

Abbie M. Rankin
Private Journal
July. 1871.
Vassar 1876

1871

July

July 21.

I never kept a journal before but on this one I am going to write down facts or feelings in my daily life, just as I wish.

Ella, Ed, and I took a walk today, coming home we went through the graveyard and sat awhile in the shade. We had a real pleasant talk, as we were getting up to come home I said "where will we be ten years from now?" Ed proposed to write it down so here it is. Where will we be? God only knows perhaps one or more of us may not be living, we can't tell. All we can do is to watch and pray. And wait.

July

God grant that we may be safe where ever we are, whether together or separate.

July 22

Papa says that he thinks it is decided that I shall go to Vassar. I am so glad yet I do dread the examination very much, if Ella can only go with me it will be so nice. I went up to the Jane'es this after noon and played croquet with Ella A. We had a real nice time only I got very tired. After tea [Hibb] and I took a little walk and we met Ed so he went along with us When we parted he said good bye for two weeks. He is going to Niagra I am glad for him that he is going but I will miss him so

July

You never know how much you love a friend until you are separated. I only hope it will do him good and that he will come home better.

July 23, Sunday.

We have had a real quiet Sunday I only went to church in the evening.

July 26

This morning I rec'd [received] a catalogue from Vassar and a circular which said that the name of Miss Aikman was written as a candidate for admission to Vassar College Sep. [September] 14, I am so glad, so I studied history all the afternoon. Ned has gone and we do miss him so much, Ella and I. He said that we were the best friends he had or even would have and he said he

July

would never forget us, I am glad, for it is some comfort to know that he thinks of us while he is away. Belle is home, she has been in Newark 10 days I did not miss her much, and I am afraid that I wish she had stayed longer, but I can't help it I can't like her half as much as I did, and I like Ella a great deal more.

Thursday July 27

Ella can't go! I don't know what to say I feel so badly.

July 31

Ned has got home and oh we are so glad, there was an old French man here in the morning selling kid gloves and he said he had sold monsieur Holden a pair the young man

July

with specks, we did not believe him, but in the afternoon when Ella and I were going out walking, who should we meet but Ned, we are happy now. The dear boy I am sure it is not wrong to love him he is such a dear friend.

August

This evening about 9 o'clock all the Aikmans and young Mr. Vanderpool and some of the boarders at Mr Janes'es with Harry and I took a straw ride we had a lovely time and did not get home until 12 o'clock. We sang and told stories and cut up like every thing

August

it was splendid and Mr Janes treated us all to ice cream at Day's.

October 15th

What a long long time it has been, since I have written in my journal, the last time I wrote I was home, and now here I am at Vassar College and have been here 3 weeks. It seems so strange I can hardly realize it, I almost think sometimes that I shall wake up and find it only a dream. The examination was nothing to what I thought it would be, although I was a good deal frightened at first, I don't know what

October

I should have done if I had failed, it would have been terrible, and I prayed earnestly that I should not. If I can only succeed[succeed] now as I hope to do, it will be so nice. But I get almost discouraged sometimes, it seems as if I should never be able to learn all that is required to go through the whole course, but I shall try, with God's help I shall try, and I hope I shall succeed. My roommates I do not like at all, I can't help it, but it is so, and I hope to change before long, I would like it so much if I could room with Mattie [Ahlen], she is a real nice girl, and I would be real happy

October

but I know it will all come out right, where ever I am "Man proposes but God disposes" that is just as true as any thing can be, and if we could only remember it often- [in] there would not be so much sorrow, at mistakes that are made. "Such is life," oh how I should like to see all the folks at home, and Ned how I should like to see him, but he loves Ella, sometimes I am real homesick to see him and feel that he loves me; the thought that he loves Ella best makes me feel dreadfully, but I must not and will not feel so, I must try and live nearer to Jesus. And then I will be happy no matter

October

who there is who does not, I do wrong so easily that I can get all but discouraged but God will help me and I will "hope on hope ever" and try never to give up.

