

Westfield

(Probably Jan. 2, 1873)

Dear Carrie,

I had fully made up my mind to omit writing to you until I received a letter from you, but I bare relented and again assail your ears with one of my interesting concoctions of trash and small particles of news. Today we have amused ourselves as best we could in the house, for all the morning it rained, causing us to be alarmed lest our anticipated sleighride this afternoon would have to be foregoae. However, the drizzling ceased about noon, and after our early dinner (the Whitmans still retain the primitive dinner hour of twelve) Mr. Whitman Jr. brought up a cosy little sleigh drawn by two little ponies and in this Mrs. Whitman, Ida, Nellie and myself joyfully seated ourselves. For about two hours we rode, enjoying ourselves extremely, for the day is very mild.

Jan. 5-

At this point my letter was left last Friday, and new, back at College, I take It up to finish it. Upon arriving last night I found two letters from home awaiting me. Yours and one from Papa and Mamma. (They twain being one I count their letters as one.) Indeed, after being silent so long, I think you might have favored me with a longer epistle. Perhaps you think that I grudge the time which it takes to peruse a lengthy letter, but If that be the case, you are much mistaken. I shall look for a long, long letter, telling all about the Christmas festivities. All my hopes that my visit to Ida would be gay were in vain. I enjoyed myself very much in a very quiet sort of way. Ida is the most inveterate talker I ever knew, and you know one of my weaknesses is a dislike to excessive talking, unless it is very entertaining. She has a certain set of stories which are repeated aver and aver again. If at this early age she is so fond of amusing herself In this manner, what will she be when she becomes an old woman. I think I have heard half a dozen times at least, all her doings this summer at Block Island. Then too. In regard to the family matters, she has a way of patting the best foot forward, which, I suppose, is quite proper. Only sometimes it is as much the best foot I seem to be talking rather unkindly of her whose guest I have been; but it is not meant so. I am telling my impressions merely, and these are not so favorable as yours of old. Nellie I like extremely. Mr. Swan (Captain Robert's uncle) takes a great interest In all the College art students, for he professes himself something of a Judge of pictures, and besides, Is one of Prof. Van Ingens best friends. The Saturday night before I went to Troy he Invited Pattie Thum, Miss Tuttle and myself to accompany Dr. Avery to his house and pass the evening. Of course, with great glee, we all went. The three are ardent admirers of Dr. Avery, and worship at her shrine mast devoutly: I from afar, however. The Doctor ordered a sleigh at five o'clock, an early hour it seemed to me, but such is the custom of this country. The Swans live on Mill Street In a very small house but a most comfortable and homelike one. Two tiny parlors opening together with a miniature greenhouse back of them. Lots of pretty pictures, and books scattered around, and best of all an upright piano, reminding me so forcibly of home. Dr. Avery and Mr. Swan the most sociable of persons; Mrs. Swan a lovely little woman; the children very well behaved a really splendid supper;-you can readily imagine how much we enjoyed ourselves. Professor Van Ingen came and added no little to the gayety. James Beecher brother of Henry Ward B. played whist, and sang comic songs for us; no wonder we hated to have ten o'clock come, for that was the hour at which Dr. Avery had ordered the sleigh.

Great was our surprise upon entering the sleigh to find Mr. Swan and Professor following us, and suggesting a sleighride. Dr. Avery not objecting away we went, arriving at the gate of Vassar some little time after twelve. I wrote mamma that we went down to Westfield to celebrate Mr. Whitman's seventy sixth birthday. We found the old people perfectly well and apparently very happy in their easy little hame. It is so pleasant for them to have their house on the main st. for they can sit in their bay window and see all the passing, when they do not wish to go oat themselves. They are such nice old people. I quite fell in love with Mrs. Whitman. They both seem to enjoy the society of young people, and are as forbearing as Grandma. Ida, as I have before perhaps Intimated (?) struck me as rather conceited. Little things were always coming up which rather amused me. For Instance we had been In a bookstore for same time while I was looking over new books. I remarked that I enjoyed goings bookstore and examining the books. "Oh!" said she, have bean surrounded by books all my life." Perhaps she thinks there are no books in Texas, but she would find you have read more than she has. Then again, when I asked her to play the piano for me. "Why, you seem quite fond of music, I should think you would take lessens." But Texas is afar off and I presume she considers us savages. Only two or my parlormates are back yet. Miss Pepilton (Ellen E. Poppleton), from Omaha arrived this morning. The other one, Mary Sheffield, is now seated by the register, feet elevated almost to the level of her head, amusing herself with a navel. Helen Lough the President of our class has the single room in my parlor; she has been quite sick during the holidays and will not return for some time. Miss Swift from Po'keepsie, of whom I will tell you sometime, and Miss Forbes, my roommate, will be back on Monday. Today we have no Chapel or Bible class. I shall spend my afternoon in a useful manner, that is, by sleeping. Having bored you quite long enough for one time, I will now cease.

With love to all in abundance.

Your sister mustang

Julie