

U. S. S. Yantic,
New Haven, Conn.,
June 18, 1887.

My dear Lou.

Your letter of the 17th. reached me this morning. It was "perlite" of you to write so soon.

I would gladly write a page or so to you every day, if you would get a letter pad and do the same. Why dont you try it for a month and see how we like it? I am delighted that you are having such a good time with the sweet little Florie.

Yesterday we put in the hardest day I have ever experienced on a parade. We left the ship at 8 a.m. and got back at 5 P. M.

I had the mid watch the night before and started tired. The weather was very hot, and the parade badly managed. It should have started by 10 or 11 a.m. but after marching and counter marching several miles we had to stand in the street until 1 P. M. before we got under way. Then we marched until 3 or 3.30 P. M. I dont know how many miles. The heat was terrible, and I wet my coat all the way through. We must have looked distressed, for during the march an old gray-headed man ran out in the street, while we were on the march, in his shirt sleeves, and handed me a glass of ice water. Perhaps he had been a soldier and knew what it was to

June 18, 1887 - page 2

march 7 or 8 hours.

During the march we formed the Naval brigade in a line at the side of the street to present arms to the grand old General Sherman, and the dashing cavalry leader, Sheridan as they drove by in a carriage.

If you ever have an opportunity read Sherman's Memoirs.

Fortunately for the Brigade we stopped for this review directly in front of a house where Miss Minnie Boyd was a guest, (Mrs. Boyd was not there x x !) and all the officers were invited in, and given a drink of whiskey and some sandwiches. If it had not been for this we would have gone hungry, for the refreshments that were to be provided missed fire as usual.

Miss Boyd looked about the same, only much run down - too much dancing and dissipation as usual.

You can imagine that I was tired out when I arrived on board. As soon as I had my dinner I went to bed and got about 10 hour's sleep, and am not much the worse for wear, except a slight return of the old enemy, which I guess will be all right in a day or so.

New Haven is the most beautiful city I have ever seen. The finest streets are shaded by a magnificent arch of huge elm trees, - all the houses are set back from the street and have flowers and shrubbery in front.

June 18, 1887 - page 3

They were all splendidly decorated and crowded with people. The Naval Brigade was received very well.

The Galena's goat marched with the Brigade, He was decorated with ribbons and had an American flag fastened to his horns.

This morning the Galena and Richmond sailed for New London, where they will spend Sunday, then go to Gardner's bay. We remain here until Tuesday to head off the Ossipee, and carry the new officers ordered to the fleet to Gardner's Bay. On Monday afternoon we intend to have a party of people on board - about 50.

Our address will be Greenport, Long Island, "until further orders." Keep me informed of your address. Dont forget to tell me about Tom. Sims, and his family. Are they any kin of ours.

You say you forgot to tell me of them before. But you wouldn't have if we wrote daily letters, see? Of course I forget plenty of things when I only write occasionally.

I hope Florie & Mr. O. found a good house in Montclair. It is a lovely place. I have seen it all, for Miss Thompson used to drive me all about there, in her happier days.

I am glad you had such a good time on the Yantic, and I am sorry Mr. O. could not have been there. I like

June 18, 1887 - page 4

him very much indeed, and hope I will see more of him. Tell Florie I dont see how she managed to catch such a nice fellow. I am obliged to Mr. O. for his polite remark about me, but you must not believe all the taffy you hear. You are like Mother when anyone makes polite remarks to her about her children. She returns home from a visit convinced that her batch of kids are the finest in the world.

Wasn't it pleasant to see Nancy "off" on the Annex boat? I fell very much in love with her the other night when she sang for me, and you people sat in the other end of the room and made disagreeable remarks. I dont know anything about music, but I'd rather hear Nancy sing than any one I know.

She is the finest girl I know, and all the fellows on board were very much taken with her, and made many complimentary remarks about her - especially the Captain, who asked me a number of questions about her. The party was a great success, and the occasion of a very handsome compliment to me, viz., that I always bring the best "gang" on board ship. You know the "three little maids" put all the other Norfolk breakfast parties in the shade.

I expect a picture of one of the little maids in a few days - the one with the wonderful complexion.

June 18, 1887 - page 5

It is to be taken in a dress that belonged to Miss Meem's great grand-mother. I also expect one of Miss Meem, and may later have one of the other little maid.

I must close now as I have a chance to send this to town now.

Love to all

Y l. b.

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Greenport, L. I.

June 23rd., 1887

My dear Lou,

Your last letter reached me yesterday. In a little while we will anchor in the harbor of Greenport, where we are going for fresh provisions and the mail for the fleet. We are always very busy now with one thing or another. Today it was target practice all day long. Tomorrow night we leave for Boston, so address there. I will write at greater length when I have more time, Regards to all at 489,

Your loving bro.

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Gardner's Bay,
Long Island,
June 23rd '87

My dear Father,

Mr. Smith keeps us so busy that there is no time for much writing, so I only scratch off this note to tell you that we expect to leave tomorrow night for Boston. Address letters there until you hear from me that we have moved on. I dont know how long we will remain, but probably only a few days.

With love to all at home,

Your loving son,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Gardiner's Bay, Long Island
June 25, 1887,

My dear Old Jones,

Your last letter, in answer to my Norfolk letter, was received and read with the greatest pleasure. Every day since I have intended answering it, but being very busy with various things and having very many letters to write, I have put it off.

However I have been collecting items of interest all the time and will proceed to reel them off.

While in New York, we were so short of watch officers that I could not go home - for the same reasons that I found it impossible to visit Taylorsville.

While I think of it let me say that the Yantic, will have two or three months repairs on her boilers this fall, and will have to be docked. The New York dock is closed for extension and repairs, and the one in Norfolk is the only one available, so I think it is pretty certain that we will go there. I dont think it likely they will haul us up at Portsmouth N. H. If we do go to Norfolk I will doubtless have a chance to visit your home, and will certainly do so, as I would like to meet your family and Petes very much.

We remained in New York about two weeks, and I put in the time visiting all my old friends, not having money enough to amuse myself in the usual way - theatre etc. A few days

June 25, 1887 - page 2

before we left my sister who had been visiting in Annapolis, came on to 489, and Nancy Shunk who had been in West Point to see her brother graduate (he graduated) - with the best record ever made at the Academy - arrived at the same time. "Flimsie" (?) is the same fine little girl as ever. One morning I had them all, with Miss Peletreau, and Theo. Maxwell (the woodenest stick I ever saw) on board the Yantic to breakfast. The Bache was in the harbor at the time, and I invited Pete and Hulme to meet them. Hulme came, but Pete had not returned from leave. He got back the day we sailed (14th). Of course we had a pleasant time. You were mentioned - as you always are by your old friends in the pleasantest manner.

The remainder of the day (until 12 P. M.) I spent at 489, and enjoyed myself thoroughly. Florie is engaged to be married, and will take the leap in the dark in Oct. next. You dont know the "victim" as she calls him, a Mr. Overton, and a very fine fellow.

Nancy is the same aplendid girl she always was. I think she is the finest woman I know - I mean in appearance. She has the finest figure I have ever seen. You know what excellent company she is, with her keen sense of humor, and her kindly womanly heart. You know I always liked her voice. Well, she sang to me for I dont know how many hours, while I gazed at her face and superb figure, and told her

June 25, 1887 - page 3

after each song that I was falling deeper and deeper in love with her - to keep it up - that she was the handsomest woman I knew etc. You know I always fall in love with Nancy every time I see her, but recover slowly afterwards. If such things were not forbidden fruit for me I wouldnt like to answer for the result as far as I am concerned, if I spent a month or so in Harrisburg. When I left I told Nancy that I wrote to you occasionally, and you would have been gratified if you had heard the cordial manner in which she told me to give you her **very best** regards.

Jones, old man, this country is full of pleasant people. See how many there are in our small circle of acquaintances.

P. G. Miss Pelletreau is very pretty. From New York we went to New Haven to help blow in a Sailor's and Soldier's monument. We marched in the parade - about 8 or 9 hours, on a scorching day. We happened to make a halt in front of a house where Miss Minnie Boyd was a guest, and we were all invited in and given some sandwiches and whiskey. If it hadn't been for that we would probably all have died. Miss Minnie is the same as ever, slangy and loud, but a good hearted little thing.

The fleet sailed the next day, leaving us to pick up some stray officers ordered to the different vessels of the fleet. Before we left we gave a reception on board with dancing. I had no idea we had room to dance on such a little

June 25, 1887 - page 4

ship, but we succeeded very well. The real reason we gave a reception was that Kellogg who is popular with us all knew many people in that "region of perpetual pie," his home being only twenty miles away.

As soon as the new officers arrived (ten new Cadets - the homliest mortales# I ever saw) we sailed for Gardiners Boy and joined the fleet. We went through target practice etc. and our last day there we landed on the island on a kind of picnic, from 8 a.m. until 5 P. M. We had a drill and dress parade, and put in the rest of the time playing baseball - in consequence of which I am very stiff and have a couple of game fingers.

On the 25th., the day I commenced this letter, we sailed for Newport, where I am now writing. (26th.) We had target practice on the way over in a heavy ground swell, the ships rolling 15° or 20°, and succeeded very well, tho' a few shot went out into the Atlantic somewhere. Today is Sunday. We leave here next Tuesday for Boston, where the fleet will disperse, and go to the provinces one after the other.

This is about all the fleet news. And now for a few remarks about Norfolk, where my heart always remains. Bless the littles maidens hearts, how I do miss them all. I have had quite an extensive correspondence with the sweet little Miss Mary, with whom I am quite as much in love as with the

June 25, 1887 - page 5

others. The occasion of all this correspondence was a photo. I can't recollect whether I told you of it or not in my long Norfolk letter, but never mind, if I did there is more to tell about it now. It happened this way. After the girls had spend the day at Old Point, and we were on the wharf waiting for the boat, Miss Mary said she wanted to speak to me all by my lone self. I will not soon forget her sweet little face, as she looked up into mine and asked me if I would grant her a favor, or rather give her something of mine. She was simply irresistable and I answered promptly that she could have anything I owned. She seemed to think she was asking a good deal, but it was only that I give her one of the camp photos. The one where we (Artillery Officers) are all grouped about the little magazine tent. She thought I would not like to break the set. Bless her heart I would have given her the whole set if she had asked for it. Well just before we left Old Point, as we were expecting every minute to sail, our boat went ashore to bring the skipper off, and I sent the photo. together with a letter to Miss Meem - a farewell letter, full of all the complimentary things I I# could think off# intended for them all. There was not time to mail them, and the coxswain gave them to a soldier on the wharf, who promised to mail them, but they never turned up. I wrote to the Officer of the day at Fortress Monroe about them, and it was investigated by the

June 25, 1887 - page 6

Adjutant, but without success. They both wrote me very polite notes about it.

You must know that this set of photos, belongs to my sister. When she was on board the Yantic in New York I told her that the dearest little woman in the world, a friend of mine and Horace Jones, had asked for one of them, and I had given it to her. That it had been lost in the mails, and I wanted to send one of the others, if she did not care.

She said that as a friend of yours and mine the little "opera" maid was entirely welcome to the entire set. You see this sister of mine has very good taste, and is really quite an amiable girl. I sent the picture where we are all standing up in a row according to size, and Miss Mary thanked me for it in a very nice letter, in which she said my sister must be a very nice girl indeed.

Do you think you can guess why Miss Mary wanted one of these pictures? I think you can, and not half try.

I enjoyed all this correspondence very much, and I did not fail to tell her how grateful I am to 16 Bute for their kindly friendship.

I told her that I intended to keep them in sight, and write from all sorts of lonely places about the world whenever the spirit moved me.

Apropos of photographs, Miss Meem had some splendid ones, taken in Norfolk. I asked for one but was refused, as it

June 25, 1887 - page 7

afterwards appeared that Miss Annie had persuaded her to "swear off" giving her pictures to men. Well, after I left Miss Annie had a picture taken in a dress belonging to Miss Meems great-great-grandmother, and Miss Mary, during our correspondence promised, with Miss Annie's consent, to send me one. Of course I did not cease to ask Miss Meem for her picture, and she finally decided to make me an exception to the "swear off." I have the picture, and am very much flattered at being made an exception. With every mail I expect Miss Annie's.

When I sent Miss Mary the last picture, I begged, as hard as I knew how, as a special favor, that she send me one of hers to complete the set of the "three little Maids." She replied that she she# will do so the first time she has some taken. Wont it be fine when I have the set.

If I were rich I would have a triple gold frame made, one set with diamonds, one with rubies, and one with pearls, for the three pictures.

I will send you the pictures when I get them, to let you have a look at them, for I know you would like to see them. Of course you would have to return them soon.

In one of Miss Mary's last letters she told me that she had just received a splendid letter from Mr. Horace Jones, asking permission to write, which she had granted with pleasure. This is good news indeed, and I am delighted that you are going to keep this sweet-hearted womanly little girl

June 25, 1887 - page 8

in sight. I don't know a more lovely, truer hearted little woman in the world. She is my ideal of everything that is refined and ladylike. May every possible joy and happiness be her lot.

I dont think I have any more news to tell you just now.

Miss Meem and I keep up a running fire of letters, and I enjoy her friendship thoroughly, but that is all. There is never a touch of sentiment. She know# of course I admire her - so do Miss Mary and Miss Annie, - and Nancy Shunk, - for I tell them all so. Why I have never fallen violently in love with any one of them I can't imagine. They are all too good for the best man in the world - for men are all more or less tough, when compared with the holiness of a pure woman.

Perhaps I am young yet, but I realize I am no chicken, and will be getting along soon.

I haven't the faintest idea what my future life will be like.

I know I am something of a crank, and would sell out cheap.

Did you send the Norfolk letter to Baxter? I only want to know so I will know how to write to him. Send it or not just as you please, only let me know when you write.

Write to me when the spirit moves you - but dont make it a burden. Tell me all about yourself and our mutual

June 25, 1887 - page 9

friends.

Address care Navy Dept.

Always your very sincere friend,

(Signed) Sims.

P. S.

I have mislaid your address which was not given in your last. I will send this to St. Paul, and ask Pete. to let you know there is a letter in the general P. O. for you.

(Signed) Sims

U. S. S. Yantic,
Gardiner's Bay, L. I.
1 a.m., June 25 '87

My dear Mother,

Instead of sailing last evening for Boston, as I said, we sail today at 6 a.m. for Newport. We will probably only remain a day or so there, then go on to Boston.

Yesterday morning early the Naval Brigade was landed on Gardiner's Island for the day. We had a drill and dress parade, and played baseball the remainder of the time. An officer's nine played the Yantics nine of sailors, and tied them. I came out of the scrimmage with a game finger - not a bad one - from playing behind the bat without gloves. We had quite a fine day. "Mr. Smith" with Mrs. and the Misses Gardiner reviewed the Brigade.

I received the photos. of Com and Addie. The former is very good, but the latter is not a very good likeness as compared with the Phila. picture. Do you think it is?

Tell Alf. I received his letter today and will answer it soon.

Tell him to send the Nation to my address (Boston) after he has looked over it, and to keep on sending it to my address after he returns to Phila. I lost many

June 25 '87 - page 2

copies last winter thro' not being always able to change my address. The publishers wont send it by schedule, but require the address to be changed each time separately.

I will write from Newport and Boston.

I hope you will all have a pleasant summer.

Your loving son,

(Signed) Wm.

P. S.

This will be mailed in Newport tomorrow noon.

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Newport, R. I.

June 26 '87

3 a.m.

My dear Lou,

Your last letter to Greenport reached me on our arrival last evening. I sent you a note from Gardiner's Bay before we left which you have doubtless received by this time. It did not occur to me until too late that I had forgotten to tell you that I am all right again. I was only a little out of sorts for a couple of days, and now I am perfectly well. On Friday, our last day in the Bay the Naval Brigade was landed on Gardiner's Island, at 8 a.m. We remained until 5 P. M. - had a dinner and a regular picnic - a little drill, and a dress parade, and the remainder of the time taken up playing baseball. An officer's nine played the Yantic's sailor's nine, and tied them, which we consider quite a success, as we usually get beaten. I have a couple of game fingers, and a stone bruise or two from playing behind the bat without gloves.