October 28th

It has been two weeks since I have written any. I never saw the time go as fast as it does here. The days and weeks pass like lightning. In 7 weeks I shall be home again and if they go as fast as the last few weeks, it will not be long. Last Sunday evening I led in prayer at our prayer meeting. I don't see how I could do it, now, but Mifs [Miss] Lord wanted me to, so much, that I promised her I would try, and I did, I am glad I did but it was real

October

hard. I could not help thinking what the girls would say. I know it was wrong but it was almost impossible to help it. I thought when I came away from home, that it would be a good deal easier to do right here, than there but I find that I am very much mistaken. When Mattie Clark is

concerned I find it almost impossible to keep my temper. She is one of the meanest girls I ever saw. Whatever I say or do, if it is a possible thing she contradicts me in every way she can. It is very hard to keep my temper then, but I shall not give up trying, for I am sure I shall succeed at last. Emma is not as

October

bas as Mattie, but she seems to think that every thing her sister does, is just the thing to be done, and so she sits guiltily [guiltily] by, and acquiesces to every thing. Sometimes when I appeal to her for justice, she says in a soft voice, that I can't bear, "I think you were wrong also Abbie," or else "I never like to order my sister." But I ought not to talk so about them without looking at the other side of their characters [characters]. When Mattie is not fighting she is really [really] a very smart pleasant girl, and Emma is too, she means to do right I am sure, and generally is very pleasant. This is the thing that I am disappointed in here, before I came I don't know how it

October

was, but it never entered into my head, that my roommates might not be pleasant girls. And I felt so badly when I first saw them, but I hope and pray, that next year, I shall be more pleasantly situated.

If Ella were only with me, o! How often I have wished that, but in vain.

November 10th

The rainy day,

1. "The day is cold, and dark, and dreary; it rains, and the wind is never weary; The vine still cling [clings], to the mouldering wall, but at every gust the dead leaves fall, and the day is dark and dreary."

2. "My life is cold, and dark and dreary; It rains, and the wind is never weary; My thoughts still clings [cling] to the mouldering Past

November

But the hopes of youth fall thick in the blast And the days are dark and dreary"

3. Be still sad heart, and cease repining, Behind the clouds is the sun still shining; thy fate is the common fate of all, Into each life some rain must fall, Some days must be dark and dreary."

Longfellow

"O fear not in a world like this, And thou shalt know ere long, Know how sublime a thing it is To suffer and be strong."

Longfellow

I have been reading these verses, and I think they are so beautiful that I have copied them here. although it is not a rainy day, still I suppose it will rain some time, and then the verses will suit. they always

November

remind me of Belle.

We are all friends again Belle, Ella, and I, just as we used to be, No! not as we used to be exactly, I can not like Belle Best as I used to. Ella has taken the first place and Belle the second. but we are three loving friends again, and I am so glad.

There is another piece of Poetry I must quote, before I stop, which always makes me think of Ella, it is by Dryden. "For pity melts the mind to love"

I think it is sweet, and Ella likes it too.

November 19th

Driving the last week, we have had sorrow. A little baby sister was born to me and

November

lived a little over a day, and then the Angels took her home never to know sin or sorrow. I almost wished, that I had died when I was a baby, in the same way, but now I don't, since I have come to think about it, perhaps, God has some things for me to do in the world. I am sure he has, and I will try and do his will, I am sorry for Mother, it must be so hard for her, and here I am away off at school, and not able to comfort her at all, but it is all for the best, and I will try and feel so. There are so many of us left, little Robin and Ruth, I am so thankful

1.5 November

that God has left them to us, I don't know how I could get along without them the little darlings. Now I would like to see them, a few weeks more and I shall, if God is willing.

December 10

In one week and 3 days I shall be home, if nothing happens to prevent, I am so glad and yet there is one, whom I am sorry to leave, Dear Dear Mifs [Miss] Clarke, I love her so much, I never loved a lady outside of my relatives, as much as I do her, I would be so happy if she would only love me a little I want to go and see her ever so much and yet I am afraid she would not like it, when

December

I see her talking with girls with their arms in her's I do feel so badly, not that [I] don't want her to love them, but I want her to love me to [too], But I am going to learn my lessons just as well as I can, and perhaps she will like me by and by. She has twice said "very good" when I have recited and I was so glad, last Sunday evening she met me going to chapel and sad [said] "have you passed a pleasant sabbath" I did feel so happy that she should speak to me, perhaps this is foolish, but I don't think it is. Emma Clark says that I am "smashed" I ain't, but I do love and admire her as a teacher and if I only could, as a friend.

