

Bolton 6 September 1858

My own sweet darling Maimie/

I thank you a thousand times, for that dear sweet letter of yours and your kind mother's also of Wednesday last. It seems to me that I am destined always to have a hard fight to get your valued letters – you know what a time I have at Washington to get them regularly – well it is worse here of course – your letter should have reached me on Saturday morning by the steamboat from Caldwell – you will see my picture here from this outline sketch of the lake [sketch of geography of Lake George] Bolton is 10 miles due N from Caldwell mais quelle malheur – the boat arrived at 8 AM, late as usual en route for the far end of the lake but brought me no letter from my own dear sweet heart – so I at once in company with my friend took a nice sail boat and determined to go to Caldwell tho' a head wind was blowing – by dint of hard work & frequent tacking we managed to get up as far as the upper end of Long island (you will see the island on the sketch) – but the wind entirely left us in the dead calm – after baking in the sun for three hours & reading all the old newspaper scraps we could find stowed away in our trash pockets we gave up in despair as no wind came & it was getting late in the afternoon – we however did get to shore by means of our oars & then leaving an old “frigate” as we called her – walked the remaining four miles to Caldwell I rushed for the Post Office & sent my friend to hunt up some provisions as we had eaten nothing since 7 in the morning more than 16 hours so you can imagine we were “slightually” [sic] hungry – But I was doubly repaid by receiving a letter & such a dear letter from my own lovely & beloved Mary – it brought me such good news – of your being so well & happy of your emptying the “mens sana in sano corpore” so praised by the Latin poets Juvenal I think. Oh! May you ever be so my sweet one for you deserve everything & I pray our dear Father to shower his choicest blessings upon your loved head! Well to finish my long story we had to take a row boat & row back the four miles where we left the sail boat at [auction?] we then took her in tow and after 5 hours hard pulling & part of it in the dark of night we accomplished our 16 miles & reached our quiet little hotel at Bolton. Anyone used to boating can explain to you that it was no easy work towing a heavy sail boat that distance. On our way we had the most exquisitely gorgeous of sunsets – I cannot hope to give you the least glimmer of an idea of it. The giant clouds of royal purple & molten gold were piled mass upon mass far up into the ethereal blue of heaven – the glittering pencils of light from the dying sun shot through these massive fold here & there & as if rejoicing in he their having penetrated so far sped nearly two thirds of the way across the arch above – the bases of the mountains opposite the sun were already somber in the cold grape purple of the approaching shades of night whilst a couple of thousand feet above, the summits were still kissed by the departing rays of the great luminary of day – the warm & roseate hues

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lingered long there after the mountain base & water horizon had faded & became merged into each other on the quiet reprise & sleep of a lake George night. At last the faint rose tints were gone & nothing was left but the dull grey of the far advanced evening & the intense & unbroken solitude of the lake so we pulled away at our oars & recorded this scene among the landscapes of memory to be recalled on a fitting occasion when other pleasures as sweet sympathetically bring up do past.

The weather has not been prosperous since our advent here – very unsettled & I have had frequent dunkings in the rain – the season is so far advanced that we have been advised not to attempt to go further north as I intended as we could not camp out with any safety or comfort. So we shall remain here till about Wednesday a week & will then commence to turn homeward – this year I have something to make one look forward to leaving Lake George without reluctance as in former years – because I shall see my sweet one soon I hope to be at Annapolis on Saturday a week I shall try if I have not forgotten all my painting to make you a little ink sketch of Bolton – one that I can send you by mail.

It would be very selfish in [sic] me dearest Maimie to object to what gives you so much pleasure as riding on horse back – but do be very careful for I have known of so many accidents & I know by experiment how unsafe the best horse is – the sting of a bee a sudden fright or an unlucky stumble may create danger in spite of skill or courage – but darling I do to like it but still I will not positively object.

Mr. Scharff's young lady has gone out to Chicago on a visit so I am very sorry I shall not see her as I intended before my return –

As to your last paragraph my own darling pet, I respect & love you all the better for it\_ I feel that it was wrong & ungrateful in me after so many blessings from my Father above, to do as I did that Sunday – I shall cheerfully give you my promise not to do so again & it costs me something to do so as it is the one day I have to myself – still I will gladly make the promise & keep it. As you say dearest we must help each other thro' life to be strong & earnest as our faith & conduct – it is a holy & beautiful privilege.

Give my best love to your dear mother for me & many thanks for her kind postscript which gave me such good news – so welcome & cheering, Also to all the family. When you write to Miss Margie say all sorts of nice things for me & now my beloved Mary my paper warns me to close – with many warm kisses for your dear lips I remain

Yours affectionate

JBH

