

Copy.

*This date must be
wrong - See letter
of Jany 1, 1887 -
Probably 1886*

U. S. S. Yantic,

Norfolk, Va.,

Jany 4, 1887

(1888)

1886

To my very good friends

The Misses Chamberlaine,

Before I sail away I want to thank you both for the pleasure you have given me during my visit to Norfolk - a pleasure, of which I am sure you can form very little conception, because I know you can little realize the isolated nature of a wandering life with its brief and fragmentary acquaintances, and consequently few real friends. To understand this at all you must remember that since I was about your brother's age I have been cut adrift from my home - only a visitor there at long intervals. At first shut up in a strict military school for four years, then on a ship for seven more; that a few days or weeks is the most I have ever seen of any place and its people; that I have met many persons, but for so short a time that acquaintance was hardly commenced before it was broken, and others followed, leaving a misty recollection of faces and names, and even these fading away or entirely forgotten; that

* Added in pencil later by W. S. S. - ASF
(WSS was not on the Yantic in 1886)

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I have seen only the outside, the society manners, and party dresses of these people, and have heard only their small talk, and experienced only their conventional courtesies, and been made "company" of; that I have seen in all this time (and that very seldom) but brief glimpses of homes and people whom I have felt it would be a pleasure to know; that during long intervals I have had no other companions than the shipmates chance has thrown me with, and my books - in fact the word companion has lost its meaning for me as applied to any man outside my naval acquaintances - I am "Mr. Sims" to everyone else.

Perhaps it is unfortunate I have remained at sea so long.

You can readily understand that such circumstances and surroundings must develop a very different character and tastes from those of one who has lived in the same place always, and grown up with the companions of his childhood, but I am quite sure you can never realize the sweetness of a little friendship and kindness to one so placed.

Suppose, for example, that after the winter the swatara# spent here (when I say much more of you than I often see of anyone) I had never returned to renew the acquaintance. In that case I must have dropped

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out of sight, as I could never have hoped to maintain the interest of those whom I never saw again.

And that would have been but a repetition of what my experience has been - except that in the very few weeks of our acquaintance I seemed to know you so much better than anyone I had ever known for such a short time. It must be plain to you that one so placed would be in danger of having his disposition soured, and social inclinations blunted to the degree of convincing him that society would only be a bitterness and disappointment, and that *le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle*. This is what I used to tell the Jones boys, and that was about about# the condition of my mind when I met you. And since that time I have received from you both so many kindnesses (that I remember in every detail, but which I can readily understand you do not) - that I feel, I can assure you the most sincere gratitude.

When you understand all this you may be able to form some idea of the exquisite pleasure your friendship and kindness has given me. I have too lame a tongue to tell you how much I appreciate it, nor have I any idea I can do so with a pen to my own satisfaction, but I can try.

That my heart is filled with gratitude, first for the privilege of your friendship, and then for your

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many kindnesses you must believe.

Miss Meim (?) was kind enough, in speaking of this, to pay me the compliment of saying that she had no doubt the balance of pleasure was about equal.

That was very kind of her; but if I imagined that she or you really thought so, I would say you know very little of men. You are mistaken if you imagine they lie awake nights thinking what they can do to give others pleasure. No - you dont know 'em - they sleep like tops, and in the morning they do that which pleases them most. If I were conscious of having sacrificed a single inclination or done anything that was not a pleasure to me, I might be persuaded that there was a balance of some kind, but I am not. My every association with you both has been a pleasure and a privilege the like of which it has never been my good fortune to experience. Perhaps only from lack of opportunity, but from whatever reason the fact remains that I am almost entirely unused to the friendship of girls and to kindness from them.

All this I feel for myself. It was a source of pride and gratification to me to be able to say even to myself, "These splendid little women allow me to be their friend," and the evident pleasure your visits on board ship have given my shipmates and their many complimentary # to me about you cannot have gratified

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you more than they did me. It has been one of my greatest pleasures to write our mutual friends the Jonesii and Baxter an account of my visits here. I dont include Miss Miem (?) in "our mutual friends" because she is one of the little maids, and is included in all these remarks. I am and always have been proud of my friends, and my sister Louise, - my chum in the family - has been my confidant. She was well acquainted with the "three little maids" long before she came to Norfolk, and if she would could tell you how very proud I was of you.

From the time I first knew you I wanted to "make friends" - as the children say - but it was a long time before I could persuade myself that I was so regarded.

I am afraid I can't make you realize how different it is with me from a man who always lives ashore in one place. To the latter most of his acquaintances are friends, while to me the world is full of strangers and mere acquaintances.

This puts one in a position to appreciate thoroughly the first evidences of friendship; but naturally to suspect everything of being a conventionality - having been accustomed to little else.

You don't know how much pleasure it gave me when you asked me to take Miss Barker to the German; or told me I would be expected every night off duty; or pretended

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to scold me for coming late; or siad you were afraid I would like some other girls as well; or invited me to tea Sundays, etc. These were great pleasures for me, and I wish you to know how much I appreciate them.

As for my sister's visit to Norfolk, I don't think I have quite yet recovered from the surprise and delight of your asking her to be your guest, and being so hospitable and kind to her. Such a thing never for an instant entered my mind.

It really all seems like a dream, and as though I could easily be persuaded that I am mistaken in thinking she was here at all.

You need not tell your Father, but your Mother's kindness to Louise, and the many nice things she has said to me about her have so completely won my heart that I am head over heels in love with her.

Nothing since I was born has ever given me so much pleasure as this. If you had known her and liked her for herself it would have been different, but she was a stranger, and you accepted her as such from what you thought you knew of me. There is nothing that I could imagine that could be so gratifying to a man, and above all to a man whose relations to society have been such as I have attempted to explain above.

That I, a thick headed sailor could ever have done

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anything to deserve such kindness, I know to be impossible; so I can only conclude that you were prompted by your own kind little hearts, and the pleasure you always seem to take in doing that which gives others more pleasure.

I hope I have made myself clear, because I want you to understand that I not only thoroughly appreciate this and everything you have done for me, but that I am sincerely and deeply grateful for it all - and you need never try to make me think I should feel otherwise, for you can never succeed.

I have written nothing here but the plain truth, and I want you to believe it, for I know you have the kind of hearts that will be gratified by the knowledge of having given another so much pleasure.

If I have said or done things that you did not like or understand, I am sorry, and can only ask you to believe in the integrity of my intentions, and to remember that one who has really seen so little of society as I have must necessarily be clumsy and ignorant about many things.

I have followed my inclinations exactly with regard to coming to 16 Bute (?) this winter, and I have not been without my suspicions that perhaps I have taken your invitations too literally, and thereby

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occasioned you some annoyance. I would not for anything have you think I had presumed on your kindness in any way, tho'. I am aware my conduct on several occasions has placed me under suspicion.

I knew perfectly well at the time that it was not right to come early in the afternoon and remain until 11 P. M. - but I was weak enough to do it, And once or twice for the same reason I have asked permission to remain to dinner, and it has been worrying me ever since, so I want to "fess up" and go south with a clean score.

Tomorrow we start on our long cruise South.

When I will see you again I cant say for sure.

I sincerely hope soon - this is a hard business of mine - But over all the thousands of miles of blue sea I will sail before then, let me assure you the little Yantic bears a real friend to whom the execution of any commission you could ask would be a pleasure.

Please give my kindest regards to your Father, Mother and Wm. (?), and believe me always

Your very sincere friend,

(Signed) Wm. S. Sims

U. S. S. Yantic,
Port of Spain,
Trinidad,
Feb. 4, '88

My dear Lou.,

The mail has just come in, but as the Yantic is just going out, I will not have time to write you a sure enough letter, but will do so from Curacao, and perhaps make as good time.

I enclose you a photo. book for your own sweet self, for I suppose Addie will want to keep hers, and you may want one as a curiosity. Show it to Madame Florie when you go "home," as I hope you will do soon, and tell me what she says about it - the scraped face. Send one copy to Alf. to let him see it.

I rec'd by this mail a very lovely and kind letter from little Miss Mary, in which she says that they appreciated the letter I left for them - a copy of which I sent you. It reached the house in a few minutes after I left them at the corner. I dont wonder that the gossips think I am in love with one of them, for I think it rather strange myself that I am not. Even old Pete suspects me, and tho'. I answered a point blank not long ago in the negative, he has just asked me again in a letter I got here, and again I will have to disappoint him.

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I rec'd a very kind and friendly letter from Miss Thompson. I pity her from the bottom of my heart. She is young yet, but has shut herself in entirely from the world, and lives for the dead, and her religion.

Tell them all at home that if they write as soon as this mail arrives I can get a letter at Aspinwall, but they will have to look sharp. Alf wrote me one of his bright breezy letters, but put a 2¢ stamp on it and stuck his poor old brother for "thruppense" (six cents) at this end. It does my heart good to hear such good accounts of him - he seems to be a sunbeam wherever he goes. Such people make this world worth living in, and help us clams along.

This is not a letter, only a promise. I will write from Curacoa. With love to all at home,

Your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Aspinwall, U. S. C.,
Feb'y. 28 '88 .

My dear Lou.,

The steamer arrived yesterday noon with our long looked for mail, but brought nothing for me. Not a scrap except a couple of old forwarded letters, and two Nations.

Of course I was bitterly disappointed, for it never occurred to me that such a thing could happen.

I wrote 12 or 13 letters from Barbados, and the steamer reached New York on Feby 9th. Everybody on board got answers to their letters, even from as far west as St. Paul, and as I received none to any of my letters, I can only conclude that my mail did not leave Barbados until the next steamer - and that, consequently you did not know that we would arrive here earlier than the schedule time - as I informed you in the Barbados letters.

The next steamer arrived in New York the 19th., I see by the papers, so that you must have the letters by this time, also those from Port of Spain, and Curacao.

I hope you will not answer them here, for if you do we will miss them until I dont know when. I stamped my letters myself in Barbados, and put them in a street letter box, the rest of the mail went to the P. O. It

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is all extremely unfortunate.

For more than a month I had been looking forward to receiving answers to all my letters - all from home, from Alf, Mary, Miss Barker in New York, Miss Thompson, and the little girls. My mail must have been delayed for surely I would have received a letter from somebody out of all these. Isn't it too bad. I feel just like gettin' on a big drunk.

I dont know what the little girls will think of me, for they rec'd and answered a letter from Ball, but not a word from me.

If any impecunious nigger in Barbados destroyed my letters for the postage (about \$2.50) I hope he may die in mortal agony - and the next time I go there I will put a penny stamp on his head stone and spit on his grave.

But I suppose there is no use growling about it - tho' I swar# quietly but earnestly whenever I think of it - which is all the time just now.

You can imagine that I am not in the humor to write much of a letter, but I will tell you what we have been doing since leaving Curacao - which isn't very much.

We went direct from there to the Gulf of Venezuela, and were there about one week making a survey. We "ran in" the coast line on the Eastern side of the gulf, and

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made a survey of the only good harbor on the coast - where we found a small fishing village. I dont think a man-of-war has been there for a great many years, for they seemed to think the Yantic was something tremendous. The officials came off to see us, and were shown about the ship. Among other things we showed them a clear block of ice about two feet square. The big man of the village put his hand on it and jumped back as if he had been burned, and looked at his hand. They had never seen any before, and I dont think they have any idea now what it was, or why we kept it so carefully packed away in blankets.

From this little harbor we went to the entrance of Lake Maracaibo, which we had some difficulty in finding as it is not placed correctly on the charts. We found that there was only 10 feet of water in the channel so we had to remain outside a couple of miles. A tug came out bringing a general and a brass band, and they came on board to have a look at us, and gave us some Venezuelan music. There was such a heavy sea running in over the bar at the entrance of the channel that we could do no surveying with our open boats, so we skipped out, steamed out of the Gulf of Venezuela, and made sail for Aspinwall and four days later we were anchored here. We made the trip under sail entirely,

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and made a splendid run before the regular trade winds. The only thing that varied the monotony of the trip was catching a shark. We had a new steel hook made with a very sharp barb and I baited it with a piece of pork and let it trail out about 100 yards a stern.

I watched it for a couple of hours, but concluded that we were going too fast for sharks, so turned in for a nap, leaving the line over. In a little while a shark nabbed it, and after a very exciting time was got on board by means of a bowline (slip noose) around his body. She - for it was a lady shark - made things lively and scattered the sailors right and left, until struck over the head with an iron bar. Of course they cut her open as they always do, and we found that we had caught eight sharks instead of one, for there were seven little fellows inside. They were as spry and lively as crickets. They were about 15 or 16 inches long, and very graceful. I felt sorry for the little fellows, tho'. the old shark was a vicious looking beast with many rows of terrible looking teeth. She was about seven or eight feet long.

Everything is perfectly quiet on the Isthmus, and the city of Aspinwall is very much improved in every way - so is the R. R., for they have a new Supt. who has discharged all the old gang and stopped the stealing.

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We have nothing particular to do here, but are ordered to remain ten days.

We intend to sail promptly when our 10 days are up - on the 6th - for we are afraid that the Admiral may come in any time and prevent our going to Havana - our next port. We will arrive there in about 7 days, say the 13 or 14 and remain about five days.

This letter leaves here on the 5th. or 6th., arrives in New York on the 13 or 14 and in Orbisonia on the 15 or 16. You might possibly get a letter to me in Havana, but it would not be sure, so you had better address to Key West, where there is a mail every other day now.

Now please, when you write mention all the letters that have been received since we sailed, so that I will know whether any of my letters have been lost or not. **SEE?** Give my very best love to all at home, and tell me all the news when you write.

It is quite comfortable here now - rains very seldom, and is not so very warm. We go alongside a dock tomorrow for coal, then go behind the terre-plein to avoid the swell that rolls into the harbor. We will be very comfortable there.

When are you going home again - to Florie's? Have you seen Nancy since she returned from Wash? Have you

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heard from the little girls.

Tell me all these things when you write - you
cant imagine how I thirst for a little news from those
I love - not that I quite love all the above.

Always your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

P. S. My health is perfect.

U. S. S. Yantic

Aspinwall, U. S. C.

March 4 '88

My dear Jones,

When the Yantic arrived here I found that not a single one of all my letters had been answered tho' there was plenty of time, and I have come to the conclusion that my mail - which I put in a street box in Barbados - missed the steamer. At all events I was bitterly disappointed, and have not the heart to write you a letter just now, but will write from Havana or Key West.

I think I promised to send you a copy of the letter I left in Norfolk for the little girls. I wrote it from time to time before leaving so had the rough notes - here it is.*

Bless their hearts, I expected to have answers to my letters here but received none - I dont know what they thought of me for not writing. However they have my second letters by this time and unless the first mail was lost they have that too, and I will hear from them soon. I have heard from Miss Meem twice. She is having a splendid time in Birmingham.

You can answer this to Key West. Tell me all the news, especially if there is a good prospect of your bill going

*Copy of letter to the Misses Chamberlaine is enclosed, but as I have copied it elsewhere (in family letters) I do not include it here. - ASF)

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through this congress. Niblack is working our bill, but I have not much hope of success.

Did Pete. give you any general address for South America (West Coast)?

I am sorry to write you such a miserable note, but I am sadly out of spirits about my mail, and will promise to do better next time.

I am in perfect health.

With much love,

Your loving friend

(Signed) Sims.

U, S. S. Yantic,

Havana, Cuba.

March 17 '88

My dear Father.

I enclose you a very sweet letter from one of your daughters - just to let you see it - for I have not given her any encouragement in the matter of a riding horse, tho'. I once used my political influence to get a play house built. It is a very fine letter all the same having affection, flattery, logic etc. combined very adroitly. If I had any money I would be tempted to buy her a horse right away quick, but money is very scarce down this way.

