

Love Letters

Joseph Lester Woodbridge

August 1887 – September 1889

Transcribed by Phyllis and John Watson



Book Design:
Patricia Woodbridge
Robert Dunn

A Wind Hill Farm Archival Book
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One of 50 copies

For all our ancestors, who made us
who we are

Introduction

Joseph Lester Woodbridge (known affectionately to our family as Gipp) was born in a simple row house at 356 Clinton Street in Brooklyn, New York. Joseph's father, Charles Lester Woodbridge, sold buttons and bows to decorate the dresses of Victorian ladies. Joseph Lester's grandfather, David Gardner Cartwright (known as Captain Cartwright) was born and lived in Nantucket. He was captain of a whaling vessel that made many trips around Cape Horn into the Pacific.

In their early years Joseph Lester and his family spent many happy summers in Nantucket at their Grandfather Cartwright's house and eventually the family purchased a nearby summerhouse of their own. Joseph met his wife-to-be, Edith Foster, at his church in Brooklyn. Her family also owned a summerhouse on Nantucket and as young adults Joseph and Edith were part of a group of friends that enjoyed swimming and playing together.

Lester graduated from the Polytechnic Institute in Brooklyn and continued his education at the Steven's Institute of Technology in Hoboken where he received the degree of Mechanical Engineer. His first job was working for the Edison Electric Light Company in New York, the company that owned the Edison Patents and was engaged in engineering the power plants and distribution systems for electrifying cities and towns.

In 1867 Lester left the company and with the financial help of his father and several others, formed a partnership with another Edison employee, William S. Turner. Electric railways were just being introduced and their company, Woodbridge and Turner Engineering, was involved with their construction. They did well until the depression of 1892-94, when they could not collect their money on a contract in Washington D.C., and were forced to dissolve the company.

After a few precarious years of consulting, Joseph Lester secured a job as an engineer with the Electric Storage Battery Company and he remained with the company until his retirement in 1941. In 1923 Stevens Institute awarded Joseph Lester the honorary degree of Doctor of Engineering.

Gipp's knowledge of electric battery storage was used to electrify Wind Hill Farm before it had town current. The armature remains from the large wind-driven propeller that he installed. In

the basement there were large, 32-volt batteries fed by a Delco gasoline generator.

The letters from Joseph Lester to his future wife, Edith Foster, were written when he was around twenty-three years old. He was just starting his own business and needed to spend the summer working rather than summering with Edith on Nantucket. He longed for “a swim, and a sail in the canoe, and a game of tennis...” but most of all he longed for her.

The letters were digitally transcribed from hand written by Phyllis and John Watson. Phyllis, Joseph Lester’s great granddaughter, found the letters especially interesting since, at the time she transcribed them, her son, Mike, was the same age as Lester and starting his own graphic design business. She says the letters are a wonderful window on life in the late 1880’s – horses, trams, boarding houses and lots of letters.

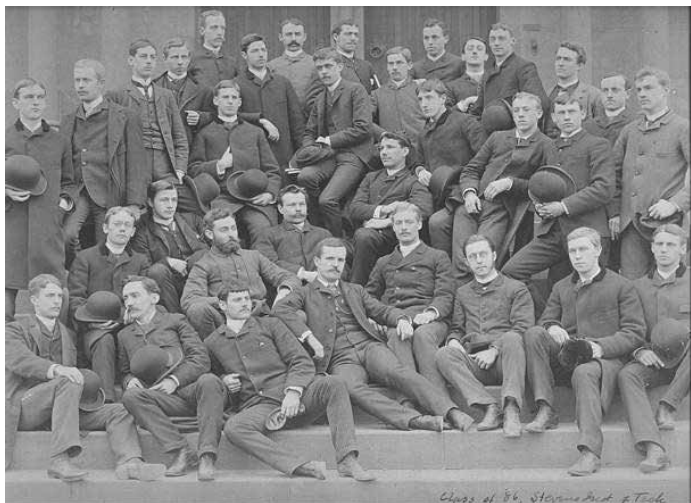
Patricia Woodbridge



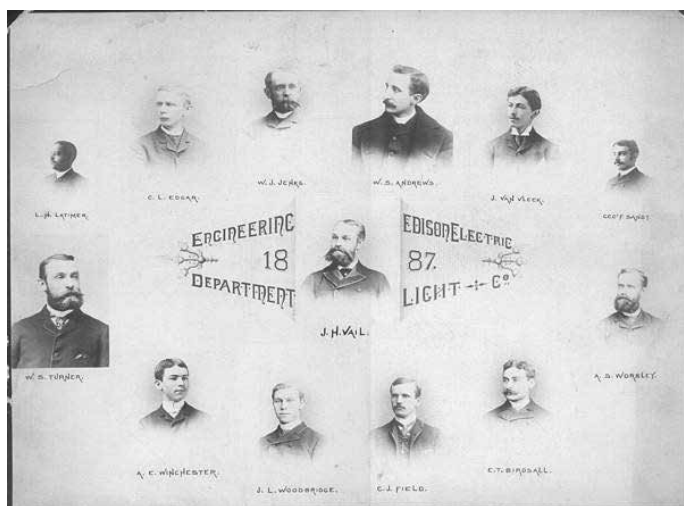
Joseph Lester Woodbridge
March 26, 1866 – September 15, 1951



Edith Emerson Foster
October 26, 1864 – June 29, 1944



Class of 1885 – Stevens Institute Technical
 JWL first row, second right



1887 – Edison Electric Company



Nantucket Bath House Gang
Elmer, Bessie, Mary, Renie, Edith, Charlie, Lester



Nantucket



1926 – Edith's Birthday Present
Edith, Eliot, Donald, Helen, Katharine, Elsa,
Raymond, Lester, Dudley

363 Henry St.
Nov. 22, 1884

Dear Edith,

I received that instrument case when I got back from Stevens' this noon, and want to thank you very much for it, but as I cannot very well in a note, I will do so the next time I see you. I am really very much pleased with it. Fortunately I had my instruments home today, and I have an opportunity to try it immediately. It fits just exactly as of course it would have to, being made from such beautiful and elaborate working drawings. The design on the cap is exquisite, and very appropriate. Don't you think I am smart to know what it is? I must thank you also for the large loop, and the accompanying compliment.

My conscience rather troubles me to think you have taken so much pains with it, but I console myself with the thought that all that fancy work was not on the working drawings, and that you put it in of your own accord.

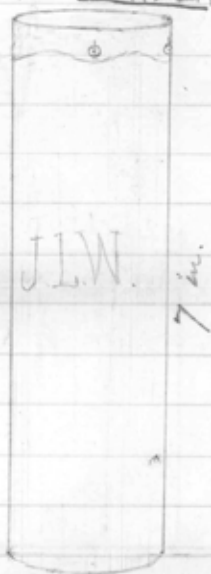
I am half inclined not to bring it over to Stevens', it is so dusty everywhere over there. If I do find it getting dirty, I shall bring it home, and wait until after next year, when I will probably do my drawing at home.

Yours sincerely,
J. Lester Woodbridge



Holder for mathematical
drawing instruments

N.B. THIS IS MERELY A SUGGES-
TION.



2 in diam.

Holder complete, $\frac{1}{2}$ size

363 Henry St.,
Brooklyn, N.Y. Nov 26, '86

Dear Edith,

Renie was not quite so well yesterday, and the Doctor has ordered her to go to bed and keep quiet, and not see anyone for a few days. She wanted me to write to you and ask you to write to her every day, and she will answer the letters when she feels better. She says she wants nice letters.

Yours sincerely,
J. Lester Woodbridge

Brighton, Mass.,
Dec. 3, 1888

My dear little feller,
Boston is such a long way off from Brooklyn! I kept getting
further and further away all last night, and now I am here!

363 Henry St. Nov. 21, 1884

Dear Edith,

I have just received your note, and shall be happy to accept the invitation therein contained. As for Miss Sprague, the mere fact of her connection with the renowned Adelphi Academy would be recommendation enough. Please let me know at what time you will be ready, and I will be at 290 promptly on time.

