

Vassar College.  
April 10, 1868.

My dear Mother,

I received your letter just before dinner and am going to write you immediately as I have plenty of time. The girls are making sugar candy over the gas - i.e. Laura and Saidee are, Miss Penfield is making herself an organdie muslin while your loving daughter is writing to her mother. Now that it is so well settled that I am to have a box I will tell you as fully as I can what I want. I went over to see the dressmaker Mrs. Green yesterday and she measured me for a short skirt. I have decided to have a white marsailles short dress cut with a sacque. My skirt is to be 37 inches in front and 38 behind. I shall get a pattern of the sacque Monday and you may expect it by Wednesday or Thursday. I suppose Em would be willing to have the skirt trimmed off on her and I know of no one any nearer my size. The sacque is to turn back like a coat and I want a white waist to wear under it of course. This ought to

be as high in the neck as possible and made of linen - or the front at least. It will look in every respect like a man's shirt bosom, and, of course, is to be starched stiffly. I am not particular how it is made, whether the tucks are fine or coarse, uniform or in groups. About such a matter you have fully as good taste as I, and you know fashion allows great latitude in the minor details of one's dress now-a-days. I want a plain white skirt short enough to wear with the dress. I don't know but what such a skirt would look better ruffled and a very few tucks - on second thought, what do you think? It is not an affair of much moment any way. Now as this letter will be the one referred to when you come to get the things ready I will write everything I think of.

I spoke of having a white muslin waist. If you send one I would like it plain garibaldi or if ornamented at all - with puffs so instead of tucks. Jennie Penfield is making her muslin ^and instead of leaving the cords on the outside she has them on the inside and they are farther apart than we made mine. I like it better I think. I think I shall need a thin waist for it will probably be too hot during Commencement to wear my silk waist. I am afraid

I am laying out too much work for you. If I mention anything that you do not approve for any reason, you must say so. When you send my box you may send that braided chemise if you please. I shall want a skeleton - the smallest you can find and then I shall take out the top hoops - a pair of boots and I should like to have you send for a pair of kid gloves to match my walking suit whatever color that may be. I suppose you don't know any more than I, but you had better decide upon the material and color yourself. I

like gray very much or steel. Saidee says I had better have ponjee as that is to be the thing of the season. The bit I sent of hers is ponjee also the dress Nell got In New York. I think Nell's however was cheaper and perhaps you had better get a piece of her and tend for one like it for me. You must go by your own judgment in every thing. All I want to do is to suggest and leave all decision to you. Of course I could get my gloves here but it will probably be cheaper for sine Mr. Woodruff to get such things I wear ^6 or 6 1/4 you know. I want my skeleton white. I can't think of anything more now that I want. In regard to the trimming of my dress. I think it had better be white - sort of gimp. I can get a sample In Poughkeepsie and send you or get the whole of

it and trim it after it comes. I am going to send you a piece of cloth for skirting thinking perhaps you will need a new skirt as well as myself and this is very nice - cost \$.70 per yd. Aren't you tired of so much about dress ? Remember that you told me to be very particular in my directions. I must tell you about Carrie Young's last freak. I suppose father's admiration will be unbounded now, allowing that it has had a limit heretofore. She has run away and been married to a worthless fellow by the name of Sam Herroa - they are boarding at a hotel in Cincinnati now and her father will not allow her to come home. Annie says she thinks letters of condolence would be more appropriate than congratulation.

What a contrast there is between the cousins. I never saw a girl that I admired more thoroughly than I do Annie Glidden. I wish you could know her.

I received a letter from Aunt Maria yesterday. It was real nice and I enjoyed it ever so much. I shall write to her again before I come home certainly. She writes that Frank McKean has been at home. How could you be so heartless as to not write me about it?

I have not yet perfected my arrangements to spend that week in New York which Mrs. McKean suggested.

I have decided not to have anything done to my black dress except to mend up a few holes and re-plait it. It is so old I cannot do much more with it. Tell Sue I am delighted with the prospect she offers ^me of joining her party to the Mts. Wouldn't it be delightful. I do hope nothing will occur to prevent it and, more than all, the visit of her cousins and relatives for I want to see them very much indeed. I wanted to write to Hal week but to write so much to you that I could not. I shall write you a short letter Monday for I don't want a single Wed. to pass without bringing to you my letter.

Lovingly  
Mary.

[Mary (Parker) Woodworth, '70]