

Vassar College Po'keepsie

April 29th 1866.

My Dearest Mother.

Your letter of Wednesday was received Friday

noon. I am very much obliged for the money and as you say, I think it will be plenty to last me until I come home. I am glad to hear Mrs Treman is better and above all to hear that you are again feeling so well. I hope you will not get sick again. I am sorry Father has to be away so much. now if he could only have been home this Spring We could have stood it better in the future could we not? — Only think Mother dear - after tomorrow, In fact when you receive this letter we can say next month I will be home Does not that make the time seem short? I am sure it does to me. — But now I must begin to tell you the adventures of the past week. I believe I mentioned to you that we are to celebrate the Founders birth day. The preparations have been going on all the week and In fact for several weeks though none of us In this room have had anything In particular to do. Friday night at the tea table * Prof. Tenney came in and spoke to Miss Lyman and she rung her bell for us to be quiet and then Prof.

Tenney gave the notice that as soon as we were excused from the tea-table we requested to repair immediatly to our rooms and procure our bonnets and cloaks and then meet him in front of the College for our first rehearsal for the founders day. We did so and then proceeded to try different ways Inorder to decide . on the most approved In which to welcome Mr Vassar I will now tell you what was decided upon so that you will understand. We are to have the day - tomorrow to ourselves until six o'clock when Mr Vassar*s carriage will arrive. Just before he arrives all the girls in the College, with the exception of about fifty who are to sing, are to be ranged in single lines, one on each side reaching from the gate house to the end of the walk where the road turns off on each side to go around the building (I think you may understand from the pictures of the College. As the carriage enters the ledge the heads of the two lines will turn and walk beside the carriage and instead of the two lines marching down towards the gate-house the stand still while the carriage and moving part of the procession pass and as the end reaches them keep falling in in turn You know there is a walk on each side next the grass and between those and the road also on each side a wide smooth place which is to be the

second line of march. I will draw a picture so you may see — I have just been drawing the accompanying plan (I guess I can call it though I am afraid you will not see much plan to it. However I will go on with my explanations * As the carriage reaches the door and the last of the lines come up the choir, who are stationed by the upper front door - which you will know is quite raised and a broad place, sing a welcoming piece. The words composed by one of the girls here & the music by Prof. Wiebie. It is very pretty. After that we are to escort Mr Vassar to the Chapel where there are to be literary exercises and after that a reception in the parlors and a supper. Think of that-- But I can tell you better about those things afterwards and I have so much else to tell in this letter. — As I was saying we had to practise the marching several times Friday night and the first thing after breakfast Saturday morning four or five times again. Imagine us marching up and down Prof. Tenney as chief commander and all the other Profs and teachers with the President and his family looking out of the windows. It is fortunate that we are having such warm beautiful days if it will only be as pleasant to-morrow. There are to be several arches I believe of greens over the road but they of importance anyway. So don't think of my being sick. - I have so much I should like to tell you about the "Founder's Day", but I am afraid

I shall have to postpone most of it as I have so little time to-night. The day was as delightful as could be wished and we spent the day as we wished as you know it was "holiday" I played Croquet in the morning with some of the girls and spent the rest of the day until time to dress in fixing me a ribbon bow It is very pretty I think, and I am quite anxious to see if you will like it. We had to commence dressing about three o'clock. I wore my light silk with my new undersleeves and pink flowers. There were about fifty strangers invited but mostly old folks and friends of Mr Vassar. At a quarter of six we were arranged in the two columns as I have before described & at six the open carriage^ containing Mr Vassar & President Raymond passed through the lodge. As they came in sight of us the both stood up and took off their hats and remained so while we went up the avenue & in fact until they entered the house. There was an immense arch of evergreens over the road & the front door was trimmed very prettily as well as the Chapel & dining hall. After the welcome song had been sung Mr Vassar was conducted to a private room to rest while the rest were being seated in the Chapel After all were seated he entered with Dr Raymond and several others of his party - as he did so we all arose and the organ voluntary was played. The exercise were excellent. I will send you a programme & explain more fully when I see you. Also the supper was excellent and we were allowed to sit up until twelve o'clock. But I am sorry to say the retiring bell has rung are not up yet so I am not certain about them and will write afterwards. The Chapel is already partly trimmed and the dining room is also to be trimmed. I have not yet decided what dress I shall wear but hardly think it will be warm enough to wear my white as we shall be out doors so late in the day. We had such a laugh Friday night when we were exercising for as we were all standing on each side waiting for the signal to march one of the men who is working on the Gymnasium came along with an old rattling dirt waggon. As he drove down through the two lines it was echoed along that Mr Vassar was coming and such a laugh as we had and the man laughed too. But I have said enough about the festival for this time though^you may expect to hear more in my next. I must now tell you of my trip to Po'keepsie yesterday. Julia and I concluded Friday that we wanted to go if we could go without a Teacher. Mollie had said when she was up here that if we would come down she would go with us. So we went to Miss Lyman and asked her If we could go down and see our friends and do some shopping as they had said they would go with us. She said that would be perfectly satisfactory. So after Chapel Saturday morning we started We saw some other girls going across the fields so we concluded we would go that way too. We had to climb several fences and cross one stream but we got along very nicely and found the walk a good deal pleasanter than going by the dusty road. We found Mollie at home but, sad to relate, with such sore eyes that she could not go out. We made her quite a long visit and then started for Main street. We were at a great stand what to do as Miss Lyman expected we would not go without some one with us but we did not want to return to the College without doing any of our shopping and I told Julia I must have my hat and she was equally anxious for some worsted that she had been waiting for some time In order to finish a shawl. So we concluded that as long as Miss Lyman could let girls 19 & 20 go without a teacher we were near enough that age and we would take the risk of Miss Lyman's hearing of and making any objections to it. So we gave up all the little things which we had intended to get and got only the essential ones which only obliged us to go into three stores and those not more than three or four rods apart I got me a Derby hat

which I think very pretty. I was at such a stand what to get for I was so afraid I should buy something you would not like. However I risked taking this one for I liked It so much myself and I thought my blue trimming would look so pretty on it. It is a very pretty shade of drab. I guess, at least the best way for you to tell is to look at a piece of my traveling dress for it is an almost exact match for that. I only wish now that the trimming on that and my hat could match. You have no idea how pretty my blue feather and velvet look on It. I have just twisted that largest piece of velvet you sent me and put that around with that feather in case we should want to wear our things tomorrow night But bands will look much prettier - I think that you are going to send me will be just the thing. The hat fits me very nicely & the girls say Is quite becoming. I believe I like it better St better every time I look at it. I so hope you will like it. Nellie says she is so sorry she did not get one the color of mine and all the girls that have seen it seem to think it very pretty. It is a^l cut straw and when I had had it lined & a wire put around the edge came to 3.75. I hesitated a little about the price fearing you would think it too much but it was the only Derby I found of that color & it suited me so well and I thought it would be so pretty for traveling and riding on horseback. I have plenty of money left yet as I have over six dollars but I may I have worried you with this long letter. But I feel in the mood for writing today. I have found so much I wanted to say & I don't suppose next Wednesday I shall have made time. However I will leave when things for the present. I hope this letter as much as good as the other you spoke of I am sure it is long enough. When is Father to be home? Remember e to all my friends and believe me.

Ever loving daughter

Ellen

...so you must excuse me if this is short. We have breakfast every morning at half past-five-six and I get up at five so as to commence practising at half past. Don't you think that quite smart for me? -.....