Yours sincerely,
J. Lester Woodbridge

Orange, N.J.
July 2. 1885

Dear Edith,

I received your letter this morning, and was very glad to hear from you. I was somewhat surprised also to see that it was mailed the same day it was written. I also received the photo, and am very much obliged for that. In consideration therefore, I will promise not to take any more prints from that negative, and if you insist, I will put away the one I have out of sight, and won't let anybody see it, and won't look at it myself oftener than once a year. As for destroying it, we will discuss that when I get to Nantucket. You must remember that it is the only picture of that Bang in existence. As for your looking idiotic, I'd like to know who is to blame for that.

In return for that class picture, I will send you a print of that picture of me that Gus took in Albany, as soon as I get time to take a good one, I hope you won't form the same opinion of it as you did of yours. I shall not be able to print till next week.

I inquired the other day about making up my shop work at Stevens', but they said that all the machines were in use, so I will have to wait till next year, I could hardly have done much anyway, as they don't run Saturdays, and I have only four more "off-days" before I leave for Nantucket.

The two Miss Bradshaws, with whom I am boarding, are two old maids who live here alone in the house, and have a school in the winter. They are very nice, and are ready to do anything for me. Somehow or other, I have made a great impression on their minds, principally from the fact that I took two of their clocks to pieces, scraped off the rust and oiled them up, and succeeded in making them go. They thought that was wonderful. Then last night I invited them to my room to see two photos developed, and they were very much pleased with the process. They said they begin to think they have got a magician in the house. They are very queer. They never take meat at breakfast or tea, though they get some for me, they never drink a glass of water; they say they haven't any medicines in the house of any kind as they are never sick. They look as if they would live for three or four centuries yet, and I don't know but they will.

Yesterday I took a photo of this house. I had to get up in a tree to do it, and there was hardly room for the camera and me at the same

time. Miss Bradshaw stood at the foot of the tree and passed up my things, and quaked all the time for fear I would fall. I got a very good one, however.

I sent off a letter to Renie, Rhinie, Roceros, this morning, to the "Island Home." She ought to get it, for the U.S. is bound to do all it can to deliver letters promptly, and they have to put the Nantucket mail on board anyway, and they could easily give that letter to the stewardess or the captain. Still, if she doesn't get it then, it will go on to Nantucket, and my valuable manuscript will not be wasted.

I have a piano here. I like to practice very much, but oh, if I could only practice without being obliged to listen to that piano. Please invent some way of practicing in the other room with the door shut, and send it on immediately. I have tried the symphonies once or twice. After the Philharmonic, it is cheek enough to attempt to play them on a good piano; but this one! It is an insult to the memory of Beethoven, and I have made up my mind that I won't do it any more. Then, to add to the general sweetness and beauty of its tone, there is one note missing, or rather, that was a mistake, it isn't missing. Would that it were! One wire is broken, and the other, which has fallen about 3 octaves, gives forth a hollow, jangling sound every time the note is struck. To cap the climax, both pedals are gone.

I hope you will excuse this letter, as I seem to have a bad habit of starting a word wrong now an then. And I hope you won't think of stopping correspondence when Renie gets there, as I want all the letters I can get. What do you say to writing a little German every time. If you like the idea, begin next time, and I will do the same. Please write soon.

Sincerely yours,
Lester

Orange, N.J.
July 7, 85

Dear Edith,

I have just received your letter and one from Renie, and I will square accounts by answering it. As I leave N.Y. on Friday, I will not ask you to write again, for though it might be possible to get an answer back to me before I leave, I am afraid you couldn't. I am very much obliged to you for taking pity on me. I am very very greedy for letters, and my craving is never satisfied, and no matter how many I may get, I am just as eager for the next mail. Perhaps I may be able to return the favor sometime.

I was stupid, was I to direct that letter to Renie on the "Island Home?" Well, perhaps I was stupid, in fact I will admit that I was stupid, but not for that reason. The only thing wherein I was stupid was in blindly following your directions, without careful consideration. Here are your words in that letter you sent me: "We came to the island on the Island Home, and Renie will probably do likewise." Now, when I got your letter, I did not think about there being two boats a day. I may not have known it. So I took your advice. That was stupid in me. But I knew very well that Renie would leave New Bedford at noon, so I directed my letter to the noon boat for Nantucket. See? You don't suppose the people at New Bedford call the boat that leaves New Bedford at 7A.M. the noon boat, do you? Now, who's stupid? Just read over that sentence of yours three or four times, and try to grasp the enormous amount of stupidity therein contained.

I suppose Renie has mentioned to you the fact that Margaret Haviland is not, was not, and will not be in Orange. I hope she has sufficiently impressed it on your mind. I guess when you gave me that piece of information, your brains were a little muddled by being so nearly carried off by the Bristol. That was an immense "joak" on you folks. Would you really have gone on board, if I had not confused you so, by telling you that she left in a few minutes? That reminds me of the time when you all "got left" at Fall River.

I believe that I have never told you how pleased I was with your commencement essay. It is rather late for congratulations, but perhaps it may not now seem so much like a mere polite form, inasmuch as I need not have said anything about it. I liked yours

better than any of the others that I heard. I was sorry that I did not hear all of Minnie Mercer's, for I think, from what I did hear that I should have liked hers very much also.

Papa arrived here today, and I went over to see him at noon, and got all the news. I went with him to get some fixings for the bathing houses. I have arranged to work every day this week. I thought inasmuch as I couldn't do any shop-work, I might as well get through my regular work as soon as possible, and get off. I do hate to do nothing. It tires me. If I am not working, I want to be having fun, and if I can't have fun, I believe I would rather work than do nothing. That depends on the kind of work, however.

[This section is in German. We asked several experienced German translators for a translation. They were unable to read the handwritten German. Or perhaps J. Lester was showing off and his German wasn't very good.]

There! That's enough. It is getting so late that I haven't time for more. It would be good fun to attempt to translate something into German this summer, and compare notes. I must keep up my French and German. It does slip away so fast. As for Latin, I suppose I could hardly read a line of Virgil now, without a dictionary.

I hope to see you all Saturday, if all is favorable. Give my regards to all the rest and believe me,

Your sincere friend,
Lester

363 Henry St.
Brooklyn, NY
May 7, 1886

Dear Edith,

I discovered it at last, after Renie had made me examine myself in the glass for about ten minutes. I could not imagine what she meant, when she asked me if I had brushed my hair this morning. Finally she told me to come up and brush it again. I was still more mystified. Then she told me to look myself all over from top to bottom. I couldn't discover anything peculiar. Then she told me to examine the looking glass, which I did, and at last my eyes lit on an envelope addressed in a familiar hand, and I felt much relieved. The hatband is very pretty, if I do say it, and I admire your artistic taste in the choice of colors. I thank you very much for it, and I shall ever wear it next my heart. You must have gone about it "with alacrity," to use one of Miss Baker's pet phrases. Thanking you for it once more, I remain,

Yours sincerely,
Lester

363 Henry St.,
Brooklyn,
Dec. 22, '86

Dear Edith,

Your note came this morning. I wish to thank you for the invitation, and shall be happy to accept. It is orchestra night, but I can skip it for once. Excuse haste, as I must leave in a few minutes.

Yours sincerely,
Lester

363 Henry St.,
Brooklyn, N.Y.
July 9, 1887

Dear Edith,

I feel a little ashamed of myself for not having written before, but as I am the one that suffers from the delay, I don't suppose you will blame me much. You can make up for it by answering this letter right away if not sooner. (I can seem to see you turn up your nose and say, "Cheeky!" to that last remark.)

Yesterday was a scorcher here, and so was last night and this morning, but the sun has clouded over this afternoon, so as I sit by my window with a breath of air blowing in once in a while, I feel quite comfortable, especially as I have taken off my collar and cuffs, and necktie, and coat and vest. Also my shoes.

Your hat-pin worked beautifully. I was afraid it would not be long enough, but I found it not only went through the mattress but also through the pillow that Elmer had got on for safety. From that you can judge the thickness of the Old Colony Mattresses. I kept Elmer literally on needles and pins for a while, until I was afraid he would be having the nightmare again, if I got him too excited, so I proclaimed a treat of peace.