December 1871

December 17

Three days more and I shall be home. I am so very glad, I want to see them all so much. Last evening I went to see Mifs [Miss] Clark with Marrie. I was so happy, she was all alone by the fire, she said to sit down by her and we would have a nice cozy time. It would have been so nice, but we had not been there more than 5 minutes when Mifs [Miss] Perkins came in, but Mifs [Miss] Clark asked me to sit on a stool at her feet and I was so so happy. I could go see to see her every night if I could and sit at her feet and learn. God bless her and make her happy. Good bye Old Year. Welcome to the New Year with what it brings.

January 1872

January 9th, Wed

I neglected to write in here on Sunday, as I intended to so I will write a few words now. A new year has begun. Who can tell what of joys and sorrows it will bring to us. Oh God if it be thy will for me to live through this year now dawning upon us, make me to live nearer to Thee, doing my duty wherever I see it whether it is pleasant or irksome? I want to trust more fully in thy love, keep me from doing or saying any thing that might be a stumbling block to others? Grant me this petition oh Lord? in the name of they dear Son.

The second day after my return from home the Girls, Mattie and Emma recieved a telegram

January

from home telling them of the death of their father I am so sorry for them, it is such a sad New Year for them.

Yesterday morning Mifs [Miss] Perkins and I went to Mifs [Miss] Clarke's soon to ask her something about our Rhetoric lesson. she sat there in the sunshine among her flowers, and she did look so sweet. she said, no matter about the lesson girls, but come in and sit down with me a little while. Oh, there is no use in writing how very much I love her it can't be expressed. I do thank God so much for letting me know her.
I recieved a letter from Sue today, she said she remembered what Mr. Beiker had told me in the cars about keeping your lips

January
tight shut when you are angry. I had almost forgotten it myself, Mifs [Miss] Clarke said almost the same thing the other day. she said there was no better proof, that you were a christian, to to others than your conversation. I know it is true, and I know that I do not always speak as I should. I know also that "out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh," it is only too true, I want to be helped to think better to act better and to speak better.
I had such a pleasant vacation home. It went so fast, I was so glad to see Father and Mother and the children and Harry + Sue, again. I saw Ned, too he has grown so much in the last few

January 1872
months that is seemed funny to call him Ned as I used to when we were, as it were, children together, I called him Mr. Holder once or twice, and he laughed at me, naughty boy, and said "there wasn't any Mr. Holden there," Oh well "such is life" I wish I could see him oftener. he promised to remember me, and I think he will, yet I would like to freshen his memory a little bit, by seeing him once in a while.

January 14th 1872
We have just been having quite a discussion, as to the good of keeping a journal. I think it is a good deal of good, especially while I am away from home for it is the only place where I can

January 1872
let out my feelings. There is something the matter with me to-day, I believe I am jealous, and I wish I could stop myself from it, it is just because last night Mifs [Miss] Clarke asked about Mattie, to come and see her a little while in the evening, now I know what as Mattie has had so much sorrow it was very very kind in Mifs [Miss] Clarke to ask her to come and see her, and comfort her, and I know I ought to be very glad about it. I am glad, and yet I'm afraid I am jealous to [too], for I would give anything to have her ask me to come and see her. for I do love her so. it would always be a bright spot in my life, Perhaps she will sometime, any way I would try and drive jealousy out of my heart and trust in

February 1872
my God for the future, if it is his will that Mifs [Miss] Clarke shall love me she surely will sooner or later.

Feb 11th 1872
I have been to see Meiss [Miss] Clarke twice since I last wrote the first time was about 8 weeks ago we had a very pleasant time, we were alone quite a while. We were talking about Prayer meetings, she was just telling us how to make them interesting, when some girls came in, I was so sorry I could have cried.

Last night Mattie and I were there a short time, but we had no talk alone with her for there were so many girls in calling on her

February 1872

She seems to love some of them so much. Wil she ever love me as well? Friday or rather Thursday we had our final examination in Rhetoric. I passed, but I almost feel like saying I am sorry, for I won't have any more to do with Meiss [Miss] Clarke until the last part of next year, and that is such a long while to look ahead. Meiss [Miss] Clarke must love me in time for God has promised to answer our prayers, if we have enough faith, I am afraid that is why He does not answer mine. "O! God" I believe, help thou mine unbelief."