Apropos of money, if I had any I would buy you some cigars, but I haven't.

I received a letter from old Nibs. saying that he is trying to work the Ensign's bill, but, somehow I haven't much hope of its going through. Nibs things# he can succeed and he has my best wishes.

I also have news that my claim for longevity is all right, but I am in doubt as to how much I will receive. It has been decided - tho'. I think rather unjustly - that Cadet service don't count as "previous service" so the best that can happen is to have my service counted from the time I was graduated - '80. Then my pay (increased) would commence in '85 and I

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would get \$600. that is \$200. each year since '85. But if they count my cadet service as extending to '82 - as I am afraid they will - my increased pay dont commence until '87, and I will only get \$200, but all the same I will be on my second five year's pay - \$1500. counting my ration. We (Ensigns) gave out claims to a lawyer in Wash. to collect - he drew up the original bill and put us on to the racket. I will write to him and ask him about it and let you know.

At all events I think I had better go to sea until I am a Lieut. (j.g.) when my sea pay will be \$1700. and my shore pay \$1500, when I can afford to live ashore; that will be in about $3\frac{1}{2}$ years. I would like to go on a foreign station, but dont know whether I would manage it or not. I think there is little doubt but that the "Dept." would give me leave for a considerable time, before I started another cruise provided I could get ordered to a ship going to a foreign station.

I would like of course, to go to Europe.

At all events, I think I had better remain here until next fall. Alf. I believe finishes in June, and I will require three or four months to clear away my small debts to you \$88. + my mutual aid assessments etc.

In Mother's last letter she seems to have set her mind on my getting a year's leave as soon as I come

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North and going to Canada. I would be extremely sorry to disappoint her as you know, but I dont see how it can be avoided. Of course it will be as much of a disappointment to me as to her; but I took a contract to put a boy through college so I cant expect to cut a watermelon every day.

Of course there are no regrets about this whatever. I regard what I have done for Alf. with the utmost satisfaction - nothing has ever gratified me so much. Jno. Sims said in his last letter "Alf is a fine boy, and I am proud of him." and I think we all have reason to be the same. Please explain to Mother how I am fixed. And try and make my peace with Addie, for I am very much afraid she will be sadly disappointed with me for not coaxing you for a horse.

I hope to get all my belated mail in Key West - where we will remain until about April 5th - and will answer all the letters and straighten things out.

We are all very well and enjoying delightfully cool weather here.

My health is as usual simply perfect, and I am a very contented boy, and gettin' I am afraid, rather set in my ways after nearly eight years of seagoing. I haven't been ashore since we arrived in Barbados, for I prefer the books to the hot sun. I am reading

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Spencers philosophy with great interest - one of my shipmates has nearly all his works, and as he dont seem to relish 'em much, I get the reading gratis.

We leave here for Key West on the 21st. and will be there the next day. This letter leaves here on the 19th. for Tampa Bay.

Give my love to all at home,

Your loving son,

OVER

(Signed) Wm.

P. S.

Monday, 19th., 1888.

The steamer does not leave until tomorrow.

Today the U. S. Consul General paid his visit on board, and brought with him your letter of March. 12th. It should have arrived by the last steamer, and perhaps it did, but in only came today. You speak of Addie's letter covering one Month (?) - I suppose it went to Aspinwall.

I am glad to hear that you found Alf. so well. I quite agree with you about the P. R. R. and think it would be much better if he could get something on a Western road, or a smaller Eastern road. What do you think of the Va. or Carolina roads?

Mr. Chamberlaine and I are quite chums, and he is Auditor or Treas. of about 600 miles of R. R., and he might be able to recommend him for a position.

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I have 1200 cigars on board that I bought for him, besides some trinkets for the "little girls." I hope the latter will come and see you this summer, tho'. I think it doubtful, as they owe a visit to the girl in the valley. However they may come.

I am glad to hear that Mother is so well. You will both live to see me a well-preserved old gentleman with gray hair. I am quite satisfied to remain here until it gets warm up your way. It is 82° in the shade here today, tho'. it has been quite cool (70°) for the past few days. We miss our mails and newspapers, and the telegrams say that the heavy snow storms have stopped the trains - they say 10 ft. on 5th. Ave. N. Y. and 20 ft. in Phila.!!

I dont profess to know much about politics, but - perhaps because I am a free trader by principle - I dont agree with you about Cleveland's. I think the Free trade or Tariff reform plank will bring voters from the Rep. party. I have great faith in Mr. Blain's political sagacity, and I think he would have taken another whack at it if he saw any chance of success.

He was a candidate until after he had replied to Cleveland's message and watched the result a while - then he withdrew - and I dont think there is any trick about his withdrawal. I think he has given up.

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The "view with alarm" plank is gone forever, the war is over, and the country is prosperous.

If the next "panic" - which the wild speculation in land is bound to bring on sooner or later - dont arrive before the election, I think we have got 'em. However, it is too soon to tell what the reamu (?) discussion will bring forth. The country will learn more about it in a few month# active discussion than in 20 years without the issue; and protection will not bear discussion as an issue very long.

The working men are beginning to suspect something - they are beginning to see that it is not prot. or f. t. that determines the rate of wages. For example there is free trade bet. England and the U. S. in wheat. Farm laborers in the U. S. harvest for \$1.50 per day, while in Eng. they receive about 75¢ still we can undersell Eng. in wheat, tho'. only 1/6 or 1/7 of England is under cultivation.

We undersell them in various manufactured articles also. France and Germany or protection and wages or from $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{2}{3}$ what they are in Eng#. It's something else besides P. and F. T. that fixes the rate of wages. etc. etc., and under discussion these points will come out.

Henry George will support Cleveland if he dont shirk his message, for his principle involves free trade.

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Now that H. G. has allowed his, or rather the Labor party to split rather than deviate from his principle, he will be given credit by the unbiased for sincerity at least in the advocacy of his principles.

Now I've a grievance in a small way, viz., none of the letters I have written have been acknowledged in any of the letters I have received - tho'. they may be in the letters I have missed. Make some of 'em brace up and tell me the letters that have been. I've had very hard luck missing mail.

Love to all at home,

Your loving son,

(Signed) Wm.

*

U. S. S. Yantic,
Key West, Fla.,
March 26 '88

My dear Lou.

They tell me you have been away having a good time, I am delighted to hear it of course. Write to me and tell me what you have been doing, and all about it. But above all let me know what letters have been received from me.

The mail we missed in Aspinwall has not arrived yet, but so far there has not been one of my many letters acknowledged by date or the place from where written. From a remark in somebody's letter I infer that some of them have been received and another letter says "your letter arrived today," and that is all. Nothing that I have written about has ever been noticed, or any evidence shown that any interest has been taken in it. I dont know whether the letters from Barbadoes reached home or not - I thought it was all lost for a while until I received answers to some of them - I sent some photos. in that mail to Addie, and in the next mail to you. Perhaps you acknowledged them to Aspinwall. But I feel disappointed about all my letters, for I cannot trace them. Most of the letters I write home I never hear from. I suppose they arrive, as the mails are pretty certain, but it would be all the same to me if they

* W. S. S. adds in pencil here, "A proper scolding."

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went astray - I mean I would never suspect it.

This is very discouraging indeed when you remember that my letters are my only connection with home. I never neglect to write, for it is one of my greatest pleasures to do so, and I try to make the letters interesting, but it is often like writing to the dead-letter office.

It is a quiet life I lead for the most part - I have not been outside the ship more than 3 or 4 hours since we left on our cruise - and I do a pile of thinking about the people at home. It is totally impossible for you living together in the world to understand what a mail means to me. In the last mail I received nothing from home except the Nation. Alf. and Mary I have not heard from.

I do not like to find fault, but I dont think it right to keep one so far away from the ones he loves. It would be so easy to commence every letter by saying "Your letter of --- ----- from ----- arrived on ----" then it would seem like a correspondence - an exchange of letters. But there can be no correspondence so long as the contents of the letters received are ignored.

I never answer a letter without first reading it over, and making notes on the back of the envelope of everything I think my correspondent would like to have me mention, acknowledge, or show that I appreciate, as well as all questions, etc., and last, and least important of all what little

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news I have to tell. There can be no real correspondence without something of the kind, and besides it makes correspondence not only easy, but a great pleasure. It is so discouraging to write about something you think will be entertaining and never hear from it. However, I know you are all ten times as busy as I am, and that you dont think how much such little things mean to the absent ones, so we wont be disagreeable any more, but talk about something pleasant.

Now, usually I can accomplish small things that I set out to do, but since I acquired the reading habit there is one thing I have never been able to accomplish until the spirit moves me, viz., to work tortoise-shell. You know how much I think of our friends the "little girls," but all the same I have not been able to commence their hair pins. However, I got them some right pretty fans in Havana, tho'. the shell would have been much less expensive.

I suppose, with the usual obtuseness of a man about such matters I have got thē colors all mixed up. Miss Mary's is a dark red, Miss Annies a light pink, and Miss Meems a light blue. They are satin with ivory (bone) carved handles and painted and embroidered pictures of bull-fighters "onto" 'em. I dont know what they will do with 'em, when they get 'em, but perhaps they will do for a fancy party of some kind. However, they may appreciate a mans clumsy attempt to be

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agreeable.

I know they are very fond of bay rum so, I got 'em a case, which I will send when we get north.

Mrs. Chamberlaine said so many "nice" things to me about you that I got her one dozen $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb. bottles of tropical preserves. I also bought some cigars for Mr. C.

Did you ever receive the copy of the letter I left behind for the girls?

March 27th.

A mail comes in from Tampa this evening and I hope that it will not only bring some letters for me from home, but that the belated Aspinwall mail will arrive by it. There will not be time between the time the mail arrives and leaves to answer the letters received, but I will of course, write by the next mail, and if my letters have been acknowledged I will make the most humble apologies for my illnatured growling.

Tell Father I send him by this mail - registered - the eight very fine cigars I spoke of in his letter. I did not intend to register the package, but it got registered with some other packages I was sending at the same time. Tell him he is to smoke the eight cigars himself. I also send him by express the 50 Bouquets I mentioned. I could have sent them by mail; but I have one of my intensely economical fits on - that usually attack me when I have spent all my money,

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and am a little behind in my mess bill - and, of course you can see the economy to me, of sending them by express to be paid at the other end. Rather a low down way of making a present, I admit, but you can say that the 50 cigars are worth \$5.50 in Havana, or about \$25 - per. 100 in New York. I hope they will be acceptable under the circumstances.

We expect the Ad. in here before our time for leaving - Apr. 5, - and he may change the program. I have an idea we will not go to South Pass, for I don't see how all the ships can get there in time. I hope we don't for in that case we will get North all the sooner, and have a better chance of stopping at Norfolk for a little while - to see the little girls.

I have written the l. gs. a number of letters during the cruise, but I have not said anything about their visiting you next summer - but I am sending them some presents, that I have mentioned above, and perhaps they may have the desired effect. You see we have not much to offer them in the way of amusement in Orbisonia, and I would not like to do anything to induce them to go against their inclinations. Tho'. I really think they would enjoy a couple of weeks or so in the country.

Do you ever write to them?

We are all in very good health, having had no sickness on board to speak of. I have not been the least bit

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indisposed in any way during the cruise, and am in perfect health now. I weigh 164 pounds today, which is rather light for me - but the hot weather accounts for it. I will get stouter when I go North, tho' I am quite as heavy as I care to be.

Received a letter from Pete. Jones here, written from the Cape de Verde Islands. They experienced very severe storms on the way over, and the ship was badly used up when they arrived in port. He got away from Brooklyn just in time to escape falling seriously in love with several girls. I think a foreign cruise is an excellent thing for him. Only case-hardened old shellbacks like me are safe on this coast; and you can make all your calculations on the basis that I am real good and safe, and likely to remain so indefinitely#.

Give my best love to all at home,

Your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Key West, Fla.,

April 2, '88.

My dear Friend, (Jones)

We have had very hard luck with our mails this cruise. We received orders at Barbados that put us ahead of our schedule time and consequently missed several mails. Your letter of Feb. 6th to Curacoa only reached me here a day or so ago; and the letter you told me to look out for at Aspinwall has not turned up at all - did you send one there? We missed our mail at Aspinwall, but it has been forwarded and received here.

I would have been delighted to gather you any number of stones in the various places had I received your request in time, but you see I didn't.

I wrote to you I thing# twice on the cruise, but certainly once, enclosing the shaved photos., and the copy of the letter I left for the little girls. Did you receive the letters? When you write tell me what ones you received.

Have you neglected me a little bit? If so, please accept a mild reprimand, and don't do it any more.

I have been writing to the three little maids during the cruise, and they have sent me very kind answers. You know just exactly what I think of 'em all - or what I say I think, tho'. I dont know how much of it you believe. I can only repeat, however, that there is not the least suspicion

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of love in all my kindly feelings.

I have every desire to please them and retain their friendship. I am very happy to say that they have repeated remarks of their father and mother that show that I enjoy their good opinion. This is very gratifying to me, as you can imagine. I got them a few things during the cruise that I hope will please them. Before we sailed I offered to get some cigars for Mr. C., and I have 1200 on board for him. I rather expected a check from you at Havana. I have a dozen jars of assorted tropical preserves for Mrs. C. and a case of the best St. Thomas bay rum for the girls - they are very fond of it.

In Havana I bought three very handsome fans for the three little girls.

Ivory (bone?) carved handles - satin with handpainted bull fightin' pictures "onto" 'em, not to mention embroidered clos. on the bull fighters. I suppose I got the colors all wrong, but I wanted to please 'em hard enough, and perhaps they will give me credit for my good intentions. For Miss Mary - bless her warm little heart - I got a dark red, for Mistress Annie a light pink, and for Miss Meem a light blue, - all in good boxes sent by mail, registered, from here. To amuse little Gil. Meem I sent a shark's jaw filled with sharp white teeth. These have not been acknowledged yet.

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I am perfectly aware of what Miss Mary told you of the gossips in Norfolk - I think I told you all about it in one of my recent letters, so you know that such things dont annoy me in the least, that is, when I am sure they dont annoy the other parties concerned - and in this case I I# know they dont; and I understand why - simply because they are so very common in a place like Norfolk that nobody pays much attention to them. There is only one thing I think it is necessary to be careful about in one's intercourse with girls, and that is to be sure there is no misunderstanding between the parties directly concerned.

On this score my conscience is perfectly clear. If any girl ever took a shine to me I never found it out, and she did so with a clear understanding of the fact that I was not the least bit in love with her. That I think is all that is necessary. Of course one should not allow his conduct to effect# - through the gossips - a girls prospects, as it were. But in this particular case there is nothing of the kind. Miss M. has told you what the gossips say as nearly as she - being a girl - could state the circumstances, tho'. as a matter of fact they (the gs.) dont suspect us of being engaged. They say simply that your Uncles Simes is very much in love with this small lady; but has met with no success in his suit.

That of course can not annoy the lady, and it certainly

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does not annoy me. The only uneasiness they have caused me is a mere suspicion that there# remarks may have prevented Miss Meem visiting Norfolk last winter, tho'. their latest gossip removes that difficulty.

Both Miss Mary and Miss Meem know that I am aware of what the gossips say, for I have told them both that I hope I have caused them no annoyance. Miss Meem and I correspond as usual, and I enjoy her bright and observant letters very much.