On Wednesday evening Elmer and I went up to the Summerfield M.E. Church to get the double-bass which had been left there since that evening that the orchestra played. On the way home we met Mr. Russell. ~~He looked very sad. He is growing thin. He inquired carefully after you, and said he was pining for your society, but said nothing about Lillie. I knew what he meant, though...~~

I scratched out the above, on second thought. I was afraid you might pull all my hair out when I get to Nantucket, so please don't read it. Mr. Thackray and Elmer were down here Thursday night to plan out our rackets. Mr. Thackray and I are each going to make one, and Elmer is going to help. We have got our wood and other materials, and tonight we expect to steam them and bend them to shape. I shall not be able to finish mine before my vacation, as I shall have to stay over at the office during the evenings next week, but it is just as well, for Nantucket is very hard on rackets.

Mr. Thackray and I each expect a cover for our rackets from our partner at whist. Mine is to be a sort of emblem of victory, and his is

to console him for his defeat. (N.B. Little hints like the above are thrown out merely to harden you to the idea that you are going to make me a racket cover.)

I went to the dentist's this afternoon, and found out, *mirabile dictu*, that there was nothing to be done to my teeth except a little treatment to one that he filled last fall. I feel extremely happy.

We have an awful lot of work at the office now. {The previous sentence had been crossed out.} (Excuse me, I did not mean to say "awful." I will be getting you into bad habits again.) We have a great deal of work at the office now. I may not be able to get off Friday night after all, and I shall have to work nights next week anyway.

Mr. Sandt, the one who has charge of the electrical determinations, is to go out as inspector of the underground tubing, as soon as they begin to lay it in New York and then I shall be left in charge of that department. I am very glad I took my vacation as early as I did, for I might not have got any at all if I had put it later. And even now it is possible that I may have to come back before my two weeks are over.

I suppose Nantucket is as delightful as ever. If you can induce Charlie to build a raft, and prop up the bath house, and brace it inside, and put sea-weed under it, and put new locks on the doors, and put up the pump, and the looking glasses, do so. I am afraid you can't.

I am longing for a swim, and a sail in the canoe, and a game of tennis, and a game of "our old cat," etc. etc. etc. It is only a week more, though, and that week will go very fast.

I won't object, if you answer this letter right away; address to the office, 16 Broad St., care of Edison Electric Light Co. I will write to Renie tomorrow again, though she hasn't answered my last yet. Give my regards to all the family. I hope your father is improving.

Yours sincerely
Lester

Direct your next letter to 295 Gates Ave. 295 Gates Ave.
*(The above is written in the top, left corner Brooklyn, N.Y.
of the letter on the diagonal.)*
Aug. 4., 1887

Dear Edith,

I received your nice long letter this morning, and oh, what a lot of good it did me!

I have been feeling so lonesome without you, and your letter cheered me up so. I didn't dare open it till I had finished what I was doing, for I knew I wouldn't be able to do anything afterwards. In fact I haven't been good for much since I got back. I have been thinking about you all the time, and every once in a while I would have to wake myself up and drag my thoughts back to work, only to find them in a few minutes wandering off again, thinking about you wondering what you were doing, and wishing oh so much, that I were with you. But never mind. September is coming and you are coming, and I have got such a lot to tell you, but I can't write it all, there is so much.

Edith, I do love you so. It seems as if my love until now had been shut up in some cold damp cellar, and stifled, but now it is out in the sunshine, and how it does grow! It keeps getting bigger and bigger, and I don't know what I shall do if it keeps on.

You seem to have got the impression that I was sorry I had spoken, or that I would not have spoken when I did, if I had known how things were going to turn out. Edith, I would not have anything otherwise than it is. My only object in concealing our real relations was that we might have a time to test our love without entering as yet into a formal engagement. Everything is just right. I did feel a little dread about speaking to your father and mother, but they treated me so cordially that I have been very glad I did so.

We did not have very much serious talk while I was on Nantucket. That Saturday night I could not talk. I was not feeling well, as you know, and then my brain was all in whirl of excitement. But when you get back to Brooklyn, we will have some, and how we will enjoy it! I am so very glad to find that you trust me so. It makes me so happy, ___ and, God helping me, Edith you shall never regret it. As for me, I trust you wholly, in return. I have already told you things that I have never told to anyone else, and I am ready to tell you

everything. At some time in the future we are to be one ___ one in mind and purpose, one in love and trust. We must begin by opening up to each other every nook and corner of ourselves, not only our good side, but our weaknesses, our faults, our temptations, so that we can each help and support the other in the great struggle for the right. As you have said, we must neither of us expect perfection in the other, but must aim at perfection in ourselves. Yes, Edith, our choice, (for it is our choice now) with the help of God, shall prove a wise one. I know it will. And if you knew how seldom I say I know anything, you would appreciate more fully what I mean. The more we know of each other, the more closely to we come into sympathy, the more we feel that we are just suited to each other. You know how we have been drawn to each other irresistibly, in spite of the efforts of both to stifle our feeling. What will it be now, when we are at liberty to encourage it, in ourselves and in each other!

I have lots and lots to write to you, but I want this letter to reach you before Sunday, so that you can write again. For if both families know of our relations, I don't see why we should not write oftener than once a week. I have not told Elmer yet, but I think I shall, as I can hardly keep it from him.

The weather here is quite moderate, and the work at the office is quite slack, so I have a chance to come down easy from my vacation to work again.

Tell Renie I will write to her Sunday. And tell Charlie that I could not get his jersey, but will send the other things as soon as I get it. I do wish I were there to give you a kiss and a hug. But I shall have to wait till you come here. Give my regards to the rest of the family and keep lots and lots of love for yourself.

Very lovingly Lester

295 Gates Ave.
Brooklyn, N.Y.
Aug 11, 1887

Dear Edith,

Your letter was waiting for me last night when I got home. I read it rather hurriedly the first time, for Mr. Thackray was here to dinner, and he was in the parlor waiting. But when I went to bed, I just sat down and read it again and devoured it. I wonder why I like to get letters from you, anyway.

I am afraid you are forgetting the training I gave you when I was at Nantucket. The old wickedness is beginning to crop out again, and your last letter was full of it. I wish I could have seen your eyes look so wicked while you were writing some of those things in that letter. I must count up the number of scores I owe you. 1st on the first page, you tried to tease me about making love to you, you naughty girl. That is one score. Then you suggested that you might see me within two weeks after you got here. That makes two. Then you said that perhaps you were growing too fond of me. That counts for two, and makes four. Then you hinted that it was a waste of time to write to me. That counts for three, it is such a bad one, and makes seven. Then that little post-script about the things which I consider flat, but which your wits might sharpen up. That makes eight, all together, You are getting dreadfully wicked, but as I can't pay you now, I will wait till you get back, and pay you with interest at 100% per week. At that rate, I will owe you about 40 scores. Now look out that you don't add any more, for I am afraid that by the time you get back, you will be so naughty that I shall be kept busy paying up new scores, and won't find much time for the old ones.

You said something about your having kept those ferns that I picked for you, you sentimental little thing. Do you remember picking a daisy for me in the morning of July 4th? I put it in my button hole, and on the boat going home, I took it out, and thought about you, and what do you suppose I did with it? I know you can't guess. I picked off all the rays, one by one, and said, "Yes, no, yes, no," to them, and the last one came out "yes."

Now don't you call me sentimental, because it will make one more score, if you do. When we meet again, you are going to ask me, not one, but lots of questions, and I am going to answer them as truly

as I know how, and then I am going to ask you lots of questions, and you are going to answer them the same way. And then we will get to knowing each other better and better. And I will look right into your eyes, way down deep, and tell you how very, very much I love you, — how you are a great big part of my whole life, and how it would break my heart if anything should separate us. I am afraid it will be rather hard to find a real nice lovely place to say all these things, where we won't be interrupted as we were at Surfside. But I have been thinking of different things, and I guess we will manage it.

I will tell you all my reasons for telling Elmer about our relations. I knew he and Charlie had been making remarks and joking about us, and I knew he would be all the worse, if he saw me writing to you very often. And I knew I could not stand getting only one letter a week from you, so I told him, and that will stop his talk. For now that he knows, he is in honor bound not to say anything about it. As for his jokes, they are very often a little objectionable, but this is partly due to the fact that jokes do not come naturally to him anyway, and they are usually rather forced. At the same time I must own that there is something lacking about him. He doesn't seem to have a true sense of refinement, in spite of all his etiquette. It may be that not having any sisters has something to do with it. By the way, he wants me to tell you that he will congratulate you when he sees you to shake hands with you, instead of sending his congratulations in a letter.