I did not know we were coming here until we left the Bay. We leave here next Tuesday for Boston. The Ossipee goes direct to the fishing grounds, followed in one week by the Galena, and in two weeks by the Yantic. There will be no more fleet drill for the present.

June 26 '87 - page 2

We will be ten or twelve days in Boston.

I will write you again from here. You will receive this letter tonight, and if you answer at once I will receive it before we leave. I am off duty Sunday and Monday, and I am thinking of spending them in Providence visiting the Riders, but have not made up my mind yet.

I send you lots of kisses for your birthday. You know I never remember anybody's but my own, and that often slips by without my noticing it.

Remember me to all at 489.

Your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Portland, Maine,

July 11, '87

My dear Lou,

I hear you are home again. What's the news?

I havent a bit. Have been on board ship ever since we left Boston. Feel a trifle blue; sigh for Norfolk, and Bessye Fyffe's fiddle; and want to move on. Never get tired sittin' down and readin'.

Have N. A. Reviews arrived yet. Send 'em back when everyone finishes readin' 'em.

My health is perfect.

Tell Alf the Nations arrove. Ask him to send 'em on each week as they arrive.

Give my love to all at home and drop me a line,

Y. L. B.

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Portland, Maine,

July 14 11 P. M.

(W.S.S. adds in pencil "1887?" - ASF)

My dear Lou,

I thank you for your last letter which reached me a day or so ago. I dont feel in the humor for writing now and will answer it Smother time. There isn't a bit of news, - but I dont mind that when I feel like writing. Havent been ashore since we left Boston - cuz I dont know anyone here, and am quite contented on board.

I wish you would take Alf off in some quiet corner away from the girls and ask him what in the thunder etc. has become of my (?)# Nation. I re'cd two, June 16 and 23rd, they went from Boston to Halifax then here. But what has become of the copy of the 30 June, and 7th July? Tell him I would like to have them forwarded each week.

There is no change in the program that I know of- and it only takes two (2) (too) (to) (0.0.) (1.1.) cents to carry a letter to any part of Canada.

Give my love to all at home, and to Florie and Nancy when you write.

Your loving brother

(Signed) Wm.

July 14, 1887 - page 2

P. S.

The Reymut (?) Mine made a short experimental run with the new mill and turned out five bars (1000 ounces) (each) of silver.

The machinery is now being housed in, and about Aug 1st. will start in on a continuous run. Price expects dividends in the early fall. - He will keep me informed.

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Portland, Maine,

July 14, 1887

My dear Pete,

Some time ago I wrote a letter to Big Jones, and addressed it St. Paul, Minn. - I mislaid his regular address giving the name of the St. etc. Will the letter reach him? I wish you would drop him a postal immediately and tell him there is a letter in the general post office for him from me, and another to me giving me his full address.

What are you doing to amuse yourself just now? working hard I suppose. We are lying quietly here with the flagship, and for a wonder the Ad. isn't bothering us much.

He sails next Sat. for Halifax and we follow on the 18th. for a cruise among the fishermen, returning to Newport by Aug. 24, where I hope to see you. The Richmond and Galena go to Quebec - lucky dogs, and the Ossipee and Yantic remain in the Gulf.

I havent time just now to write you much of a letter, and besides I'm not just now in the writing humor, but I will remember you later.

I enclose you my last from Price. I shouldn't be surprised if we made something yet. How many shares have you? I have 225. A modest dividend would lift me out of the woods nicely.

I hear from the girls occasionally and will tell you

July 14, 1887 - page 2

what little news I know when I write again, which will be soon.

Miss Meem is at home, and the Chamberlaine kittens go to South Berkshire, Mass. tomorrow on a visit to some relatives.

I haven't been ashore since I left Boston, - I've got 'em again, and "me and the books" are having it out.

Apropos of books, buy the June and July numbers of the North American Review, they contain a concluded article by Ignatius Donnelly on the Shakespeare Myth, giving an idea of his cypher (c_ipher) illustrated by several fac-simile pages of the first edition of Shakespeare. You will find it very interesting, and I have no doubt your Father would like to read it. Donnelly promises his book (the 1st. Vol.) in a couple of months.

Dont forget to write to Jones, I would not like him to lose my last letter.

Drop me a line soon and send me his address.

Give my kindest regards to Hulme, and believe me,

Always your sincere friend,

(Signed) Wm. S. Sims.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Portland,

MainE,

July 18, '87

1 a.m.

My dear Lou.,

We sail today for Halifax, and will arrive there by the 21st. and remain two or three days. On our way back from our cruise we will stop there for coal leaving not later than Aug 10 or 11th. for Bar Harbor, Me. Will you drop me a line to be there by Aug. 10.?

The Captain thinks we may not keep to the schedule I sent home, but we will go to Charlottetown, P. E. I., sure, so letters can be sent there. If my Nations have not been sent when this arrives, ask Alf to send them to Charlottetown, P. E. I. Nova Scotia.

Have you received the June and July North American Review. If you have, and have finished them you may send them there also. If not send them to Halifax by Aug. 10. Allow about 3 or 4 days for them to get there.

I have no news to tell you. I have not behaved myself very well here, for I didn't even go on shore to call on the officer's wives, as I usually do at each port. However this midwatch belongs to one of the married ones, and I am standing it for him, and that is something. The boys rather think I will have a chance

July 18, '87 - page 2

to pay him back soon, for they have settled it among themselves that I will be married soon.

They think there must be something up when I go ashore at every opportunity at Norfolk, and dont go ashore at all at other places.

We have not done ourselves proud here at all.

At Norfolk we did the proper - had lots of breakfast parties etc. and attended to all our social duties. Here we have attended to none of them. We were all invited to go to the White Mountains on a Picnic, but none of the Yantics went. The next day there was a hop on the Richmond, and none of us went. We have had lots of fun over our sociability, for at Norfolk we were very proud of ourselves, and said many complimentary things about the Yantic leaving a good name wherever she went.

I have had a first rate time here. The weather has been perfect and my health likewise. Have been doing nothing but reading - principally Shakespeare, of which I never read very much.

It is certainly the most wonderful book in the world. If Donnelly cant prove that Bacon wrote it, all right, I will never believe that a drunken uneducated lout like Shakespeare wrote it.

I dont think a silk purse can be made out of a sow's ear, or that blood can be squeezed out of a turnip, cuz

July 18, '87 - page 3

there aint none into it.

Give my best love to all at home, and tell 'em
to write me a letter occasionally - perhaps I may get
some letters before we sail, which will be about noon.

I suppose you are all having a good time.

Y. L. B.

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Halifax, Nova Scotia,

Wednesday July 27 '87

My dear Pete,

Your very welcome letter of July 19th. reached me here. I was delighted to receive it tho'. you didn't give me the information I asked for.

You give me Horace's address as "% Robinson and Cary,

Minneapolis,

Minn

Is that correct!?! If so, my mind must be failing me for I certainly thought he was in St. Paul. I told you in my letter that I had written a letter to Horace addressed simply St. Paul, having mislaid and forgotten the Robinson and Carey, the Street and number.

I asked you to drop Jones a line and tell him there was a letter there for him. Did you do so? You did not mention it in your letter tho' possibly you did in the letter sent to Bar Harbor.

I am not convinced yet that Jones lives in Minneapolis. Please write me at once and tell me if I have made a mistake or you have. And please forward this letter to dear old Jones so that he can get my letter, and so that he will know what a fool I am - if I have made a mistake.

Please attend to this at once - a postal card will do - for I am considerably worried about it. Address Halifax.

July 27 '87 - page 2

If my letter has failed to reach Jones I want to know it so I can write another right away quick. And my dear Big Jones, if my letter reaches you I want you to drop me a line soon for I am watching the mails for a letter from you.

If I have made a mistake in the city Jones lives in I want to know it so I can save up some money and take Prof. Loisettes course for the memory. Please dont fail to drop me a line at once, never mind a letter, but just clear up this point for me.

If Jones is in Minneapolis he can get his letter by writing and asking to have it forwarded.

Lord, what a fool I am!

I dont believe I can tell you anything interesting about our present doings, for I am sadly out of humor over my stupidity.

I am sorry they are working you so hard - I think the C. S. a mistake for Ensigns now, for they are nearly all watch officers on cruisers, where the duty is more agreeable - for people who dont like work.

I hardly think there will be a vacancy on the Yantic this fall, for we have a full house now and all long-timers.

We have a new executive, Lt. Gheen - a poor ladylike incompetent little thing - besides Lt. Mentz, Nav, Lt. Lefavor, Lt Orchard, Ensigns Kellogg and Sims, and N. C. Swanstrom. There is still a vacant room but it is not a good

July 27 '87 - page 3

one, and I hardly think the Dept. would order another Ensign. The vacant room is due to the fact that we have no Chief Engr. - only Mickley and Wilmer.

Of course I would be delighted to have you come, if it could be managed.

I have no settled plans for the future - except that I will remain at sea at least a year longer. After that I am thinking rather seriously of asking for six or eight month's leave and going to Paris for a holiday, and to study French. I take a lesson every day and am making considerable progress besides finding it very interesting.

It would have been splendid if you could have seen the kittens on their way to South Berkshire. I have not heard from them since I last wrote.

I hear from Miss Meem occasionally, but there is nothing of special interest to tell you. We have three fine sturdy newfoundland pups on board, and one of them is for Master "Gil." Meem (age 7 yrs.). He is a great friend of mine and thinks I am a wonderful traveler. He told his sister to ask me to send him a newfoundland puppy, and a monkey. I have no doubt he will be pleased with the puppy for he is certainly a beauty.

We have been here since the 20th. and are having a good time. The weather is simply perfect. I do the staying on board, and the other fellows the running ashore. I am

July 27 '87 - page 4

perfectly happy with five watches and my books.

We expect to go up into the Gulf of St. Lawrence, return here by Aug. 10, be in Bar Harbor by the 13th, and Newport the 23rd.

How much this will be changed I dont know - but am never surprised at anything in that line.

Please excuse such a wretched letter, I will write again soon and do better,

Always your sincere friend,

(Signed) Wm. S. Sims

U. S. S. Yantic,

Halifax, N. S.

July 28th. 1887

My dear Father,

We leave here today for the Gulf of St. Lawrence. I am not sure that we will carry out our schedule now that we have been delayed here so long by the Admiral. I am not even sure we will touch in here on the way back, but if we dont our mail will be forwarded to Bar Harbor, where we will be about Aug 13.

We are all very well - especially me - and enjoying perfect weather. I have only rec'd one letter from home, but expect to find more at Charlottetown and Pictou.

Give my love to all at home,

Your loving son

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Georgetown, P. E. I.,
Sunday, July 31 '87

My dear Lou,

Your letter of July 21 to Charlottetown reached me today, and I was very glad to get it as it is only the second since leaving Portland Maine - perhaps the 3rd. The other one was from you at Halifax#and one I think from Alf.

We left Halifax two days ago, stopped at Port Hawksbury - in the Gut of Canson for a few hours, then came on here to Geo.town in the eastern end of P. E. I. Our skipper never knows his mind overnight so we dont know where we are going. I believe we sail this morning for the north shores of P. E. I. to take a look at the fishing fleet. In about five days I think we will be in Charlottetown, when I will write again. Send your next letters to Bar Harbor, for we will be there pretty soon.

I see by the papers that it has been very hot all over the "States." I'm sorry for you all. The weather is simply perfect here - never over 68° and the country beautiful. More and more Americans come up here every year to spend the summer, and some day I think it will be very popular, and have large hotels.

You should have received the N. A. Reviews long ago. I did not send them myself, but gave them to Miss

July 31 '87 - page 2

Bessye Fyffe with your address so that they could be forwarded to you directly. She has probably - like a woman - lost the address, not having any pockets to put it in. I am going to lend her a book when I get back to Bar Harbor, and I will ask her to forward them.

I rec'd the Nation of July 7th and 14th, but no later dates - they are probably in the mails somewhere.

What makes you think that Commodore has taken a liking to sheep? How does he look clipped and how does he stand the heat. Is he overfed and too fat.? We have six newfoundland dogs on board, five pups and one big dog. I own one of the pups - a sturdy little chap weighing 15 pounds. I bought it for little "Gil." Meem, Miss Meem's 7 year old brother. He told his sister some time ago to ask me to send him a puppy and a monkey, for he thinks I am such a great traveler that I can get anything. Wont he be delighted with the puppy.

Our poor little goat is dead. She ate a lot of patent fuel, - coal pressed into bricks with pitch - and it killed her.

Give my love to all at home and dont forget to write,

Your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Bar Harbor, Maine,

Aug. 14. Sunday,
(W.S.S. adds in pencil "1887" - ASF)
10.30 P. M.

My dear Lou,

To say that I am busy would but feebly express it. I am on the jump all the time. I dont like to jump much, but it so happens that there are many things one has to do here. For instance the wives are ashore at one of the hotels, and when they invite us to a dance you cant be disagreeable and stay at home - tho', when I have a night off I am very fond of lighting three candles and turning in and reading myself to sleep. Of course it is pure laziness. Mr. Kellogg's sister is here, and one must always be perlite to them you know.

There are half a dozen hotels here and endless cottages. There are millions of girls in every style, and not many men. About four nights in the week there are hops at the hotels, besides cottage hops, tea fights etc. etc. until you cant rest. "Pa." Orchard is away on leave, and has left the mess swag with me, and I am blowing it all in. When we leave here I expect we will have to eat beans the rest of the month. I have a breakfast party every day; and next Thursday am going to have a hop. Beefsteak is 30¢ a pound, so you

Aug. 14, 1887 - page 2

can imagine what other things cost. Day after tomorrow we are going to play some of the people ashore baseball. I am going to catch, as we have no other catcher. I will wear a mask, if that is any comfort to you, to protect the teeth - and nose.

We leave here about one week from today. I think a month ashore at one of these places would set me crazy. You can easily see I am too busy to write much.

I had a long letter from H. W. Jones, which contains something I want to talk to you about when I see you. I have no news from any other of our personal friends.

Do you know I nearly finished Nancy's sword twice. I had it about finished, when each time I broke the handle, or rather cross piece. I will finish it yet, see if I dont. Do you visit Nancy soon? Give her my love when you see her, and tell her I havent seen so handsome a woman in all my travels.

Tell Alf. to be careful of his health, and to write soon and let me know if he will be in Phila. when we are there, - also to forward the Nations. I will come home for a week from Phila. if I can. Will you be home then? Write soon, Give my love to everybody at home,

Your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Bar Harbor, Maine,
Aug. 16, 1 a.m. Mid-Watch,
Tea and Sandwich disposed
of and cigarette lighted.

My dear Jones,

It is my invariable custom to answer a letter this way. Having made all necessary preparations, I take the letter to be answered and read it carefully, and make notes on the back of the envelope of all the points that require an answer or notice in my letter. Then I commence to answer the letter. When I have finished I commence to write my letter and tell my little story and so forth.

I think that simple little practice is the secret of a successful correspondence. My letters from home are almost always quite unsatisfactory because they wont notice what I say. Sometimes I am not even able to tell that my letters have been received. When I want a question answered I write it in large letters diagonally across the page, and place nothing else on that page except an underlined request for an answer. Sometimes even this fails.

My last letter to you was so long ago that I dont remember whether you have neglected me in this respect or not - I fancy not. However it is a good point, and I only mention it to let you know that I intend to follow it out in this letter. Of course you know the part of your letter that

Aug. 16, - page 2

is of the most absorbing interest, but my system is rigid and it will not be noticed until its proper turn.