It is a correspondence pure and simple and without a shade of sentiment. Her small brother Gil. is quite an interested party in the correspondence, for I often spin yarns for his entertainment and amusement, and he thinks I am a great traveler, and quite a wonderful fellow altogether. Lately I have been spinning very exciting yarns about shark fishing of which I have done a good deal lately. In my last letter I described the very exciting capture of a large shark, and drew a tolerable picture of the shark, and when we arrived here I sent by mail a shark's jaw with its glittering rows of sharp teeth. Little Gil. told his mother one day that he thought I was a "fine old fellow" for sending him a newfoundland puppy. This pup by the way has developed into a most beautiful and magnificent dog, and they are all delighted with him. When Miss M. went to Alabama - where, by the way, she has had a splendid time - the dog

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would search the placē for her, and failing to find her, sit in front of her door and howl. Mrs. M. sends locks of his silky hair in her letters to Ala.

I told Miss M. that I would have been disappointed in the dog if he had not noticed her absence and that I felt like howling myself sometimes. Between you and I, this same Miss M. is a very bright girl, and a very entertaining correspondent.

Miss Mary is quite right about Miss Annie's being a beauty, and nobody is more proud of her than she is - as you would expect such a kind heart to be. You were quite right in sending her my love. I have written you pages about Miss Annie already, so you know how much I admire her. And the more I see of her the better I like her. On meeting these two girls one says at once that Miss M. is a complete little woman, and Miss A. a perfect girl, which is in a measure true. But if you conclude that there "is not much to" the younger you would make a great mistake; for besides being a dear warm hearted little girl, she is very clever indeed. You see, Miss M. as the senior takes all responsibility from the younger and leaves her free to indulge her girlish propensities. It would be quite the reverse if their ages were reversed.

I received a letter from Pete. here. He judges me by his own heart and cant possibly understand why I am not in

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love with one of these girls, and I fancy he rather thinks I am, notwithstanding my denials.

He desires such a state of affairs very much - says I ought to be married etc. I am afraid I will be a standing disappointment to him, for as I have not fallen in love with any of these splendid girls, what manner of girl will it be that I will fall in love with?

Do you think there are finer women at large than Nancy, or Miss Meem, or kinder hearted little women than the tow "little girls"? If so where have they been all these years? And what chance would a cranky sailor have of favorably impressing one of 'em?

I rather fancy I am gettin' too thoroughly "sot" in my ways to think much of such things, for tho'. I am not very old (29) I have put in eight years of the most impressable period at sea, and that is not condusive of sentiment.

Poor Pete. had a very hard time on the way out as he has doubtless told you. He was in a bad way with several girls in Brooklyn, and as he says, got away just in time. Perhaps a foreign cruise is best for him, for he is out of danger now - at least until he falls in with some more girls who speak English. I sent him a very long letter to Monte Video, about 60 pages, and told him all the news of our mutual friends. In his letter he said something about his addresses. When you write tell me what they are, for I know

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of none beyond Monte Video. I will send him a letter % Navy Dept. in the mean time.

You will be glad to hear for Pete's and my sake that our bill for \$1700 (no longevity) stands a very good chance of passing this time. Both Cong. and the H. of R. have reported favorably on it, and it is a matter of plain justice. I am sorry to say however that there is a minority report in the House committee in favor of some other bill, and we need votes in the house to make it sure. Niblack, my old roommate is in Wash. working it, and he will do all in his power. If you know any Congressmen, or anyone who can influence a cong'n give us a lift. Niblack says we are all right in the Senate.

Is Werntz doing anything towards your bill? and if so with what chance of success?

I am in for about \$800. back pay under the Mullen (?) case if Cadet Service is counted as previous Naval service, the court of claims has decided so, and it is being pushed in the Supreme Court. If the bill passes and I get the \$800. I will be out of the woods, and may go ashore to live awhile.

I have not thought much as to my future movements, but think it very likely I will remain at sea if I can go to a foreign station. My younger brother is doing splendidly at the U. of Penn. and will be graduated in June. I regard what I have done for him with the utmost satisfaction - he

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has developed into a splendid fellow - and is the favorite of all the family connection.

Did I tell you that we sail from here this evening for Pensacola, Fla. where the fleet first assembles. We will give a Naval show there, and repeat the performance in New Orleans, Mobile, Charleston and Savanna. Election year you know. We will be in Pensacola about two weeks from the 9th. Brace up and drop me a line, for I long to hear from you again. Got a letter from Bax. the other day - says he hasn't heard from you for a long time.

When you write tell me something about yourself - how you pass your time outside of biz. hours - how much society you see, and how you like it. Also how the biz. is coming on, etc.

Dont forget to answer the questions I have asked you. In other words be a good boy and write me a good letter.

You know my hobby about reading a letter over and making notes on the envelope before answering it - something of the kind is necessary to make correspondence possible, and to make it a pleasure. You are very good about this, but some of my correspondents neglect me very thoroughly. For example I wrote a great many letters to different members of the family, and up to the time of our arrival here not a single one had been acknowledged by date or place from where written, or their contents noticed in any way. They wrote me plenty of letters, but no answers. See.

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A fellow thinks when he writes "what will he think of so and so," and is naturally disappointed when nothing is said about it. I send photos. draw sketches, write long descriptions to amuse the small ones, and the little skallewags dont notice 'em, tho'. I have no doubt they enjoy them.

What do you think of Ike. Seymour's engagement to Miss Benners, Ashbridge's sister-in-law? It was a great surprise to me. I didn't think Ike. the kind of man she would fancy.

I suppose Miss Mary has told you of your admirer's engagement. Miss Nannie Saunders to Prof. Toy (?), professor of Greek and Hebrew at Harvard, a man with a gray beard and at least 50.

Oh! the Vanity of us men! And I thought this sweet creature was disposed to pay me considerable attention last winter.

I thought this to myself, and this is the first time I have given it away.

This marriage will be intellectual bliss for you.

What have you been doing to make the gossips talk about you in St. Paul? The trouble with you is that you dont have to pay a girl much attention before she tumbles.

With all your fear of "particularizing" in Norfolk the gossips had you engaged to the little Madame.

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This letter is reaching a rather dreary length, so I must close.

I think of you very often old man, so you must write.

With my best love believe me, always your true friend

(Signed) Wm. S. Sims

U. S. S. Yantic,
Pensacola, Fla.,

April 8 '88

Sunday afternoon.

My dear Louisa,

Your letter of Apr. 3, addressed Key West, (changed to New Orleans by Pa.) was forwarded and reached me this morning, and I was delighted to get it - as I always am to get your letters. Thanks. Perhaps you remember my having complemented you on several occasions on your ability as a correspondent. And I have often said - often and often - that I dont expect you landsmen who have so many things to occupy your time, to write many or long letters.

I think you have misunderstood my growl. I dont think I uttered a word of blame against any of the home folks because I missed my letters, or because they didn't write enough - I only blamed our fool of a surgeon who made out what we now call the "Fool Schedule." Perhaps I did say something about two or three steamers arriving in Key West without any letters for me.

My growl is briefly this. I do know for sure that you enjoy my letters when they are interesting, and I never fancy for an instant that any of you ever feel indifferent towards me. I even have the inordinate conceit to think that you all love me considerably, and quite as much as I deserve.

But, although I am reasonably sure you receive my

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letters, and perfectly sure "you-all" enjoy and appreciate them, still I must confess - and this is my growl - that I have the weakness to be disappointed when they are not acknowledged. I do not mean you particularly but all.

When all the returns were in - all the belated mails arrived - I was only able to trace a few of the letters I wrote, but above all few of the topics, and questions in them were noticed. I could mention a dozen that I remember still. I wondered often what you would all think of my poor shaven mug, but none of you ever made a comment, consequently I was not encouraged to tell you what others said - Lemme Wall, Baxter, the Jones Boys, and the little girls. Its all vanity I know tho'. some of the remarks were beastly - but the disappointment was there all the same. I copied the long letter I left for the little girls, and I frankly confess I had the vanity to hope you would be pleased with it and say so, but you didn't acknowledge it, because I suppose you didnt think of it when you wrote, for if you had you must have known that it would have **gratified** me to have you mention it. Which is why I remark that a little system - such as reading the letter to be answered and making notes on the envelope - will not only remove this difficulty, but make the answering of a letter not only easy, but a plea-
sure, and make it possible to continue any topic that may be interesting. Often when I write to the little daughter -

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bless her little heart - I purposely ask questions for her to answer, and write about things that I think will furnish her topics - and with the notes on the back of the envelope it would be so easy and so pleasant to write a letter without even any news in it. Do I make myself clear?

I#would have given me more pleasure to have the little girl say that she enjoyed my description of the shark hunt etc. than almost any item of news about people I scarcely know. You See? I want to correspond with you all. As for sending letters away before they are answered - I frequently do that, but I read them over and make notes on the envelope which I keep.

Now dont let's be growly any more - and apropos of sharks - I killed two just before we left Key West, and the biggest ones I ever succeeded in killing.

This is the only cruelty I am ever guilty of towards dumb animals; but they are, you know a sailors natural enemies.

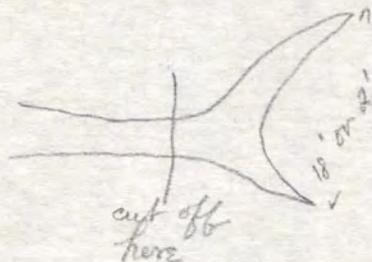
One of our Kids - Bristol put the shark hook over to try for two large fellows who were cruising about under our stern. The hook was suspended from a piece of board so as to float astern with the tide. After a great deal of manoeuvring, one of them nabbed it and was fairly hooked. The line was only as big as a lead pencil and it required very careful handling to keep him from being carried away. We were

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afraid of losing him so I got a repeating rifle and stood by for a shot. After a while we succeeded in getting him under the stern, and I sent a bullet through his head killing him dead as a nit, and a couple more through him just for fun. The blood gushed from the wounds and attracted his chum who came close up under the stern to see what it was all about. He was about two or three feet under water and would not come any nearer the surface - so I took careful aim allowing for the deflection of the bullet by the water, and let drive. When the smoke cleared away Mr. shark was belly up on the surface of the water probably only stunned. I put two more bullets through his head and he slowly sank out of sight a very dead shark.

The one we hooked we got on board and cut up. He was about 9 or 10 ft. long. The one I shot in the water was 11 or 12 ft. long.

I have the tail of the one we cut up in a keg of beef brine pickling it. When it is well pickled I intend to



dry it using the regular preparation of arsenic, potash, camphor, and alcohol.

Would you like to have me send it homw? Don't say yes

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if you wouldn't, for I have no doubt Willie Chamberlaine, or little Gil Meem would be glad to get it.

When you answer this letter if you dont say you think these were pretty good shots I'll be real mad.

I am very sorry to hear that our little Adelaide has been sick, and I hope she is all right by this time.

I think it a good thing that Miss Ella R. is married and out of the way. She fatigues me very much.

To the best of my recollection I never hear# of a Paymaster Puncheon, nor has anyone on board ship ever heard of him.

Your picture of Alf. commencing to shave at 11 a. m. and your packing his valise amused me.

I have been telling him for some time that I intended to read him a lecture, and I did so in the last letter. I didn't abuse him, but simply told him that I understood he was credited with two faults of disposition which if true and not corrected would stand in his way when he came to go to work, viz., procrastination and lack of policy (independence - "Kicking") I asked him to give the subject his serious consideration - a careful and honest self examination - and make up his mind on a line of conduct and carry it out faithfully. I haven't heard from him yet. With regard to the latter fault, if it is a fault, which I seriously doubt, tho'. I will admit it would stand in the way of a young man's

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success - I've got it bad. I take no slack from anyone, and would sass the Admiral as quick as anyone else if I didn't like his treatment.

I have the utmost abhorance# of a bootlick, and will never be a "coburger." I'd rather do the worst duty the Navy has all my life than bend my neck an eighth of an inch. I think Alf is the same way - and I must say I admire the way he made the Professor take water.

I'm sorry but I cant get at the pins. I have a power of reading ahead of me.

I am sure the little girls would like them, but you see they know nothing about them, and I have made them quite a number of really handsome presents. The fans were really very fine, and they were very much pleased with them - then the bay room and the preserves and the handsome book I gave them before I left. Not to mention the letters I have written them. I am glad the 58 cigars arrived safely. See that he dont give them all away.

The fleet news is as follows. The Ossipee arrived this afternoon, and brings word that the flagship is right behind her. On dit that we will remain here until about the 19th or 20th. then go to New Orleans for a few days, then Key West, then Port Royal S. C., then Hampton Roads by the 15th of May. But you know what fleet rumors are, so you can expect anything.

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When do you expect to go home - to Montclair?

When the Ossipee arrived I received 1100 cigars that Brainard got for me in Havana for Mr. Overton. I will send them by express at the first opportunity. There is no trouble about sending them ashore here. Pensacolans wouldn't do anything to displease the navy just now.

Dont feel the least bit inclined to go ashore here to the clubs, parties etc. - never do in a strange place - so I guess I will remain on board as usual. Don't imagine that I am morose or blue, for I never am. I am as happy as possible all day long - nobody laughs oftener or harder.

My health is perfect and I send you all my very best love,

Always your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Pensacola, Fla.,

April 10, 1888

My dear old Man, (Jonas)

I have only a moment to write you just a line, but I want to tell you that your letter has been received and that I am perfectly delighted with it - as the girl# say.

I have not re'cd a letter for many a day that has given me so much pleasure.

I was perfectly sure you would succeed, and was waiting for the news, and now it has come I am pleased all over tho'. I have not much time to say any more. You make me tired running down your letter, it was a daisy. I will write an answer to your letter when I get time.

So your specialty is supplying railroads. Have you any experienced railroad friends of whom to ask advise##? My fine old father is a R. R. man of long experience, and I am sure he would be delighted to answer any of your questions. Let me know what you think and I will write to my father at once, and he will have my Mother and sisters about his ears immediately on your behalf.

We are going to repeat the same old circus here - camp and all - how I will think of you boys! I will tell you all about it, and all the news when I have time. - The photo. and coat both look quite familiar. Will never shave the beard off again - Did you send the little book on to

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Pete?

With much love,

Always your loving friend,

(Signed) Sims.

U. S. Signal Station,
Camp Osceola,
Magnolia Bluffs,
Pensacola, Fla.
Sunday Apr. 16 '88

My dear old friend,

As you see by the heading we are again playing soldier, The camp is an imitation of the old one on a smaller scale and many are the associations of old times. I am Signal Officer, and have established myself with my four bright signal boys in two large (20 x 8, & 30 x 8) rooms in the old bath house at the end of the long wharf where I saw you for the last time. My quarters are the most comfortable in the camp and my duties the easiest - no drills etc.

I am not writing because I have any particular news to tell you, but simply because memories of happier times come to me thro' association, and I thought I would drop you just a wee note and say so.

I say "happier times," not because I am unhappy now, but I mean to express the fact that there is a vacant place in this old heart of mine that has been there since you boys left this same wharf so long ago. I have no congenial companions - none to sympathize with my tastes, or understand them, or to whom I care to talk of our mutual friends.

No, I am not at all unhappy, but carelessly contented and unambitious - except as regards one subject, which I will

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tell you about some day when I am settled on board ship and have more time. You see there has as yet been no disturbing element in my life - for some reason or other my "no count" old heart has refused to respond to the charms of person and mind of the many splendid girls I know. And then I am thoroughly convinced that I have not half the ability to earn half the money I get in the Navy, and even if I had it would not suit me, now that # have so thoroughly acquired the reading habit, which gives me so much pleasure that I would begrudge the time spent in earning a living. Hence this careless contentment.