I know one reason you did not kiss me that time at Surfside; — you not only didn't dare, but you couldn't reach! I must get you so used to it when you come back, that you will dare help yourself, or ask for one, when they are out of reach. I believe you always were a little afraid of me, and I wish I could get it out of you some-how. You will have to suggest a remedy yourself for you know more about it than I do. I am glad you are so nice and small. You are just the right size for anything like being hugged. And you are so light that I could carry you anywhere, and you couldn't help it.

Isn't there something I can do to prevent myself from thinking of you all the time? Can't you suggest something? You needn't try too hard to find something, for I shouldn't use it anyway.

I think you do write longer letters than I do, and better ones, too, but you needn't mind. I can stand it as long as you can. I have to put in my time at night, and sometimes pretty late, for we are often

busy during the evening. Mr. Thackray was here to dinner again tonight, and spent the evening, and so I did not begin this until 9:30. So you see, if I want to write a long letter, I have to write pretty fast, and cannot spend too much time thinking. And if I want to write a good deal of thought in it, I cannot make it very long. This is a long one, but I am afraid there is not much in it. Never mind. I will make up for it all, when I see you.

I have not mounted those photos yet. I am waiting to print a few more. They all turned out very well. Our cool weather still continues, though it has been a little warmer today. I suppose we shall soon have some scorchers again.

I shall have to end now, as I ought to be in bed. Remember me to all, unless you don't want to be teased about the number of letters you get. And now I will imagine I am giving you an awful hard hug, so as to make you squeal and a great big kiss, and you must imagine you are getting them.

With lots of love,
Lester

295 Gates Ave.
Brooklyn, N.Y.
Aug. 20, 1887

My own dearest Dithie,

Your nice long letter came today, and oh how glad I was to get it. I do just long to take you right in my arms and hug you up close, and let you feel how much I love you, and look down into your face and see how much you love me. I look at your picture in Elmer's "Gang" picture in the dining-room, and I look at it in the group we took by the bath-house, and when I go to 363 I look at the one you sent to me when I was at Orange, but none of those pictures are as good as my memory. My memory shows you to me on a walk along the cliff on Sunday afternoon, with that cunning little white moth-eaten dress on, — or lying down under a parasol that same afternoon, while I put grass up your sleeve. And I see you again on a Monday night, in the fog, sitting on the edge of the same cliff, or walking along the shore with my arm in yours, or lying on the sand. And I see you on a Friday night sitting among the pines, picking needles and throwing them at me — or climbing fences, and a little afraid to let me help you over. And I can see you on a Saturday morning under a parasol on Coatue beach, looking off at ships, and thinking about them, — or a little later in such an improper position, letting me hug you and kiss you. And I see you again on the same Saturday night, on the beach at Surfside, letting me do the same thing again, and saying you liked it. I don't know what I would do without these pretty pictures to cheer me up. But oh, how I long for the original of those pictures. It sets me wild, too, to think about you. You are so far off. But it is only three weeks now, and time is going just as fast as it can. I'd like to drive it on a little just now, and let it slow up a little later.

I always did like "Dith" for your name, but I always hated to hear other people use it; but as the others have dropped it now, I think I will take it up. I like "Edith" too, but not so well as "Dith," provided I can have a monopoly on it. As for my name, I like to have you call me Lester, but if you think it is too long, try 'ester. Renee calls me that, but not very often. You remember, I suppose, the time when I first asked you to call me "Lester." I had been seeing you home from somewhere, and as I was leaving, you said "Good night,

Mr. Woodbridge,” and I asked you not to call me that, and you told me to call you Edith. I went home feeling so happy that night. I have always liked to hear you call me Lester, but you avoided it as much as possible at first.

Your saying that you love me so, and trust me so thoroughly makes me stop sometimes and look at myself, to see if I am really worthy of such trust, and oh, Edith, I find so much in me that is not worthy. But that very trustfulness is a great inspiration to me to press on, to work harder than ever to make myself worthy of such a love. The thought of you has always had that effect on me, — it has always strengthened me to fight still harder against the temptations around me.

I was indeed somewhat surprised to hear of Mary’s engagement, though I could not help perceiving that they enjoyed each other’s society. I wish you would give them both my hearty congratulations. I have a great respect for Mr. Voluntine. He seems to be a man of such deep and earnest thought. And he would have to look a good way to find another so good and sensible and true a girl as Mary (excepting my own little Dither, who is the best girl in the world.) I feel sure that they will be happy together. I am indeed glad, though, that we have loved each other so long, and have never cared for anyone else.

How I wish I had been on that sail to keep you company, instead of your own thoughts. If I should say they must have been pretty poor company, you would probably say you wouldn’t have been any better off with me, so I won’t say it. I would like to have been there, all the same.

I know you never promised me that racket cover, but I expected it just the same. Your pride was just as bad in that case as when you came so near inviting me to the Adelphi Reunion. I am going to give you a little lecture on that subject, when I get you in Brooklyn. But I am glad you have decided to make the cover. It is just as well to wait till you come to Brooklyn, as you can have the racket then, to measure from.

Isn’t it queer that you and Mary should both become engaged the same summer. And I suppose Lillie will follow soon. If anyone had told you five years ago, that you would be the first of the family to get there you would have opened your eyes wide (which you are capable of doing).

I do understand how you feel about your friendships, but I don’t

know but that I am rather glad of it. I like to feel that you confide in me, and in me alone. It may be selfish, but I want you all for myself, — and I feel sure I shall have you, and I know you will have me wholly.

I guess you are right about that Saturday. I did not think much about what other people would think. If you are not too tired we can go off somewhere. How is Staaten Island? You said you knew a place, Hugenots I think, where it was nice. I thought of Wiehawken, but I don't know much about it, so we had better make sure of a good place for our first trip. Shall we have to come back in time for supper, or can we take a lunch? I am afraid after your journey you had better not stay too long. If you think we might stay later, and your folks cannot get up any lunch (I suppose they will be busy unpacking), I will manage to get some lunch together somehow. I think I had better leave the planning with you, and I will agree to anything you say.

I do need some lessons in etiquette, I confess. I feel myself awfully green on some points. Having never been in love with anyone else, I am naturally very inexperienced. I don't suppose you have had much more experience, but such things seem to come natural to girls, so I shall consider myself under your instruction.

Another thing I want to know is, when shall I get a chance to put my arm right around you and give you a good kiss? Have I got to wait till I get off in the woods somewhere? I shall be wild by that time.

I guess I do remember going over the life saving station that time with you, and I remember the drive afterwards, how I invited you to ride in my carriage, and you got in on the back seat, and how at your suggestion I invited you to sit in front, and what a hard time I had getting you to do so. And I remember how we got to fooling, and I put my hand over your mouth, and then felt awfully bad afterwards. But I did enjoy that drive. It was one of the few bright spots in my life, when I really thought you cared for me a little. I guess I can remember things, too! It is eleven o'clock, so I will finish this tomorrow.

Sunday morning

I will wait and see if you are tall enough to have a kiss whenever you want one, —that is, I suppose I shall have to wait, though I

don't want to. I should enjoy seeing you try to jump for one. The trouble is, I know I shall not be able to resist the temptation to give you a half a dozen before you have half tried to get one yourself, you little witch, you.

You will make a cunning little school-ma'am, but oh what a nice little wife you will make! You needn't be at all afraid to undertake that. I only hope I shall be able to make as nice a husband.

How I wish I were in Nantucket this morning! It is such pleasant weather here, and I am feeling so well just now, that I would like to take a long walk over the Nantucket commons with somebody I know. We shall have to wait till next summer for that. —that is, if we go there. Do you think you and I would like Waterville as well? I don't know anything about the place, so I cannot judge. Are there any nice walks where we could go off alone, and not be afraid of interruptions? Nantucket is such a fine place for that. I am so glad the strangers don't find out much about it.