So here I go.

Your letter of Aug. 3rd. only reached me about three days ago. It was held at the Dept until our return from the Provinces about a week ago. I thank you sincerely for it, as I enjoyed it immensely. Pete nearly had me crazy about your address. I forgot the Robinson and Cary, having mislaid it - that was in a measure excusable, As I didnt receive an answer I knew you hadn't re'cd it on time, so wrote to Pete for your address. When he told me you lived in Minneapolis I was alarmed about myself. "Thinks I to myself" there it goes, my mind has given way at last - I always was a crank. I wrote to Pete immediately to make sure of it, and poor Pete wrote back most humbly kicking himself and calling himself hard names, but relieving me wonderfully. I was really worried, and have felt better ever since.

Your letter was very enjoyable, as they always are, and you must not worry yourself about writing long letters, of course I dont expect it. I have all the time I want, a real fondness for writing long letters, (I wrote Miss Meem a 40 pager a few days ago) and an ever changing life. I thoroughly understand and appreciate everything you say on the subject. However we can keep track of our mutual acquaintances, and keep each other informed of our own doings.

Aug. 16, - page 3

Whenever you have a growl let her go, and I will do the same as I always do. We must not insist on consistency - a letter always reveals the mood of the writer, and allowances must be made accordingly.

I understand exactly what you mean by a "limited horizon," and "Shop," I have met business men and talked to them, and I once remarked to Lemme, that I'd rather be a dog and bay the moon than have all their money with their intellectual paucity. There is no doubt about it, that if you once learn the pleasure of feeding even a week# intellect, there is nothing that will supply its place - except being in love with a woman, so they say. Mr. Haggard the author of "She" remarks that life isnt worth living unless you are in love with a woman, but he busted. There is no reason why a man should not be successful in business, and enjoy his intellect at the same time. The businessmen I spoke of above are made in this way. They are taught penmanship and arithmetic#, and put in a counting house at 16. When they become men their minds are as narrow as the edge of a caseknife, and all their opinions are borrowed from their friends, and are usually obviously unsound. Buckle, Social Statics (Spencer) and The Wealth of Nations read with interest and understanding would have made them different men. But such men could never read such books. With you it is different as it is with every man who receives a

Aug. 16, - page 4

liberal education before he starts in business. I will give you an example in point. My cousin John C. Sims, received a liberal education studied and commenced to practice law. He was musical, literary, and a prominent society man, when the Penn. R. R. offered him sufficient inducement to leave his profession. Now he carries on a business in which he has no pecuniary interest, simply for the handsome salary it gives him, but his old tastes are not changed. It is delightful to visit his house. His wife is equally cultivated, and they keep up with the literature and music of the day in their own home, as well as keeping their languages rubbed up. It is lovely to hear John talk French to one baby and Grace German to another. His associates are, of course, people of similar tastes, and his life as happy as I can imagine one to be.. Surely you can find the same kind of people in St. Paul, and they must be your social friends. See? If you dont cultivate such people you will naturally and inevitably suffer from "literary listlessness" and find yourself growling because life dont seem worth living.

As to my being a "ship keeper," and Pete's "getting old" you need not worry about us. I dont take much stock in Pete's growls, tho' mine mean a little more.

I know I haven't improved myself by remaining at sea so long. It makes a fellow unsociable except when one meets

Aug. 16, - page 5

such exceptionally sweet girls at the 16 Bute household. I dont want any books when I am in Norfolk, for I love 'em all and take the keenest pleasure in visiting them and trying to give them a good time. However I'm not worrying about myself, I'm just drifting and enjoying it all the time in a quiet way. I havent the least suspicion of a plan for the future. The scheme of going to Paris is the nearest I have ever come to it, and it may fall through.

I received a delightful letter from the wee Miss Mary the other day so know all the news, and the scheme for visiting "Mimses Switch." Dont you worry about your peace of mind. That's all right. When you come east to visit your family you are going down to Norfolk - you said so - and you will look into the eyes of the sweetest little girl in these United States, and see what you shall see - and fix the rest of it up between you.

I imagine I see a photograph of you schooling yourself against the time, when your friend will be forming serious ties etc. You just keep on with the schoolin' the way you are goin' now, and you'll come out all right.

Now I'm going to make some sport of you.

You think you're right smart dont you? surprising other peoples secrets etc. I would like you to draw a diagram to show when and how you got onto all this. To be sure I do, now, remember your hauling a long face in Brooklyn and saying

Aug. 16, - page 6

you could heartily congratulate Nancy and me on a partnership; but I wouldn't have remembered it if it hadn't been for your last letter.

I regard the Queenly Nancy as one of the finest, if not the finest girl of my acquaintance. Her physical beauty goes without saying, and I know her well enough to know that she has a heart of gold. She is my ideal of everything that a "good woman" means. I have always admired her, and she is one of my fathers sweethearts. She is clever, entertaining, and of a loving disposition, and I have always admired her - but, - but, I hold up my right hand and with all sincerity swear that I am not, nor never have been, the least bit in love with Nancy Shunk; and, to the very best of my knowledge and belief I have never even suspected that she was ever the least bit soft on me. I feel immensely flattered that you think so, of course, and am not the least bit offended with you for thinking so; tho'. considering my feelings towards her I would be very sorry to believe it true. I am sure you never gave me **credit** for much personal conceit; I certainly never had enough to imagine or suspect any girl of entertaining anything more than a feeling of friendship for me - like Miss Mary, Miss Annie, and Miss Meem.

I think I understand how you have been deceived.

You did not consider that when you met Nancy I was

&&&&&&, - page 7

already her intimate acquaintance. She had been a constant visitor in our family, a chum of my sisters; that my father had said pretty things to her mother before we were born etc. It was the familiarity that deceived you. I alway# paid her considerable attention cuz, I was proud of my compatriot, and because she was a good dancer, and I think Nancy liked me for the same reason she did you, viz., because we were tall and our dancing suited her.

If some of my poor relations should die and leave me a million, I think I would go down to Harrisburg and pay Nancy a visit and try and fall in love with her, because I would have won the finist# girl of my acquaintance. If I didn't fall in love with her I would come away, as I have the utmost abhorrence for any other kind of union.

I will give you a history of my love affairs, as follows, Viz., I have never been the least bit in love with any girl, or suspected one of being in love with me. That is all.

As for making love to a girl for the fun of the thing I regard it as low, ill bred, and ungentlemanly. In all my correspondence with girls I have always taken the greatest care never to express more than a fair open friendship and good square admiration. Now you know as much about my love affairs as I do myself.

Your picture from the old auther (?) I have seen before

Aug. 16. - page 8

and it quite meets my approval. However, I dont think such matters can be made off hand and in cold blood. They simply happen by the forces of nature; and any interference of the mighty intellect usually wrecks a couple of lives.

Now I haven't left myself much time to write the news. The fleet is here - Richmond, Ossipee, Galena, Yantic, Atlanta, and Dolphin. Bar Harbor is the gayest place I have ever seen - I am thoroughly tired of it. There are half a dozen big hotels and a couple of hundred cottages, and we are invited everywhere. There are at least two dances every night, besides tennis etc.

I am run to death, because it is impossible for me to avoid them. I have a cousin here, and the place is full of Philadelphia people who know my people and inquire for me, and invite me ashore. There is no shirking that. Besides there are the messmates wives, and sisters.

As an example of the work. I have the mid watch tonight. I must get up at 6 a.m. to get ready to land with the battalion - for the amusement of these people, that will keep us until 12. or 1 P. M. In the afternoon I must play behind the bat - as there is no other catcher - with the officers against the gentlemen ashore. In the evening if I am alive, I must go to a ball at the Newport House given by Phila. people. This makes me sigh for a quiet harbor in the W. Indies. I dont appreciate all these advantages?

Aug. 16, - page 9

because I dont enjoy them. I dont enjoy the society of these rich people, consequently feel indifferent towards invitation to the cottages where millions would not admit an unindorsed civilian - I refer to the very exclusive Phila. society people here.

If I get through this safely I will write again.

I hope to meet Pete in Newport.

Write me a note soon. Tell me what you think about Nancy and me now.

Always your very sincere friend

(Signed) Wm. S. Sims

3.55 P. M.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Bar Harbor, Me,

Aug 25, 1887

My dear Lou.,

We expected to sail yesterday, but were delayed by bad weather reported from down the coast. I think we will leave today, and arrive in Newport about Saturday. We stop for target practice on the way down.

I am glad to get away from Bar Harbor - it is too hard work for me. I have been too busy to write much, but will tell you all about it later.

We remain in Newport until about the 10 or 12, then go to Phila. I have tried to get Alf. to tell me whether he will be there when we arrive or not, but have not heard from him on the subject. Can you tell me?

I expect to see Mrs. Rider in Newport. Also Pete Jones.

I have not heard from home for some time. Wont some one write?

The last Nation I recd was Aug 11th.

My health is excellent, notwithstanding all my dissipations, but I am not fat.

When do you go on for Florie's wedding? I dont know where the Yantic will be then but probably at a Navy Yard, most likely Norfolk.

Write soon, and give my best love to all at home,

Your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Newport, R. I.,

Sept. 4, Sunday

(W.S.S. adds in pencil "1887" - ASF)

My Sweet Lou.,

I haven't been writing much lately, - haven't had my writin' tacks aboard, as it were and haven't now.

I haven't any very particular news to tell you as we, or rather I am remaining quietly on board gettin' rested.

You have seen in the Herald what we have been doing. Nothing very much, but target practice, and a landing party on shore here on Coaster's Harbor Island (a Gov. Id). The War College opens tomorrow, and we will have no more exercises so that we can attend the lectures during our stay here.

Yesterday the Bache came in and Pete. Jones came to see me, and today I went over and took breakfast with him. He is unhappy. He doesn't like the C. S. work, nor his ship and shipmates. He wants to come to the Yantic this fall, and I sincerely hope he will succeed.

I saw Hulme old boy, and he wished to be remembered to you, so consider him remembered accordingly. He is looking very well, and is very much tanned by the sun. Pete. is well and also wishes to be remembered.

Sept. 4, 1887 - page 2

I still think the Jones boys are the finest specimens of manly gentlemen I know.

On Wednesday and Thursday next I intend to go to Providence and see the Rider families, and will tell you about them when I write.

Will you be at home when I come, about Sept. 15.? We cant know yet where we will go for repairs, but hope it will be either Brooklyn or Norfolk. We are a little afraid of being sent to Portsmouth, N. H. If we are I am afraid I cant make the wedding, after having leave in Phila. And besides there is the expense! But we will see later.

I am afraid we wont remain in Phila. very long, and I am sorry, as I would like to have the clan off to see the ships.

I will probably start home by the 15th. I dont think I will have to march in the parade. If I do I wont start until the 18th., but I am pretty sure to come home. I met Mr. Fisk here, and he said he had had the pleasure of meeting you. He seems a very nice fellow.

Drop me a line soon. Give my love to all at home

Always your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Philadelphia, Pa.,

Sept. 17, 1887

2.30 a.m.

My dear Jones,

I am far too busy to write you a letter just now and tell you all I want to say. You can imagine that with the celebration, and all my relatives etc, I am very busy. However, I am going home tomorrow, and will write you from there. Wont you drop me a line there (Orbisonis, Huntingdon Co., Pa.) before my week's leave is up? Tell me what you think of Nancy and me now! I leave Phila. on Sunday, and as there are no trains on our little road on that day I will stop over in Harrisburg until Monday, and, incidentally, go and see Nancy. I went to see Mrs. Rider from Newport, and will tell you all about my visit when I write. Pete has doubtless told you that I saw him in Newport.

I will tell Nancy that you wish to be kindly remembered to her, as I know very well you do - also my "people."

Brace up and drop me a line soon,

Always your sincere friend,

(Signed) Sims.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Off Fort Norfolk, Va.,

Saturday, 24, 10 P. M. (Sept.)

My dear Jones,

They would not let me go on leave from Phila. We arrived here today noon. I have not been ashore and have no news. Of course I will tell you all the news as soon as I learn it.

The 16 Bute girls are in New York and wont be back for a couple of weeks. Miss Meem dont expect to come here this winter.

You may wonder why I am writing under the circumstances. This is the reason. The other day I got a letter from Price saying that the mill started on Sept. 1st., that he had bought out Lemme's shares, and asking me to send him your (and Pete's) address. I will send your address by this mail. I will not attempt to advise you, in case Price offers to buy, but will only say that I intend to keep on risking my money, tho'. I haven't much faith in the concern.

Please write me a note, if you haven't done so to Orbisonia.

Always your sincere friend,

(Signed) Wm. S. Sims

P. S.

I shouldn't tell, but Louisa says Nancy was recently engaged to a West Pointer but it is off. Ha! Ha! How you busted!

(Signed) Wm. S. S.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Norfolk, Va.,

Sunday 25, '87 (Sept?)

My dear Jones,

Last night I sent you a wretched little note - about Price - I believe you have a few shares in the mine.

This morning I received your very agreeable letter - via, Orbisonia. I haven't been ashore yet, and besides the girls are away, so there isn't a speck of news to tell you at this writing.

However I will drop you a line to tell you what I am going to do, and when you may expect a letter with some news into it.

You have doubtless rec'd Florie Maxwell's "cards," but if not, let me tell you that she is to be married Oct. 5th. My Sister Louisa is with her now gettin' ready to be a bridesmaid. I intend to leave here Oct. 4th. attend the wedding, then pass on to Orbisonia, on two weeks' leave. I dont know whether the Bute St. girls will be here before I leave or not, however, I will write to you from home and give you all the Norfolk and Brooklyn news up to date. Perhaps you saw in the papers that Nancy's sister was married to one of her brother's classmates about Sept. 21st. I intended to stop over for the wedding, but my leave from Phila. was "not granted." I suppose the superb Nancy will be at Florie's wedding but I dont know for sure.

I dont mind your meddling in what you consider my

Sunday 25 '87 - page 2

private affairs in the least for the simple reason that this affair of yours isn't in any sense of the word private, - I wouldn't mind it if it were - I am quite flattered. If you will not be convinced why that settles it; but to show (anyone but a "firm" man) that Nancy hasn't been pining all away for me, I may repeat the P. S. of my note last night, viz., That Louisa told me in Phila. that Nancy has at present an undecided or unsettled love affair - was engaged to one of her brother's classmates, but had a row.

I may also state the following facts, viz., I never corresponded with Nancy; and since you have known her I dont think I have written her a line. Do you remember the tortoise shell swords I made for my sister? Well, before I made them I promised one to Nancy. That was more than three years ago. At the same time I made my sisters I sawed out one for Nancy. The last time I saw her in Brooklyn, she teased me so much about it that I finished it and sent it on from Phila.

No, Jones old boy, in all seriousness, there is not, nor never has been anything at all between Nancy and me. She is a stately girl, but I knew her very well in Brooklyn and the familiarity deceived you.

When Nancy visited my home, where we had plenty of time to disagree and quarrel, we never failed to do so. She made remarks to me then that were so disagreeable that I have

Sunday 25 '87 - page 3

never quite forgotten them.

I give you my word that I was glad when she went home. However, I am always glad to see Nancy now, for she is good company, and she knows that if she hurts my feelings again, as she did at my home, I would move on.

I meant nothing (except what I said) by my praise of Nancy. I simply mean that if I ever fall in love, I hope it will be with as handsome and upright a woman as Nancy.

My dear friend, you must believe that you have made a complete mistake.

But this is only a note and I go on watch in a few minutes, so I must close.

I dont call this a letter nor expect an answer - wait for my next - but all the same it gives me great pleasure to hear from you. Because you are a long way off is no reason why you should wait until you feel like writing a long letter.

Let drive a page or so whenever you feel like it, tho' you haven't time to write much - I will remember you to all your friends here.