Perhaps you are right about little Miss Mary. However she is a splendid little woman, and you must not let her drop out of sight before you come East. I correspond with her pretty regularly, but she regards me as only a peculiar old bookworm. Her mind is far superior to the average girls, and when I was in Norfolk, I used to talk to her of serious literature - the wonderful philosophers of the century etc., and I was agreeably surprised at her very intelligent and evident interest. Not long ago I was very much pleased at her telling me in a letter that she was reading Buckle with great interest. You know I sent her a Spanish fan from Havana?

Well I made an attempt to write the proper kind of a letter for such an occasion, to put in the fan box, but, as

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usual, when I try to do the proper as a lady's man, I failed completely.

In noticing her remark about reading Buckle, I got wound up and wrote many pages on the pleasure to be derived from reading the works of these great minds and noble hearts, and told her something of them etc.

I was ashamed of my stupidity in sending such a letter with a bit of feminine finery; so judge of my surprise and delight when the little girl said in acknowledging the fan that the fan was beautiful, and she was much pleased with it, but not half so much pleased as she was to think that I should take the trouble to write her at such length on such a subject.

Then she made some flattering remarks about my letter - for the little woman knows the world well enough to know that a little flattery catches the toughest of us.

Miss Annie (a thorough girl) and I are declared lovers. When I sent her the shaved photos. I wrote her a burlesque love letter and she "caught on" immediately, accepted me promptly, said she would get her trousseau ready etc, and signed herself "Your devoted sweetheart, Annie." We keep up the fiction. This little girl is now so healthy and in such good spirits that you would scarcely know her.

But this was to be only a note, so Ta, Ta.

Write when the spirit moves you. Our next address will

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be New Orleans.

I will see Lemme there.

With my best love,

Always your sincere friend

(Signed) Wm. S. Sims

U. S. S. Yantic,
Pensecola, Fla.,
April. 19, 1888

My dear Louisa,

I received letters from you and Adelaide today in camp. Last night I wrote a letter to Addie, so that our letters crossed on the way. We have just returned on board and finished dinner, and I am very tired, and am going to bed after writing you just a line to acknowledge your letter, and say that we leave here on the 23rd. for Mobile - stopping two days on our way to New Orleans.

We are all well, but tired. Last night in camp the Admiral held a pow-wow over the sham battle, had the three Colonels read their reports and state their views. He was pleased to complement your small brother on his report and the manner in which he handled his troops.

Give my love to Lettie H. (?) if she is with you.
With love to all at home,

Your loving brother,
(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Alongside a wharf
fernst the city of
Mobile, Alabama,
1. a.m. May 2, 1888

My dear Louisa,

You see this here tea is great stuff.

At 12, midnight, I turned out for the mid watch feelin' very much like a boiled owl - and certainly not like writin' to anybody. But my "boy" Abner Epps - the best boy in the ship - had a lunch ready for me, consisting of a pot of tea, bread and butter and a turkey wing, which I have just demolished; and having set fire to a paper cigar, I am ready for a small chat.

You know from my letter to Adelaide - which was not mailed until yesterday - that we arrived in Mobile Bay some days ago, leaving the Richmond and Atlanta behind.

Well day before yesterday they came in, and yesterday morning, the Admiral and about 15 officers from the other vessels came on board the Yantic, and we started for Mobile, arriving here at noon yesterday.

I send you a paper today which gives some account of the fleet, and will send others. The hospitality of these people could not be exceeded. As soon as we were alongside the dock the Mayor and a large delegation

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from the city and club came on board to call on the Admiral. They had a dozen or so carriages and took all the officers who could go for a drive about the city - their baggage was sent to the hotel, and they were finally landed there as the guests of the city.

At 6. P. M. they were given a banquet, and at 9.00 a ball by the club - the latter is going on now while I am writing, and will probably last until daylight. The Admiral intends to go back tomorrow but all the same I dont believe he will go back for several days. We have his band along with us.

The whole of Mobile Bay is so shallow that our ships cant reach the city. From the lower bay - 25 miles below here - a channel has been dredged and marked with piles, and vessels drawing not more than 15 feet can reach the city. The Yantic only draws 13, but all the other ships draw from 18 to 20.

You will notice in the Mobile paper that they have a slap at Pensacola about the water on their bar, for there is intense jealousy in a commercial way between the cities. The truth of the matter is that Mobile is slowly dying, and P. will be the great export port of the South in the Gulf. It is not a very pretty place, and there is very little wealth, but, of course, there are lovely people here. As we will be here such

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a short time I dont suppose I will meet any of them -
having missed the ball.

When we leave here we will go direct to New Orleans,
unless the Admiral suddenly changes his mind.

I have rec'd no letters but father's lately, so
suppose our mail is in N. O. - perhaps it will be for-
warded here.

It has just occurred to me that you are not at
home - in somebodys letter they said you were going
to Phila. or New York, so I will send this to father
and ask him to forward it with the paper.

If you have not already done so you must write me
a letter to New Orleans, and answer my last letter, -
and tell me all about Lilly Holland and Mr. Smith.

Give Lilly my love, and tell her that I want one
of her photos. so much that I will not send one of mine
until she promises me one of hers.

Give my love to Alf and tell him there is one of
my questions he has never answered - viz., whether he
has yet received any volumes of Alden's cyclopedia.

Always your loving bro.

(Signed) Wm.

Is it R. and Carey
or
R. and Cary?

U. S. S. Yantic,
Moored to a wharf
at the city of Mobile,
May 2, 1888

My dear old friend, (Jones)

I want to ask you if you have read the last story by
Miss Amelie Rives - a countrywoman of yours.

It is a most remarkable yarn. Opinions differ about
it on board. I will not tell you what I think of it, tho'.
I have formed an opinion that the critics wont change much -
I have not seen any of them yet. Tell me what you think
of it.

This is how we happen to be here. Several days ago
we started from Pensacola, Yantic leading. We reported 24
feet on the bar as we went out, but the Galena - out of the
channel a little I think - reported 21, so the Richmond and
Atlanta remained behind. Day before yesterday they came out,
and anchored with us (the Ossipee, Galena, and Yantic) in
the lower bay alongside of Fort Morgan (?).

Yesterday morning (it is now - - - - -)

(The following pages of this letter are missing. - ASF)

U. S. S. Yantic,

Key West, Fla.,

May 17, 1888

My dear Lou.,

Your letter of the 6th. inst. reached me in New Orleans, where I was too busy among my old friends to write any letters. I have not really time now, but I have neglected you too long already.

I had a splendid time in New Orleans in a quiet way, for I have very good friends there. I did not "go out" much but spent my time with my friends, the Jones family. I found them all the same except that the eldest son, my old chum since 1880, is married and living in a very pretty little house with a splendid little wife. I took dinner with them twice - spent two evenings with the older family, and went to a young 17 year old daughter's birthday party.

They are splendid people, if two of the girls have red hair, and by far the most cultivated I know.

The old gentleman Dr. Joseph Jones is know# all over the world from the medical and antiquarian books he has written.

You can imagine that I was delighted to find them all Henry George cranks.

I only wish we could have remained there longer.

I found out all about Lemme and his doings, and

May 17, 1888 - page 2

will tell you them when I see you.

We leave here this afternoon for Port Royal, S. C. where the other ships have already gone. We remain there about a week then go North, but I don't know where to. Perhaps Norfolk, and perhaps New York.

I re'cd a letter from Mr. Overton acknowledging the receipt of the cigars with which he expresses himself very much pleased. They certainly were fine cigars, and quite cheap. Mr. Chamberlaine also received his all right.

I am very sorry that I will miss Lilian Holland, for I understand she has already gone home - unless she changes her mind. I sent her my photo. and asked her for hers. When do you go to Montclair.

Mrs. (Paymaster) Cann, has not been down here this winter, but at Ft. Levenworth in Kansas. She has just returned to Harrisburg.

I will write you again from Port Royal, We leave here in about two hours.

Got no news from home here but will in Port Royal.

Let me hear from you soon,

Always your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Port Royal, S. C.

May 20, '88

My dear Mother,

Your letter of May 12th. to New Orleans missed me there but reached me on our arrival here today, Sunday.

I am mighty glad I wasn't home at house cleaning time, for I really dont think it does any good, except stirring the dirt up out of corners where it belongs and rubbing it into everything, and getting it down your back, and in your hair. However, I wouldn't mind being home now that you have the house all slicked up and painted, just to see how "you-all" look.

I dont suppose I will ever have a house of my own to be pulled to peices# every spring by the wimmen folks, for I dont seem to take kindly to the latter.

One of the finest girls I know has very red hair and is not at all pretty - how would you like that? She lives in New Orleans where I have just been and I have known her since '81.

Received a letter from Lou. in New Orleans, but have not heard from her since. I fancy she is having a pretty good time. I am very sorry that I will miss Lillian when we come North.

May 20, '88 - page 2

It will be fine if she takes to the woods in Montclair, for then I will see her occasionally. I have no idea yet where we will go when we leave here, but will probably know later. Rumor says that the whole fleet is going to Annapolis - it may be so. Our being here is all politics#.

I have not heard from Varley for some time, but I don't mind, as I know he must be very busy. I have no doubt he will pass all right.

I am delighted to hear that Adelaide is doing so well with her music. She must play for the old sailor when he comes home. Do you know I am commencing to get gray on the temples. I believe I will be 30 next Oct. Thirty, do you hear ??? years! - great big years!!

Tell Lou. that the shark's tail I spoke of turned out a total failure. It all dried up, and had a fall and got broken.

I will write again when I have any news for you.

Give my love to all at home,

Always your loving son

(Signed) Wm.

P. S. Please tell Mary that I rec'd her letter today, and will answer it soon.

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Beaufort, S. C.,
May 27, 88
Sunday,

My dear Alf,

The Yantic sails tomorrow or next day for

Care U. S. Minister

Port au Prince,

Hayti,

I am too busy to write much, but I want to give you my address and ask you to drop me a line there and tell me how you passed your examinations.

I have only barely heard from home that you passed - nothing more. They tell me they suffered the keenest disappointment and anxiety when your name did not appear in the papers and you did not write. Adelaide said it nearly made her sick. They wrote to me in sorrow and anxiety and said your name had not appeared amongst those who were graduated and as you had not written they supposed you had failed. You can imagine my feelings, and it was two weeks, before I got the next letter. I understand of course that you must have been very busy, but two postal cards would have answered every purpose for the time, and you could have written them both in 5 minutes.

Perhaps this is what Father means about procrastination, and lack of system and business methods.

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We are ordered by telegram on this cruise, and will probably remain South two or three months. I suppose there is some revolutionary trouble down there.

It will be very hot and disagreeable, but I am in excellent health and wont mind it.

Dont forget to write to me soon.

Your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Port Royal,

May 28 '88.

1 P. M.

My dear Father,

We sail in a few hours for Port au Prince. This is to tell you that I will write for the New York Times. An officer on the flagship received a telegram asking him to write, and he has turned it over to me. I will do the best I can. This will give the cruise some interest for me, and pass the time away.

We are all well, especially me.

I have only a moment to write,

Give my best love to all at home,

Your loving son,

(Signed) Wm.

Dont forget to write. I have written to the Postmaster of New York to send you list of mails going to the West Indies during June and July.

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Port Royal, S. C.,

May 28 '88

My dear Adelaide,

Isn't it too bad that we have to go South instead of going North.

Just here I rec'd a letter from Louisa, please tell her so, and say I will answer it from Haiti.

I haven't time for a word, for we are going to leave immediately.

Give my love to all at home. Good bye, here is a kiss



Y. L. B.

(Signed)

Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic
Port Royal, S. C.,
May, 28, '88

My dear Jones,

We leave at once for Hayti - some trouble there.
Re'cd orders by telegram. I haven't time to write a word,
as you can imagine.

Please drop me a line there. I don't know how long
we will remain or what the trouble is, perhaps all summer.

I have been asked to write for the New York Times,
With love,

Your sincere friend

(Signed) Sims

U. S. S. Yantic,
Santiago de Cuba,
June 9, 1888

My dear old Jones,

The row was all over in Haiti when we got there, so we only remained three days, when we lit out for this place to take coal, send despatches and await orders.

We left just in time to miss our mail from the U. S. not to mention \$150. worth of stores.

Perhaps the Yantic will have better luck smother year.

I was rather disappointed that there was no bloodshed in Haiti - but I suppose all "war correspondents" are blood-thirsty. However I wrote one letter to the New York Times, and if the editor has any use for it it will probably appear in the issue of June 14, 15, or 16.

I don't think you will find it interesting, tho'. it may give you some idea of the wretched Haitiens.

We expect orders any moment to proceed North and join the squadron, and when they come it won't take long to get the anchor off the bottom, for it is just a trifle warm here, and as for Port au Prince, it was a regular Turkish bath. If you have sent me a note to P. au P. it will reach me on our return.

Have no news from the girls. There is no chance of our putting in at Norfolk, so I don't know when I will see them again - I will probably be detached from the Yantic

June 9, 1888 - page 2

early in the fall, but have no idea what I will do for a living.

Both courts have decided that Cadet Service at the "School" counts for longevity, so that I have been on my 2nd 5 years all the time I have been an Insect, and have due me \$800. U. S. gold. Perhaps I will blow it in in Paris if the sisters dont coax me out of it.

I would like to make an end of conversational French, and as I have been studying it for about 1½ years by dictation etc., and have a tolerable pronunciation, I think I could manage to get along in a few months.

I think I told you in my last note that I had a long love-letter from Pete from Montevideo.

Let me hear from you soon.

With much love,

Your sincere friend,

(Signed) Wm. S. Sims.

Yantic,

Station E New York

July 2, 1888

My dear Louisa,

Yesterday, Sunday, I spent the day with the Overton family. Ya! Ya! You all didnt know so much after all.

Mr. Overton wrote me a note asking me to go to Montclair Saturday afternoon and remain over Sunday. I could not go Saturday but arrived there at 10.40 Sunday morning and remained until 7.15 P. M.

Chal. took me fo a walk to the top of Eagle rock from where we could see New York City. There were half a dozen fellows along. One of them was a Norfolk man who knew everybody there. Another had had a brother at Aspinwall and knew many people there, and among the others I had various mutual acquaintances. Mr. Overton's brother and his wife were also there for the day, and returned with me. I called on Mr. & Mrs. Tarry, and the former wishes to be remembered to father. Met old Mr. Pratt who know# the Consul Genl. at Panama, an acquaintance of mine. Also young Mr. Pratt, (with a smooth face) and a brother of his. They both, especially the former (with a smooth face) wished to be particularly remembered to you. Likewise Mr. & Mrs. Tarry.

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I had a most enjoyable day. The Overtons spoke of you very often, and they both said repeatedly that they wished you could visit them again, for they say they now knew so many more people that you would have a very good time.

In the afternoon Florie had quite an informal reception - about 8 young men, two old men, four ladies, and half a dozen children.

If I were you I would visit them just as soon as you can. They now know all their neighbors and are very popular, especially Florie with the women. They invited me to come out and spend the night whenever I could. They have a lovely little home. They both said also that they want father and Mother to pay them a visit, and I am sure they both would enjoy it. It would be pleasant for father to have a chat with Mr. Tarry.

When I returned to town I went to see Miss Barker, as I do every day I am off duty. She always gives us cake and ginger beer and we remain until 11. and 11.30.

I wonder how I could ever have thought her homely. She is a splendid girl and no mistake, and very entertaining.

Have just rec'd a note from Miss Mary C. which informs me that Miss Gwathmey has just died. She was sick with typhoid fever when I was there, She is an

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only daughter, and her father and mother are heartbroken.

