

Mary Walsh James to Henry James, 17 March [1874], from Cambridge

ALS Houghton, bMS Am 1093.1 (53)

1 Cambridge

2 March 17th

3 My darling Harry

4 You will have heard from Will himself of his arrival in safety, to our happy
5 embrace, before this reaches. His telegram from N. Y. took us by surprise but it was a
6 happy one; to find him with us, without the anxiety we would have had, had we known
7 he was on his way, at this boisterous season— To tell the truth, I was not unprepared for
8 seeing him, and had said to Father, who was off to Providence giving a Sunday lecture
9 there; “Suppose Will should come while you are away”—and every night when I heard
10 the high March wind howl, I felt as if I were tossing with him on the [^]stormy[.] main.
11 Happily however I could’nt get any one in the house to worry with me—
12 You will first want to know how he seems to us. Well, he seems as yet too much the old
13 story to give us [^]all[.] the pleasure that we expected— Of course we make every
14 allowance for the fatigue of the voyage, and his broken sleep, and know that he must
15 have made great gains, and we shall presently see it. He looks very well, but says he has
16 looked better— The trouble with him is that he must express every fluctuation of feeling,
17 and especially every unfavorable symptom; without reference to the effect upon those
18 about him. I think he is very glad to get home, and says he has no desire on earth, but to
19 stay here and be able to work, and I hope when I write next to be able to say he is all right.
20 Your ~~not~~ writing ~~from~~ Feby 13th and then saying that you would probably start for Paris

21 on March 1st and then not writing until Feb^{ry} 27th will be the occasion I fear of your
22 losing two letters ~~one~~ While we were all uncertain about your movements, we heard that
23 Will had written to W. Holmes that you were both going to London to stay a month
24 before sailing—so Father at once wrote to you there; and I hearing of your Paris plan,
25 wrote to you there— These letters are not worth sending for however, for they were
26 principally with reference to a riding habit, which had been ordered for Alice in London
27 and [^]which[_^] we thought you might bring home— I fear therefore you will be looking a
28 long time for letters without getting [^]any[_^], which I much regret—
29 Your letter of the 27th came last evening, and we are quite reconciled to your delayed
30 return. There is much force in what you say about your occupations, and your desire to
31 linger on into the summer— If you plan to come home about the 1st Sept when our worst
32 heat has expended itself, and we have got through our summer wanderings, you cannot
33 do better. The account you give of your improvement in health and spirits is delightful,
34 but the plan you propose of taking a cheap voyage from Leghorn, does not meet with our
35 approbation— But we will have plenty of time to talk that over before August—
36 Looly Shaw's funeral took place yesterday from the Chapel at M^t Auburn; and the
37 services by M^t Foote were very simple and most touching The little Chapel was covered
38 with flowers, and filled with those only who had known and loved her, and there seemed
39 to be scarcely a dry eye present— We read a most interesting letter from Effy, giving an
40 account of her illness and death, and how wonderfully Anna Hallowell had borne it all—
41 They will remain she says two months at Nice, and she ends with saying, “when I come
42 home in the Autumn I will go and spend a month or two in the dear old house in Beacon
43 Street and you (it was addressed to (Ellen Gurney) and Clover & Emily Russell will

44 come and help, and we will [^]do^[^] just as Looly has directed about every thing in it. It
45 seems, the house is not hers to will, and but a [^]very^[^] small part of her income of
46 \$125.000. had she any right over— It all reverts to the two families who do not need it
47 being all rich; and poor Looly with her large generous loving heart, would have known
48 so well how to bestow it— She left \$25.000 to Anna Hallowell—and I hear a
49 remembrance to Wilky, but nothing is yet said about the will—
50 Write often darling Harry— Ever so few lines every week would be a great comfort to
51 me—
52 Father came back comfortably from his Providence spree, but rather discouraged I think,
53 as he always is after giving a lecture— All that he has to say, seems so good, and
54 glorious, and easily understood to him, but it falls so dead upon the dull, or skeptical ears
55 who come to hear him, that I do not wonder he feels so—
56 Lots of love from each and all Your loving Mother

Notes

- 20 Your [...] writing [...] Feby 13th • Henry James to his parents, 15 February [1874]
- 21 not writing until Feb^{ry} 27th • Henry James to his parents, 27 February [1874]
- 36, 48 Looly Shaw [...] Anna Hallowell • See Mary Walsh James to Alice James, 18 July [1872], Mary Walsh James to Alice James and Henry James, 26 July [1872], and Henry James to Anna Hallowell, 11 February 1874
- 39 Effy • Josephine (Effy) Shaw Lowell (1843-1905), widow of James Russell Lowell's nephew, Charles Russell Lowell
- 43 Ellen Gurney • Ellen Sturgis Hooper Gurney, wife of Professor Ephraim Gurney and sister of Marian (Clover) Hooper Adams, was also a cousin of Loulie Shaw
- 43 Clover • Marian (Clover) Hooper Adams, wife of Henry Adams and sister of Ellen Gurney, was also a cousin of Loulie Shaw
- 43 Emily Russell • Emily Russell's mother, Sarah Shaw Russell, must have been related to Loulie Shaw
- 48-49 a remembrance to Wilky • See Mary Walsh James to Henry James, 6 July [1874]

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To cite this letter, according to MLA style guidelines:

James, Mary Walsh. Letter to Henry James. 17 March [1874]. James Family Papers. Houghton Library.

Harvard University. Cambridge, Mass. Dear Henry James.org Ed. Pierre A. Walker et al. 2005.

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