Elmer and I went down to Manhattan Beach yesterday afternoon, and heard Gilmore's concert, and then walked over to West Brighton and back. We got home a little before eight, and I tell you we were hungry! I am glad I went, as it is the first time for me, since the hotels were built, but I don't care to go again particularly. It is all so city-ish, compared with Surfside, or the North Shore.

It looked very much like a storm yesterday, and it did rain a little out there, but it seemed to pass over. I suppose you will get it, the same as you got that storm on Thursday. It passed right over us, without giving us a drop of rain, — or rather only a few drops.

I had a little outdoor exercise Friday afternoon. I had to go uptown in New York as far as 29th St. and find out how much of the underground wires had been laid up to date, so as to make a map. It was fun to watch them put the tubes down. They put three copper wires in each tube, separated by winding small sized rope around each, and then the pour melted bitumen into the tube, as insulation. The tubes are 20 feet long, and are connected at the ends by a junction box, where the wires are soldered together. The wires are sometimes 1/2 inch in diameter. It is very interesting to see them laying the tubes, after having planned it all out, and made maps, etc. When I get a chance, I am going to explain to you all about these electric lights, — that is, all that I know, and tell you more about my work, so that you will understand what I mean when I talk about the

three-wire system, and mains, and feeders, and junction boxes, etc. You must take a good look at the electric lights on the Fall River boat when you come back.

Friday night we were down at 363 again, without Mr. Thackray, as he was out of the city. I expect to string my racket the next time we go down, if I don't have to work on my lathe for Elmer's benefit. I must get you at it sometime. It is a hundred times worse than a violin stand! I would like to see you take it apart. I wonder where you would begin.

After Church.

I have been reading over all your letters in order, and it gives me such a contented, happy feeling. I can just see how we are growing into each other in sympathy and trust and love, even in so short a time, and with no communication except letters. What will it be, when we can see each other face to face, and open our hearts to each other! I cannot help thinking how very few couples seem as exactly fitted to each other as we are. In our love there is so much deep, earnest seriousness, such full sympathy, and yet combined with this there is a charm, which in no way detracts from this seriousness, in the fact that, in many things you are still a girl, and I am still a boy, and we can enjoy our love in many ways that we would perhaps have missed if we had not met till later in our lives. Do you catch my meaning? I have always thought how much happiness has been lost by persons' waiting till they were old & mature before taking the step that we have taken. Yet I fully feel what a serious step it is, and I am all the more glad that we have know each other & loved each other so long, and are so sure that we are right. Oh, Dithie, I cannot see how anything could be better. God is so good to us. When I sang "Praise God from whom all blessings flow" in church this morning, I sang it as I have never sung it before. I felt every word way down into the depths of my soul. When I know that our love makes me feel that way, I know it is true and sacred, and the thought increases my feeling of thankfulness.

This is a pretty long letter, for me, but you can take it little at a time, Sometimes I think I will read yours that way, so as to make them last, but when I once get started, I can't stop till I get to the end.

I got the glue out of my hair without much difficulty when it got nearly dry. I don't know how it got there.

Elmer wants you to find out in some way, without saying anything to Lillie about it, whether she is going to make him a racket cover. I believe she said she would. He doesn't want her to know he has said anything about it, and he is afraid she will be offended if he gets anyone else to make it, and yet he is afraid she will forget it. I guess you can manage to find out about it, without letting her know.

I told you I heard Gilmore's band yesterday. They played the Boulanger march, of course, as that is all the rage now. The anvil chorus from "Trovatore" was very fine. He had two sets of anvils on two different notes, — about 8 or 10 of each note. Perhaps you have heard him play it.

Tell Bessie to send the name of that flower that I sent her a description of. I must end here, as it is time to start for Sunday School. I have more to write, but will save it for next time. Give my regards to all the family, and to Mr. Volentine.

With more love than I can ever tell you of,

Your own loving Lester

363 Henry St.
Brooklyn, N.Y.
July 13, 1888

My own dear Diffie,

I feel more lonesome here than I have felt for a long time, — perhaps because I have more time to be lonesome, perhaps because I am so much farther from you, and I haven't even Turner to talk to. How everything here reminds me of you. It is all so natural, and yet so strange without you. The first thing I noticed was your picture on my shelf, and then, the lambrequin that you made me. And then my eyes rested on that picture of the fishing party that I took in Nantucket five years ago, with Charles Harris and Capt. Dunham and all the "Gang" in it. It looked so natural and reminded me so much of that time that now seems so long ago, that I have set it up in front of me while I am writing. Then there is that picture of your "Eight," with Dif in the middle, and beside me leaning against the wall is the racket that I made last summer, with my thoughts wandering off to Nantucket and you all the time I was making it. And the racket cover you made is on it. Oh, dear! How homesick I am! But I like the feeling, in a certain way, because although all these things remind me of happy times in the past, they also give me a contented, happy feeling, when I think of what is to come. Do you know, Dif, the pleasure with which I anticipate the future keeps growing more and more intense; the happiness which is in store for me seems day by day more and more immeasurably great, as I learn to appreciate its full meaning. Do you know, Differ, I believe it is good for us, hard as it may be at the time, to be separated for a while, it gives us a chance to look back at the past, and forward to the future, instead of being absorbed in the present.

You spoke in your Tuesday's letter of the time in the Surfside pines when you came so near letting your deeper feelings have control of you. I do so wish you had!

There is nothing, I believe, that I have wished for more, than to have you disclose to me and to me alone, those deep strong feelings which are hidden from all eyes save those that would look into yours with the deepest sympathy and love. How I do long to have you confide in me, to trust me wholly! I know it will come in time, and when it does come, it will be so sweet! You need not be afraid

that your letters will not find me in the right mood, for of whatever character they are, and however I may feel when I receive them, they always awaken responsive sympathetic feelings in me.

I shall not obey your request not to reply to that musical paragraph. I know just what it is to feel so disgusted with myself, when I have attempted to play over some music that I have just heard at the Philharmonic. I remember how deep an impression the music of Lohengrin made on me, and how discouraged I used to feel when I tried to play it. But I think a musical education is valuable, not so much for the power it gives you to produce good music, as for the greater appreciation and power to enjoy that it gives you.

How time does fly! I found lying on my desk an old piece of paper that I scribbled off when I was at Stevens' Inst., and those days seem so long ago! It is more than two years since I graduated, — since that night that we three came home together. How all those old times keep coming back to me! But there is lots in store for us in the future, and perhaps not so very far off. My business looks more and more promising. We are sure of the Hartford Contract, though the President of the company is out of town so it isn't signed yet. I shall go on there on Monday, and commence work just as soon as I can get materials and men together. I have ordered some material this afternoon, and shall order the rest tomorrow. The people are in a great hurry.

I shall sleep at the Cartwrights tonight and tomorrow & Sunday night. I have had a pretty busy day, and expect a still busier one tomorrow. I saw Elmer this afternoon.

I have some other letters to write, so I shall have to stop now. I suppose your last letter to Salem got there after I left, so I shall get it tomorrow probably. Give my regards to all the family. Oh, Dif, how I love you! Good bye, and good night, dear,

Your loving Lester.

I forgot to tell you that I had heard from Gus Kibbe (Kible?) again, and his wife is in New York, so I shall try to call on her. She is visiting his mother, which I was very glad to hear.

UNITED STATES HOTEL.

D. A. ROOD, PROPRIETOR

July 17, 1888

My dear Diffie,

I am getting very hungry for a letter again. It was only yesterday morning that I received two from you, but it seems ages ago. I have been looking for a letter all day, but I shall have to wait now till tomorrow. I heard from Papa this morning, and had two letters from Turner. He says everything is running smoothly at Salem, and he expects to be ready by the time the Sprague people are. I have been out over the line today locating poles. I haven't done much work as yet, as my material has not yet arrived, but I am looking out for men, so as to be all ready.

The man that the Sprague Co. sent here has arrived, so I am not quite so isolated. He is hardly more than a boy, and though he is to inspect my work, he doesn't know so much about it as I do.