Have also just rec'd a letter from Pete. Jones, who is now, or was in the Straits of Magellan en route for Honolulu, Sandwich Islands.

The future movements of the Yantic are very uncertain, - we can't tell what a day may bring forth.

Love to all at home,

(Signed) Wm. S. Sims

P. S.

Pete mentioned you in his letter and wishes to be remembered to you. Also Miss Barker. Miss Mary says in her note that she met Mrs. Herrick for a few moments at a reception in Asheville.

She was so pleased with the place that she wants to go back. The Chamberlaine's will spend August at West Point on William's account.

(Signed) Wm. S. S.

In haste.

P. S. 2.

The Times published my letter yesterday, but cut it down about one half - to one column.

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Navy Yard,

Brooklyn, N. Y.

July 28 '88

My dear old friend, (Jones)

S'matter with you anyway? I haven't heard from you for ages.

I have been expecting every day that you would send me the letter Pete. asked you to forward.

Yesterday I received another from him, when I first realized how long it is since I have heard from you. If it ain't very long it seems so to me, so you must drop me a line and tell me how you are.

If you were not such a sturdy chap I might think you were sick, but at all events I will feel more comfortable when I hear that you are all right.

We have been here in New York about a month, and of course I have been busy with one thing or another.

I went home for a week - but did not stop at Harrisburg, as the great Nancy now lives five miles out of town. Of course I had a splendid time at home.

Found all the family in excellent country health especially my father and mother. I see no reason why they should not live to see me quite an elderly gentleman.

My mother and sister Louisa wish to be remembered to you.

In New York I have divided my time between Miss Barker

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and the baseball games, and enjoyed both very much. Of course you know that Wm. Chamberlaine is a West Point Cadet, and that the family will spend August at the West Point Hotel.

I hear from them quite frequently.

I am watching the political struggle with the greatest interest, tho'. I have fallen into very bad company in so doing. Having occasion to call at the Standard office some time ago I sent my card in to Mr. Henry George and had a chat with him for over an hour.

He invited me to dinner at his house in E. 19th. St., and I went and enjoyed it very much.

When we get away from New York, and I have more time I will tell you all about him. He is a most entertaining and interesting man.

What do you think of the Single Tax principle by this time?

We expect to leave here any day for Newport R. I.

Drop me a note there and tell me all about yourself, and dont omit to give yourself a scolding.

Yours in haste

(Signed) Wm. S. Sims

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard,
Brooklyn, N. Y.

July 31, 1888

My dear old Chap, (Jones)

I dont think I ever reprimanded anyone for not writing that my letter didn't pass his on the way. Wish I hadn't said a word, of course. Yours of the 23rd. with dear old Pete's faithful letter enclosed reached me today. I enjoyed them both thoroughly, and have even been reading them over like lovers do - so they say. I am glad to hear that social amusements take up some of your time, but dont let the rough Westerners wean you from your old and tried Eastern friends.

I dont think I have any more news to tell you, except, perhaps that my young brother, who has just graduated from the Penn'a U. was at home while I was on leave. I can hardly realize that he is the same boy. He is a man now, and a fine one. He is taller and broader than I am, and a splendid, handsome fellow - the pet and life of the house. Isn't it wonderful that a few years in college in a large city could accomplish so much? If I never do anything else, this will always be the greatest satisfaction to me. And I believe it has done me as much good as it has him, for now I have a very accurate idea of the size of the great American dollar, and dont owe a cent in the world. On the

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contrary, I had a windfall of \$204. 93/100 the other day, for according to a certain decision I have been on my second five years since June '87. And if a certain other decision counting cadet service is rendered in our favor I will come in for about \$600. more.

As for the pay bills in Congress there is not much hope of any action being taken on them this time. The atmosphere of Wash. is solid tariff.

I am glad you have taken the "Standard" for the Campaign. It is clean politics# founded on principle, and the editor, Mr. George is a true earnest man, the hope of whose life is to see his principles in practical politics.

I have been to his house a number of times and know him quite well. He gave me his photograph the last time I was there, and it is a very fine one.

I think he has the finest head I ever saw.

If you have any curiosity to see what he looks like I will send you one, as they can be gotten from a photographer in the city.

You will find the little book on Education delightful. If you go to Norfolk without having read it you will be sorry, for the little Madam tells me in her letters that she is very much taken with it.

"Protection or Free Trade" is being worked for all it is worth in this campaign - I often read editorials that are

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suspiciously like it.

Literature is beyond my comprehension. I would not have believed it possible for anyone to write such an interesting book on such a subject - and so say all the critics.

Your remarks about the single tax are certainly encouraging, but I am not sure that I understand quite what you mean - that is to what extent you believe in them. Have you finished Progress and Poverty?

When you have you will probably - judging from my experience - have your doubts about various things - the justice of this or that - how such and such difficulties can be overcome etc.

For a considerable time I would not acknowledge myself a thorough single tax man, but I have thought more than you would believe about the subject, and read everything I could get my hands on, and can trace my not belief to pre-existing prejudices - that pure logic dissolve very slowly. You will notice on the next to last page of the Standard a list of tracts published weekly, and you can see by the titles that many of them will explain many things you are in doubt about.

I have a duplicate (partial) set - just returned from Hayti - which I will send you tomorrow, and they may amuse an idle hour occasionally.

You must think me an awful crank on this subject -

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and something of a bore, and I suppose I am, but it is seldom out of my mind.

Write me a wee, wee, note occasionally - just a line, and believe me, with much love

Always your sincere friend

(Signed) Wm. S. Sims

P. S.

I have no further news about the little girls, or you may depend upon it I would tell it you.

Our Haytian mail arrived today, and in it was a letter from Miss Meem, containing nothing but pure chat - but it is a fine sample of a breezy letter. When I have answered it I will send it to you if I dont forget.

It is a gift to be able to write such letters. This girl is admirable in every way - as the little girls are. What do you suppose is the reason I have not long since fallen in love with one of them ??

(Signed) Wm. S. S.

Yantic,

Navy Yard,

Brooklyn N. Y.

Aug. 2, 1888

9 P. M.

My dear Lou,

I haven't any more general news, but I have a piece of particularly good news.

Lieut. Tyler, who has just come from Norfolk, to take Lieut. Lefavor's place, tells me that Commodore Brown told him that he had the Secretary's promise that the Yantic will be sent to the Norfolk Navy Yard, the first week in Oct., to remain there 30 days for repairs. How is that? Of course we will remain more than 30 days, as we always do - probably until the middle of Nov.

If it turns out true, wont it be fine?

I feel quite sure the Chamberlaines will invite you to come and visit them. Then I will get detached before the ship goes south and we will go home together.

We will probably know for sure pretty soon if we are to go there.

We leave tomorrow for Newport.

The Chamberlaines arrive here Sunday, and leave Monday or Tuesday for West Point, so we just miss them.

Love to all at home, Your loving brother

(Signed)

Wm.

Yantic,

Newport, R. I.

Aug 9, 1888

My dear Lou.

Your letter of the 7th. reached me this evening.

We hear no more about our going to Norfolk, but nothing to the contrary.

I think we will leave soon for the fisheries - perhaps in a week or so. I hope so, for you know I dont like this place.

I knew you would enjoy Pete's. letter. He is a splendid fellow indeed and I am glad he likes me so well.

You need not fear Miss Barker being dull at our house, for nothing could be more dull than her life in the city.

She seldom sees anyone, and is shut up in a flat (tho. a very nice one) all day long. You can't imagine how lonely one can be in a great city.

She told me once that she met a girl at a summer resort, who told her that she lived in New York. She asked her what street and she said 24th. St., and on asking her the number found that they had actually lived next door to each other for two years. I feel quite sure she would enjoy a visit in the country - simply being in the country would be a great pleasure to her. When they go away for the summer they are not in the country, but in a big hotel in a pretty large place.

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I think she will probably go to West Point with the girls during August, but she might like to visit you in Sept. If you really want her to come I would invite her to come whenever she can.

I know you would all like her, for she certainly is a splendid girl.

This is a very peculiar climate indeed. This morning it was foggy; during the afternoon it was warm and clear, and this evening it is foggy again.

I dont know whether it's the weather or not but I have a bad fit of the fidgets and feel disagreeable and very unsociable. I wouldn't mind if I could read but I can't even do that. I mean sure enough reading. During the last two days I actually read two novels - fortunately pretty good ones.

When I stop going to sea I expect to get all right, but I am in a bad way now. Some of the fellows went over to Narragansett Pier the other day, and found Mrs. Cann there with the Paymaster, who is on a month's leave from Key West.

She sent me all kinds of kind messages, and I will try and go see her; but to be real honest, I find myself wishing that she had not found out I was here, or that I had not found out she was there. That ain't even civilized is it? On top of this came a card from a girl in Newport (an

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Army officer's daughter) asking me to come and see her. She was in New Orleans in May and asked me to a garden party there but I could not go, so I must pay my party call here. She is an extremely pretty girl, and receives any amount of "attention," but I never liked her, as she is not my style. I suppose it could never enter her head that such a state of affairs existed.

You see I am not in a very good humor this evening so I had better close.

Give my love to all at home,

Your loving brother

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Newport, R. I.,

Aug 14th, 1888

My dear old chap, (James)

Your letter of the 10th. turned up today to my great delight - for you see, to tell the truth, I was agreeably surprised to receive an answer so soon. Thanks, awfully, and do it again - never mind how short the note. If you were a girl I would enlarge on how much pleasure your letters give me, but then you know one don't like to compliment a big broad shouldered man so much.

You are right that you have to move slowly in the single tax literature. It attacked my strongest prejudices, viz., protection, the Malthusian theory, and Henry Buckle. I did not understand it well for a long time. That is I could not say how this or that would work under the single tax. I had no one to discuss it with, and first understood it thoroughly when I read the Standard - then not so exclusively devoted to the tariff discussion - and the tracts. The latter more than anything else supply the place of discussion, and explain the workings of the proposed system in various cases.

My acquaintance with Mr. George was most interesting, as you can imagine, and I suppose he was gratified to hear that there were so many single tax men in the Navy. He says the growth of the principle has been wonderful, that

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when he first published the book it was almost without hope of seeing it enter practical politics# during his time. If you have not already done so, read the first two pages of the "Conclusion" of P. and P. where he expresses himself on this subject.

I distinctly remember that when I first understood the book I took an opposite view, and so expressed myself to West, an old classmate of mine. I mentioned this to Mr. George and it seemed to please him. I did not talk "shop" much with him - not half so much as I wanted to, for he never introduced the subject, but seemed bent on asking countless questions, and making me do the talking. Everything seemed to interest him.

I asked him about the various replies to P. and P. and he said that the book had never been attacked without gross misrepresentation of his principles, nor attacked with any arguments that were not already answered in the book.

I also asked him if # thought the great political economists had really failed to see the true bearing of the land theory. He said he felt sure they had all seen it, and avoided it - fearing the result to their reputations all except Spencer. Mills recognized and stated it, but avoided the logical conclusion. He feels sure that Smith saw it and avoided it entirely. He also said that the bitterness of the opposition is yet to come, and he thinks it will come

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soon - depending somewhat on the tariff discussion.

I will send you by this mail a small book containing an attack by the Duke of Argyle, and an answer by George. I have no doubt it will interest you. The Duke's article is a misrepresentation throughout, and is written in very bad temper, while George's is, I think very gentlemanly.

I saw by the papers that the Engr's. bill had passed, and it seems to me that your claim has only to be pushed to be acknowledged. If you are legally in the service you will have a good claim to back pay, though the bill reinstating you may provide against it. The courts could and I think would overrule their provision.

Of course it would take money to push the claim, but if it is a good one, there are claim agents who might be willing to push it for a certain % of the back pay in case of success. You know our claim was gotten in the same way, by

John Paul Jones,

No 622 F Street,

Washington, D. C.

Why dont you state the case to him, and see what he thinks of it. It is not much trouble and can do no harm, and if he undertakes it, it will be no more trouble to you. Give it a trial, and then if you succeed, you can make the choise# between a cruise with Pete. and I, and civil life. See?

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I wish you were here now with all my heart, for I am sadly in need of a companion. Gettin' to be a confirmed old crank. Not morose and pale and all that, but simply unsociable.

My health is excellent, and I am as lively as a cricket and quite happy on board ship, but want to be let alone by shoregoing people. It's the same old thing that I have explained often. A girl visiting Newport (Miss Throckmorton) who is very pretty, and receives plenty of attention sent me a card, and I had to call, go to tea etc. She don't care for me particularly, but likes attention, ain't my style, and I don't like her. When I go to call the people with whom she is staying get out of the way and leave us alone, and it makes me savage - but then you know one has to treat people with civility even if it is of the commonest kind.

Today Paymaster Ball, who has always been most attentive to the little girls, brought two girls on board ship, and I buckled on my armor, shut my teeth and prepared to do my duty by a shipmate. When I saw them, or one of them, I melted at once, and what do you suppose was the reason. Simply this. One of them was little, with a perfect womanly figure, and a cute, sweet face that reminded me of the only Simon Pure little "Madame," Mary Chamberlaine of happy memory.

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Nothing to be compared with the original of course, but the resemblance was enough to warm my tough old heart towards her for the little Madame's sake. She is in West Point now with all the family - and may all the good angles# watch over her. "Et je suis bien sur que pendant que vous dormez l'ange qui vous garde agite doucement ses ailes avec le joli bruit Frou-Frou." which is what I wrote the little woman once upon a time - from the play Frou Frou.

I thank you for your compliment to Miss Meem. I agree with you entirely. I am sorry to say that I unintentionally destroyed the letter I promised to send you.

Just wait till you see me ashore. I have no doubt I will turn out quite an ordinary and moderately agreeable society man.

Write me a note again when you have time.

With much love,

Always your true friend

(Signed) Sims.

Yantic,

Newport, R. I.

Aug. 18, 1888

My dear Old Jones,

Did I tell you in my last letter that the Yantic has had a great piece of luck - tho. of a negative kind. The Department has ordered the Admiral to send a ship at once to Hayti, and he hadn't the cheek to send the Yantic again, so the Galena has been ordered, and leaves at once, via. Norfolk for coal. We leave here on the 22nd. for Boston - for coal - thence to Portland, Me. where we transfer the flag to the Ossipee, then make a rapid cruise to the fisheries, and return to New York by Sept. 15th., but whether to be repaired there or not I don't know.

This is all the news. Having occasion today to send to the Standard office for some books, and there being just 35¢ left from a shekel, I ordered a copy of Protection or Free Trade sent to you. If you have one already, give it to a dem. who is inclined towards Free Trade, to let him see what it leads to.

I sent you a picture of H. G. the other day; and I send you my best love now.

Always your loving friend,

(Signed) Sims.

P. S. Mrs. Rider is at Pictou, N. S. and perhaps I will see her during the cruise.

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P. S. 2nd.

A very pretty and very sweet little girl asked me to send all the foreign stamps that came on my letters to her small 10 year old cousin, Master Gussie Wingfield, % J. F. Wingfield, Liberty, Bedford Co., Va.

As she is really a rather nice little girl, and I wished to oblige her, I did so: whereupon the little chap wrote me a very cute letter thanking me, and telling me among other things that when he got to be a Naval officer he would collect stamps for my little boy. If you have any stamps from Pete's letters, and don't want them, you might send them to the above address, or to me; that is if you also are inclined to oblige this little girl - her name is Mary Chamberlaine.

(Signed) Wm. S. S.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Newport, R. R#.

