Jill Lepore, "Ahab at Home: Two Hundred Years of Herman Melville," *The New Yorker*, July 29, 2019.

A Note about Sources

N.B. For readers who'd like to read more, or who are undertaking their own research, here is a select bibliography of my sources for this piece. As with all the bibliographies for New Yorker *essays that I post on my Harvard faculty website, this brief discussion mentions a good number of works consulted but it's neither an exhaustive inventory of my sources nor a survey of the scholarship in a given field. Instead, I've listed works I found most useful or especially provocative. I have generally only included manuscripts, journal and magazine articles, and books; I haven't listed interviews here at all; I've generally not included things like newspapers, advertisements, patents, legislation, and policy statements; and I've left out citations from specialized bodies of literature in fields like medicine and law. A last caveat: these brief bibliographies are all frozen in time: I do not update them, and they therefore don't include anything written on these subjects after the date on which my essay was published.*

Herman Melville's published works are, of course, readily available online. Other notable online collections include Melville's Marginalia. On Melville's life, day by day, see the amazing Jey Leyda, *The Melville Log: A Documentary Life of Herman Melville, 1819-1891* (New York: Gordian P, 1951). For an exhaustive biography, see Hershel Parker, *Herman Melville: A Biography*, 2 vols. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996). For the correspondence itself, see Merrell R. Davis and William H. Gilman, eds., *The Letters of Herman Melville* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1960) and Lynn Horth, ed., *Correspondence: Herman Melville* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern, 1993).

The Augusta Melville Papers at the New York Public Library are available digitally, though not transcribed. On the acquisition of the papers, see Donald L. Anderle, "Not Just Another Old Trunk Story," *American Book Collector* 5 (November/December 1984), 3-10. Very little has been written about Augusta Melville, whom Melville scholars generally dismiss, but see single essay: Wyn Kelley, "'My Literary Thirst,': Augusta Melville and the Melville Family Correspondence," *Resources for American Literary Study* 25 (1999): 46-56. And, broadly, see Elizabeth Schultz and Haskell Springer, eds., *Melville and Women* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2006).

Melville criticism is far too vast to note here but see, especially, Lewis Mumford, *Herman Melville* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1929); Newton Arvin, *Herman Melville* (New York: Sloan, 1950); John Updike introduction to Herman Melville, *The Complete Shorter Fiction* (New York: Everyman's Library, 1997); and Andrew Delbanco, *Melville: His World and Work* (New York: Knopf, 2005).

My thanks to Thomas Lannon at the New York Public Library, for showing me the Melville trunks; to Alicia DeMaio for help transcribing Augusta Melville's letters; to Peter Bergman at

Arrowhead, for the tour; and to Erin Hunt, curator at the Berkshire County Historical Society, for finding a precious letter.

Finally, here's an example of Augusta Melville's correspondence, a letter written just after she arrived at Arrowhead:

Arrowhead, October 17th, 1850

My dearest Mary [Blatchford],

It is not a fortnight since we arrived at our mountain home, and during that fortnight, I have felt oft & strongly inclined to write you, but when there is so much disorder around one, one sympathizes with it, till there is about as much within, and then one hardly likes to thrust oneself upon people fearful of the consequences to one's epistolary reputation. But now that I can discern something of order around me--such order that goodly thing of which these poor eyes have been deprived for many long weeks—I think I can discern a corresponding something in my brain, & hasten to communicate the delightful intelligence, together with much else which I know that warm heart would feel interested in hearing.

To begin then—I am delighted with our beautiful new home. It far surpasses my expectations. The scenery is magnificent. I could never have imagined anything more beautiful—more varied—in every direction, it stretches away in mountain, hill & valley, all glowing with the gorgeous tints of autumn. I have no doubt we see it now under its most beautiful aspect, for I hardly think the peak green of June can be as well suited to its wild sublimity. The house itself though appearing to be in a valley contrasted with the heights around, is in reality upon a hill & commands from every window a fine view.

