

Mary Walsh James to Henry James, 13 July [1874], from Cambridge

ALS Houghton, bMS Am 1093.1 (57)

1 Cambridge

2 July 13th

3 My darling Harry

4 Here we are, Father & I, all alone, but I assure you nevertheless, a very
5 happy pair— Will left us five days ago, for Newcastle, an island in Portsmouth Harbor,
6 where a new hotel has just been opened— He writes this morning, that the place does not
7 amount to much. That he took a sail yesterday to the Shoals which looks as delightful as
8 ever, but that he does not stay because there are too many women there whom he knows.
9 He advises us to go for two or three days, and says, “if you begin taciturnly, they will
10 probably let you alone.” He says he has had “a very active time since he left & no
11 reading, and feels very hearty” Alice & Aunt K— writes most satisfactorily from the
12 Bread Loaf Inn— The air is most delicious, the house good, the table most civilized and
13 substantial. Alice is enchanted with her horse=back exploits. The Mountain roads are
14 not fit for driving, but most delightful, and varied for the saddle. She says M^r Battell,
15 (the landlord) is the most excellent soul; he seems to consider as a matter of course that
16 he should ride with every stray maiden that comes to the house” This as Alice is a novice
17 is a great comfort. She finds several very good horses there, and says she does’nt know
18 fear—
19 The company from all accounts is second rate, and no glimmer of “talent” has [^]yet[^]
20 appeared. They are waiting for [^]us.[^] You spoke of the excessive heat having

21 prostrated you, before you left Florence I trust you are entirely resuscitated by the
22 change—and long to hear that you have lost nothing of what you had gained Your paper
23 on Ravenna is in the last Nation, also two sets of Italian notes in the last two
24 Independents. The last very short. Father thinks they had divided them—
25 I presume from what Aunt Mary said in a recent letter, that you will meet in Homburg—
26 Libby Gourlay writes to announce Kitty Van Buren’s engagement to M^r Peyton Miller of
27 Albany a young lawyer, very bright and gentlemanly, and from all accounts a most
28 excellent match for her— The Gourlays are devoted to Kitty, and seem very happy about
29 her prospects of happiness—
30 I find in my Portfolio a recent letter from Wilky, the contents of which will interest you,
31 so I put it in— Bob’s last letter gave a nice account of Mary’s début and his too, in
32 Oratorio, to get a belfry for the congregational Church. The piece was Esther. He says,
33 “Mary has a very sweet expressive voice, and acted her part with great understanding and
34 grace— She was received with a storm of applause whenever she appeared.” The mayor
35 of a neighboring town, had sent to beg them to repeat the performance for their
36 entertainment, and they had consented. This must be quite a refreshing diversion from
37 baby tending & station master’s duties—
38 They have been having a very cool, wet summer— I hope not too much rain for the
39 pleasure seekers in the Mts and by the sea—
40 The Bootts are enjoying themselves at Rye beach— I think they mean to try and get in
41 with us next month— Oceans of love from us both

42 Your loving

43 Mother

44 Love to the Tweedies if they are with you

45

46 Tom Ward gave a poor account of his Mother and Bessy, he said they were quite run
47 down, and had gone to Divonne I think— Bessy hopes to be married next month, when
48 her who came home to bring unfortunate Anne and her children, will have returned—
49 Poor M^r Ward, what a lot his must be, with the Romanism and ill health, of all his
50 family— This marriage and exile of Bessy's seems the saddest of all—

Notes

- 7 the Shoals • Isles of Shoals, a group of islands off the Maine-New Hampshire coast
- 14 M^f Battell • Author Joseph Battell (1839-1915) bought the Bread Loaf Inn in 1865 and renovated it
- 22-23 Your paper on Ravenna is in the last Nation • “Ravenna,” *Nation* 9 July 1874: 23-25
- 23-24 two sets of Italian notes in the last two Independents • “An Italian Convent,” *Independent* 2 July 1874: 3-4; “The Churches of Florence,” *Independent* 9 July 1874: 4
- 25 Aunt Mary • Mary Temple Tweedy
- 26 Kitty Van Buren’s engagement to M^f Peyton Miller • Catharine (Kitty) Barber Van Buren (b. 1849), daughter of Smith Van Buren and Ellen King James Van Buren, would marry Peyton Farrell Miller; the marriage would not prove happy
- 46 Tom Ward • Thomas Wren Ward (1844-1940), the son of Anna Hazard Barker Ward and Samuel Gray Ward and a friend of William James
- 46 his Mother • Anna Hazard Barker Ward, wife of Samuel Gray Ward and mother of Thomas Wren Ward, Elizabeth (Bessy) Ward (de Schönberg), and Lydia Gray Ward von Hoffmann; she had been a close friend of Henry James, Sr.
- 46-47 Bessy [...] to be married • Elizabeth (Bessy) Ward, daughter of Anna Hazard Barker Ward and Samuel Gray Ward, would marry a Monsieur de Schönberg
- 49 Poor M^f Ward • Samuel Gray Ward (1817-1907), husband of Anna Hazard Barker Ward and father of Thomas Wren Ward, Lydia Gray Ward von Hoffmann, and Elizabeth (Bessy) Ward (de Schönberg); Henry James, Sr., had been very upset in 1858 when Anna Ward converted to Catholicism

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