Aug. 21, 1888

9 P. M.

My dear Mother,

Your letter enclosing Lilly Hollands arrived this evening. I have only a moment to write as the last mail goes ashore in a little while, and we are to sail tomorrow morning at 6 a.m. It is storming now and we may not go unless it blows over before morning.

I will write you more fully from Boston about going to Canada, but I have time to say a few words, tho. I am sorry to say I can't give you much hope - for several reasons. First our time of arriving in New York from our northern cruise has been changes from Sept. 15 to Sept. 21, and is much more likely to be much later. That would not leave me much time to get my leave, as I would have to go to Washington and see the authorities.

However, if I can't go I dont see any reason why that should keep you and Father from going. Of course the more the merrier, and I quite understand that you would like to have as many of your little ones along as possible.

I can't well get my leave by mail as it would require a long explanation; and I hardly dare ask simply for my detachment, as I would very likely be sent some

Aug. 21, 1888 - page 2

place on shore duty, and lose my leave.

You say Father can only remain in Canada two weeks.
If you go how long do you intend to remain ? ? ? ?
I suppose some time longer.

With love to all at home,

Your loving son,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard,
Boston, Mass.

Aug. 24 '88

My dear Louisa,

We arrived in Boston yesterday morning after a cold passage - I expected it to snow every minute during the night, but it didn't. We have finished coaling and will sail tomorrow for Portland, Me., where we will remain a couple of days before going on to Halifax.

That is positively all the news.

I heard from the girls the other day, and they are very enthusiastic about West Point, the Cadets, the hops etc., etc. They leave Sept. 1st. when the studies commence, and I think go to New York with Miss Barker. Miss Annie, I understand is going to visit Miss Meem down in the valley during Sept., and I would like to go too.

There is nobody here in Boston that I know except a few old shipmates that I don't care much about. Miss Bessye Fyffe is away for the summer, I am very sorry to say, for I would like to hear her fiddle again.

Do you intend to go to Canada with father and mother? I am afraid I won't be able to go, but can't for the life of me see why that should break up the party. When you write tell me what the plans are - when you

Aug. 24 '88 - page 2

expect to leave, how long you expect to remain etc.,
etc. And also tell me how it happens that passes can
be gotten nowadays. I thought that snap was busted.
Write me a letter to Halifax, Nova Scotia, and tell me
all about it.

The weather up in these parts is simply perfect,
and my health is quite as perfect - think I am gettin'
quite fat.

Give my best love to all at home,

Always your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Halifax, N. S.

Sept. 6th, '88

My dear old man, (Jones)

I received your short note just before we sailed from Portland, Me. for this place.

Since then I have been quite busy - and now have only bad news to tell you.

It was my intention to get my detachment on my return to New York, and go with my Mother and sisters to Canada to attend the wedding of a pretty cousin of mine to a wealth# New Yorker - the wedding to take place next month.

When I arrived here I received the very sad news that she had just been drown# in Lake Ontario.

The American Consul at Port Hope, a Mr. Robinson, took her out on a rough day against the advice of everybody - and worse than all it was in a canoe. They upset and she was lost, and he was just barely saved. Comment, of course, is unnecessary.

On Tuesday last I went to Pictou, by rail to see Mrs. Rider, and was there 26 hours. She is very well and has been enjoying her summer. Her son George is very well, and I fancy from the way in which she spoke of him, that she has no anxiety about him.

She asked me if I had seen Mr. Sidney Rider and family when I was in New York. I replied that I had not. I

Sept. 6th, '88 - page 2

intended to go, but rather expected a note from Mr. Rider inviting me. I had subscribed for the book notes and they had stopped coming which somewhat puzzled me. Mrs. Rider explained it all. She had received news from some one in Providence that Mr. & Mrs. Rider have just found out that Miss Annie Rider has been married secretly since last April to the driver or hostler of a certain Dr., formerly their family physician.

I fancy from what Mrs. R. said that they had been intimate (criminally) previous to their marriage. She also told me that Mr. Rider had failed in business. This is sad enough news. Did I not tell you last year after my visit to Providence that I suspected she was "no better than she should be"? She is simply a beast and will probably be reduced to prostitution some day.

That is about all the news I have now. We leave here on the 15th. Sept. to be in New York by the 21st. Write to me soon.

Always your sincere friend,

(Signed) Wm. S. Sims.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Halifax, N. S.

Sept. 15, 1888

My dear Lou,

The festive Yantic leaves here tomorrow morning for New York, and will arrive there on the 21st, or before - depending on the weather.

The boys have had a glorious time here - there are many Yankee's spending the summer, and they and the blue noses have been most hospitable. I have met nobody, but remained on board as usual, except for my trip to Pictou.

When do Mother and Alf. intend to return home?

I hope they will bring Florence with them. Is she the oldest? I dont remember, but I rather think Frances is - about 16 or 17 years?

(Uncle San's daughters, my neices.)*

I enclose you a letter just received from Miss Mary which will tell you where they all are. Miss Barker must be in New York by this time, and I have no doubt would be glad to visit you before Miss Mary visits her.

I have no idea when I will get my leave, as I have to write or go to Washington, but probably some

*Added in pencil, not by W.S.S., I think, possibly Grandfather Sims? - ASF

Sept. 15, 1888 - page 2

time in the winter. I am not at all sure they will give me a long leave. They don't care how long I have served at sea - so long as I cant bother them with political influence.

If they want me for any duty they will send me there, and give some Coburger the leave. If I promise to go to France and master French I might get it, for Walker, the man who has the say, favors that sort of thing, and orders officers to colleges to study electricity etc. I might get duty in Paris next May at the exposition, tho', it is not likely as many will be after it. A notice was recently published in the Army and Navy Journal saying that hereafter officers would not be granted more than one month's leave, however, I don't think there is much in it, as I see somebody has just got three months.

So dont count on anything for sure, and make all your plans without any reference to me.

I have thought that perhaps Alf. and Mother's going to Canada may be very expensive under the circumstances - besides Alf's having no work, and if my allotment will be needed they are welcome to it, for my heart is not set on going ashore, and I wouldn't much mind going South again, as the ship is quite agreeable.

Sept. 15, 1888 - page 3

A few days ago I wrote a letter to Miss Florence Luray (?) Overton, telling her I had just heard of her arrival in Montclair, and asking her how she liked the place, and the people she is visiting; and asking her to drop me a line and let me know if, without interfering with any of her engagements, I might run out and have a look at here. I expect to find her answer on my arrival in New York.

Drop me a line about the 18th. and give me the news.

With love to all at home

Your loving brother

(Signed) Wm.

P. S.

Mary forwarded Alf's letter, and it reached me yesterday the 14th.

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard,
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Sept. 21st '88

My dear Lou,

We arrived here this morning, and your letter reached me this evening. I must thank you for writing so promptly and telling me all the news.

Mother's letters to Father are the delight of my heart, they are veritable love letters. Bless the sweet woman's heart I believe she is really rather fond of the husband even after all these years. Isn't it fine? I wonder if such women grow nowadays.

It is a great satisfaction that poor Lillian's body has at last been found. Her terrible death has attracted attention all over the Dominion, - the Halifax papers contained several kindly notices.

Uncle Dick's letter to the Times is very touching. The people of Port Hope have certainly been very kind.

Let us not continue our discussion at all - no good can come of it.

I enclose you a clip from the New York Times about Miss Rider. The paper was sent to me by Mrs. Brewster - I think from the hadnwriting. I will go to see her tomorrow.

Sept. 21st '88 - page 2

I thank you for the clips from the newspapers, they are written in a very kindly spirit.

I am delighted to hear that Mother is to bring little Florence back with her. If she does we will never let her go back again I fancy.

When I get my affairs straightened out I am willing to assist Aunt Carrie or Florence. It does seem hard that these sweet girls should have to go into stores to make a living, because a woman can make at the best such a poor living.

You speak of being lonely, and I think of it often, and often wish you had the never failing resource# that I have - tho', not perhaps to such an unsociable extent.

I mean reading, or something else of an absorbing interest. I had this in mind when I mentioned Henry George and his works to you. This subject has for me an interest that I wish you could understand. He is a good and true man.

I sent my card in to him at his office when I was here before, and have taken dinner at his house with his family, and found them most excellent people.

When I come home you must let me explain his principles to you, and show you what a splendid civilization is possible. One must have a pretty good heart

Sept. 21st '88 - page 3

to be interested in these matters, and I believe you and I have such hearts.

If I am mistaken in this matter I will find it out in time, for I give it considerable attention.

I hope Mary will bring her Pittsburg friend home with her.

I called on Miss Barker today and was charmed with her.

I suppose it is true that she is not pretty, but I can hardly believe it. She is one of the very few girls that I am not glad to find "out" when I call.

I really enjoy talking to her an entire afternoon. She says she is going to marry me if she can manage it, tho' she thinks I am rather too old.

Miss Mary left only day before yesterday for Norfolk where she will remain until Nov. (Thanksgiving) when she comes on to New York to go to West Point with Miss Barker.

I have missed her all around. Miss Barker suggests that Mrs. C. is trying to keep her away from me!

When Alf. comes home why dont you invite her to visit you? She would enjoy the country (as a city girl) and I am sure you would enjoy having her.

I have not yet received an answer to my letter to Miss Florence Luray O., but when I do I will go and see

Sept. 21st '88 - page 4

her and report the visit.

We think we will be repaired here, but are not sure, as the ships have not settled down yet. I understand that Commodore Walker is on leave until Oct. 1st., but as soon as I hear that he has returned, I will go to Wash. and see him about leave. I don't see how they can refuse me 6 or 8 months at the least. I am making the most encouraging progress with my Meisterschaft System of learning to speak French - no more grammar for me. I am determined to learn French, and can stumble along pretty well now. A few months in Paris would give me the fluency I want. You have no idea how much of an advantage it is to an officer to be able to speak French, especially if it is known that he learned it by hard work. When I get the French down fine I am going to tackle the Spanish.

You need not have returned Mary Chamberlaine's letter, as I had answered it, and - you need not give it away - but I always destroy all letters as soon as they are answered.

I am sorry to hear that there is discord with the family over the way, but don't see how it can be helped.

I am going to see Miss Kate Maxwell very soon.

Also Pee Wee West, the cynic - who is now engaged

Sept. 21st '88 - page 5

to be married.

It has been officially announced in the Army and Navy papers, that Lemme Wall was in no way implicated in taking the examination papers at Newport. He has however resigned.

I will send you by this mail a splendid picture Mrs. Rider gave me. She took it herself in Cleveland Ohio.

Take care of it and stand by to return it to me when I ask for it. Mrs. R. says she will print me several copies when she returns home if the negative is all right.

If she does I will give you one. I sent it to Miss Meem to take a look at it, and received it back here.

Give my love to all at home, and believe me with much love,

Always your sincere and loving brother

(Signed) Wm.

P. S.

Tell Hen. I will send the pup on monday# so it wont be stopped at Mt. Union over Sunday.

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Brooklyn,
Sept. 30, 1888,

My dear old man, (Jones)

I have been going to drop you a line for some time, but as you know "some time" is rather indefinite, and New York is a poor place for letter writing.

We arrived here from Halifax Sept. 21st, and it has now been decided that we will be repaired here much to my disgust, for Norfolk is good enough for me.

I suppose you know where all our small friends are. Miss Mary left here for Norfolk two days before the ship arrived - comment is unnecessary. Miss Annie is with Miss Meem, who gives the most glowing picture of her rosy health and beauty.

Next Tuesday or Wednesday (today is Sunday) I expect to leave here for Washington to see about getting leave, and from there I expect to run down into the valley for the remainder of my week's leave. I hope to find Miss Annie still there. I will give you a full report of proceedings, but you must not expect too much, for I am not in love with anyone.

Of course I will have a splendid time - horse back, tennis etc., and expect to make friends with little Gil. immediately, as I have a professional baseball (boy's size) and a fine jack knife to take him.

Sept. 30, 1888 - page 2

I have not heard from Pete for a long time, and hardly expect to, as I see he has sailed for Samoa from Calleo.

When we arrived here I sent him a letter to Samoa % Navy Pay Office, Frisco. How do you address his letters?

Did you see in the papers that Lemme Wall has resigned to practice law in Wash. Ter.?

It was reported that he he# was implicated in stealing the examination papers at the torpedo school, but it has been officially denied in the Army and Navy papers, and I understand that he has been allowed to withdraw his resignation, to clear his record. I should not be surprised if he remained in the service.

What do you do with yourself out of business hours during this cool weather.

Do you know, old man, that I know very little about your manner of life away out there in the West? - occupation, amusements, sassiety, etc. Does the country produce anything like the little girls? or is the climate too severe? Do you still slide over the floor with your usual grace, and how are the Western girls on the slide? etc. etc.

Do you expect to come East this fall or winter and if so when? If you do you must not fail to let me know. I will keep you informed of my address, and will meet you somewhere if possible.

I think it will not be long before I am home, and as I

Sept. 30, 1888 - page 3

suppose you will travel on the Penn'a line I can meet you at Mt. Union, and perhaps hold you over a train or so.

Drop me a line soon to the above address, and excuse this poor note, for I haven't any writin' tacks (?) aboard tonight.

Has Miss Mary told you that she is reading some of my crank literature.

She has read the "land question" and I think understands it pretty well. She is also reading Buckle, and altogether padding her pretty little head out in fine style.

By the way, you belong to the R. R. department of your biz now I understand. Eh bien, you must meet many R. R. men and if you hear of an opening for a young engineer please let me know, for my brother has finished college and is now rested. I think he is really very competent, as he has had considerable experience. He is willing to take anything in the line of promotion, or as I understand it any position on corps in the field.

If you ever write to Bill Boush (?) you might mention it to him.

My father don't want him to go on the Penn. line, as it is now very largely controlled by influence.

The "boy" is 23, and father, who is an engineer, says he is quite competent to take charge of a party, as he has already done on several occasions.

Sept. 30, 1888 - page 4

He is now in Canada, but returns shortly, if not already on the way.

He went there immediately on hearing of my poor cousin's death. They searched with divers, steam launches, and grapnels, for two weeks and when they were about to give up, an onshore gale brought the body ashore.

Let me hear from you soon.

With much love,

Always your sincere friend,

(Signed) Wm. S. Sims.

(U.S.S.-S.-Yantie).

Strathmore (the name of
the place - form)

Mount Jackson

Va.

Oct. 6, 1888

my dear Lou,

Your letter of Oct. 1st. was forwarded to me here, and the next day I received one dated Oct. 2nd. and one from Adelaide of the same date.

I suppose Mother Alg, and Florence, are home by this time, if so please give them my very best love, and tell the former not to be worried about her little boy - being away down in "ole Virginia" among the girls.

I recd also a note from Mary enclosing a letter from Mother.

There are three girls here. Miss Annie, Miss Meem, and Miss Slaughter. The other members of the party are Mr. & Mrs. Mee, little Gil. and myself.

Miss Annie and Miss Meem were very much pleased with your messages, and I am told to send you their best love.

As you can imagine I haven't much time for writing - too much to do. We are busy all day long. The girls come to breakfast in their riding habits and after breakfast they take the sailor out for a ride, and you may not believe it but the sailor rides tolerably well. We rode about 15 miles

Oct. 6th, 1888 - page 2

the first day, being out both forenoon and afternoon, and I was none the worse the next day, tho'. I played tennis besides. Miss Annie is the very picture of health, I wish you could see her gallop along the turnpike.

She is very beautiful, weighs 130 pounds, and is a little sunburned.

In the evening she sings for General Meem for hours at a time. He is a splendid fellow, 6 ft. 3 ins. and very much in love with Annie.

