

Apr. 14 1912  
203 Josselyn Hall, Vassar  
Poughkeepsie, N.Y

Dearest Mother and Dad -

Your letter didn't come until Saturday afternoon and as no mail goes out from here Sunday's , Tomorrow morning's mail is the earliest I can catch - I do hope you won't have to wait for this to be forwarded to you at San Fran. for I know you'll be wanting to hear from me. Of course, I landed back at college safe and sound, and before twenty-four hours had elapsed, was back into the old routine of life. This week-end I have spent working on my semester's paper for House Sanitation, subject - Tuberculosis, - and now, praises be, it's all written and copied, ready to hand in. That is the last of my topics for this year and it certainly is a relief to realize that I have finished all the heavy work of the semester so soon.

Dorothy Parker has had a guest for over the week end, a celebrated concert-singer from San Francisco who is [East] arranged for a concert-tour to be made this summer and next fall, I believe. I had of course never heard of her - her name is Lillian Birmingham (nee Craft) - but she created quite a furor here. Well, I was peacefully jogging along to [chorus] rehearsal this a.m when one of the girls brought me a note from Dorothy asking me to have dinner with them and to Senior Parlor with them afterwards. I did, and had to accompany the lady - I almost died, I was that scared - but folks said it was all right - personally I have my doubts. Well, after that awe-inspiring performance was over, Dorothy, Mrs. Birmingham, Edith Salter and I went over to Prof. [Gow's] (Edith Salter, by the way, is the daughter of Mary Turner Salter the composer!). There Prof [Gow] asked me to play for her again, but I said I would rather he did - so he did. I would have liked to try it, but I thought it was only courteous not to accept, and anyway some of the accompaniment, which were all sight reading for me, were simply atrocious! We four went to the Inn for supper and how Mrs. B. did talk! My goodness, she certainly has the "gift of gab". She had a letter from Schumann-Heink in her pocket, which she let us read during the course of the evening. Dorothy and I between us told my plans for next year and she absolutely [sat] all over me. The idea! Come back to college and get into a rut from which it would be impossible to emerge? Never! And she shrugged her shoulders and threw out her hands in much eloquence of gesture. What I should do according to her, is to sail for Germany as soon as I receive my diploma. Take up my residence in some "little town", preferably Munich,, where the cost of living is not great and proceed to absorb. "Absorb, dear child, till you overcome your deplorable lack of knowledge of operas, concert music, etc. Just soak it in, go to everything possible whether it is good or bad, so as to develop your ideas of [comparison]. Stay there a good year, then come back - and with a little backing, you are assured! She talked as her above for a good long half hour with all her funny little [inaccuracies] and characteristic gestures. She is president of the San Francisco musical Club and vice president of the Century Club and talked of singing duets with her "very dear friend [Leordica]" as if it were the most commonplace occurrence in the world. I could go on for hours, but I'll spare you - just now, I can't think of much else. Next week, she has asked me to take tea or dinner with her at the Algonquin Hotel in N[ew] Y[ork]. I haven't asked you if I could go down, because I didn't know I wanted to till just the last day or so. 1912 is giving a play Saturday afternoon in the [Wanan...] auditorium, and just about half the college is going down to it -

practically all of 1914 and many many more. Dixie has invited Freddie Mossdrop and me to spend the week end with her in Brooklyn and we're planning to do so if all goes well. She is going to take us to see "Peg O' my Heart" Saturday Evening. I do hope you won't mind - it really isn't as wild as it sounds. The proceeds from the 1912 play are to go to the V[assar] C[ollege] Endowment Fund, I believe. Many alumnae, friends and relatives will attend, and a goodly assemblage is expected.

We have to decide our next year's rooming pretty soon, and I'm having a terrible time to decide whether to go into a single or to take a single alley way [in] three bed rooms and a sitting room with Dorothy Parker and her present room mate, Gertrude Worrell a Boston Girl, at least she lives in Roxbury. You see, I like [DM.P] very much, Gertrude is just a good wholesome straight sort of a girl, nothing very startlingly remarkable about her in any way, as one girl said to me "She's like Ivory Soap, good and nice and sort of guaranteed. I'm not not awfully keen about it, though she is a nice enough sort of girl - I've met her mother and brother, Manning. She's the girl who came out with said mother and took dinner with us that night at Cottage Park Hotel two or three summers ago - remember her? I wish to goodness you'd give me your opinion. Sometimes I incline very strongly to a single, and then again. What would you do?

Now regards June and Silver Bay, etc. Gladys Lyall, Grace Harvey, Freddie Mossdrop and Dorothy Parker have all invited me to visit them. Dorothy rather strongly expects me to come out to Chicago this summer as I couldn't go for this winter and she suggested that I come out and have you all pick me up on the way back. That's merely a suggestion. My original idea was this: to go to Glad's for a few days so as to keep peace in the family, then go on to Freddie's and later go to Silver Bay with her. I can't tell you much more than I have about Silver Bay, except that it is a town on Lake Champlain where there is an annual Y.W.C.A convention to which all the colleges send delegations. About 50 more or less come from each college and it is a gala ten days - prayer - meetings, general convention meeting, basket ball games, college-singing, etc. all indiscriminately combined to make a very enjoyable time and one which I have wanted to attend every year since I have been in college. Ruth Cornish, that Mt. Holyoke girl whom I met at Quinibeck last summer, had been last year and year before and was very very enthusiastic about it.

Then you asked about the state of my finances. I returned to old V[assar] C[ollege] with \$15.00 and promptly spend \$4.50 for class stationery that I had ordered and \$2.75 for class tax. Now inasmuch as it will take practically the rest for this N[ew] Y[ork] week end, I fear [me] I will need some to pay for my gift to Senior Parlor, some books which I have to purchase, a nightgown which I bought and have embroidered for myself (Dad saw it - it's a darling) a small [lied] at the Inn and sundry other miscellanoeuses. I wanted to get myself a white blazer when I went to N[ew] Y[ork] but I've decided that if I have my sweater washed it will serve the purpose to lead singing in at night just as well.

Speaking of clothes, if you're looking ahead as far as my birth day and are wondering what to bring me from the far West, I should like a mandarin-coat better than anything I know of - something in white, [blue] and pink - you know the kind, all embroidered with butterflies and dragons and things.

If I don't forget it, I'll enclose the very nice letter I received from Mrs. Mossdrop the other day.

Did I write you that I am Third Hall Play Committee and am to have entire charge of the singing and dancing? We are going to Sir Milton's ["Courses"] and Tennyson's "Foresters" on May 10. May 16 is Song Contest and May 24 Junior-Senior

Boat ride (more cash, I suppose) I was on the committee for that but had to resign because of too many points. Field Day is May 3, and I expect Alice Flannery is coming up for it although, as yet I haven't heard definitely. I'm hoping to be able to make as good in the 50 yard dash here as I did at camp last summer. So if you get a wild telegram about that time, that's what it is about. Please hope I may break the record and win a "V". if I only could! I die happy! Do you remember that print of Golden Gate that was on a X mas card Mr. and Mrs. Baker sent you? Well, I've had it framed in a narrow [ourel] frame for Dorothy's birthday, April 30, and I think it looks dear! I wish you might see it.

It's a scandalous hour and I fear I'm contracting writer's cramp, besides, so I must stop. With much love - for everybody, and hopes for a safe and happy trip,

Muriel

Poughkeepsie

Apr 14

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N.Y.

Mrs. B.O. Tilden

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April 18 1913

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