With my best love,

(Signed)

Sims.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,
Sept. 27, 1887

My dear Lou.,

I have been expecting a letter from you every day giving me the details - time, etc - of the wedding. Please drop me a small note and let me know. The cards say, reception from 8 to 10 P. M., but I presume the wedding will be earlier. I want to know particularly, for if it is not too early I can come by the Old Dominion steamer, which is more comfortable besides being three sheckles cheaper. We have commenced our repairs, and they say we will be here three months - I am sorry for I want to get south out of the cold.

I have a terrible cold just now, but expect to be all right in a few days.

Give my best regards to all at 489. Who are the bride's maids?

Your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

P. S. Can you give me the address of a convenient Brooklyn hotel (cheap one)

Yantic,

Norfolk Navy Yard,

Sept 28 '87

My dear Jones,

I enclose a letter from Bloody. I have no news -
girls all away etc. I called on Mrs. C. the other day.
I am remaining quietly on board, as I have a really
terrible cold.

Your sincere friend,

(Signed) Sims.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,
Sept. 28, 1887

My dear Lou.,

I rec'd a letter from Florie, but it contained none of the information I want about times etc. However, that is not what I want to tell you about. I wish to warn you that I may not be at the wedding at all. My very severe cold has turned into a light fever, (Temp. 100.5), and I don't know what is to come of it. If it is only caused by cold, it will pass away in a few days, but if it is a touch of the Norfolk malaria it may hang on in the shape of a low fever until the frost comes.

If it should turn out to be the latter I would probably take a B. line for the mountains of Orbisonia. I will let you know how it turns out. The Dr. says it is probably only cold.

Remember me to all at 489 Wash. Ave.

Your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

P. S.

It is not necessary of course, to say that you must not repeat this in the home letter,

(Signed) Wm

U. S. S. Yantic,

Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,

Sept. 30th., 1887

My dear Lou,

I have written to you twice from here and have been expecting an answer every day, but have re'cd none. Have you written, and if so where did you address the letter?

I dont think I will be able to attend the wedding for I am now much too sick to travel. However I may brace up by the 4th.

I dont know exactly what's the matter with me, but I dont improve any. It commenced with a very severe cold, then a little fever, which, however, didn't last long. It may be a little Delaware River or Norfolk Malaria, or only cold, but, whatever it is it has left my head in a terrible condition. My eyes pain fearfully and are so sore I can scarcely move them, while my jaws and teeth can't manage anything harder than milk toast. I have no appetite; but eat a little on principle, and altogether am quite wretched. To make things worse the temperature here is 85° in the day time, and not much cooler at night - not to mention mosquitoes.

I suppose you are all very busy at 489 getting ready for the great event, but all the same, I think you might have sent me a postal giving me the information I asked

Sept. 30th., 1887 - page 2

for in Phila.

My only consolation for all this misery in the head is that the Volunteer has thrashed the blow and conceit out of the Thistle. With regards to all at 489 I remain,

Your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

Orbisonia,
Huntingdon Co., Pa.

Sunday 9, 1887 (Oct?)

My dear Jones,

I think I sent you a small note from Norfolk, promising to write from here.

Well, here I am but I haven't much news to tell you, for I have had rather bad luck.

I arrived in Norfolk with the worst cold I have ever experienced, I never knew before that a cold could be so very severe. To make things worse I had fever for about a week, and was in bed part of the time, and my head and eyes were in such a bad condition that I couldn't bear the light, and had to remain on my back with my eyes covered up. When this came on I gave up the idea of going to the wedding, and was advised to go home as soon as I could travel, and get into cooler climate, for it was intensely hot in Norfolk. I left there on the 4th. and came direct home, and am now about all right.

When I got to Norfolk the 16 Bute girls were still in New York. Miss Mary dropped me a line to let me know when she was coming back, but I was too sick to go and see her, so I wrote her a note telling her so. You can well imagine what kind of a note she sent back - all kindness friendship and sympathy.

The afternoon of the day I left I went over to call and

Sunday 9, 1887 - page 2

found both the girls looking simply lovely. Their summer in the mountains had done them a world of good, and they were both actually plump and rosy. Miss Annie weighs 120 pounds! As for Miss Mary, she never looked so rosy and dimpled and bright. They were of course delighted to see me, for we are really excellent friends and delighted that the Yantic is to remain in the Navy ^Yard until about Jany. To say that I enjoyed seeing them again, would but feebly express it. Miss Mary charmed me by exacting a very flattering promise. viz., "Mr. Sims, whenever you are off duty you must come right over to see us; and whenever you want to go and see any other girl, you must come to me first and I will take you to call on her." I think you can imagine Miss Mary's manner of saying this. -

I tell you Jones there isnt two sweeter little bodies in the world than these two little friends of ours; and I guess there are none finer than Miss Meem and _____ Nancy.

It's a queer old turnip of a heart I've got not to fall in love with any of these girls.

We of course talked of you and Pete, but this time more of the latter; for he is thoroughly disgusted with the Coast Survey, and is going to try for the Yantic, and the girls were delighted over the prospect of having him there during the winter.

Pete has a pretty good show, for his Capt. will help

Sunday 9, 1887 - page 3

him and Capt. Green wants him to come.

I expect to have a good time in Norfolk this winter. In the first place we have day's duty - turn in at 10 P. M. and get up at "all hands" then 3 or 4 days off duty. Then of course the German and Casino. Commodore Brown will help us do something in the Navy Yard, for as you know his wife is socially inclined - I intend to struggle through a dance or two with her and pay her a compliment or so. The Navy Yard now has a band of 15 pieces! The Training Fleet will be in soon, and perhaps some other ships. My Father & Mother and perhaps my sisters are coming down to pay me a short visit, and I am going up to your swamp sure this time to see your people. Dont you think that is enough to make a pleasant winter? Of course our little friends will call on my Father & Mother, and wont I be proud of our little friends! There is only one thing wanting to make things complete, viz., yourself and Mistress Meem. The latter, I am afraid will not be down from the valley this winter. I think she is going to Alabama. By the way, did I tell you that I got little Gil. Meem a fine well bred newfoundland pup in Halifax and sent him from Phila.? Miss Meem tells me they are all delighted with him - tho' he is the first dog that has ever been allowed on the place.

Of course, I will write you all the news from Norfolk - so will Miss Mary if you give her a chance, - that will be

Sunday 9, 1887 - page 4

interesting, for you can compare notes.

Speaking of news, I have a good piece from Pete, viz., Mrs. Truxtun told me that Mary Walker is not going to be married.

My sister Louisa arrived home yesterday, and it has been very interesting for me to sit still and listen while Mother and my other sisters pumped her about the wedding. In the first place she told me that Florie was very much pleased with your splendid letter, which she was so proud of that she showed it to Lou. and Nancy. You evidently did yourself proud.

The wedding, it appears, was a perfect success. The bridesmaids were Louisa, Nancy, Miss Weigand, Miss Pelle-treau and two other girls. I will not attempt to describe the dresses, of course, but may say en passant, that the bride's dress was trimmed with pearls. Nancy was dressed in a tulle dress (whatever that is) and looked more queenly and lovely than ever. I dont remember "Tilly's" dress nor Miss P's, but Lou. says the former hasn't improved any, and that the latter was as lovely as a dream - positively, she says, the most beautiful creature she ever saw. Only the family were present at the ceremony, and Lass. gave away the victim. Afterwards there was a reception with dancing. There was no solemnity, but lots of fun. I fancy a regular lark. The bridesmaids bunked in the house four in a room

Sunday 9, 1887 - page 5

and two in a bed, and the little redheaded victim in the middle. The night before the wedding they whooped it up until 2 a.m. and fired shoes at each other at daylight. Lou. says Miss Kate was the life of the house, and charmed everybody. She ordered everything and had the bride's cake decorated on top with a candy village cart in which were seated a very homely man (the groom isn't handsome) and a very red-headed girl, the vehicle being drawn by a prancing white horse, and each one of Florie's brothers had a little white horse pinned to the lapel of his coat.

I am very sorry I wasn't there. Lass. seems to have turned over a new leaf. He took the girls to the theatre and the yacht races, and made himself generally very agreeable. Louisa cant bear the sight of him, and kept away from him as much as possible, and consequently was much amused when Miss Kate told her that Lass said he never knew before what a fine girl she was. It appears from the latest gossip that, once upon a time before we knew him, Lass was engaged to a Miss X. and that about that time he embarked his capital in business with a friend, and the friend walked off with it, whereupon Miss X. promptly shook him, and that ever since he has despised women. See?

That I think is about all the news at present. I haven't heard from Baxter or Lemme for a long time. Price says he will give me some news about the mine soon.

Sunday 9, 1887 - page 6

I promised to tell you about my visit to Mrs. # tho' there is really little to tell. I spent two days in Providence one with Mr. Sidney Rider and one with Mrs. Rider. Mr. Sidney Rider is a splendid man, and a wonderfully interesting one. He has one of the brightest clearest and quickest intellects I know. It is a keen pleasure to listen to him and I would like to see more of him. His wife is a very worthy woman but one of the "I want to know" kind. I am sorry to say I dont think Miss Rider is a very worthy woman. She is a thorough animal, governed by her animal instincts, and hasn't a particle of sentiment or refinement. It's a pretty hard thing to say, but I honestly doubt whether she is virtuous or not.

Mrs. Sarah Rider is a perfect lady in every sense of the word, and a cultivated and refined woman. She really loves me for my friendship for her son, and treats me like a sone - kisses me when I come to see her as my Mother would. She is still quite handsome and must have been beautiful as a young woman.

It would only be painful for me to tell you all we talked of, so I will only say that my visit tho' painful at times was very satisfactory, you know what I mean - Mrs. Rider was very grateful to me for coming, and I am very glad I went. She drove me to see Rider's grave, and I am very glad she did, so that I may have the picture of it in my

Sunday 9. 1887 - page 6

mind. I will never as long as I live forget this poor mother standing by the grave as she said with difficulty "Here is Fred. There is my husband." I broke down completely. I never was so moved in my life. It seemed such a malignantly cruel fate. I was filled with bitterness and rage, and I lost control of myself. My reason revolted against the belief that either this woman or Rider deserved such a fate - worse than the punishment for a fiendish murder - but I wont speak of it any more - such things should not be discussed in bitterness between friends when they differ.

Drop me a line when the spirit moves you, and tell me more of your life and associates. Do you meet any "nice" people. I know there are queer mixtures of refinement and vulgarity in the West and the country generally. I have seen a good deal of it from my family living in the country. I have met people who have apparently all the usual refinements, but who some day would surprise you by some little vulgarity (so called) of manner or expression, something you would never think of doing yourself, but which when looked at in the cold light of reason, turns out to be not essentially vulgar as indicating a vulgar mind or unrefined feelings, but only conventionally vulgar - "bad form" as they say.

Then again you will find people essentially vulgar who, through social ambition, shrewdness and careful observation, manage to cover up their natures so well that it requires

Sunday 9, 1887 - page 7

considerable observation to get onto them.

But this is enough for one letter.

My sister Louisa is at my elbow, and asks me to send you her kindest regards, as does also my Mother whom you captured completely in Phila.

As for me you have always my love and very best wishes,

Always your sincere friend

(Signed) Sims.

P. S.

Remember that I am a permanent office holder and most always have lots of time to write long letter, but you know I explained once fully that I didnt expect long ones in return from a busy man. Whenever you have a "greviance" or a growl fire a page at me.

It will do you good.

(Signed) Sims.

Orbisonia, Pa.,

Oct 10, '87

My dear Jones,

In the last two or three letters I have written to you I have neglected to refer to your request for some Havana cigars. Last night when I was writing I made a note of it, but missed it somehow.

So Let me say now that, of course, I will be delighted to bring you any reasonable number of cigars - at your risk for fines or confiscation.

The Yantic patronizes the firm of Inclan (Ynclan) and the sharps say the cigars are excellent, so unless you prefer some other maker, it will be more convenient for me to get yours there, especially if our stay in Havana is short. I am not sure we will go there, but I think we will. When you write for the cigars, give me all the necessary data, viz., size, brand, color, and price, with a check for the amt. of course, for you know my strapped circumstances.

They say that anything over from \$7. to \$.0. per hundred, (according to size) is paid for style and appearance etc, not quality of tobacco. I know nothing about cigars, but we have some sharps on board, and if you choose you can tell me the price you wish to pay, and let me get the best cigars for the money, - always, however, mentioning color.

I hope to hear from you soon,

Always your sincere friend

Oct 10, '87 - page 2

(Signed) Sims.

P. S.

When they cut the bridesmaid's cake at the wedding, Louisa's piece contained the thimble, the symbol of an old maid.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,
Saturday, Oct. 22 '87

My dear Mother,

I haven't a scrap of news, but like to write a few lines anyway when I am a little homesick.

I have been on duty all day, and as it is now 9 P. M. I am a trifle tired. We are still in the dry-dock and will go out Monday. Captain Green returned today and I think was a little disappointed at being detached so soon. He brought us all messages from Mrs. Green, who wants all our photographs.

The captain enquired after Lou. and little Adelaide, and wishes to be remembered to them. He also asked after Nancy and Mrs. Overton and spoke very nicely of them.

By this mail I send the new register to Father; tell him to let me know if it turns up.

I see by the papers that an Ensign has been ordered to the Yantic, so I suppose I will not have a chance to go to sea with my old friend Pete. Jones.

I still miss you all very much, particularly as we are rather unsettled, with painting etc. on board.

Give my best love to all at home,

Your loving son,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,
Sunday, Oct. 23 '87

My dear Father,

I received Alf's letter to Mother a day or so ago. He seems to have taken a tumble gracefully. I don't think he could have thought very seriously about the matter.

I haven't written to him since I left home, but intend to soon to give him a rub about procrastination.

There is no particular news down this way. Everything is quiet and the weather is simply perfect.

I am doing nothing in particular - one day on duty in three, and no night watch. Occasionally I go over in town to see the girls - my old friends.

I suppose I will go to the Germans when they commence tho' I don't feel much interest in them without the Jones boys. The girl from the valley will not be here this winter. I believe the gossips have me engaged to her - at all events I was asked the question point blank in town the other day, and was of course immensely flattered. Of course I replied in the negative "on my honor," so you may tell Mother not to be uneasy.

My old Swatara Capt. Cooper is on duty at the yard - with his third wife. Old Gil. Wiltse is on the Receiving Ship Franklin. I have not seen him yet, but guess

Oct. 23 '87 - page 2

I will call. We hear that Mr. Smith will keep the fleet at Newport until Dec. Who says the Yantic has no luck!

The Training ships are expected here soon, three of 'em.

In the mornings when the thermometer gets down to 50 I want to go to the West Indies right away quick. I am hardly settled down yet after my visit home, and am reading novels (something I very seldom do) to pass away the time.

Give my love Big and Little Adelaide, and Mary,

Your loving son,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,
Oct. 25, 1887,

My dear Lou,

I was delighted to get your little note, and to hear that the new establishment is coming on finely. I would be delighted to be able to run up and "remain over Sunday" some of these times.

Write me occasionally for I am a wee bit homesick yet, and they dont write much from home. I suppose you will have a fine time when you get settled down. I am delighted that you have such good friends who like you so well. I hope you will stay a good while, for I know they will miss you when you leave. Give my best regards to the family and write again soon. Just a little note, before you turn in.

Always your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Navy Yard, Norfolk Ba.,

Monday Oct. 31 '87

My dear old chum, (Jones)

I really did intend to write, sooner, but now I am rather glad I put it off, for I have so much the more to tell you. Of course I know you will enjoy hearing all about our friends in Norfolk and all the Norfolk news, but I can't help but feel that your interest will be rather melancholy, as you can't help but wish to be here and enjoy another winter with me. I will commence at the beginning after my usual style and I hope I won't miss any items. I will commence at home, where I can assure you, you have a warm place in our hearts. My mother and sister spoke of you often in the highest terms, and wished you every success in life. Some of these days I hope to be able to take you to my home.