Hartford is a very pretty city. The State Capitol is a fine building, on a hill with a pretty park around it, and a fine stone archway at the entrance, erected in honor of the Hartford men who fought in the Civil War. All the streets in Hartford, at least all the main streets, are very broad, and lined with large trees. There is a great deal of bicycling going on. You see about as many bicycles as you do carriages. I am tempted strongly to invest in a bicycle. I was going to hire one for the time I am to be here, but I cannot find any to let.

I think I will finish this letter in the morning, as it is growing late, and I am sleepy. Good night, my Diffie.

Wednesday morning.

It is a lovely morning. The sun is shining right into my room. I can imagine how it must be in Nantucket. I must have a letter from you this morning, and I will keep this open till it comes. I expect one from Reinie, also, pretty soon.

My work will commence in a day or two, and then I shall not have much time to write letters. But I will manage to make time to

write something every day, and a real letter on Sunday.

You haven't told me anything about bathing yet. I suppose it is too cold. If this weather keeps up, I guess you will not get any this summer.

You must not forget the eclipse of the moon on July 23. That will be Monday night. I shall be looking at it from Hartford, and I will think of my Dif in Nantucket looking at it too.

Later.

Your letter and one from Reinie were waiting for me when I went down stairs this morning. I have just had my breakfast, and must finish this letter and mail it. I suppose my Sunday letter must have been mailed too late to reach you until Tuesday night. You probably got two letters on Tuesday.

I expect to be here about four weeks, so you can address your letters here for some time to come. I will try to write you a nice long letter tonight.

With all the love you can imagine,
Your own Lester

August 18, 1888

My own dear Dithie,

I have a little time before dinner to commence a letter to you. It is now twelve o'clock. I have just finished straightening out my accounts, and find that things are not costing me quite as much as I expected. Everything has gone smoothly this week, and we have done a lot of work, so I feel in a pretty good humor with the world generally.

I got a letter from Papa this morning, saying that he might come on tonight, but he seemed to be rather doubtful. I think he will come, however, if I know him. I think he likes to get away on Sunday, and it is nice for both of us to be together.

I may not have much time to finish this letter tonight, as I expect to take some photos today and I shall have to develop them, and then if Papa comes I shall have to attend to him.

I am going to teach you photography when I get a chance. It would be so nice after we are married, to go out together once in a while, and then you could do some of the printing during the day time, while I was away, and you could let the dinner burn while you were printing, or leave the prints in the sun too long while you were attending to the dinner, or both. Isn't that a fine prospect? If I find I am going to have two or three days on Nantucket in September, I shall take my camera along, and try to get some pictures. I think a view of a certain spot on the beach at Coatue would be highly interesting to us, and quite the reverse to everyone else. Then there are some pines out near the Madaket road that are very picturesque, and some near Hummock Pond. I tell you we'll have gay times together, if I only can go on.

I have just received a telegram from Papa saying that he cannot come today, but will try to spend next Sunday with me. He thinks he has got to attend to his Bible class at the Chapel tomorrow, as there is to be a picnic. It is about time for dinner now, and as I have ordered my horse and wagon at 1 o'clock, I must go right down. I will finish this this evening.

9 P.M.

I have just finished reading your letter. The porter went over for the mail at 8:30, and still no letter from you, so I took the key twenty minutes later, and surprised the hotel clerk by bringing in a whole bag-ful of mail. The train that brings that mail gets in at about seven o'clock, so they must be pretty slow, or else there is a lot of it.

Well, it is Saturday night, and I can look forward to a day of rest tomorrow. I feel pretty well satisfied with the work so far. It will be pretty lively for us, to finish by the 1st of Sept., but I think I can get enough done to run the cars. It will probably take about a week longer to finish up.

Your speaking of chess reminds me of a chess party your father had at 290 one time. I guess you remember it. Brace Chittenden was there, and a lot of the Poly boys, and I remember getting there early and securing you as a partner, or rather an opponent, for the evening. I remember, too, that the boys made remarks about it afterwards, but Brace seemed to take quite a fancy to you, and said he thought I showed good judgment. I think so to.

No, I did not have to get into any awkward positions in taking those pictures. They are very good ones, however, as I told you before. I did not have any time today to take any more, but I am going to try some next week.

I had quite a time with my horse yesterday. I have a horse and wagon nearly every day, to drive around with, and do errands, and carry supplies, etc. to the men. I get the rig from a livery stable, and do not always get the same horse, although they all exhibit the same general stupidity and sleepiness, and unwillingness to move at any but a snail's pace, — until yesterday, when they gave me a fairly decent animal. Not knowing the kind of horse I had, I drove up behind another wagon and stopped and got out to get something at a hardware store. No sooner had I turned my back, than that animal was off, and sailed down that street at a full run, with a crowd of men and small boys in the rear, — and a good deal in the rear. I was in the crowd, until they gradually dispersed, as the horse began to get out of sight. I kept on, and after running some blocks, I found him, just around the corner of one of the side streets. He had fallen down, and a man had caught him. For a wonder, no harm was done, either to the horse or the wagon, or anything on the route. The horse was not

frightened, but wanted to have a good time, I guess.

Yes, Diffie, I think we shall get to know each other much better this winter. I do not think I shall be very busy, though of course I may have a good deal to attend to late into the fall. The Sprague Co, do do business in the South, and we have already bid on a road near Richmond, but Turner will take care of that. Then there may be some western work this fall, also. But I shall manage to see you pretty often anyway, and we have the consolation of knowing that the more business there is for me now, the sooner we shall be able to be together for good, and I do so long for that time to come! Won't we be happy though!

Your letter is quite full of Kurahara (*Kucabaca?*). I think I shall have to begin to tell you about the charming young lady that sits at the same table with us. I shall have to observe her carefully tomorrow, and give you full particulars.

Yes, I do wish I could hear those nine o'clock bells, — with you near me. If you weren't there, they would make me feel so horribly lonesome that I don't know what I should do. I like to think of you as being there, and hearing them every night. They seem to be saying, "good night," or "all's well," and I can imagine them keeping guard over the Nantucketers, and especially my Dithie, all night,

Please do tell me who in the world the "Veneered Savage" was, and how on earth he ever got his name. I have been trying to imagine what could have happened to the poor savage to bring upon him such an epithet as that.

Well, Dith, it is getting late, and I must stop, as I am inclined to wake up early in the morning, even if it is Sunday.

I wonder if you will get this tomorrow. You ought to, as it should reach Boston at 6:30 and leave at 8:15, so it would have plenty of time, if the people would only hurry it along.

Remember me to all. And just imagine what a big hug I would give you, if I only could. But I can love you all the same, and that is just what I am doing with all my might. Good night, my darling,

Your loving Lester

Hartford, Conn.
Aug. 26, 1888

My own dear Dith,

I have just been sorting out your letters, and arranging them in chronological order and tying them up. What a stack of them! The process, however, has given me a very lonesome feeling. I don't know why, except that I have been reminded so much of my Diffie.

It is now afternoon, and Papa has gone to his rooms to write letters and sleep, Niles has done likewise, and I have a little time to write to you, Diffie.

Your letter came this morning, and also one for Papa from Renie, -- no, it was from Mamma, as Renie's letter came yesterday. He read me both of them, and then asked me to read him mine, which I declined. I gave him your love. He said he had it already, meaning me.

Somehow, this afternoon I am unusually lonesome for you. Every once in a while it comes over me how far away you are, and how very, very happy I would be, if I could only be there, and go out with you to those pines by the Hummock Pond, or those near the Madaket road. What a lovely day it must be there. It is a little warm here, but in Nantucket it must be about perfect.

Yes, I think if I had been in Nantucket this summer, I should have liked bathing as much as ever, -- providing you went in, too. I think you would have all liked it better if you had had a raft or a pier to dive from and to hold on to when you were tired swimming. Perhaps it is just as well for me that I haven't had so much swimming, because sometimes I used to imagine that it was not the best thing for me. What a pity it is that I couldn't have had three months of vacation this summer like I used to have! What jolly times we would have had together! I suppose if I had chosen to become a Professor in some school or college I would have had. I sometimes wonder whether it is really worthwhile to try to make a little more money, and sacrifice so much to do it. I guess it is better in the end. And I know I feel much freer and happier to be working for myself than to be working on a salary, as I was before.