I leave here next Tuesday and take Annie to Baltimore to put her on the boat for Norfolk.

I will write you again and tell you all about the place, but I must close now for the morning mail.

Give my love to all at home,

Always your loving brother

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Swatara,
Navy Yard, Wash., D. C.

Oct. 7th. '88

My dear Mother,

I received my bunk cover all right by express today, and I think it is simply beautiful. I like the way it is finished very much indeed. Everyone on board ship admires it very much. And besides being so very pretty it will be very useful and comfortable for me, for two days out of four when I am on watch, I take a nap in the daytime.

I thank you very much indeed for it, and for all the trouble you have been to in making it. It will be a great comfort to me for years.

Your letter of the 4th. arrived on the morning of the same day I rec'd the Afgan.

I think there must be some mistake about Dr. B's charging you with the corn he gave you, for, in the first place, I dont think the Dr. is so mean, and in the next, I think he is too shrewd a man to do anything so extremely foolish.

I am glad old Poll is commencing to talk at last, she may become quite an educated bird if you take pains with her. I have no doubt the "Mucky" had a very good time at the reunion.

Please tell Father that I have just written to

Oct. 7th. '88 - page 2

Mary as suggested in his letter, about her studying Latin, and have urged her to do so.

We will finish unloading the silver tomorrow, and, I suppose will then coal ship and take on our cargo for New York. We have gotten to be a regular freight boat lately.

Everybody tells me I have improved very much during my vacation, so you see, all your cream has not been wasted.

Give my best love to all at home,

Your loving son,

(Signed) Will.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard,
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Oct. 10 '88 P. M.

My dear Lou.,

I should write a letter to Adelaide and will do so soon, but I want to write to you now as I have something to say of our mutual friends.

As you know by my postal card, I arrived safely this morning.

On Tuesday at 11. a.m. Miss Annie and I left Strathmore with sincere regret. She was there 5 weeks, and, of course, won all their hearts. The Gen'l. and Mrs. Meem are particularly fond of her; and I don't wonder, for a brighter and more amiable girl I never saw. She is the picture of health (weighs 138½ pounds) and in the highest possible spirits.

Each day after supper she would sing at least two hours for the Genl. while the rest of us sat in the library before a blazing wood fire.

The Genl. is a tremendous fellow - 6'3'' and solidly built, and as merry as a cricket. Mrs. Meem is quite large and quite as jolly. They both like young folks, and did everything for us.

Their house is large but not well furnished. I fancy they are not very well off, but I don't know.

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They entertain a great deal.

Miss Meem has lots of girls to visit her, and many men visit them, especially during the hunting season, as there is plenty of game on the place.

Little Gil - the second son and 3rd child is only eight years old. He is a very handsome and sweet little boy. I took him a baseball and a fine Jackknife, and I think quite won his heart, thereby. The other member of the family is a civil and mining Engr. in West V.

The Newfoundland dog is simply splendid - one of the finest I have ever seen, and is of course a universal favorite.

Miss Meem, as you know is very handsome, particularly so just now I think. She of course rides perfectly, as she has ridden for years. She is only a beginner in tennis, but beats me quite as often as I do her - try as hard as I can, so I fancy she will be a "sharp" some day.

Miss Annie and I had a clear Oct. day for our trip, and enjoyed it very much. I think we were taken for bride and groom from the way we behaved on the train. We arrived in Baltimore at 5.30 and drove to the Bay line boat, saw the baggage on board, arranged about a stateroom etc. Then we drove up town to a swell

Oct. 10 '88 - page 3

restaurant and had dinner and returned to the boat by 8 P. M. I remained on the boat until 10 P. M. when she left the second landing, and had a regular Norfolk time, for we were fortunate enough to find thereon - among about a thousand other Norfolk people - the following, viz., Misses Bessie, Bland, Nina, and Pattie Taylor, Miss Lizzie Taylor (the little "snip"), Miss Bessie Chamberlaine, and some others whom I don't know, - but I was told that there were over 40 people on board who were related to each other!

You can imagine the reunion.

From the boat I went up town with Mr. Chamberlaine - who happened to be there. He is Annie's & Mary's Uncle - a half brother of Mr. Wm. C. He took me to the club, gave me a drink, and introduced me to several men who knew Simpson, Gorgas, and a number of others. Then I went to the Penn'a. R. R. and at 11.35 took a sleeper for New York where I arrived at 6.20, but declined to turn out until 7.30 when I found myself on a siding in the Yard.

When I arrived on the ship I found that poor Knep- per had been ordered to proceed without delay to San Francisco and join the Ranger.

He did not want to go but had to. He telegraphed for a delay in order to go home, but received no answer.

Oct. 10 '88 - page 4

Today a letter arrived delaying his orders until Oct. 25th., We telegraphed to Somerset at once, but the reply came that he had already left that morning. Hard lines, ain't it? I believe the captain of the Ranger applied for him.

I have not yet written to Washington about my leave, but expect to do so soon. I will write the best letter I can, of course, and we may have some little correspondence.

Dr. Magruder returned from Europe yesterday, and paid us a visit today. He is great friends with Com. Walker, and says he will put in a word for me incidentally, that is not as tho'. I had asked him to do so.

I think I will ask for a year and take what he will give me. I will be bitterly disappointed if I have to give up my trip to France - not because I think I will enjoy it for I know I will be lonely and homesick in a big city with an unsociable disposition and not much knowledge of the language - but I have so long had my heart set on learning to speak French well, to raise me a bit in the profession, that it will go hard to give it up.

I will tell Walker that if he will give me a year I will promise to learn French faithfully, and be ready to go to sea again. If he will only give me six month's leave I will go on shore duty - if possible as an inspector

Oct. 10 '88 - page 5

of steel somewhere between Phila. and Pittsburg - or at the Naval Academy.

I have not been to see Miss Barker, as I went on duty (day's duty - one day in four) today, but I will go to see her tomorrow.

The Misses Jones, of New Orleans are in the city and I will see them also.

The Yantic is to have quite extensive repairs, a new deck etc., and will probably be here until Jan'y at least, if not later. I don't want to remain in New York and will get my leave as soon as possible, which, however, may not be until the end of this month.

And indeed it may be, for all that I know that Walker will not detach me until the ship goes South, tho'. I hardly think it.

Write to me and tell me all the news, and about Florence, - give her my best love.

With love to all at home,

Your loving brother

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,
Navy Yard, Brooklyn,

Oct. 13, 1888

My dear Sis,

Your letter of the 11th. reached me this P. M.

Since you have fallen so much in love with little Gipsej, I am glad Hen. has given her to you.

If Hen. will accept a sort of back-handed present, I will give her to him now - just as if he hadn't given her to you yet.

Apropos of dogs - I would not like to say right out loud that I think little Gil. Meem's dog Rebel is handsomer than Commodore, but he certainly is very handsome. His hair is not so curly but quite shiny and fine, and the white plume on the tip of his tail looks very swell. He is in perfect condition as he gets plenty of exercise and is very carefully fed - very seldom, almost never gets any meat.

You say you leave on Thursday for Montclair, so I suppose you will arrive on the same evening.

I am standing in "days duty" and there are four of us - therefore I am on duty one day and off three, but as two of us are kids, I have to remain on board one of the other days, so I am on board two days, and off two days. As we are going at present I am off duty next Tuesday and Wednesday, on duty Thursday and Friday

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off Saturday and Sunday, etc. However I guess I can change my days on and off duty with the other fellow so as to reverse the above order. As soon as you have made up your mind for sure when you will arrive, telegraph me so that I can make my arrangements.

I suppose Chal. will meet you anyway. If I can I will do so also (if you tell me the train you arrive on). If I can't I will come to Mtclair as soon as possible.

When I am off duty two days I can come out on the first day-in the afternoon, and remain until the next evening if they will put me up.

If you consider the church paper such a nuisance why did you send it to me. I have few church acquaintance, but I will see what I can do.

Give my love to Florence and tell her I hope she will like Orbisonia when she gets ettled down.

I went to see Mrs. Brewster today, and found that Mr. Brewster has been very sick again, but is about a-gain now. He is liable to drop dead at any time.

Give my love to all at home,

Your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

U. S. S. Yantic,

Navy Yard, Brooklyn,

Oct. 17, 1888

9. P. M.

My dear Father,

Your letter of the 15th., enclosing Mothers reached me today.

Yes, I am "past thirty" - over the hill, as it were, and no longer a kid.

I am thankful that I have concealed my wickednesses so successfully as to cause you no anxiety. My blood is too cool to be dangerous.

I thank you sincerely for your kind expressions.

My life has been a happy one; and I am thoroughly convinced that my home is the happiest one in the world, and my father and mother the best.

I only wish I deserved half as much love as I have for you both; for, tho' conscious of no active evil, I don't think much of your dutiful second son.

There is no news yet from my letter, and may not be for some time. I don't really expect any consideration from them - perhaps not even the six months. There is so much pressure brought to bear on them by those who have influence, that those who have not must go to the wall.

Of course I will let you know as soon as I have

Oct. 17, 1888 - page 2

any news.

You can give Hen. the money back. I make him a present of the pup - with my compliments.

I have been expecting a telegram from Lou. as she said she would leave Thursday. I have changed my duty so as to be off duty on that day, but of course can't meet her unless I know her train - by telegram, or even know for sure that she is coming.

I have two days off and two on duty at present, but in a week from now I will have three off and two on, so I will have plenty of time to go to Montclair. I am sorry to say I have not been there since I returned from "Down East."

My health is excellent tho'. I am having some trouble with my left eye. Something must have irritated it, and I can't read much with it.

With my best love to Mother, Florence, and all at home.

Always your loving son,

(Signed) Wm.

Yantic,

Thursday, 25 '88.

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

My dear Lou,

Some time ago I asked Mr. and Mrs. Brewster to come and visit the Navy Yard and she has written to say she will come tomorrow, Friday, P. M., so perhaps I won't come out - probably will not as Mrs. B. wants me to return with her and take dinner.

It is just possible that I may come out on the 8 P. M. train, but don't expect me.

I have just rec'd a note from Miss Barker which I enclose.

I will write to her to say that we will call on her about 3 P. M. Saturday.

If you will leave Montclair at 8.54 on Saturday morning I will meet you in the ferry house at Chambers St. on the New York side. If you can't come send me a telegram. If I dont hear from you I will be there.

We might pay Mrs. B. half an hour's call - go to the ship for breakfast, and call on Miss Barker in the afternoon.

If the weather is too bad don't come.

I will wait in the ferry house until the train is in, and then leave. If you miss me take the next train home. See.

Thursday, 25 '88 - page 2

My best regards to Mr. and Mrs. O. and my love
to the baby.

Y. L. B.

(Signed)

Wm. S. Sims

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

U. S. S. Yantic,
New Orleans,
Monday 7,

(W.S.S. adds in pencil "1888" - ASF)

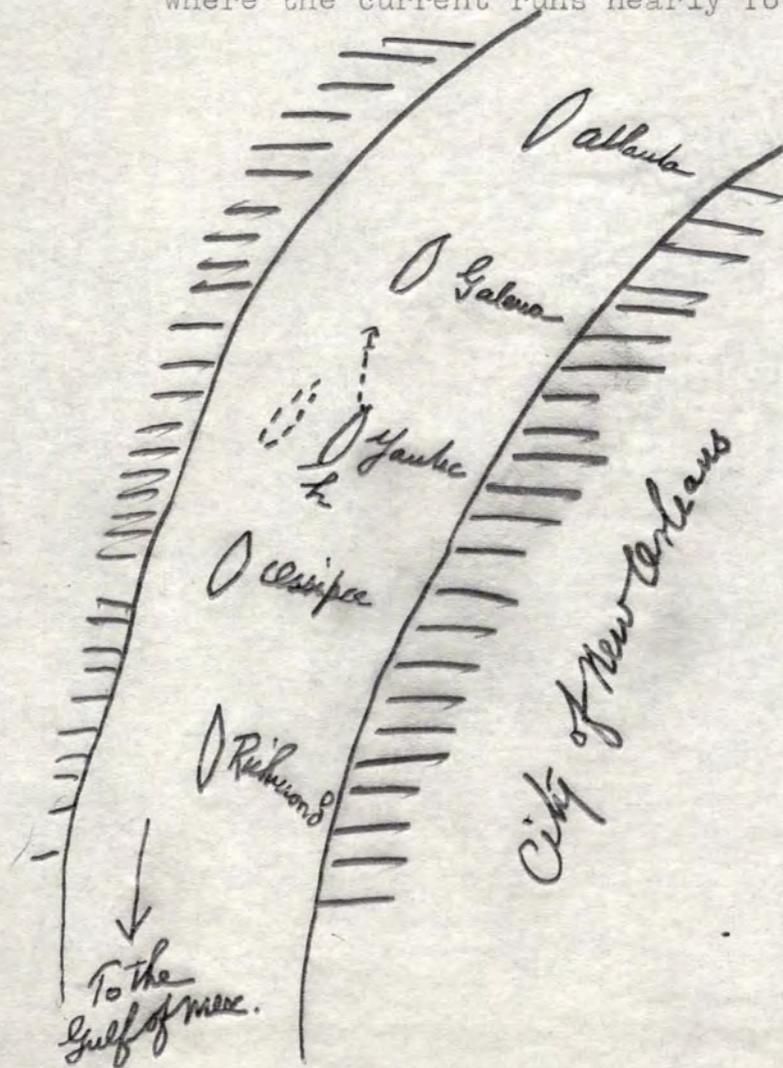
My dear Mary,

Some people have more luck than others, of one of the former of whom I am the latter of which.

I had a splendid piece of pure luck today, and probably saved the little Yantic from being a total wreck.

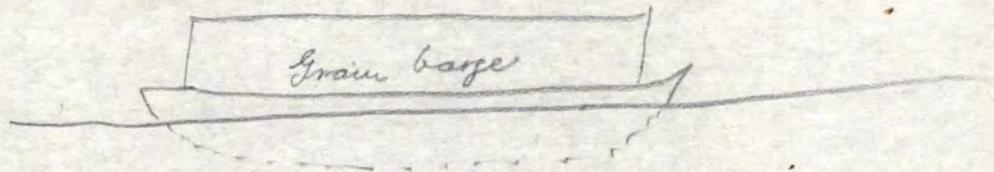
We (five vessels) anchored in the Mississippi river where the current runs nearly four miles an hour, which

makes it rather a difficult job to bring boats alongside. I had the afternoon watch, and in order to try an experiment I put the ship's helm (h) over and lashed the wheel. That made her run over to the right hand side of the river and made less current on her starboard (right hand) side.



Monday 7, 1888 - page 2

Soon after I had done this a heavy thunder and rain storm came up, and there was such a heavy fog on the river that you could not see the other ships. Just about the same time two large steamers were bringing a very large tow of heavy grain barges down the river.



There were more than a dozen of them, and each one must have had 500 tons of freight on board.

I suppose the captain of the steamer did not see the fleet in time, but at all events the heavy barges caught across the bow of the Atlanta, and one of them was pierced by her steel ram and stuck there, breaking the Atlanta's anchor chain, so that she drifted down stream with the swift current. Another barge broke the Galena's chain and they drifted down also. The barges with the Atlanta and Galena came rushing down the river four miles an hour close by the little Yantic, and if it had not so happened that I had steered her out of her regular place a little while before they would have smashed into us, and swept us away, and we would have gone on top of the Ossipee.

That's what I call luck. Both the barges that

Monday 7, 1888 - page 3

struck the ships sank in the river, and as the water rushed into them the pressure of the air blew the roofs of the hatches off - so that barges and cargoes were a total loss.