I think I told you in my letter from home that I stopped in Narrisburg to call on Mrs. Cann (wife of Paymaster Cann) Well she invited me to stop over on my way back, and take dinner. Her object was partly to entertain me, but principally, I understand, to try her hand at a little matchmaking. The other victim of her scheme was the superb Nancy! You know when I went home I was not well enough to go to the wedding; but just before I left home, Mr. & Mrs. Overton paid us a surprise visit and remained a couple of days with us. When they returned home they took Louisa with

Oct. 31, '87 - page 2

them to help start housekeeping, as Flimse dont know much about such things. As I left at the same time, we had quite a party as far as Harrisburg. Nancy met us at the station where the train remained only 20 minutes. But even in that short space of time Nancy managed to make quite a number of disagreeable remarks, tho' no one wished to be anything but agreeable to her. I remained in Harrisburg until the same train the next day - took dinner at Mrs. Cann's (Nancy was there) and lunch the next day at Nancy's home. I find this interesting young lady quite as handsome, and jolly as usual, and I admire her for a great many good qualities; but she certainly cant resist the temptation to say sharp things at every opportunity often willfully misunderstanding the most innocent remarks to that end. I dont think she means to be unkind or disagreeable, but it is part of her amusement. Perhaps you remember her remarking some time or other, that she considered herself often misunderstood. I think I have given the reason. I did not enjoy her society during my visit any more than I did when I first met her at our house, on the contrary I was glad when it was time to go.

In Brooklyn she appeared more to advantage than I had ever seen her - perhaps because the society was more general than that in which I had before seen her.

I think Mrs. Cann was rather vexed at our sparring.

Nancy was perfectly aware of Mrs. Cann's schemes, for

Oct. 31, '87 - page 3

she told me that Mrs. Cann had arranged quite a little romance for us. I tell you all this to show you how completely you "busted" in your surmise about us. I tell you the honest truth when I say that I left Harrisburg with a feeling of resentment against Nancy.

This should settle the matter once and for all.

Nancy is unpopular in Narrisburg society for the same reasons I give - the young men will not visit a house where they have to be always on the defense against ridicule or the exposure of their weaknesses. If I visit her again it will only be out of consideration for my family, especially my sister.

This, old man, is the end of your romance; and it is a great relief to turn to Norfolk and tell you about our sweet little friends, of whom every recollection is a pleasure not soon to be forgotten.

Pete has no doubt told you of his effort to come to the Yantic, and his failure on account of the orders of Ensign W. L. Rogers. The little girls are very much disappointed, and say they are going to write him a letter. Pete tells me he expects to go to a regular cruiser when the fall work is done, (which will be in a week or so) and hopes to get leave first. I am waiting for him to get his leave so that I can visit your homes while he is there. If he don't get his leave, I will go to Hanover anyway. Do you expect to

Oct. 31, '87 - page 4

come on for your sister's wedding? A little girl asked me if I knew.

It goes without saying that I am very much disappointed that Pete. is not to be with me this winter.

We have day's duty - one day on and two days off - and about every day off finds me at 16 Bute. This is the seventh day of continuous rain, and it suits me down to the ground, for it keeps the Norfolk dudes indoors, and I find the little girls all alone. The last ferry boat catches me every time. I enjoy my visits - you can imagine how much!

Honestly I believe these little women are the sweetest in the world. Lord! Lord! how I wish you could be with me some evening and see the little fairies in their cosy house dresses sitting by the fire in the back room with your Uncle Simes#, who is in love with them both, head over heels. From 8 until 11.15 I admire them just as hard as I can and wonder which is the prettiest. I talk to 'em about all sorts of things and admire their intelligence, their interest, their beauty, their pretty little hands, their sweet manners, and their warm little hearts.

It is 11.15 in no time, and I rise to go, but linger, as usual, for a last word with the sweet little creatures standing in front and away down below me, until I am in danger of missing the boat. Then I start out on my tramp home, and then's when I miss my old Swatara chums. Paymaster

Oct. 31, '87 - page 5

(Asst.) Ball, of Warrenton, Ba., goes with me quite often, and tho' he's a fine fellow, it's not the same as it used to be. He remarked on one occasion when speaking of our friends, that it seemed to him that if you sprinkled a little, just a very very little fine sugar on 'em and poured a little cream on 'em you could eat 'em both. So you see he quite appreciates them.

They are both very well, and get prettier every day, or else I am falling more in love with them every day.

I often go out to see Mr. and Mrs. Chamberlaine, and like to think that I enjoy their good opinion. Only last night the Pay. and I were there to tea. It was storming but we got there all the same, notwithstanding the five mile walk.

We often and often speak of you, and wonder if you will ever get east. I explained to Miss Mary how it was that you were not given your vacancy, and told her what chance you had of getting back. She said she would rather see # come East and be a citizen.

I stopped here last night when the 10 o'clock lights went out. I would have finished then, but we had the Capt. to dinner, and I was interrupted. It is now 1 P. M. This morning I went over to town to ask Miss Mary to go to the theatre with me this evening. I would have asked her Sunday

Oct. 31, '87 - page 6

evening, if it had not been her intention to go to Baltimore today with her mother a shopping. The storm still continues - the 8th day - and I thought it likely they would not go; and sure enough, I found that they had given it up. I think that was pretty smart of me. Of course I am delighted, and Miss Mary seemed pleased.

I carried over with me a very excellent photographeur (?)# of the North Atlantic Squadron all on one piece of paper about 15 inches square.

It is a great pleasure to me to be able to enjoy this little maiden's society, and to feel that she regards me as a friend. She told me this morning that she had written or was writing a letter to you, and would tell you how much we all missed you at 16 Bute. I told her I was writing also and would do the same.

Pay. Ball takes Miss Annie this evening. The play is Daly's "A night off." This is the second night and they say it is very good.

Of course we will have a very pleasant evening.

I am a member of the german club, and will soon be a member of the Shakespeare club. The first german takes place next Friday evening.

When I returned from leave I found that Miss Mary was engaged for this one, but she will be my partner for the second - but if you will come on for it I will waive my claim -

Oct. 31. '87 - page 7

My partner for this german is Miss Annie Harmonson, a girl whom I dont particularly admire, but a good dancer as you may remember. There is a junior german but I dont think I will attend, as the little girls are not going.

The first Shakespeare is the third Thursday in Nov.

The Portsmouth Casino is in full blast - every week alternately a dance and a - something else. The dance unfortunately comes on the same day as the german.

I still get the same very pleasant chatty letters from Miss Meem. She is not coming down this winter. However the newfoundland dog I sent little Gil. is a perfect success. They never have had a dog on the place before, but the pup has won them all over.

Now I think I have told you about all the news. You know that Quimby married Miss Munchausen (Spottswood) a few days ago. Garrison is going to marry Miss McB. Miss Mary Walker's engagement was announced in yesterday's New York papers so I guess it's a go. The lucky man is a Mr. Higginson. Miss Leigh still talks about Ashbridge, and seems to me rather "fly."

She will not go out until after xmas. Miss Lilly Newton ditto.

If I have forgotten anything I will give it to you next time.

I will watch the mails for an answer to this letter, so

Oct. 31, '87 - page 8

write when the spirit moves you. Tell me something more about your life, and how you pass the time etc. etc. And if there are any questions in this letter, (and there ain't many) please answer them.

Good bye old fellow, and God bless you,

With much love,

Always your sincere friend,

(Signed) Wm. S. Sims.

Yantic,

Nov. 8 '87

9 P. M.

My dear Lou.,

I have only time to drop you a line to let you know that I received a telegram from H. P. (Pete) Jones today saying that he has been ordered to the Nipsic, now in the Navy Yard, Brooklyn, N. Y. Of course, he feels pretty blue, over not coming to the Yantic, and it might cheer him up to see some old friends. If you tell Mrs. O. I think she would invite him out. If she does please be very good to him, as he is my dearest friend.

His address will be

Ensign H. P. Jones, U. S. N.

U. S. S. Nipsic,

Navy Yard, Brooklyn,

N. Y.,

and if you write to him dont forget to give him your address, the ferries to take, the name of R. R., times etc. etc.

Give my best regards to Mr. & Mrs. O.

Your loving brother

(Signed) Wm

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,

Nov. 19, 1887

My dear Lou.,

I went to the german last night, got back at 3.15 a.m. this morning, and, consequently feel a trifle old.

I had a lovely time - the little maids far eclipsed all others. They are very kind to me indeed, and thoroughly good friends. I spoke to Miss Mary (the eldest) about the possibility of your coming here for a few days, and she delighted me by saying she would be glad to have you stay at her house. Of course, I thanked her and declined for you. But her invitation shows me, first how good a friend she considers me, and second that by coming here you will make two lovely friends who would perhaps be glad to have you visit them sometime. And there is no greater pleasure I could wish you than to visit Norfolk some time. My sweet Louisa!!! I really do wish you would decide to come. It would give me the greatest pleasure in the world. And I know you would enjoy it, for you have no idea how kind Norfolk men are to strangers. Then I have so many very good friends amongst the girls, that they would give you a good time. Please reconsider the matter if you have already written and declined. I wrote home about it at the same time I wrote to you, and I know they will

Nov. 19, 1887 - page 2

not object.

Please, Please, please, come like a good girl.

Write, at once, and let me know.

Your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

Yantic,

Nov. 22. Tuesday.

9 P. M.

(W.S.S. adds in pencil "1887" - ASF)

My dear Lou,

I wrote you a very hasty note this morning, and have little more to say now. I have just written a long letter to Father explaining everything, and I am sure both he and Mother will be delighted to have you come. Please come at once so as to be here some little time before the german. Mr. Ball brought the girls over to the yard this afternoon to hear the music - of our new Navy Yard band - and I saw them for a little while. They asked me when you were coming, and said I must tell you to come soon. I would bet my life you will fall in love with the whole family at first sight. They are the loveliest people in the world. I was out calling last night, and my friends all say they will be delighted to show you every attention, and I know they will for they are lovely girls and very good friends of mine.

If you could only understand how proud I feel about your being invited to visit my lovely friends, you would come at once. Please, please, start just as soon as ever you can. I am doing nothing but watch for the mails and the telegraph messenger. I can't bear to

Nov. 22, 1887 - page 2

think of being disappointed.

Always your loving brother

(Signed) Am.

P. S.

I dont know why I didn't think of the Old Dominion Line, until you mentioned it. The steamers go direct from the dock in New York to the dock in Norfolk and arrive here between 5 and 6 P. M. where I will meet you any day you choose to come. The little girls will be with me.

You will enter the Capes shortly after noon, pass Fortress Monroe and the huge Hygeia Hotel about one hour before you arrive in Norfolk. The trip alone is worth the price of admission.

Y. L. B.

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,
Nov. 22, 1887

My dear Father,

Your letter and Mother's received. You are both very kind to say that I may go on the Nipsic. I have not made up my mind yet, but I hardly think I will go. It is not certain yet where she will go, and besides I hear very unfavorable reports about her commanding officer - that he is not a gentleman etc. So for the present you may consider that I am not going. Just now there is something else that I am thinking about a great deal more, viz., Lou's. visit to Norfolk.

When I mentioned the possibility of her coming to the Misses Chamberlaine, they said she must stay with them, but I declined for her. But the next day they wrote me such a splendid letter - in which they were joined by the entire family - and insisted on Lous. visiting them, that I could not refuse.

So that now I have set my heart on Lou's. coming.

I think it is something for you and Mother, Louisa and me to be very proud of, that your old son should have made such good friends of such lovely people, that they invite my sister to visit them. I must say I am charmed and delighted.

I have written to Lou. (last night) urging her in

Nov. 22, 1887 - (Letter No. 2) - page 2

every possible way I can think to come. She can come by the Old Dominion Line, - outside direct from the dock in New York to the dock in Norfolk. Mr. Overton knows the Captain's on the line and can give her a letter to any one of them. It will cost her only \$12. here and return, so the expense will not count. When I first wrote to Lou. I proposed to her staying at the hotel. I have just re'cd a letter from her saying that she had forwarded my letters home asking for money - so if you have refused on that account please telegraph to her at once that she can go - if you have no other objections. That dear Lou. will enjoy the trip goes without saying - as for me it will be the delight of my heart to give her so much pleasure. I will refund her expenses when my money comes in.

I have many good friends here besides the Chamberlaines, and some of them told me last night that they would be very glad to show her every attention. I am very proud of this, and you should be. As for the Norfolk men they are simply delightful to strangers. I was delighted to see the way they treated the wife of one of our officers at the last german. All the ladies went to her at once, and the german leader introduced every man in the room to her. All the Misses C's. friends - and they are legion - will call on her, and our officers

Nov. 22, 1887 - (Letter No. 2) - page 3

will show her every attention. As for the Chamberlaine family I know she will feel perfectly at home five minutes after she meets them. They are amongst the most delightful people I know, not only the little girls, but their Father and Mother, whose friendship and good will I enjoy.

I cant help being bitterly disappointed if Lou. dont come.

I feel that this is the finest compliment that ever was paid me, and you must feel that it reflects upon you and Mother.

Of course the idea will occur to you - certainly to mother - that I am somewhat in love with one of these girls. Nothing could be farther from the truth. I say this on my word of honor. They are simply very good friends that I have made, and I am proud - very proud of it; and it will be a happy event for me when I can show these friends of whom I am so proud to the sweet sister of whom I am still more proud.

This would be a great pleasure, even tho' it had been a casual meeting, so you can imagine how much complimented I feel that they should have asked my sister, a stranger, to be their guest. It was a surprise to me, and you can't imagine what a delightful one. When they wrote me the letter I mentioned they asked for Lou's.

Nov. 22, 1887 - (Letter No. 2) - page 4

address to write to her, and she must have the letter by this time.

I have said all that I have to say on the subject, but I feel that I would like to say it all over again - I am so delighted with it.

I know mother has a boundless conceit about her children - as every good mother has - and it has occurred to me that she may suspect that one of these girls is interested in me. But, of course, after a moment's reflexion she would give up the idea, knowing that no lady in such a case would give a man such encouragement. As for me, I would be ashamed of such a thought, for I feel only gratitude toward these little women for making such a friend of me.

There has never happened anything half so pleasant to me; and I know it must please you to hear about it.

I feel sure you will offer no objection to Lou's coming. I would like to give her all the pleasure I can, while I can.

Your loving son,

(Signed) Wm.

P. S.

The Old Dominion boat arrives here between 5 and 6 P. M. - leaves New York about 3 P. M. the afternoon before. The trip alone is well worth the price of

Nov. 22, 1887 - (Letter No. 2) - page 5

admission.

(Signed) Wm.

P. S.

I have forgotten to say, tho' it is of no importance just now to you, that you will find my partner for the next german at the Chamberlaines. She is a cousin and they paid me the compliment of asking me to be her partner, - she arrives next week sometime.

(Signed) Wm.

(Written on back of above letter - as follows: - ASF)

Dear Lou.

This letter was too much. I had to "cave". I would in your place go by the outside route. Telegraph Will when you leave so he will be sure to meet you. All well. Love to Florie. Addie & I will miss you in Phila.

(Signed) Poppy

Navy Yard,

Norfolk, Va,

Nov. 26, 1887

My dear Jones:

I find that I have only two sheets left on which to write you a note - but I will have more tomorrow - when I will have no time to write. I am very happy and contented just now and I owe it all and am deeply grateful to our splendid little friends - especially Mistress Mary. She has just paid me the handsomest compliment of my life - bless her warm little heart! and I will tell you about it. In the first place she pleased me very much by asking me to take her cousin (Miss Barker of New York) to the next german. She arrives tomorrow. This made me feel that we are "sure enough" friends.

