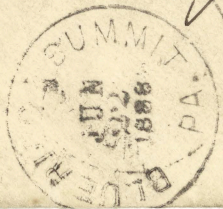


If not delivered  
please return  
101 West Monument St  
Baltimore Md



Miss Mary E. Garrett  
Passenger on SS 'Aurania'  
Cunard Dock  
A 2937 New York City





Postmark: N.Y. 10  
1898

Postmark: N.Y. 10  
8 P.M.  
A  
6-23-98

June 1

Baltimore Thursday May 31. 1844

①

Dearest Mary

Your letter from Berlin dated  
It May 17<sup>th</sup> was waiting for me when  
I reached home this evening. I am so  
sorry that I have not written but a  
week or two after I wrote to you some  
thing happened (in regard to Mother  
of course for I seem to care for nothing  
else) that was almost more than  
I could bear. I may tell you about  
it some time but I do not think I can  
write it, and after this a cloud of  
silence settled down upon me and  
I could not write or speak. I knew  
all the time how I sd feel not  
knowing about you when you were  
in just such trouble as I am in but  
all the same I could not break the  
barriers of silence. Do you remember  
Fra Angelico's monk with his finger on  
his lips over one of the doors in the cloister

[2] <sup>power of expression</sup>  
well the cell behind that door is my ~~heart~~. Every week on Sunday I leave <sup>2</sup>  
not knowing how it will be the next time, or whether I shall be summoned  
home, and for the past two weeks there has seemed little hope that Mother  
would live till college closed. She had grown so terribly weak and ~~could~~  
keep nothing, not even milk on her stomach. Her stiffness has increased so that  
she can scarcely move out of her invalid chair and sleeps in it till night  
comes. I have been an automaton or lay figure and every thing at the college  
has, I fear, gone wrong altho. I have tried to give it all my thought during  
working hours in the midst of it all. Mrs Cleveland arrived on her <sup>train</sup>  
progress and I had to receive her and lunch with her at Mr Childs (on  
order not to refuse the fourth time, running an invitation to Wootton.  
Still that was this week, and Mother is so very much better that we  
cannot help hoping we can get her up to Coombe Edge next Saturday. I  
<sup>is</sup> heard of a new cancer <sup>we heard of</sup> cure. I went on to New York to see some people  
that had been cured by it. There was not a moment to be lost so Aunt  
Hannah went to see the doctor in London the instant she landed and  
cabled me his prescription, and Mother has been trying it for 4 days  
So far the effect is wonderful, her nervousness is gone gone. She has begun to  
eat a little meat again and this evening she talked to me almost like her  
old self. They claim this to be an absolute cure if a cancer has not been  
cut <sup>and</sup> or if it has not broken out. I do not hope for anything but alleviation  
but that seems a very daring hope. We have used no opiates yet and there  
has been no acute agony - only every form of discomfort and weakness and  
helplessness. If it ~~will~~ be so till the last I suppose we ought to be thankful.  
but I cannot feel so. I need to wonder whether I should feel the need of "religion"

if any great trial came. It scarcely seem-  
 ed fair to judge a faith by the claims  
 made on it by such a happy life as  
 mine. Beres's illness and you (some-  
 times) have been its only trials and  
 thro. every thing I loved to read, to  
 see pictures and acting, to hear music  
 and to lecture to my girls. Now altho.  
 I have been desperately unhappy - no one  
 cd help it under the circumstances -  
 I have not felt as if it wd be made  
~~more~~ easier by a certain  
 belief in meeting Mother again  
 or by any thing else more ~~informal~~  
 in my creed. It has been one little  
 ray of light to feel that a more  
~~im~~personal theology has not been the  
 thing I have felt the need of. I wonder  
 how you have found it, Mary! Far  
 in the distance (rather disembodied  
 spirits I confess just now), out of touch  
 and grasp are the old interests and  
 it has been very pleasant to think  
 of you as among the most splendid  
 of them. Expect you to have a  
 clear idea of Egypt & Greece &

the Hermitage; Of course I do. You are  
 the first person with my tastes and  
 feelings that has ever been to Greece  
 and I can't tell you how <sup>any more I am for</sup> ~~long~~  
~~long~~ your report of the long land.  
 Do you know the first pleasant sensation  
 since Thanksgiving - it seems absurd  
 to say it but I think it <sup>is</sup> true was  
 when I read in your letter that you  
 were coming home. It will be very  
 nice to have you near at hand even  
 tho. I may not see you, ~~but~~ I have  
 missed you very much. Your last letter  
 told me a great deal I wished to know  
 the one I left unanswered, and yo  
 Japanese photograph has been a little  
 company as I have taken a great fancy  
 to it I hope you are bringing home your  
 Japanese costume. One thing I am  
 so sorry for - that you have had  
 headaches, and backaches and colds  
 The rapid globe trotting has not been  
 good for you, <sup>I fear,</sup> but I hope you are on  
 the whole better than when you  
 left. Try to be well. Illness is so terrible

that I think a death like your mother's is what we ought to wish for our friends. For ourselves I do not know - I shall feel as if my mother knew much better than she otherwise could have known, my love for her and yet except for my comfort what does it matter when the tide of oblivion has closed over her consciousness. Ah but Browning how solid a structure he builds over nothingness. Until now I have th't you knew and understood yr Browning much better than I (and you may do so still) but I have learned to know him much better this year. Bessie too accepted my suggestion and has been delighted with Sorodello. She is much better at Askeville and now after two weeks she (characteristically) is about to leave it for Pikesville outside of Baltimore.

