

Gravesend, May 11. 1894

My dearest Helen: It is a year to day since I joined the Chicago, an ill-omened anniversary in some ways, and what manner of letter I can write you, my dear daughter amid the present din, I can hardly see. My mail, twice a day, is something portentous, but you need not inquire that they are all invitations. One thing, however, is gratifying. Almost every one of many who have written and asked me to come to them is among those I have known - or rather, have known me - before; friends, old or new, but still friends who know what they are to expect in me. It is more gratifying to be wanted again, than merely wanted once. But before going on, dear child, I want to thank you as well as your sister & brother, for the

faithful and affectionate persistence with
which you have kept up your letters to me.
All children do not do so. You cannot yet fully
realize how much it is to me, but I trust
your own children will some day repay it
to you, if you have the misfortune to be
separated from them. I may say the same,
too, of Lyle, with reference to Mr. Island's
report of him. I can wish him no better
than that he may some day be as proud and
happy over his boy, as I at this moment
am of him. Now for my news. I sent off my
letter to mamma of your arrival, so you know
of that. By the first or second mail, I recd.
an invitation from Lady Jenn, when I dined
last year, to spend Sunday with them in the
country, also from the Schiffs to dine Sunday.
I accepted the former, a decision which I
hope will meet with all your high appro-
vals, and then had mamma's endorsement on

the latter. To day I have a nice note from Mrs. S. asking me to give my own
dinner next week and shall name Friday. I had also a letter from my old friend
Mrs. Harry Blake asking me to lunch when I could, so I have fixed Wednesday
for that. I haven't seen her for, I suppose fifteen years, but I am very fond
of her. Sir Geo Clarke wrote to welcome me & come to dinner, which I have set
for Wednesday - you know who he is, where I went here &c. On Thursday the
17th I dine with Mr & Mrs Poulter & Beryl (brother-in-law I think &
Charlie Tracy) & went back to train. That is all, so far, for next week. It
carries me as you see to Saturday, which I have left open on the chance of
being asked to the counting for that day. Five clubs have sent me invitations, among
them the Athenaeum, an exceedingly high-toned literary club, which only opens
its doors, by the letter accompanying, to a "strictly limited number of distinguished
visitors" and though you would know whether or not I could use the privilege.
Although a little inclined to poke fun at such very select respectability - the com-

pliment of being invited to the Athenaeum is I believe unimpeachable and I
was most glad to accept. We were boarded, within three hours of arrival by Mr.
David Clowes, the agent & owner of a lugger & settled upon & engaged to be
given to Mr. E. E. & the officers of the Chess - & arrange for it &c. The meeting
of the projectors was held that aftⁿ Wednesday, & committee formed, and May
24 is fixed. Clowes came into my cabin after being with the admiral, and
said to me, "This really is to welcome you more than anything else but we put it
on the general ground." So E. E. is happy in believing it is simply (20thly) a return for
the Naval Review hospitalities of last year, just as in August he assured me
and Spencer's dinner was merely a return for civilities shown by us to the
Viceroy in Ireland - said civilities consisting only in fixing the salutes de
regimen on such an occasion & eating two of the Viceroy's dinners. "You're
not in it," he assured me, a speech which has caused me many a sly snigger
since. This morning the Times has a striking article - Editorial - in which

it begins by saying ² "that the arrival of the Chicago
bearing the flag of Rear Adm. Erben & offers a
fitting opportunity of paying a friendly compliment
to the United States Navy, and doing honour to the
Greatest living writer on naval history. This
may be regarded in some measure as a return for the
cordial hospitality (in N.Y.) but more particu-
larly it is designed as a special compliment
to the great writer " &c for a full column.
Ifancy Clower is in that too. Mrs. Flat-
troy is pleasant, particularly when no discord is
heard, but let us keep it to ourselves and en-
joy in us unreservedly contentment, or desire,
to impress attention. The Pall Mall Gazette
interviewed me first day, and gave a col-
umn of interviews, beginning: American ships
come & go, and people take little account
of their movements. It would have been the
same with the Chicago, although she is the
flagship of the European separation. But
the Captain &c had also a visit from
Mr. John Mahoney, who represented so he

told me the Irish of East London and
Crew & welcome the American ship on
account of the sympathy of America with
Ireland. I told Mr. Mahony, who I fortu-
nely was in the railway line, that I was
very glad to see him personally, but
was not just now doing any political
sympathy. He thanked me & left me his photo
as grand souvenier or other with a scarf. You
see my friends are mixed. Capt. York of the
Mary also wrote asking me to stay with
them after his return to town next week, an
offer I value chiefly because given, as I said,
after knowing me. And now, what will inter-
est mamma, I have had a letter from Mrs
Hoskin asking me to come & see them. I
own after all these years & amid my
many other calls, I would have pre-
ferred to escape this extra duty, but

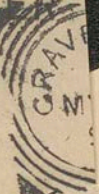
of course I shall, and indeed must, go. My plan is after visiting
the ship on Monday to go to London for a week on Tuesday - 15th - I wanted
a fortnight for I need the rest - recreation; but the admiral is certainly
unwilling to have me away. But that be, at least, within in Sept. my pro-
bation would indeed be nearly unbearable. He is - but I will not say my
opinion of him. The educational value, spiritually, of being under
the direction of such a man, is very great, and I must not lose it by
unbridling my tongue. I have taken lodgings for a fortnight, and
after the week shall go and come according to circumstances. I
wholly lose, however, the tempt of relaxation - for a man will
barely suppose to meet my duty calls - and as to getting tempt
from seeing the ship for work & rushing to town for dinners or
what not - it is out of the question. The Chief Eng. says he

does not think it will be possible to keep the ship out be-
yond August, and in fact she will need some fairly extensive
repairs down the ocean. I have just received one your letter. I am
Maamma I entirely approve of all she has done & is doing & that Maamma
was born 1758. I am glad to hear such favorable opinions of the
Queen Maamma. I will hope will be better long ere this; and I
want to tell her & you, dear, that Maamma & I have planned to provide
for you by giving you good health & the means of gaining a living &
have spent for those objects rather than save. Now you must do us, &
to yourselves, not to undo, by our work, the foundation of health. You
must husband your strength till you are 25, at least, & while you still
have my income to fall back on. So doing you will be strong when the time
for labor comes.

Your loving father
Tell Maamma to send me the \$100, if she has not already done so. and the

GRAVESEND
SHIP-LETTER

May 11 - 1894 -



Miss Helen Evans Mahan

73 East 54th St

New York

United States of America