My sister you know is now in Montclair N. J., with Mrs. Overton. Well, I conceived the idea of having her come down here to pay me a visit on her way home - staying at the Atlantic in charge of some of my shipmate's wives. I wanted her to take in one german. I mentioned the circumstance to the little girls, thinking how much pleasure it would give me to have my sister meet them. The next day, to my intense surprise, and delight, I re'cd a warm hearted, friendly and characteristic letter from sweet little Mary - written for the family - saying that my sister would not be allowed to stay anywhere else in Norfolk but 16 Bute, and asking

Nov. 26, 1887 - page 2

for her address that she might write to her. My sister has replied that she will come, and will arrive here next Wednesday evening by the Old Dom. Line, outside. You can imagine how much pleasure this will give me. I am filled with gratitude towards these lovely people. What have I ever done to deserve such an exquisite compliment? That they should regard me - a comparative stranger and unindorsed - with sufficient friendship and favor to invite my sister - "unsight, unseen" - to be their guest - that Miss Mary, who really was the one who did it, should so regard me is the sweetest morsel in a social way that has ever fallen to my lot. It was a total and absolute surprise. May all the blessings and joys in the world be her future lot!

My dear friend, this little maiden is the most exquisite little creature of my acquaintance, and the very personification of my idea of everything that a lady should be. I dont believe she ever had an unselfish# thought. The sweet little woman's pleasure seems to consist in doing that which will give others pleasure. I dont say this to please you by praising your friend - I fancy you know me better - for, from away down in the bottom of my heart I can say that this sweet girl is the finest and most finished character of my acquaintance. A man would with perfect confidence place his life in the palm of her tiny hand.

And when I think that this little woman has invited

Nov. 26, 1887 - page 3

my favorite big sister to be her guest, my heart is filled with gratitude; and with humility, to think what a poor thing I am, and how little I deserve such kindness. This is a big world, and there are many people in it; and our limited amount of logic and reading teach us that there are many such people - but I dont believe it all the same. Perhaps there are many nearly as good. But there is one thing I do believe with all my heart and intellect, and that is that the hearts of gold in the breasts of these pure women are the vital and moving forces in our civilization. You know what men alone descend to - in standing armies etc. It is the desire of all men for the good opinion of such women that keeps us all from ruin. Our mothers first and the girls afterwards. What a despicable wretch he would be who could go from the firesides of our "three lovely, friendly, faces" to the vices and dissipations of young men! How little the girls know their influence for doing good!

Well, old man we are lucky chaps to have made such friends; and I like best to think of you and Pete. as the men who dragged me over the river to meet them - tho' I fancy you knew there was a soft spot in my heart for you both before. It makes me all goose flesh to even think that I might have missed knowing these friends for the sake of the musty lore of my philosophies. I have tried to thank them all for this kindness, but, as you know, I have a lame old

Nov. 26, 1887 - page 4

tongue, and a slow brain, so I will make another try with a pen before we sail. I have spoken of Miss Mary almost exclusively, but I didn't intend to for I had them both in my mind. Miss Annie's heart is just as big, and just as kind and thoughtful, and she is altogether lovely. She delighted me by her kind remarks about my sister; and she was thoughtful enough to ask a certain Norfolk man who knows Nancy Shunk and Mrs. Overton to be her partner, so my sister and he would have mutual acquaintances. Miss Annie is very well indeed, and it does my heart good to see her looking so strong, pretty and happy. Miss Mary is, as usual, the picture of health.

I wish you could have seen them at the last german. There wasn't a girl there who could come within a million miles of them. All this is very pleasant, but I am getting to the end of my paper. Of course you must expect no general news this time - for this is only a note anyway, and besides I am not in the humor for such dry stuff as general news just now.

I received a most delightful letter from your mother a day or so ago - she is a sweetheart of mine now. Please drop me a line soon, even if you only have time for a line,

Always your sincere friend,

(Signed) Sims.

(The letter on the following page is enclosed in the same envelope with the above, - written on a scrap of paper. -ASF)

Nov. 26, 1887 - page 5

My dear Jones,

A remark of yours in your last letter has been running in my mind, viz. about your having a notion to send a page of my letter to the girls. Bless their little hearts you have my permission to do so whenever you have a mind, provided the page dont give away any of my secrets - if I ever wrote you any. They deserve more than I can ever manage to get on paper about them. They have exhausted my stock of commendatory adjectives long ago. Anything that will give them pleasure is good.

Your sincere friend,

(Signed) Sims.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,

Nov. 25, 1887

My dear Lou.,

I rec'd your telegram last evening saying that you will leave on Tuesday if Father dont object.

I know he wont object for I have written to him explaining everything. I think he is proud of us, for the friends he~~s~~ has won.

I telegraphed to you last night to leave on Monday if possible. That will land you here Tuesday afternoon, and give you Wednesday and Thursday to make acquaintances before the german. You have no idea how nicely they will treat you. I think your partner for the german will be Mr. John Tanner, who knows Nancy and Mrs. Overton - does the latter remember him - a man with a large jet black moustache? - a very good fellow indeed. All my friends know you are coming, and they will call on you. You will have a perfectly splendid time I know, and how delightful your visit will be to me!! I will be at 16 Bute three nights out of four - and perhaps the other night, and my shipmates call there constantly.

I have thanked the sweet little girls everyway I can think, also their Mother and Father, and they say they are delighted that you are coming - that they would not have you come here under any circumstances without

Nov. 25, 1887 - page 2

coming to their house.

How delightful this friendship is to me you cant imagine. It is quite the happiest event of my life.

I dont know what I have done to deserve such kindness. Please come on Monday if you can. We will meet you on the boat - all of us. Telegraph of course when you are coming.

In case of any mistake such as the telegram not reaching me etc. remain on the steamer - she remains here until about 12 P. M. - and send a message to me on the ship and another to Miss Mary Chamberlaine at 16 Bute, and we will come for me#. If wedont, then leave the steamer and go to the Atlantic Hotel. (only a couple of blocks from the steamer's wharf), where Mrs. Gheen# and Mrs. Lefavor and# staying.

I mention all this only in case any accident should happen to our messages - see?

God bless you. You dont know how happy your coming here makes me.

Please come Monday if you can.

Love to Mr. and Mrs. O.

Your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,
Nov. 25, 1887

Ny dear Louisa,

Your note reached me this P. M. I feel sure now that you can come. I telegraphed for you to come on Monday, but I didn't know there was no boat on that day.

I will meet you on Wednesday with the girls. I know you will fall in love with the sweet little women as soon as you see them.

I have called on all my friends during the last few days, and they all know you are coming. I say Miss Lily Leigh this afternoon, and she made me promise, for you, to go driving with her in her dog cart on Thursday afternoon, so you must go if you can. She is a very nice girl and a good friend of mine. I dont know whether I ever told you or not, but you must not expect to find Norfolk an attractive looking place. However, the people are very lovely and kind, and you will have a splendid time, and wont I enjoy seeing you have it!

You will arrive here just in time for dinner, as the dinner hour at the Chamberlaine's is 6.30.

The following are some of my friends. In the first place there is a member of the Chamberlaine family I have not mentioned, viz., Wm. C. the only son, a handsome boy of about 16. Next door to the C's lives

Nov. 25, 1887 - (Letter No. 2) - page 2

Miss Lizzie Taylor, a little girl, a debutant this year and the best singer in Norfolk.

Miss Bessie and Bland Taylor (sisters) two sweet little girls. Miss Annie Harmonson, Miss Lily Leigh, Miss Lily Newton, Miss Fannie Leigh, Miss Mary Taylor, Mr. & Mrs. Dixon. Mrs. Taswell (Mrs. Truxton's sister) Mrs. Geo. Taylot, Mrs. Hugh Page, Miss Jennie Parks, Miss Sophie Parkes etc. etc.

I mention these so the names will be familiar.

Chamberlaine is spelled with an E, and dont you forget it. Your partner (I am not quite sure he will be your partner yet) is named Tannor. Some of the other fellows you will meet are Fergus Reid (an old friend at the C's) , John Reed, (the handsomest man in the country) "Bird" Thompson, Mr. Moore, Mr. Gaines, Mr. Myers, Mr. Battle, Mr. Walke, Mr. Jim Doyle, Mr. Devreau Doyle, Mr. Allan Henkle, etc. etc. The fellows on our ship I think you know, viz., Paymaster Ball, Lieut. Mentz, Lieut. Lefavor, Ensign Kellogg, Ensign Sims, and Lieut Gheen our executive officer.

You will have a fine time, you may depend upon it.

Your loving brother

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,

Nov. 27, 1887

Monday evening

My darling sister,

There is no doubt about it. You simply must come here.

The entire Chamberlaine family have united to invite you to stay with them when you come here, and now I feel that I cant well stand the disappointment in my old age if you dont come. I am proud of you as you know, and I want them to see you, and you to have a good time. I feel that it is something for me and you to be proud of that I should have succeeded in making such friends of these lovely people.

Friends simply and purely. There is no sintiment# about the matter on my honor. Indeed you must not disappoint me, but telegraph to me at once, and come by the 25th. or 26th. so that you can make some acquaintances before the german. I need not tell you how lovely the girls, Miss Mary and Annie are, and their Father and Mother are equally so.

You will be perfectly at home five minutes after you meet them.

I cannot help feeling hurt as well as disappointed if you dont come.

Nov. 27, 1887 - page 2

Indeed you must, - for you will be glad of it all your life and so will I.

Please, please, please, please, please, say that you will come, and telegraph your answer at once.

Miss Mary, the eldest asked me for your address and will write to you at once - perhaps you will receive her letter with this. They will not hear of your going to the hotel. They could not have been more cordial in their invitation. My friendship extends to the entire family - for Mr. & Mrs. Chamberlaine like me very well. I have always showed them every attention, - they and their guests, and you see how they appreciate it.

I dont ever remember having desired anything so much, as I do that you should come down here. I cant bear to think of your disappointing me in this matter. Dont forget to telegraph im-mediately.

I have said all I can to make you come. If you love me as I do you you will come.

Always your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

P. S. I have written home about it asking them not to put anything in your way. I dont think it matters much if you dont meet Father & Addie in Phila. as you will see them so soon at home.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,
Dec. 1st., 1887

My dear Lou,

I enclose you Alf's. letter - and that's about all the news I have for you. It appears to be a trifle cold this a.m. I am afraid you wont enjoy your drive very much.

I find that the ball of my right foot is a trifle lame this morning, but I hope it will be all right by tomorrow eve.

I must have walked more yesterday than I thought - or perhaps stepped on a round stone.

Dont you feel already as if you had known the little girls a long time?

I dont know what time Friday I will be over but probably not until the afternoon - if then.

If my foot is not better then I will take a nap in the afternoon, so dont put yourself out waiting for me.

Your loving brother,
(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,

Dec. 11, 1887

My dear Louisa,

Your having been in Norfolk to visit my friends - now your friends also - seems to me like a dream. I have hardly yet recovered from the surprise of their asking you to be their guest.

Do you wonder that I was inspired to write an opera for them? I feel so grateful to them now that I would like to be sent to Alaska to get them a piece of ice. Every time I see them they tell me how much they liked you. I only hope they may be persuaded to visit you next summer.

I believe they dont usually leave home until about July, and perhaps I can be home by that time, as we will be North by April or May - not later than the middle of May - barring another war in the W. I. Alf finishes his college by June and he can be home, and perhaps bring Jack and Will Forbes with him. We boys could all bunk in the same room, and I am sure we will have good time. Perhaps Bromley Warton could come too, and we would have a party every night. I would go to Baltimore and meet the boat from Norfolk and bring them home.

Wouldn't this be fine, and wouldn't it be finer if they should take a shine to Mary and Adelaide. I

Dec. 11, 1887 - page 2

will see what I can do about it next spring, and will write to them all winter - as I have always done - and make the combs besides.

I am off duty now for three days and will see them every day - tonight I will go to tea there. Tell Father and Mother and all at home what sweet girls they are and ask them if we can invite them. I hope this will reach you in Phila. if not, it will be forwarded to you. Give my love to them all and tell them all about what a good time you had.

Always your loving bro.

(Signed) Wm.

P. S.

I will see that all your cards are delivered, where you had not time to call. Perhaps the girls will take me with them.

I will call on all my friends who called on me and thank them for their kindness. We had our steam trial the other day and will soon be ready for sea - and I think sail away - with one heavy heart - as soon as ready.

When you see the home people write and let me know what they think of your visit. It was the happiest week of my life, as you can well understand.

Love to all at 1409. Ask Jack and Will, and Brom. if they will come up next summer.

Y. L. B.

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,

Dec. 11, 1887

My dear old Jones,

It's no blarney that I'm given' you when I say that I've missed you much lately and thought of you often. Many things have happened during the past few days to give me more pleasure than I ever experienced before.

In the first place I received a letter from your Mother of which I am very proud, and which gave my Mother the greatest pleasure when I forwarded it to her. It is a great satisfaction for me to feel that I have a wee place in their hearts in Hanover.

Now you must know that I am in a hurry to say my say about our little friends. My associations with them and my sister have made me miss you more than ever before. If you and Miss Meem had been at the last german my happiness would have been complete. I can't begin to tell you how much I enjoyed my sisters visit.

It seems just like a dream. I have hardly yet recovered from the surprise of her being a guest at 16 Bute, and my leathery old heart is filled with gratitude towards them all, but especially that perfect little woman Miss Mary. She is clearly the leading spirit in the family, and I feel that the pleasure of my sister's being invited here is due to her - and it constantly runs in my mind, and is therefore

Dec. 11, 1887 - page 2

becoming a conviction that her kindness to me is due in a great measure to my friendship for you. Be that as it may, it pleases me to think so, and I am indebted to the kindness of the Chamberlaines for the pleasantest week of my whole life. There was nothing left undone that could give me and my sister pleasure, positively nothing. Both the girls and Miss Barker went to the steamer with me to meet her, and received her with open arms and kisses. You know how different Louisa is from them, and I was afraid they might not like her, but I am sure now that they do. They called her "Louise" from the start and made her perfectly at home and one of the family.

It seems to me that everybody in Norfolk called on her - the men, girls, and married ones. She arrived on a Wednesday evening. On Friday we went to the german - four couples strong. I was Louisa's partner. Of course it was the pleasantest german I ever attended, and the girls say it was one of the finest they remember. It is splendid to see how they treat a stranger here. Mr. Dickson the leader showed her every attention - introduced everybody to her etc. and she had a glorious time. I never saw Louisa looking better, and I received many compliments for her. After the german we had a fine lunch at 16 Bute - then the foot boat and the walk home - where you know I miss you so much.

Mr. Chamberlaine took the girls to the theatre one

Dec. 11, 1887 - page 3

evening, Pay'mr. Ball and I another evening. Then we had a breakfast on board - just the four girls and no chaperone except me. It was a bright warm day, the girls looked lovely, and it was a perfect success. They remained until 3 P.M. when we took them home. Lou. left last Thursday night on the steamer. Mr. Chamberlaine went to the boat with us, - for it was raining hard and the carriage would not hold the girls. He introduced her to the Capt. and Purser and did everything to make her comfortable. The capt. invited me to dinner with him. A couple of fellows came to see her off, and one of 'em sent her a handsome box of roses.

The little girls bid her bood bye in a way that warmed my heart, - kissed her again and again, said they wished she was their sister - I said I wished so too so that I might stoop away down and kiss their pretty little faces.

My letter won't give you much idea of the pleasure I have had, so you must exercise your imagination.

I feel now that I am a sure, sure enough friend, and am no longer treated as "company."

The day of the breakfast, as soon as we returned to 16 Bute, and the other fellows had left - I remained to dinner - Misstress# Mary busied herself finishing a letter, already quite voluminous, which when finished was very fat indeed - she gave it to me to post, telling me it was for you and to be sure and mail it. I met a postman on my way

Dec. 11, 1887 - page 4

to the ferry and put it in the bag myself, so I suppose you have it by this time. Perhaps the added part told you about the breakfast?