I hope you will write me a German letter once in a while. I should like to brush up my German a little, and I will try to answer it in German, but it will be rather hard work, for I am very rusty

and I never was very good at German conversation or writing. I shall certainly have to buy a dictionary, and perhaps get hold of a grammar. I must try, too, to get hold of some of those articles that you have been reading. I want to keep up with you if I can, though I haven't much time to read. I really ought to get a little better acquainted with the great political questions. The daily papers give such a one sided view, that you hardly know what to believe.

That was a great blunder of mine not to seal that letter. I wonder if anyone did read it. I guess nobody would dare, as I believe it is a very serious offence even to read a postal card. Well, anyway, I don't think our letters are silly, even if there are some dumdums in them.

I have four or five correspondents. You come first, of course. Then I write to Renie and to Mamma once or twice a week, and to Papa once in a while, and quite regularly to Turner, and to Gus Kibbe about three or four times a year.

Oh, dear! Two weeks ago we were out in those pines of ours. How this week has gone! Well, two weeks more may see us in those very same pines again. I do hope so! But anyway, it won't be long before you return to Brooklyn, and even if I am still in Hartford, it will be much handier to see you than it is now. But I am sure this work will be finished by that time, and if nothing else turns up, I shall be in Brooklyn too.

I forgot to suggest in my letter last night, that possibly fidgety is spelled with only one "t", -- fidgety, according to the rules of orthography. This is merely a suggestion, as I am not at all certain about it. Beyond that, I have no criticism to make.

I do hope you won't go out with Mr. Beach when it is blowing much. Your account of that sail made me feel kind of anxious about you, for Mr. Beach is not noted as a very safe captain. Please don't get yourself into any danger, for if anything should happen to you I don't know what I should do.

I wish I could talk to you, Dif. It would be so much better than writing. Wouldn't it be fun if we each had a phonograph! I could talk into it, and take off the little wax cylinder and send it on to you, and you could put it on your instrument and hear everything I said, and my voice and all. And you could talk to me the same way. I tell you, I would make that machine talk and talk and talk to me. I would listen to your letters over and over again, till I almost knew

them by heart. It would be so nice to hear your very words and tones. But it would take up a good deal of space, if we should try to keep them all. In two or three months we would each have enough to fill a trunk. I don't know how much a phonograph costs, but I think the price is about \$100.00, so it is a rather expensive luxury.

The sky is very blue today and the air is very clear. I can imagine how bright and clear everything must look to anyone standing on the cliff at Nantucket, and looking off on the harbor, and Coatue, and Brant Point and the Jetty, and our bath house. How I do long to be there! It would be so nice to sit under an umbrella with Dithie near me, and look off on that view that we have look at so often together, and watch the sail boats, those far famed (this word in the letter is not clear) and very convenient sail-boats! How I can bring it all up before me now! But I must stop writing as I want to lie down for a while this afternoon, and besides I must write to Reinie and Mamma and Turner. I will take a nap now, and finish this later.

It is half past five now. I dozed longer than I expected, so I will stop and finish this now, as I will need a good deal of the evening for my other letters, and Papa will need attention part of the time.

I do hope we have good weather this week, so that I can finish up this job in a hurry, and get my visit to Nantucket. But I mustn't say so much about that visit, or I shall begin to count on it as a certainty.

Good bye, Diffie, till tomorrow. I shall expect your Sunday letter tomorrow night. Remember me to all. With very much love,

Your own Lester

UNITED STATES HOTEL.

D. A. ROOD, PROPRIETOR

Sept. 8, 1888

My Dear Diffie,

I am back again, and it is raining hard, so the men are not working this afternoon, and I don't believe they did much this morning either, though they got paid for half a day. Oh, dear! That means just about one day longer, before I can leave for Nantucket, and there is still a good deal of work to be done. We have lost so much time this week that we haven't done as much as I expected.

I took a sleeper last night. I thought I would indulge myself to that extent, even though I had only a few hours to ride. I am glad I did, for I got a pretty good night's rest, altogether, and I needed it. I got to New York at 6:30, and went straight to my office. I was mighty glad to see that place once more. Everything seemed so cozy and homelike, and it quite cheered me up. I had a good deal of writing to do, and then I went to see the Supt. Of the Sprague Co., but he was away, and after waiting an hour, I was informed that he wouldn't return till Monday, so I had to come back here with only half my errand accomplished, and that the least important half. I couldn't possibly stay in the city over Sunday, as I had to "pay off" today, and I must get things moving pretty lively Monday morning.

How this week has gone! I can hardly imagine where it has gone to. Labor Day took out a big piece, and the men didn't do much the next day, either. I am getting kind of tired of this place. It is so out of the way. If you were in Brooklyn, I could run down every Sunday. I suppose when you do go to Brooklyn, I shall be away off somewhere else. Well, there are always two sides to every thing. If I have to be away from you much, it means that my business is prosperous, and that means a bright outlook for us in the future. So we ought not to complain if we are separated for a while. That is very good preaching, but I am afraid I do not practice what I preach, for I do so long to see you again. When I look back over last winter, it seems to me as if we didn't half appreciate our blessings. How I would like to have one of those long evenings with you now!

It is now after supper. I was interrupted in the middle of one

of the above paragraphs, and then I had to keep an appointment to pay some of the men, and by that time supper was ready. I have been playing casino with Niles since supper, until he got enough of it, and now I have the rest of the evening for you. It is nearly time for your letter to arrive, if the mail is on time, so I will go down stairs and see if it has come.

Yes, it came. I don't see why my letters have taken a freak lately of reaching Nantucket at noon. Perhaps it is the fault of the hotel. They declare solemnly that they take the letters over in time for every mail, but I shall not trust them after this, but will mail them myself.

I feel kind of disappointed tonight. A week ago, I was planning to leave for Nantucket tonight, and now tonight has come, and no Nantucket. And then in your letter you write how you have been getting all ready for my visit, and it must be such a disappointment to you, too. But what makes me feel more disappointed still is the vague idea I have that I am going to be cheated out of my visit entirely. There is so much to do, and so many chances for delay! But I shall work hard, and do my best, and then if things don't turn out right, I shall wait till the next time.

Oh, Diffie, Diffie, I feel such a longing to be with you again, and to put my arms around you and give you a good hug and a kiss. How I do love you, Dif! I am sure that nobody else is as happy as I am, with such a love as yours, and such (a – left out) dear girl to love. Of course I have more than Elmer all the time, even if he did spend three weeks in Nantucket, and saw you every day. It is awfully nice to see you, but I would a thousand times rather have your love, even if I have to be away from you for a while.

How can I tell whether my new suit is becoming to me or not? I shall have to leave that to you. As for the color, it is dark, with some fine red streaks through it. There are no "Lester" wrinkles in the coat yet.

You did not say at the end of your letter whether my letter had arrived or not. I suppose not, but I will make sure that this one starts all right, as I want you to get it in the noon boat tomorrow. How I do wish I could take its place! How I would like to get up at half past two tonight and start off for Nantucket! How delighted I would be now, if I had that in prospect! But it cannot be, so I will not think any more about it.

But we shall see each other before long, even if I do not get to Nantucket at all, for then I shall surely see you in Brooklyn.

I must go to bed early tonight, to get a good sleep, so I will have to stop writing pretty soon.

I wish I could put some of my love for you into this letter. It seems as if I couldn't get enough in. Well, you know that I love you, Dithie, and I know that you love me, and I am very happy in that knowledge.

But I must stop. Remember me to everybody. I will write to Renie tomorrow. With ever so much love,

Your own Lester

Brighton, Mass.,
Oct. 6, 1888

My own dear little “feller,”

Now for a nice time writing to you. I found your letter when I got back tonight, after a long day of trotting around Boston and Brighton, and it was such a comforting letter. It has been so wet and gloomy all day, and it is so cheering to come back and find a letter waiting for me in that familiar handwriting.

I have done a good day's work, and have at last got track of a few men, so that if my tools only come, I shall be ready to start Monday or Tuesday. I started out this morning, and after doing a little business around Boston I hired an express wagon and driver, and filled it up at the different stores with tools and wire and rivets, etc., and then drove out to Brighton. The horse was such a slow-poke! I thought I should never get there, but we did at last and I feel relieved to think that I have gotten so nearly ready to begin work.

