

Mary Walsh James to Henry James, 22 September [1873], from Cambridge

ALS Houghton, bMS Am 1093.1 (51)

1 Cambridge

2 Sept 22nd

3 My darling Harry

4

5 We waited for your last letter longer than usual, but when it came we found
6 it was well worth waiting for, for it still brought us good news; news of your confirmed
7 improvement. We had been speculating a good deal about your whereabouts, whether you
8 had gone to Paris, urged by that painful necessity of aching teeth, and we were happy to
9 learn that you had a reprieve and were still enjoying delightful Homburg—

10 It was well too on other accounts, in view of Willy's movements. Paris would seem the
11 most convenient place for you to join company; and as he may like to make a little stay
12 there, you might not care to be there so long—

13 He seems remarkably strong and bright since he made up his mind; so much so as to have at
14 times some relentings.— But these ought not to be yielded, to, He says if he holds on and
15 gets to feeling well, after three months, he will go to Florence or Heidelberg and study. We
16 are having the lovliest of Septembers and we have got our glorious October, still before
17 us— Where can you find weather like it! Aunt Kate & I with Will and Alice spent
18 yesterday afternoon at the Waverly Oaks— We roamed about, and rested in the sunshine
19 on that beautiful morain; then walked to Belmont and took the Cars home— It was
20 perfectly lovely, and as you ~~are~~ my darling one are associated in our minds with every

21 thing beautiful, we talked about you. I must write you a short letter, to-day as I am a little
22 borne down with care— I am having a good deal of domestic disquiet, a rather graver
23 experience of the utter worthlessness and deceit of the race by whom unfortunately we
24 live— I am glad to say that Mary in the kitchen still proves reliable, but I am afraid almost
25 to lean upon her, least she too prove a broken reed— There is always pleasant news from
26 Bob— Your cross has reached Mary, and was acknowledged yesterday, as “beautiful”
27 She will doubtless write to you— Our great excitement now is Wilky’s marriage, and
28 seeing Carrie When that time comes our letters will be interesting— The Nortons are
29 settled at Shady Hill, M^{rs} Norton having borne the journey from Ashfield astonishingly.
30 Poor Charles Norton was there for a week all alone with little Sally before the rest came—
31 How he must have felt then that Susan was gone! He is remarkably well they say—having
32 had all summer the good company of George Curtis and some weeks of M^r & M^{rs} Godkin.
33 Alice made a delightful visit of three days at Beverly with Fanny Morse. I am so glad for
34 her own sake and for Fanny’s that the long spell has been broken She found M^{rs} M so
35 quiet and changed, and the place so lovely, that it was all enjoyment; and she came home
36 with her nervous system unimpaired. Father is remarkably well I think— He corrected the
37 proof of your Albano letter only a few days ago, so you are sure of it for the next Atlantic.
38 Your Tourgenieff was too late for the N. A. and will have to wait only—four months!
39 Patience must have its perfect work in your case it would seem—
40 Aunt Kate says she got your letter from Homburg, and is very glad you got hers from
41 Quebec at last. She is in prime condition. I never saw her better. She wears constantly the
42 glasses that Hay recommended, and says little or nothing about her eyes—
43 Will says he will write to you in a few days. He has not yet seen Elliot since his backing

44 out; and although he was made by him the medium of negotiating with other parties to take
45 the place, has not heard a word from him— I presume it will turn out to be one of his
46 official airs, a determination not to be bothered with College business until the 20th when
47 he returns to his post—

48 Charles Atkinson has returned, and I met him on Park Street with bag and overcoat on arm
49 the morning he arrived fresh from the ship. He looked wonderfully better, perhaps it was in
50 some measure due to his being burnt on the voyage— He promised to come out soon, but
51 has not yet done so.

52 John Ropes told father yesterday that he was about sailing.

53 The Cranches are coming to Cambridge for the winter A very doubtful acquisition
54 perhaps— I cannot tell exactly what brings them here, but a desire to get away from Staten
55 Island has set them adrift— I have scribbled away and filled my paper after all— Good
56 bye my sweet child the blessing of your loving Mother goes with you

Notes

- 5 your last letter • Henry James to Alice James, 3 September [1873]
- 18 Waverly Oaks • Famous trees in parkland (now the Beaver Brook Reservation) near the Belmont-Waltham, Massachusetts town line
- 26 Your cross has reached Mary • See Mary Walsh James to Henry James, 4 August [1873]
- 30 little Sally • Sara Norton
- 31 Susan • Susan Sedgwick Norton
- 34 M^{rs} M • Harriet Jackson Lee Morse, mother of Alice James's friend, Fanny Morse
- 37 your Albano letter • "Roman Neighborhoods," *Atlantic Monthly* December 1873: 671-80
- 38 Your Tourgenieff • James's long review-essay on Turgenev, "Frühlingsfluthen. Ein König Lear des Dorfes. Zwei Novellen. Von Iwan Turgéniew," *North American Review* April 1874: 326-56
- 40 your letter from Homburg • Henry James to Catharine Walsh, 1 August 1873
- 53 The Cranches • Probably the family of poet and artist Christopher Pearse Cranch (1813-1892)

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