The ships finally dropped other anchors and got up steam and came back to their positions.

Of course the accident was no fault of theirs and considering the storm and thick weather, hardly the fault of the steamer Captain. However it is a heavy loss for the company that owns the barges. As far as I know the ships were hardly injured at all.

They say we will leave here Saturday of this week, but we dont know for sure.

There is very little general news to tell you. I have been ashore to see some of my old friends, and find them quite the same. Lemme Wall, my old shipmate is not here now, but in Newport at the torpedo school.

I wrote to Lilian H. the other day, and sent her my photo. I hope she will send me one of hers. Have not heard from Lou. for some time- suppose she is very busy in Phila.

All the cigars I brought from Havana have arrived safely, and have been acknowledged. Mr. Overton is very much pleased with his.

With love to all at home, Your loving brother,

(Signed) Wm.

POSTCARD

Addressed to: Mr. H. W. Jones,
% Robinson and Cary,
St. Paul,
Minn.

The missing letter of Nov. 17th reached me about
10 minutes after I mailed my letter to you today.

Some fat clerk at the Navy Dept. has been sittin'
on it all this time, _____ him.

(Signed) Wm. S. S.

Jan. 3rd. '89

Observe the new address. We have not moved, but have a new P.O. of our own. (Rockhill Furnace, (P.O.)
(Huntingdon Co., Pa.,
(Jany 3rd, 1889
(

My dear Jones,

The promptness of your reply nearly took my breath away - not to mention the effect of the photo.

I don't intend to indulge myself in any flattery, but I must say it is a good likeness, tho'. you might have screwed on just a faint smile for the occasion. However you did very well tho'. to be entirely frank there is one other remark I would like to make, viz., to express my mild disapproval# of those inartistic and mathematically exact neckties that look as if they just blew in the port (a hole in a ship) and struck there.

_____ . . . _____

The guilelessness is mine, and the guilefulness yours. I will probably not see Nancy before I sail away. I have expressed myself on this interesting subject so thoroughly that I dont believe you have any lingering suspicions, but only intend a little banter. All right go ahead. Nance and I don't gee worth a cent, and never did more than five cents worth. You never saw us except with our company manners on. We were too polite to quarrel in public, but you ought to see us "at home"!

Jany 3rd., 1889 - page 2

Miss Mary and I swapped cards, and besides I sent her a very fine photo. of "3 little maids from School" that Mrs. Rider printed for me. I will send you one. She wrote me a very kind letter acknowledging it, and we are quite good friends, tho'. recently she affected to pretend that I forgot her and Annie after my visit to Miss Meem. By the way I correspond with the latter as usual, but nothing more than usual - it ain't in me.

The little maids are quite taken with the Cadets, or with the admiration of the Cadets. Admiration is what gits 'em all.

However there is one thing you may not have thought of, viz., that the W. P. cadets average four years older than those youthful ones you knew at the Naval School, and you know what a difference four years makes.

Miss Mary interests herself in quite serious reading, and flatters me by saying it is "under my direction."

Darling old Pete, as you justly call him wrote me a splendid letter which arrived a day or so before yours.

Do you publish his letters. If you dont I would rewrite them and publish them. I used to correspond with the Chicago Times, and I am sure they would take them. They used to give me \$10. a letter, and kicked if they were too long. Put Pete "onto" the racket and make him write often.

Jany 3rd, 1889 - page 3

I am exceedingly obliged to you for writing to Bush. My brother has finished the only job he has had this winter today. He wants to go West, and will take anything for a start from axe-man up. He has had a great deal of experience besides his thorough training at the University.

If you hear from Bush just drop a line to my father, as my brother may be away. Address

(A. W. Sims
(
(Rockhill Furnace,
(
(Huntingdon Co, Pa.

I send you a photo. by this mail. I was under the impression that you had one of mine.

If you wish to decorate your room with my picture, why dont you put up the shaven one.

I will write to you often if you will brace up and reply. My mother and sister send their very best regards and kindest wishes for a happy and successful New Year, and I know I need not say how much success and happiness I wish you.

With much love,

Always your sincere friend

(Signed) Wm. S. Sims

P. S. I sent a xmas card to your mother, and Hilary's mother, but forgot to put any cards in them. Please mention the circumstance when you write. (Signed) WmS.S.

Sturtevant House,

Jany 15th, '89

12 Midnight.

My dear Lou.

I received your letter of the 13th, also Adelaides, and Mrs. Riders forwarded.

Since I wrote last night I have been extremely busy. I was not in bed until 2 a.m. as I wrote to Father and also to Swanstrom. This morning I got up at 6.30 and by 8.30 I was at the Navy Yard expecting to go down on the tug and see the fellows. You have of course seen by the papers that Lieut. Miles is dead. His poor wife is a Norfolk lady, whose sister also married a naval officer. They say she is not well and they have not even told her that the ship has left Hayti.

When I arrived at the Yard I found that the tug which usually leaves at 9. a.m. had gone away on other duty, and they didn't know when she would be back, so I could not wait. I send# a note from there saying good bye to the fellows and telling them I had tried to reach them. I called on Capt. Green in the Yard, then on Mrs. Green in Brooklyn. Then to the other end of Brooklyn to call on Miss Kate and Mrs. Banks. Will M. was away.

Then I called on Chal at his office and took lunch with him, and send my love to Florie and the baby

Jany 15th, '89 - page 2

as I had not time to go out. Nancy is going to visit Florie soon.

Do you remember the sweet faced lady who had the sick baby - Mrs. Foster, I think. Well Mr. F. was missing for 3 days, and when his wife heard from him he was in the Ludlow St. Jail for defalcations of over \$20000 extending back three years, long before he married. Chal. says Florie's a brick - she is with Mrs. F. all the time, washes her poor baby for her and comforts her all she can.

From Chals office I called on Miss Thompson and saw them all - and little Marjory for the first time in nearly four years. Then I called on Mr. George, and then on Mrs. George and then on Mrs. Brewster, who is sick in bed with a very bad cold; and at 5.30 reached here very tired having walked I dont know how many miles. I slicked up a bit and went to dinner with the Barkers where I had been invited, and have just returned.

Mrs. Franchold has a brother living in Paris, and she is going to send me a letter to him.

I hope to see Alf. before I sail. I was stupid enough to neglect to ask him his New York address, or I would drop him a line.

Please write to him and say for me that Miss Barker wants him to call. They will be delighted to see

Jany 15th, '89 - page 3

him and I know he will enjoy his visits there. Dont forget, please, and give him the address 126 E 24th.

I saw Nibs. name in the list of people at the ball. Grace wanted John to go and take me. She asked someone to send me an "invite" but it didnt come.

However we would not have gone, as my uniforms were in New York, and besides we were going to New York the next day and would have to get up at 6.30 after being up until 3. a.m.

Tell Adelaide I thank her for her letter, and I will answer it from the other side if I dont have time tomorrow - but it is late and I am very tired tonight.

I am going to ask the Captain of the Britannic to pass close by the Yantic so I can signal a message to the ship with my handkerchief.

I am in perfect health but feel a little blue over leaving tomorrow. However I am going to try the sociable racket, and try and make friends on the steamer. The weather promises to be very fair.

It is the unexpected that always happens. Give my kindest congratulations to Hen and his bride. I wish them every joy and happiness.

I will mail a letter home as soon as I reach the other side. You ought to receive it in less than three weeks from today.

Jany 15th, '89 - page 4

When this reaches you I will be plowing through the sea, and most of the other passingers# will be "wrasseling" with a tin basin.

My heart is in the little home always, and you can imagine how often I will think of you all.

With my best hearts love,

Always your loving brother

(Signed) Am.

Steamer Britannic
Going out of New York
harbor,

Jany 16th 4.30 P. M.

(W.S.S. adds in pencil "1889" - ASF)

My dear Mother,

I am going to send you a note back by the pilot.

I have little to tell you except that dear Mary was thoughtful enough to address a letter to the ship, and I got it after sailing and have just answered it.

I asked the Captain to pass near the Yantic, and he did so, and let me stand on the bridge and send a message to the fellows with a flag. I sent my love - said good bye, and asked after Bristol and Heller.

They replied that they were nearly well, and said "will meet you in Paris " - so I suppose Mentz (?) and Kellogg are coming over.

Good bye - my whole heart is in the little home .
Kiss them all for me,

Always your loving son

(Signed) Wm.

(Grosvenor)

Grovesnor Hotel,

Victoria Station

Jany, 27, 1889

(W.S.S. adds in pencil "Sheets missing" - ASF)

My dear Mother,

This is a Sunday evening, and it is 10 P. M., and I am tired, so I can only write you a few lines.

Addie's and Louisa's letters will tell you what I have been doing since I left New York. The latter brings me up to yesterday afternoon, since which time I have been having what you Americans call "a good time." If I keep on supplying you with an account of each days doings you will be able to keep pretty good track of me - but it may not last during my entire stay in London, for I am getting more and more invitations every day and may be too busy, but in Paris, of course, I will not be so busy for a long time, and you may expect to hear from me frequently.

Yesterday (Sat.) afternoon I went to Mr. Vouillon's office and he took me with him to the Century Club - an American & English Club - where I was put up for 10 days, introduced to a lot of Americans and Englishmen, including our Vice Consul, a young man, named Moffitt, of about my own age, with whom we dined. The Club is furnished in a very handsome style, and the dinner was

Jany, 27, 1889 - page 2

excellent. I am more and more charmed with Mr. V., who could not possibly be more kind to me. After dinner he left me with Mr. Moffitt and went home, as Mrs. V. was not very well.

Somewhat later I was taken by the young fellows to the famous Savage Club, the members of which are Artists, Musicians, Singers, Journalists, literary men etc. etc. It is the same old club to which Dr. Johnson, Garritt, and all the old celebrities used to belong, and about which I have read a hundred times in literature. The people assemble in a large room containing a piano, and a long table around three sides of the wall. They appoint a chairman, who, was last night a singer, and he calls on the various members to sing, recite, or play the piano or violin. Everybody smokes and drinks brandy and soda, and various other vile things. Saturday evening is the big night, and I enjoyed it immensely. I heard the best baritone, and one of the best tenors in England both singly and in duet and many other famous people - and did not drink too much "rum." They kept it up until about 1.30 a.m., and I got to bed about 2.30, and snoozed comfortably until 11. a.m. You move about here in hackney coaches like the Penn. R. R. have in Phila., except that you don't have the life shaken out of you, for as I told

Jany, 27, 1889 - page 3

you in one of my other letters the pavements are very smooth, and besides many of the coaches have large round rubber tires, so that there is no noise and no jar.

When it is wet and foggy the horses fairly skate over the smooth pavements, but seldom, tho'. sometimes fall down. You are only charged at the rate of a shilling for a

(Here this letter, as arranged by W.S.S. ends, but as it seems obvious that the following, which is marked "scraps of letters - the beginning?", is the conclusion, I am adding it. - ASF)

mile, which is so cheap that you are apt to spend considerable money on 'em. Today at 1 P. M. I went to the Vouillon's to lunch, and met there a young Englishman named Dawes, who invited me to dine with him at the Constitutional Club next Wednesday.

I spent the afternoon at the Vouillons and took a walk with Mr. Vouillon.

On Tuesday - besides trying on my clothes - I take lunch with the Vouillons, then go out to see some of the sights with Miss Dottie. Then at 7.30 P. M. I may go to dinner with a Major Jones, the American Consul at Dunbar (?). I met him at the Savage Club. He is the editor of an engineering paper, and I interested

Jany, 27, 1889 - page 4

him by my account of the Panama Canal, and he has asked me to write an article for him, as he says it has not been written up much on this side. He says he will pay me well for it, and I will do it if I have time.

He had invited the great English shipbuilder Mr. White to dine with him at a club, but was not sure he was coming. When he hears from Mr. White he is to let me know. On the same evening, Tuesday, the Century Club give a farewell dinner to our Minister, Mr. Phelps. If I had arrived here some days earlier Mr. V. would have gotten me a seat at the table. However, he has invited me to come to the club at 10 P. M. in time to hear the speeches etc. and be introduced to Mr. Phelps and the other big guns.

You may have seen in the Herald how handsomely Mr. Phelps was entertained by the Lord Mayor at the Mansion House, and what a splendid speech he made.

You can easily see that there wont be much time for letter writing on Tuesday - and you also see that I am having a very good time, and seeing many persons and things that will be very advantageous for me.

I think I will leave here about Monday of next week, or perhaps Tuesday, having made a stay of about 10 days.

I am spending very little money - not counting

Jany. 27, 1889 - page 5

the clos. I am getting - and wont be strapped.

There was a tolerable fog today, but not a regular pea soup fog. I hope to see a sure-enough one before I leave.

I find the atmosphere as dirty as traveling on the cars. Every night I find my linen quite soiled, and my nose full of dust. I fancy it is about like Pittsburg used to be.

I am too sleepy to write any more, so good night, with my very best love to You and all at home.

Always your loving son,

(Signed) Wm.

(W.S.S. adds in pencil "Sheets missing" - ASF)

Grosvenor Hotel,

London,

Thursday, Jany 31 '89

My dear Mother,

I am rapidly getting tired of London, tho'. I think I would enjoy it in the summer time when the weather is warm and pleasant. The fog, and drizzling rain, and sloppy streets soon become very monotonous, and one longs for a little sunshine, even with a brisk frost. I will be glad to get settled in Paris where, as I see by the papers, the weather is like spring. I am rather sorry I cant go today, but I have engagements until Saturday, so will probably remain until Monday morning.

I went to see the great Tower of London yesterday, and found it very disappointing, as I had expected something much more imposing. However, I say many things of great interest - particularly the State jewels - the Queen's crown, etc., and all the gear used at the inauguration of a new figurehead. The Armory was also very interesting, as it contains all the old fashioned arms and armor - but the latter particularly disappointed me - being much lighter, and much more poorly made than I supposed from reading about it. The workmanship was in almost every case very clumsy, tho'.

Jan'y 31 '89 - page 2

I suppose the steel is very good.

There were many people visiting the tower, and it was easy to see that most of them were Americans.

I don't find much difficulty in making my way about the city, now that I have gotten the hang of it. I go by the Underground R. R., and walk the rest of the way. The train service on these roads is very good, but they are disagreeable to ride on, as the carriages are very poor, and stuffy, and smoky from going through the tunnels.

I went through the business part of London yesterday - that part about the bank of England.

It was about 2 P. M., when most of the business men were going or returning from lunch, and such a crowd! both streets and sidewalks were full and all hurrying as fast as possible.

I had lunch in an Alley, not more than seven or eight feet wide, which was really a miniature street, as every inch of space on either side was occupied by tiny stores ("shops").

I went to Morgan & Co., bankers, and drew ten "pun" - \$50 on my letter of credit, which with the pay I will find waiting for me in Paris, will easily last me until March.

I went to the Century Club, Tuesday night at 10 .

Jany 31 '89 - page 3

P. M. and heard the speeches after the dinner given to Mr. Phelps. They were very fine, and very amusing, and I enjoyed them greatly. After the affair broke up I was introduced to Mr. Phelps and the other big guns, and then attended the overflow meeting of those who remained. It was very amusing (brandy and soda ad. lim.) I remained until I had enough and then went home.

I was delighted to receive your letter, written just after I sailed, and acknowledged the receipt in a note to Addie the other night. You have a small household, now that Hen has married and gone, and four of your little ones away. I hope Hen will be as happy as possible - and he will if his wife gives him half a show. It was just like all your kind hearts to

- - - - -

(Last sheets of letter missing - ASF)