At all events it pleased me to know that you were to receive such a plump letter, a two stamper from such an undemonstrative little party. She is undemonstrative for as long as Miss Meem has known her she thought she was tolerated for Miss Annie's sake - that is not particularly liked by Miss Mary, until I chanced to see and tell her something that she says removed a weight from her mind and gave her the liveliest satisfaction, viz., that I saw Miss Mary, one day when she thought nobody observed her, take up Miss Meen's photo. and kiss it several times.

Now old man, I am at the end of my yarn. I know you are busy and all that, and I dont want to be exacting, but we have just tried our engines and must sail very soon, and I would like to hear from you before I sail away - with a heavy enough heart I can assure you. I wrote to you from Hanover, and once from here, and this is my third since hearing from you. Please drop me a line soon. I am delighted that you have followed my advise# and kept your friends in sight. Where would I have been today if I had not written to them? Certainly I would have been out a great deal of pleasure, and might have been an embittered woman hater sure enough.

Dec. 11, 1887 - page 5

You enjoy the very sincere regard of our sweet friends I can assure you, and I am sure it gives them the greatest pleasure to know that you remember them in the far west. Apropos of undermonstrativeness, seems to me you are pretty close for an amateur. Pete. says you are as close as an oyster.

It is 4 a.m. so I must close. May you have all the luck, and prosperity, and happiness in the world.

With much love,

Always your sincere friend,

(Signed) Wm. S. Sims.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,

Dec. 14, 1887

My dear Louisa,

Your note of the 12th. from Phila. reached me this evening. This morning at 4 a.m. I wrote you a note and I think I addressed it home, because I understood from your last letter that you would leave before my note could arrive at 1409.

This letter does not say anything about when you are going home, so I think I will send it to 1409 with a "please forward" on it. Now about the presents: I would like to give the little girls a little present, and I rather take a fancy to the pictures - if you think they will do.

Why not send them a present in common, with our cards? I will enclose you a card for that purpose and you can send the presents as xmas presents at once, for I would like to make sure they got my presents before I sail - and I am by no means sure we will be here until xmas. However, if you think best, you can send my presents to me, for me to give to them, and send them something for yourself.

Whichever you wish to do please let me know at once. My note of this morning will tell you what I have been doing today.

Dec. 14, 1887 - page 2

Mr. C., the Girls, Ball and I. went to Welldon and back again. We traveled in a special car - a regular house with kitchen and all - leaving Portsmouth at 11 a.m. Arrived at Welldon at 2 P. M. where we had dinner on board the car - roast beef, chicken, Lima beans, French peas, sweet potatoes, white potatoes, sardines, cherry cordial, sherry, preserves, oranges, & apples, etc. We started back at 3 P. M. and arrived here at 6.15. Ball took the girls home to dinner, and I came on board to finish my tour of duty. You can imagine what a pleasant day we all had. You can also imagine that I am tired, as I got up at 4 this a.m. have had no sleep yet, and cant turn in until 12 P. M. N. B. I was at 16 Bute last night and got to bed at 11.30.

With love to all at home,

Y. L. B.

(Signed) Wm.

Yantic,

Dec. 16 one a.m.

(W.S.S. adds "P. S. to Dec 14/87" -ASF)

My dear Lou.

With my usual business ability I forgot to enclose the card in my letter of last evening - or the evening before. I think you will find it in this letter. I am at present astandin' of the mid watch - have had tea, bread & butter, and cold chicken and am quite comfortable.

The german comes off tonight. Miss Barker & I are pards. I am quietly falling in love with her. We will all remember you at the Masonic Temple.

Love to all at home,

Write soon.

Your loving bro. .

(Signed) Wm.

P. S.

I rec'd my photos from Brooklyn - they are first rate and very well mounted.

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,

Dec. 18, Sunday

(W.S.S. adds in pencil "1887" - ASF)

My dear Lou,

I am on duty today but have time to scratch a line.

I am sorry to say that we will leave soon. I think about tomorrow a week. It is just possible we may be here until New Years, but not at all probable.

I went to the last german, and in consequence# am a little battered, tho' still in the ring. I danced the next morning in the Navy Yard to please Mrs. Brown, and it put a head on me. I am about well now. I was not a belle at the last german - too much attention in one place you know, but I had a very good time. I went with Miss Barker.

The girls often speak of you, but Mrs. C. most of all. She took a great fancy to you, and considers you a very desirable companion for her daughters.

I am sure you will be invited there again whether they can visit you or not.

You must write to them all.

I am too busy to write more. Love to all at home,

Y. L. B.

(Signed) Wm. S. Sims, (Wm.)

U. S. S. Yantic,

Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,

Dec. 20th. 2 a.m.

My dear friend, (Jones)

Your letter reached me today, and it warms my old heart towards you to think that you should have trusted me with the secret of your heart. On my honor there is nothing in the world that would give me so much pleasure and joy as to see you succeed in all your desires and I hope to live to bless the day. I am a drone and an idler without ambition or definite object in life, and the sweetest joy that could come to me would be to see my friends happy. I believe you know perfectly how I feel towards you. Your only rival in my heart is Pete. As for you both, I never doubted your friendship for a moment, and when I said you were oysterlike, I had in my mind your telling me after so many years of your idea about Nancy and me.

I received a letter from Baxter today in which he says that he and Capps were of the same opinion. Singular isn't it that you all should have thought so and the thought never enter my mind?

I thank you for telling me how you feel towards our dear little warm hearted friend. She is the best girl friend I have in the world, and you know just how much I think of her - sincere friendship, and thorough admiration. You have never said a word to indicate that you suspected that I felt

Dec. 20th. - page 2

more, and I have not read between the lines, nor would I mention it now if Pete. (to whom I have written fully as to you) had not asked me the question point blank whether or not I am in love with one of the girls. I replied sadly that I was not even the least bit in sure enough love with either of them, because I did not consider myself capable of such a thing - no more do I as you know. Perhaps it is best so.

One evening at 16 Bute we played "truth" (without personalities) and when it came my turn to answer Miss Mary asked me among other things if I had ever been in love with a girl. I replied "NO" when she told me frankly she did not believe me - and she does not now. I said "perhaps it is best so," having in my mind something that I do not remember whether I have told you or not, viz., that excepting being in love with a girl we are in exactly similar circumstances. My father is worth exactly nothing, that is he has nothing to leave the family, not even a house or a bit of ground. My eldest brother is married, my other brother at college, and there are three girls besides. Of course I feel now that it would be a pleasure to take care of them in case of my fathers death, but how it would be if I were in love I have no means of judging in my own case. I can only imagine that it would seem a hard and bitter world to love a sweet little woman, and not be able to tell her so.

Dec. 20th. - page 3

As for Miss Mary's feelings towards you I know nothing, and you know her well enough to understand that she is not the kind of girl to let her feelings be easily detected. Perhaps my wishes were father to my thoughts, but you remember on what I based my surmises in my letters to you last spring.

That is all, but I still firmly believe that you hold the warmest place in her dear little heart; and moreover I believe she understands something of your feelings towards her. Now as I have said I am not in love, and therefore perhaps not a fair judge, but if I were in love - with Nancy, for example - I think I would go to her and tell her so and explain my circumstances exactly; and if it so happened that she was disinterestedly in love with me, there would probably be a marriage for better or for worse. Or if I suspected her of being in love with me, and loved her myself, but thought it my duty not to marry, I would pay her the compliment of telling her so, and free her mind of doubt.

As for our fathers, there seems no reason to me why they should not live at least fifteen years more. And in half that time you may have a fortune. There is no one hopes so more than me. Your mother does not seem to think favorably of your coming back in the Navy in case your bill passes, her reason being as I understood her, that civil life was better for the developement# of character. Would you

Dec. 20th. - page 4

come back and make a cruise with me if you were reinstated?
Or would you rather have your character developed by hard
work?

I can understand how much you would like to be with us
all. I have had a very happy winter.

I suppose the gossips have lost faith in my engage-
ment to Miss Meem, and now put me down for one of Miss Marys
victims - Paymaster Ball is supposed to be very much in love
with Miss Annie.

We expect to sail soon probably after xmas and before
new years. Our cruise is Barbadoes, Trinidad, La Guayra,
Curacoa, Cartagena, Aspinwall, Havana, Key W., and H. Roads
by May 1st. When the schedule is out I will send you one,
and will expect a note occasionally, and will write often -
the burden of my song being no doubt how much I miss 16 Bute.

Bless their hearts they are more lovely than ever.

I give you my word I find it simply impossible to call
any place else of an evening. They keep track of my days
off duty, and scold me if I am even late.

I thank you with all my heart for your friendship and
confidence old man, and may every blessing and joy be yours.

With my best love I remain your most sincere friend,

(Signed) Wm. S. Sims.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,
Dec. 21, 1887

My dear Lou.

I have been expectin' a note from you to let me know what you are going to do about the xmas presents. Write soon, for we will be off for the W. Indies soon.

As nearly as I can make out we will sail between xmas and newyears - hard luck isn't it. We are only waiting for some stores to arrive from Boston to be off.

There is no particular news except that I am still having a good time as usual here. Tomorrow (Thursday) night the Shakespeare takes place, and I am going with Miss Barker. On next Tuesday night there will be a ball in the Navy Yard sail loft given by the ships.

If we are here I will go with Miss ^Mary. I am quite sure we will be here, and also quite sure we will sail before Dec. 30. the day of the xmas german.

The Chamberlaines are kindness itself, and still speak in the warmest terms of you.

I will send you a schedule of our cruise before we sail. The ports will be Barbadoes, Trinidad, La Guayra, Curacoa, Cartagena, Aspinwall, Havana, Key West, and Hampton Roads by May 1st.

Drop me a line soon, and please dont forget our little friends. They asked me last night when I had

Dec. 21, 1887 - page 2

heard from you, and I had to say "not for some time,"
and make excuses.

Your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,
Dec. 22nd., 1887

My dear Lou.,

I cant understand how you could have mistaken my letter, - if it arrived. You asked me if I would like either the pictures or the handks. to send to the little girls. I replied that I would, and preferred the pictures. I forgot to enclose a card, but sent it by next mail.

I think that must be plain. What I mean is this. I prefer the pictures if the presents are to be sent separately. I think however it would be best to send both the pictures and handkerchiefs together as a present from Mr. Wm. S. and Miss "Louise" Sims. However **either** way will suit me.

Please write to the girls soon, and tell them just what you think of them - it wont spoil them, and will only give them pleasure. They ask me every time I go there if I have heard from you. I know you are very busy, but half an hour less sleep will do the business. The girls are very fond of you, and particularly Mrs. C., and they would be pleased to know that you appreciate them.

I have called on all the people who called on you, and was exceedingly gratified at the compliments paid

Dec. 22nd., 1887 - page 2

you - everybody had something very complimentary to say about you.

I tell you this because I know it will give you pleasure, and I dont think it will spoil you.

You never do the like by me - if you ever have a chance - for I suppose you think I might be spoiled. However I am not very badly spoiled, for I held the bench down very extensively at the last german - which I take as a rebuke for not calling on anyone while you were here, and for going to the C's. so often. I dont care a cent. The gossips are rather inclined to think I am in love with Miss Mary, and Ball with Miss Annie ... perhaps the latter case is a true bill.

I sincerely wish I could be with you this xmas, but it is impossible as we sail about the 28th.

You will of course hear from me before I go.

Give my love to all at home, and tell them how much I would like to be with them,

Always your loving bro.

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,
Dec. 26th., 1887

My dear Lou,

There is no reliable news yet about our departure. We are ready for sea with the exception of a small steel rifle to be sent from Washington. We still hope it will not arrive in time for us to leave before new years. At all events we will be here until the 28th. which will allow us to go to the Hop in the sail loft.

I was at "the house" last night, Sunday, to tea.

I am delighted that we sent the pictures - they arrived in time, and were very much admired. On xmas morning I received a parcel by mail containing a dark green cloth shoe-bag from Miss Mary, a pincushion from Miss Annie, and a handpainted calendar from Miss Barker. So you see why I am glad we sent the presents. I wish you would paint something for Miss Barker. I gave her - unasked - one of my new photos.

The girls were all very lovely and kind last night, and you can imagine how sorry I will be to leave. I have my tears all ready - but will not let them prevent me having a good time until the final departure.

They all received many very handsome presents - too numerous to mention.

The Eute St. party on the night of the hop will

Dec. 26th., 1887 - page 2

be Mr. Ball & Miss Annie, Mr. Devreau Doyle & Miss
Barker, and Mr. Sims & Miss Mary.

I have no doubt we will have a very good time -
and how I wish you and Mary could be here.

I will let you know the schedule as soon as published.
Give my very best love to all at home, and wish
them for me a very merry xmas and a very happy new year.

Always your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm. S. Sims

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,

Dec. 28, 1887

My dear Louisa,

Your note reached me yesterday. You see the Yantic is still here, and now they say we won't sail until Jan. 3rd. Mrs. (Commodore) Brown gives a german of 15 couples on Monday evening 2nd. and young and frisky officers are scarce - SEE?

This week will be - has partly been - very busy. On monday night I went to the K. C. B. (Kid's xmas german) and didn't get to bed until 3 a.m. Last night our sail loft ball came off, and I got to bed at 2.30 and got up at 4 a.m. for the morning watch. I have gotten so I can do without sleep now.

The ball went off very well, and I # a very pleasant time; and I think the little girls and Miss Barker enjoyed themselves. All Portsmouth & Norfolk were there - about 400 people. On next Friday there is the xmas german - certainly plenty of dancing eh.? I am about ready to go to sea, tho', I will be very sorry to leave the little girls.

I enclose you a schedule of the cruise. You had better turn it over to Father, or get a stepladder and paste it on the ceiling.

I will write again before we sail - but have no time

Dec. 28, 1887 - page 2

now as I am on watch, and must turn in soon - I have
lots of sleep to make up.

Give my best love to all at home, and wish them
all a happy new year for me.

Always your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,

Dec. 31st., 1887

My dear Lou.,

We are almost gone, and will leave on the 5th. barring accidents - bad weather etc. This is just the time I said I would like to leave, when we thought we were going to leave long ago.

Of course I would like to remain all winter, and all next summer - but I only meant I would like to be here over the holidays.

This week has been very gay, - there is something nearly every night, and I have been taking in everything I could. My health is simply splendid, and I sometimes wonder how I stand what I subject myself to. I think the reason is that I take excellent care of myself - wear flannels, and drink no "rum." In order to be off duty on new years day, the 2nd. I am standing a second tour of duty with one day between them, and it has so happened that after every affair I have had the morning watch (4 to 8 a.m.) which keeps me up all night.

(25

Off duty	(26 German - up until 3.30 a.m.	
	(27 Sail loft ball - " 2.30 a.m.)) 1½ hours sleep
	(28 Morning watch 4 to 8 a.m.	
On duty	(29 1st watch - 8 P.M. to 12.	

Dec. 31st., 1887 - page 2

Off duty 30 xmas german - up until 3.30)
On duty { (31 Morning watch - 4 to 8 a.m.) No sleep
{ (1 Mid watch - 12 to 4 a.m.
{ (2 New Year's party - probably 3 a.m.
Off duty { (3 Probably something
{ (4 german " 3 a.m.
{ (5 Sail away - away - away.

The above shows you what I have been doing and am going to do this week.

I was up all last night and am writing now at 9 P.M.

Of course I take little naps during the day - and I dont feel or look used up a bit. I will get lots of rest when we sail away and will have a comfortable and pleasant cruise with six watch officers. A fine handsome Naval Cadet by the name of Bristol has just been ordered to the ship.

I am quite sure our Captain is going to be agreeable. He has found out that our executive officer is a fool, so we will not be troubled by him.

The little girls are just as sweet as ever, and never neglect to tell me how much they liked you. I will write to 'em often from the W. I. Miss Leigh told me at the german last night to give you her love and tell you she is sorry she could not take you out driving.