Februaru 25th

I can't write here every week for I don't have time, it seems

February

more like a monthly journal than a weekly one. I am neither [provoked] with it any how, for I write things and then I changed my mind entirely. Just now I was looking over in the first part of the book and I find I have written things about Mattie that I wish I hadn't written. I like her very much indeed and have liked her since the first month, I wish I had never written what I did about her on the 11th page, for I don't feel so at all now. I like Emma too quite well. I went to see Meiss [Miss] Clarke last night all alone and I was with her alone half an hour, I did have such a happy time. She said whenever I felt troubled or discouraged or

February

sad, to come and see her, and she would try and help me. I do think she loves me a little, she is so kind to me, I am so glad I am in her English class and I will be so very glad if I can be in her Bible class, it will be almost too good to be true.

I am happy here with my lessons and hearing from home, (I do love my letters I don't know what I should do without them) but there is one thing lacking, I would like to hear from Ned once in a while. I have not forgotten him although I have not written anything about him even to my poor old journal I haven't spoken his name, but I do love him Oh! I do love him still I want to see him before next Summer and possible not then, but I hope I hope so earnestly that I may

February-March

see him next Summer.

Does he remember me, and think of me as I do of him I wonder? Time will tell, if he and Ella love each other when they grow older as they do now. I am certain it will be well for them, I hope they will be happy, and I am sure they will be, I do love him, but I think I am willing for Ella to love him for I know they will make each other happy. I will try and be very very glad for every thing that may happen.

March 10th 1872

"Oh though child of many cares, Life hath quicksands, Life hath snares Age and care come unawares"

I don't know whether that is quoted correctly or not, I don't remember

March

it exactly but, I feel rather so, this morning. It is a dismal day, it snowed a little yesterday and now it is raining. It isn't even a good hard rain but a little damp drizzle, making it miserable outside and making me dreadfully blue, inside. I don't think a person has a right to feel blue and homesick, especially on Sunday. Miss Clarke said, the last time I went to see her, that she thought it was wrong to indulge in it, and whenever I felt a blue fit coming on I must rouse my self and shake it off. I am sure I ought not to feel so this morning, for we have just had such a lovely Bible Class. We began at the first Prophecy relating to the birth of Christ. And its fulfillment, Miss Clarke is a splendid teacher, and I am

29, March

more thankfull than I can express to be in her class. I have wished it for so long.

In less than three weeks I shall be home again. It seems such a long time since I was there last, Yet soon, very soon, June will be here, and then for twelve weeks of enjoyment. I bless God for all his great mercies to me, for I have so many more than I deserve. I think the cloud has brightened a little, since I began to write and I can see the silver lining beyond how beautiful it is.

March 24th

It is a beautiful day, and it seems all the more beautiful, because it is so near time to go home only three days more before I go home, the last time I wrote it was three weeks I have had

March

to study real hard lately and I am just as tired as I can be, it will be so nice to go home and rest for a little while. I went last night to say goodbye to Miss Clarke but just as I got to the door, four teachers went in so I could not go. I did feel so sorry, but perhaps I can go again tomorrow night I do hope I can. If I could only have a nice time alone with her as I did once, I would be so gladly happy. If she would only love me, Oh if she only would. I feel so encouraged to try harder to be good, now I am in her Bible class. She is such a kind teacher, no one knows how good she is. If I could only be as good as she is I feel tempted to take her for an example

and try and pattern after her. But I must aim higher, I must take Jesus for my [...] and love Miss Clarke for being so like him.

June 16

I have almost give up writing in here, Oh my poor old book I have had many a blue spell over it and now it is real hard to give it up. I don't know whether I shall or not. This is my last Sunday at Vassar College. A year has gone away so quickly. Oh so quickly it hardly seems possible that in less than a week from now, if God permit, I shall be home ready for a long Summer of happiness. Oh I am so happy but there is one sorrow with my joy, it is indeed a sorrow

and I would give a good deal to have it otherwise. Miss Clarke is not coming back her next year, I went to our last Bible class this morning. I may be able to go and see her once more, and I may not. All my longings and prayers have been in vain she does not love, not bt that she is always lovely [...] kind, so very kind to me, and yet why should she love me when there are so many beautiful and smart girls who are so much more worthy to be loved than I, and yet I don't believe one of them loves her more than I do. She has been a dear friend to me any way, and I think

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she may love me a little.

34.

35.

36.

.60 on bottle of varnish
.25 " " " [...]
.30 some papa
.3 one quart of chestnuts

g. Margarett (Holden) Morgan, '03 2 Nov. 1960