Later (Friday) I have just come home from attending such a nice teachers meeting (the last of the year) & all the Coe's class passed. The whole school was in an uproar of delight over the triumph over Mr.

Gildereen's severity

Good bye as the mail is going  
& I must fan Mother - She sends you  
her love - We move her up the 11<sup>th</sup>  
in her invalid chair in a baggage  
car - that is if we can.

I will write you again  
to the steamer if possible.

Lovingly yours and a  
safe return

Minnie C. Thomas



7

Albuquerque

Good bye as the mail is going  
I must for Mother - She sends you  
her love - The money for the 11th  
in her pocket - also in a package  
car - that is for you -

Write me again  
to the station if possible  
Sincerely yours and a  
safe return  
Thomas Thomas

©

Coombe Edge  
June 21<sup>st</sup>

(8)

Dearest Mary,

Your telegram reached me too late for me to cable. The Bryn Mawr Station master telegraphed to Blue Ridge to ask whether I were here before he sent on the cable and then it was Monday morning. I am very very sorry about my letters. Immediately after receiving your last, the one in which you said you were going to sail I wrote explaining why I had not written - as far as I could explain - and the letter should have reached Paris on June 7<sup>th</sup>, then I wrote again direct to the Aurania Liverpool a note which I hope reached you. We closed on the 8<sup>th</sup> and that day and the day before my cook was terribly drunk, so that it took all my secretaries' efforts and my own <sup>on Saturday</sup> to close my house and get off in the 6.48 A.M. train to Baltimore where Mother was waiting

① for me to help dress her for all the rest  
had gone up to Coombe Edge to open  
the house. As I bought my ticket the  
station master who cashes my cheques  
for me whenever I am in a hurry  
spoke of your brother's accident in  
a way that made me think that  
it had happened to your party and  
that it was, or might be, you. Until  
I got a paper it was dreadful and  
then, dear Mary, altho. my joy was  
great that you were safe, I was so  
very sorry that you were coming home  
to fresh sorrow. I wish I could tell how  
how sorry. Before this winter it  
seems to me that I have never  
really known how to be sorry for  
any one before and a brother is of  
course very different from a mother  
or a father but I suppose whenever  
one has had a great trouble every  
fresh sorrow sets the old pain  
vibrating again - I feel as if it would  
be so with me and so I fear it is  
not only your brother Harry that  
you will miss in coming home  
I wish I could be of the least use  
or comfort to you, but I cannot.  
It is some times more than I can do  
to keep my own head above water

but & at least - I can think of you very <sup>(10)</sup>  
often and very lovingly.

Since I wrote the date on which  
I had set my heart as never before <sup>on any date</sup>,  
the 8<sup>th</sup> of June, has passed and I am  
constantly with Mother. We moved  
her up on Monday week, June 11<sup>th</sup>,  
and altho we had a private car and  
carried her the whole way we thought  
she would die after we reached here.  
For one week I never left the house for  
a moment, and her pulse was so weak  
and her nausea so great that if it  
had continued a day or so more there  
would have been no hope. Two days  
ago she began to rally a little  
and today I went driving with Bessie  
for the first time because I have a  
foolish hope - <sup>which</sup> that I cannot <sup>keep from</sup> help coming  
again & again - that perhaps she  
may have a few weeks or a month  
in which we may be with her and  
she not too uncomfortable to enjoy  
being with us. Now it is not so - she  
longs to die, and unless there should  
be a change I should like her to have  
her wish. I have felt that from  
the beginning. Some times I wonder  
whether we did right in giving her  
these perverful remedies that I wrote

11  
you of. They have certainly prolonged  
her life but they may not have power  
to make her more comfortable

This is not the sort of letter to  
send to welcome you home after  
an absence that seems to me longer  
than all our four years separation  
during my wanderjahre. What a  
literal wanderjahre it has been for  
you. Before I close I want to tell  
you that the plan I spoke to you of  
has come to fulfilment. - Mamma <sup>has</sup> ~~has~~  
been made Associate in English  
at Bryn Mawr. ~~and I am to go to~~  
~~the school of Bryn Mawr on the 8th of June.~~  
on the 8<sup>th</sup> of June. I suppose you could  
not fail to hear it before I see you  
and I like to hear things that concern  
you from yourself. Bessie seems very  
well and like herself but I feel when  
I am with her the most unsatisfactory  
of friends.

I have written you a untitled  
letter, so different from what I wished  
to write <sup>and</sup> there is notice to  
substitute another but you know  
at least that I am so very sorry not  
to be able to be of any use ~~in~~ <sup>in</sup> ~~my~~  
in thoughts  
Sincerely yours  
Monnie C. Thomas