Dec. 31st., 1887 - page 3

I still receive many compliments for you.

I hope the little girls will visit you, and that you will visit them again.

Give my very best love to all at home,

Always your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

P. S.

When we sail away I will be able to write about something besides 16 Bute.

The following letters are imperfectly dated, but seem to belong with 1887. Most of them give the day of the month, but not the month itself. Rather than try and guess the right month, I have headed them as they appear in the letters, but suggest that if the letters are to be bound, they be arranged by each person as he sees fit.

Where the date, or part of it, has been added in pencil by W. S. S., I have indicated this by putting it in parenthesis.

Two of the letters in this group are completely undated, and are headed by the address only, (W. 23rd. St.) and I have numbered them 1 and 2.

ASF

Yantic,
Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,
Sunday 6th. '87

My dear Lou,

Your note arrived in due time, and I am delighted to hear that you continue to have such a good time. I wish I could be with you - tho' I have nothing to complain of in the way of good times just now.

You must go and see Mrs. Brewster soon. She likes me very well and wants to be friends with you. Please go and see her soon.

If you see Mrs. Farr (?) let me know what she has to say.

What has come over Loss. (?) I wonder?

I certainly disliked the man thoroughly, and wish to continue to do so, for I think that a person who would act as he did, would continue to do so unless it was to his interests to do otherwise. Perhaps you can find out what his scheme is now. Dont worry about me for I am having a "bully" time. The easiest duty I ever had, that is little to do and lots of time off duty, and the little girls to go and see, as well as all my old Norfolk friends.

I am a member of the german club, and quite in society. Our first german was last Friday night and I wish you could have been with us, also Mr. and Mrs.

Sunday 6th. '87 - page 2

Overton. It was one of the finest. We had a hot supper at 12, and danced until 1.30 a.m. My partner is the best dancer in town - can beat 'em all "hands down," that is "feet down." We danced all varieties of the waltze and polka, "three and a half" "deux temps" etc. etc.

The little "opera girls" were the prettiest little girls in the room beyond comparison, and their costumes were perfect. How you and Mary would have enjoyed the dance. We have one every other Friday.

No, you needn't worry about me, I am all right. I must say I am quite in love with both the little girls.

Tell Mrs. O. that I see Mr. Tannor quite often at the Chamberlaines - he took one of them to the last german. He remembers he and Nancy Shunk very will.

Miss Mary Walker says she knows of the late Miss Maxwell through the Parkers. Her engagement was announced in the New York papers, but she still denies it.

Dont forget me, and drop me a line soon,

Your loving brother

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,
Wednesday 14, 87

My dear Lou.,

I am sorry you had such bad luck with your steamer - but it's all over now, and the roses lasted until you got to Phila.

I haven't been doing anything particular since you left, except standing watch, and going to 16 Bute when off duty. Was there Sunday to tea. Went to town Monday to make a lot a calls, went to 16 Bute first and remained there to dinner and until 11.15 P. M. However I got in the calls on Tuesday (yesterday). Monday evening I asked Miss Mary to go and see the Little Tycoon with me. She accepted, but afterwards declined on account of a rehearsal, so I asked Miss Barker. Then the rehearsal was postponed, so I went with Miss B. and Miss M. had the flowers - and an engagement for Tuesday evening with - who do you think? Why Scrini. Last evening as I was coming back to dinner Mr. C. rapped on his office window in the bank, invited me in, and asked me to go with him - and the girls - on a trip in a special car about 80 miles on the Seaboard and Roanoke R. R. I was on duty, but the Kid took my watch and I am going. It is today, from 11 a.m. until 6 P. M.

Ball goes with us, and I expect we will have quite

Wednesday 14, 87 - page 2

1000
a picnic. They all said how much they wished you were still here to go along. The German comes off Friday - Ball & Miss Mary, Devreau Doyle & Miss Annie, and Sims & Miss Barker. A supper german.

They all often and often speak of you - especially Mrs. C., who says the most splendid things about you, and seems to think you a very desirable companion for her daughters.

Sweet Miss Annie says she would like me to see what she wrote to Miss Meem about you, but that she couldn't tell it to me to my face. You may be sure they all like you very much. I do hope they may be persuaded to visit you next Summer, but of course they can't promise so far ahead.

We are about ready to sail, but hope the Dr. may get our orders delayed in Washington - he is there now.

Give my best love to Adelaide & Mary, and all at home.

Your loving bro.

(Signed) Wm.

Mt. Jackson,

Sunday,

(W.S.S. adds in pencil "1887?" -ASF)

My dear Lou,

It was rather a skimpy note I sent you yesterday, for you must know I am very busy - having a splendid time.

Miss Meem and Miss Slaughter have gone to Sunday school, and Miss Annie and I are at home. I haven't much time to write now, as I have just written three letters I was obliged to write and they will be back soon.

When I have time I will tell you what a splendid place this is. The Valley from Harper's Ferry down is the most beautiful I have ever seen, and quite the richest. I have never seen such crops.

Strathmore contains about 1200 acres, nearly all under cultivation and about 350 head of stock. The General buys cattle during the summer and sends them to Baltimore and New York in Winter. 190 head arrived since I have been here.

This is part of the Mount Airy (?) estate that used to contain 5000 acres "fo de wah."

Miss Meem took me to see the old Mt. Airy house - a splendid old gray stone building. On the plaster between the stories we found names and dates away back in 1820. I am told that in the old days they used to

Sunday, 1887? - page 2

have as many as 30 girls and 30 young fellows visiting at once! with horses for everybody! Think of the spoonin'!

This country about here, was, you know, one great battle field, and swept by one army or another all the time.

Mrs. M. lost two brothers and General M. two..

It must have been very bitter. This valley was the base of supplies until Sheridan laid it bare.

Monday morning.

I was interrupted here by the return of the girls. The# brought back a sorry story of the robbery of the Sunday school banks. Each class has a little safe, and the little ones bring a penny each sunday, the banks to be opened on Easter and xmas.

Some fiend stole all. What do you think of that!

I sealed some money (\$2.-) in an envelope addressed it to Miss Meem's Class with the compliments "of a sailor" - the envelope to be opened at xmas.

On Sunday Miss Annie and I took a long ride. I wish you could see her on horseback.

I tried to write you a letter, I really did, but the girls are all chattering - and beside we are going riding soon, so you must excuse me. Write me a note to the ship and tell me all about Mother, Alf, and Florence. With love to all at home,

Your loving brother

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.

Sunday 2nd., 1887

(W.S.S. adds in pencil "Oct?" - ASF)

My dear Lou.,

Your long looked for letter arrived today, but contained none of the information. I have written to you three times for. Among a number of other things I asked you the time of the wedding, about a hotel etc. etc. but you say nothing about them.

Tell Florie I am sorry, but I will not be at the wedding, as I intend to go home direct from here. I will probably start tomorrow evening and go by way of Baltimore. I am in no condition for weddings, for I am quite sick. I have had a low fever until today, and am wretched - my head is in a terrible condition and I can only sit up a little while. If I am not better tomorrow I will not start until next day.

Your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

Hanover Academy,

Taylorsville, Va.

Sunday 13, 1887

In your Uncle Hilary's
Office.

My dear old Jones,

I have only time to drop you a line - and I will not reproach you for not answering my last Norfolk letter, for I understand that you are very busy. I will say, however, that a sweet little maiden in Norfolk asked me if I had heard from you lately.

Pete is home on a few day's leave, and I am here on my long promised visit. I came up last Saturday, and will return tomorrow Monday.

I have not time now to tell you my impressions of Hanover, but will do so later. So I will only say now that my reception could not possibly have been more pleasant. You will understand me when I say that I can't realize that I have not known your and Pete's families always. I feel that they are all friends of mine. This evening I am going to your house for tea. Last evening we had an impromptu dance at Hilary's and enjoyed a very merry time.

Pete (who says you haven't written to him for some time) has to return to the Bache on the 15, and proceed thence to New York to join the Nipsic. I shouldn't be

Sunday 13, 1887 - page 2

surprised if I applied for orders to the Nipsic - I will have to consult my family first.

You can well imagine how we have all talked of you, and wished you could be here now. I have had a long talk with your Mother about you, and she don't favor your coming back in the Navy - wherein I dont agree with her. Pete and I your Father and Uncle H. went for a long walk this morning when you were also fully discussed. I need not say how delightful it would be to me if you were here now. I understand from your Father and Mother that your prospects are rather improving - that you are becoming valuable to your employers - please write me something about it.

I cannot explain to you now how much I am enjoying this visit. Last night I made Pete come and sleep in my big bed, and we chinned until about 2 a.m. - and the last thing I heard when I went to sleep was the girls talking overhead. If you had been here there would have been plenty of room in the bed for you.

Please write to me soon, and believe me

Always your sincere friend

(Signed) Sims

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va.,
Friday, 21, '87

My dear Lou.

I must drop you a line tho' I haven't much time for writing just now.

After you left, Nancy and I walked up town, and I went to the Balton House. As soon as I had slicked up and put on my best clos. I went to the Shunks to see the baby. He is really a wonderful little fellow, and made friends with me at once. I saw Mrs. S. and Nancy's sisters.

At 6. P. M. Nancy and I went to Mrs. Cann's for dinner. Paymaster Cann went to the train to meet me but missed me, and they thought I wasn't coming, and had about given me up. Mr. and Mrs. Bent (Mrs. Cann's sister), Miss Bent a young girl, Mr. and Mrs. Cann, Barry Cann, Nancy and I made up the party. Mrs. Cann was as handsome and entertaining as ever, and the dinner was splendid. Mr. Bent stood up to carve the beef, and the servant moved his chair out of the way, and he sat down where it used to be and disappeared through a curtain into the next room - all to Nancy's intense amusement.

After dinner we played cards, smoked etc. etc. and about 10 P. M. I took Nancy home, where she enjoyed

Friday, 21, '87 - page 2

herself immensely telling the family about Mr. Bent's tumble. Then I went back to Cann's and played cards and talked over old times for some time longer. The next morning I saw Mrs. Cann again, and went to Nancy's for lunch. After lunch she took me to call on Helen Boas. Helen looks just the same as ever. She is to be married the middle or first part of next month, and the cards will be out soon.

Then we went to call on Miss Keeling, and if she had been in Nancy says they would have sung me a duet. Possibly Nancy would have sung Marguerite, etc. But she wasn't in so I didn't hear the singing.

I left that afternoon at 3.50 and reached Norfolk the next morning at 9.30. I found the Yantic in the dry dock, but we go out today.

There is now news from here. I haven't heard from Pete Jones yet.

I suppose you saw in the papers that Capt. Green will be relieved by Capt. Heyerman about the first of next month. I hope the new Capt. will turn out agreeable.

I have been over to see the girls in town and found them quite as lovely as ever, - but I would like them better if I didn't have quite so far to go.

I will send this to 489, as I dont know the Mont-clair add.

Friday, 21, '87 - page 3

Write me a note soon and give it to me. Give my very best regards to the Overton family and tell me how the new house comes on.

Always your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic

Navy Yard, Norfolk,

Monday evening 24,

(W.S.S. adds in pencil "1887" - ASF)

My dear Louisa,

I just thought I would write you a few lines, as I feel a trifle lonely. There isn't any Norfolk news to speak of. I have been over to see the little girls of course, and find them quite as lovely as ever - it's a pity the girl from the Valley isn't here, isn't it?

The Germans (2 each month) commence next Friday, and I guess I'll take 'em in if I can find a girl to go with me.

I had about given Lemme up as lost when along came a letter from him. He asks me if I dont feel that I am getting into the sear and yellow leaf when I see so many of my old friends getting married, and he enumerates a number including Miss Maxwell and Miss Shunk, so I fancy he thinks Nancy has just been married. I wrote him a long letter today and told him all the news. He seems quite happy in New Orleans, says he will remain there until next spring, then thinks he will go to the torpedo school, and then go to sea; so I suppose he isn't going to resign, as he was growling about doing some time ago.

How does the Montclair house come on. I am waiting

Monday evening 24, 1887 - page 2

to hear from you. If you dont write soon I will drop Mrs. Overton a note and tell her to make you. By the way what are Mr. Overton's initials (I have mislaid the cards) and the Montclair address. I am comparative-ly comfortable, but still a little homesick.

Give my best regards to Mr. and Madame Overton,

Always your loving brother

(Signed) William.

P. S.

I have been writing a letter home every evening, but I fancy it has kind of paralyzed them, for they haven't replied yet.

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
W. 23rd St. New York.

My dear Lou.

I underscore the "W. 23rd St.," because if your telegram had been addressed there I would have rec'd. it in time, and perhaps could have met you. It was delivered at "Station E," and came to me through the mail after 8 P. M. I am very sorry not to be with you today, but there are only two, out of our twelve officers on board, of one of whom I am which. I am off duty Monday and Tuesday. We sail I think Tuesday afternoon, but I may have to be on board Tuesday morning.

I would like to have Florie, Nancy, and you to breakfast with me tomorrow, Monday, morning at 11.30. I can meet you at the foot of W 23rd St. You can bring one or two others, as we can accomodate five. Of course there is no necessity whatever of a chaperone, to keep you all straight, for we are quite a decent lot of fellows here. Perhaps Theo. and Miss Peltreau would like to come. I would like very much to have them. I will return to 489 with you.

I want you to come very much, and will be really disappointed if you dont come.

Telegraph at once whether you will come or not, and make up the party afterwards.

Tomorrow is sure to be a fine day.

W. 23rd St. New York - page 2

Please come like dear good nice girls.

If you come you must be on time. Be at the foot
of W 23rd St at Eleven when I will meet you.

It is nearly 1.30 ^h ^m from 489 to W 23rd St.

You had better commence about 4 a.m. to get ready.

Your loving brother

(Signed) Wm.

I will expect your answer every minute.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Off W. 23rd. St.,
New York,
N. Y.

My dear Mother,

I have changed my address. It is now "Off W 23rd. St.," instead of "Station E."

Yesterday I was badly left by the latter address, and will never use it again. It was just this way. Yesterday Lou. left Annapolis for New York. When she arrived in Baltimore she sent me a telegram to meet her in Jersey City at 9.10 P. M. It was addressed to "Station E" and was delivered there, where it was mailed. I received it too late and could not meet her.. However, of course, she let Florie know she was coming - I got a letter from Florie telling me so - and doubtless she met her. I am on duty today, Sunday, but will be off Monday and Tuesday. We sail Tuesday afternoon for New Haven, thence to Boston for one week, and then to Portland, Maine, for the 4th. I have sent a letter to 489 inviting Lou, Florie, Nancy Shunk, Theo. (Florie's brother) and a Miss Peltreau to come to breakfast tomorrow at 11.30 a.m.

I expect a telegram every minute to let me know if they will come. I think they will, and we will have a jolly time. I will return with them to 489 to spend

Off W. 23rd. St. - (Letter No. 2) - page 3

What do you think about it? This girl told me a feller told her she was a "caulker." And she is, sure enough. She is the toughest looking girl I ever saw - looks very dissipated. Her eyes look like a man's, who has been on a week's bat.

She says she dont get to bed once a week before 2, or 3 a.m. and I believe her. What do you think of that for a girl. Mrs. B. says there are lots of men running after her and that she plays snap the whip with them. There are queer people in this world.

I intended to go and see Mrs. Edward Patterson, but in Phila. I heard that they had gone into the country.

You will see an account of our proposed cruise in today's Herald. I dont know how much truth there is in it, but I fancy it is about right.

I will drop you another line before I go.

Tell Adelaide that everyone has asked very kindly after her. I gave Mrs. Brewster some copies of the Star, and she wants one of Addie's pictures. Have you got any more of them?, and if so will you send me one.

Give my love to all at home,

Your loving son,

(Signed) Wm.

P. S.

You can address your answer to New Haven, Conn.