One old farm house cannot boast much in point of beauty, but it is delightfully comfortable & that is all that is really necessary in the country. It is an old house, counting its seventy years or more, & though outwardly modernized, retains all its ancient appearance within. It is built after that peculiarly quaint style of architecture which places the chimney—the longest in proportions—immediately in the centre, & the rooms around it. An arrangement so totally void of grace & beauty must surely possess some counterbalancing advantage, but as yet I have been unable to discern it, even after having made it the subject of the most prolonged reflection for a fortnight—unless it be, that the heat is thus kept in the house & secured from all superfluous waste—no trifling consideration in this breezy county of Berkshire. But another view that strikes me—the economy in the matter of brick & mortar—four chimneys would most certainly require more than one—Oh wise & prudent & mindful of the ash, were the generation that are gone. And very trustworthy & honest must they all of been judging from the absence of locks & bolts, for, with the exception of the two outside ones, bedroom, parlor, pantry & closet—each doors stands guiltless of this sign. What would they say I wonder, would they look in upon the changes a few days have wrought not anything very favorable, I fear for the honesty of the present generation, judging from the number of locks & bolts.

But I shall tell you no more about the house, you must wait till you see it for yourself in all its quaintness. It has all sorts of odd little closets, in all sorts of odd little places, the gem of the collection, however, is one that stands in the parlor—you have heard of 'the corner cupboard' well this must be it. We have left it standing for its oddity, but elevate it from its ignoble use into doing duty as our stage. In just such another, in short, did poor Dame Stoddard make her unsuccessful season.

The weather has been most delightful for ten days past—cloudless skies & the balmiest of air—windows & doors all open. I never before fully realized the glorious beauty of an October in the country. I wish you were by my side this moment, dear Mary, to watch the changing light & shade upon the forest slope just

before one—it is exquisite. The glorious scarlet of the maples contrast so brightly with the more subdued tints of their woodland sisters, & all wrought in that soft dreamy haze which characterizes a mountain sunset. I declare it has made even prosaic me, poetical. What then would be its effect on you. I really believe that I could at this moment write a sonnet, which if published would cause another star to rise in Griswolds brilliant galaxy. By the way this collector of the poets bears the same name with 'certain parties.' Did'st think of that before? And this reminds me of a beautiful act, which will ever make the name dear to one, but which I fear, at the time I did not seem half grateful enough for, though I did feel it very deeply—the daguerreotype!—Some moment I should like to see the original. When I do, I know him well, then perhaps I should be able to tell him, how that pretty act of his impressed me. I feel very anxious to hear more of him & of himself. Is he with you still? Have you as yet decided upon anything? Your own sister, darling Mary, would not take a deeper interest in everything that concerns you, so I may hope, may I not, that when you do make your plans I shall not be any long kept in ignorance of them. The cough I trust is better & will soon leave you entirely. When you write, tell me just how you are, & have been since I left New York. As for myself, I have almost entirely recovered from the debilitating effects of my illness. There is strength in merely breathing this pure mountain air & I find I need no other tonic. For the first few days however I was not so well. The fatigue consequent upon eight hours in the cars being greater than I had anticipated. I went so bad immediately on our arrival feeling as if a relapse was in store for me. but this I was happily spared. Not being able to take much exercise I have sought amusement & recuperation in books. Having made a purchase in the cars—Miss Gore's 'Castles in the Air'—I read that first:--but don't you read it it is most miserable. Then I took up James' Last (but of that I am not certain). 'The Old Oak Chest' & I promise if one of his best. It is very interesting. But I have no room for more. What think you of the name of our place, Arrowhead. It is so called from the number of these Indian relics which have been found. I like it much. We are about two and a half miles from the village of Pittsfield—so you write direct to Pittsfield, Hermans care. This letter has been written amidst noise & hustle, carpenters & locksmiths---so gently judge the effort. And now adieu. My last love to your dear father & mother. I very much regret not seeing them to say good bye. Love to Julia & Linda & believe me dearest Mary ever your devoted friend

Augusta Melville