I was late to dinner, but I got plenty to eat, and then started out again after men. I was just lucky enough to light on a man who said he knew several who wanted work, so I told him to tell them to come around Monday morning and I would see what they could do.

Then I had to go to Boston again, to get some solder and other stuff, and I got back just in time for supper.

I have just had a game of chess with Mary, and beat her. It is rather nice for me to have somebody here that I know. But, oh Dithie, how I do wish it were you, instead of Mary!

So you want me to outgrow my wickedness, do you? If you think there is any harm in it, I will outgrow it right away. I don't feel that way about it, but if you do, that means stop right off. You poor Dithie you, you won't have to oppose me any more.

Oh, Dithie, how I wish you were here, and could bother me a little, by rubbing my hair down! I felt so awfully bad that night about that! I really did not know what I was saying; I was thinking about the cards, and when you said that about not bothering me again, I had to stop a second to think what I had said. And then I felt so bad, because I saw that I had hurt you, you poor, poor Dithie, and I felt like crying myself. It just makes my heart ache now to think of it. But I didn't mean it, Dithie, my Dithie, and I hope you will forgive me for saying it. I just love to have you do such things, you little “feller” you, and

you shall smooth my hair all you like, because I like it. That evening went so fast! I tried to get there earlier, but I did not want to hurry off from supper, after seeing so little of the family, and then I had to pack my bag and get ready to go, and as I told you, I had to go back after something after I had started out.

On my way out here on the express wagon, I saw such a cunning little donkey. Two little boys were playing with him, and he didn't have any bridle or saddle or any harness at all on, but the boys would lead him around by the head, and he would go wherever they wanted him to, and then they would get on his back and he would start off, and then plant both his feet out in front of him and stop, and the boy would slide right over his head, and come down on his feet in front. The donkey seemed to be having about as good a time as the boys.

I have a nice large room, here, a great deal pleasanter than a little cramped up hotel room, and with just room enough for a bed and space to get into it. But I shall probably not be here very long. As soon as this end is finished, I shall have to move along.

Six weeks does seem a long time, doesn't it, Dith? Perhaps I may get through before that, but I cannot say, and this time I shall not set any time even in my own mind, and then we shall not be so disappointed. It does make me perfectly wild to be disappointed about seeing you, after looking forward to it for so long. At Hartford, sometimes, I really felt kind of sick, I felt so bad. And when things go wrong, I always want you worse than ever, because you would comfort me so. You always do have that effect on me, and it is so nice!

Boston is such a crooked city! It is still a mystery to me. I lose all sense of direction, or nearly all, after I have walked around a little, and have to trust to a few landmarks. It is quite the usual thing to have two streets parallel for a block or so, and the next block cross each other. But, somehow I rather like it. It seems a great deal more home-like than Hartford did.

I bought this letter paper today. How do you like it? I guess I paid a pretty good price for it, — about twice as much as Mary's costs, and I don't know that it is any better, but I forgot to ask Mary where she got hers, so I went into the first store I came to. I am going to go out to the post office tonight with this letter, so that it will go early tomorrow morning. Then I must come back and write

some business letters, so I cannot make this much longer. It is raining now, but it is quite pleasant inside, and I know that tomorrow is Sunday, and I can rest.

I must stop now, if I want to mail this, so good night, my own dear Dithie, good night, with lots and lots of love,

Your own Lester

Brighton, Mass.,
Oct.7, 1888

My dear little Dithie,

I have just finished reading your Saturday's letter, which came today, instead of tomorrow. The P.O. is open here at ten o'clock for a little while, on Sunday's, and I was planning to start for church a little earlier, and stop for my mail, but just as I was about to start, one of the gentlemen stopping here handed me a whole pack of letters. He had just been to the P.O. I had seven letters, mostly business, except yours, which was a love-letter. There was one for Mary, too, in a very familiar handwriting. I wanted them both, but very magnanimously gave her hers. It was then time to start for church, so I put them all in my pocket, and it felt so nice all church time to think I had a letter from Dith to read. Ah, little feller!

I wonder when my letters reach you. I cannot get them into the night mail from here unless I mail them before 7 o'clock, and I never have time to write till evening, so they don't go till the next morning, and I am afraid they do not reach you till the morning after. They get to New York at 3:30, but I don't suppose that is time enough for the afternoon delivery in Brooklyn. If you went down to the P.O. this morning, you would have found a letter. Otherwise it will reach you Monday morning, together with the one I mailed last night. I think the mails are very mean here, anyway. The idea of Friday night's letter not reaching you till Monday morning! It has been raining here all the morning, and doesn't show the least signs of clearing up yet, either, although it is not raining just this minute. Mr. Volentine was to preach in Concord this evening, and Mary was going with him, but they say they are not to go if it rains, as there will be no services. I wonder how long this weather will last, anyway. I cannot do anything until it clears up, and the ground dries, as the men won't sit down in the mud to drill the rails.

So you have made it a rule never to be lazy about anything. I have one very much the same in my business. It is "Never put off till tomorrow what you can possibly do today, no matter how inconvenient." I was very much tempted to sit down after dinner yesterday, and be lazy the rest of the afternoon. It was so wet out, and I knew I should have to walk around in the rain and mud, and get my feet wet. But I have learned wisdom from experience, so I

started out, and I am very glad I did, for I just happened to get track of some men. I must go down to dinner now.

After dinner.

It looks like clearing up, now. I hope it does. I want to rush this job right through, and get back to Brooklyn and Dithie. I am looking forward with so much anticipation to the winter! It will be so nice to be able to see Dithie so often!

So you went to a stationary store, did you, to buy some envelopes? I am so glad the store was stationary, because if it hadn't been, you might have wandered all over looking for it, and then I might not have gotten my letter so soon. Ah, little feller, little feller, it is such fun to tease little feller!

Mary read parts of your letter aloud. There wasn't half so much dum-dums (?) in it as in mine. I think, on the whole, I prefer mine. She wanted me to tell you that she would take good care of me, if I would let her. Yesterday I left my umbrella at the car sheds at Park Square, a few minutes walk from the house, and after dinner I started off to get it. It was only raining a very little, but Mary called to me to come back and get another umbrella. I told her that it wasn't raining hard enough, so I went on, and she has been prophesying a cold ever since. But it hasn't come, at least no more than I already had, which did not amount to much, and is getting better now.

Later.

I took a nap this afternoon for about an hour. It is now getting on towards five o'clock. The sky is still overcast and gloomy. Mary and Mr. V. left for Concord a little while ago. There is no train back tonight, so they will stay till tomorrow.

I believe Sunday is the loneliest day in the whole week. I suppose it is because I have so much time to think how lonesome I am. I feel kind of dreary just now. Oh, dear, Dithie, I long for you so. But I can keep on loving you just the same, and I know that you love me, little "feller." In a few minutes I shall pull down the shades and light the gas, and then it will be more cheerful. But my thoughts will fly back to Brooklyn, and I keep thinking about all the people there, and especially our dear little girl that I love so much. And they are all so far away! If I could only travel as fast as my thoughts can!

I have started to read a novel that Renie lent me, —"Uncle Max." I suppose I shall find a little time here and there to finish it. I haven't read much lately, not as much as I ought to, and I

don't suppose this novel is the most improving sort of reading I could have selected, but there are times when I could read a light, interesting story, when I couldn't apply my mind to anything heavier. I cannot help thinking, though, what a shame it is that a person has to stop their education and mind training to such an extent, in order to earn their living. It seems to me kind of queer, — as if something were wrong, somewhere. And they have to stop just at the time when their mind is developing, and just ripe to receive new truth, and to aid in the work of further advancement. But I suppose the every day work of life is just as important as the great deeds and wonderful discoveries, and we should be contented with the place that has been given us to fill, and should try to fill it to the best of our ability.

I cannot help wondering what is ahead of me. How will my business turn out? How soon shall I have a home of my own, and a dear little wifie named Dithie? I know I ought not to be impatient, but I cannot help it, sometimes, especially when I am so lonesome for you, my Dithie.

I do wish I could write better letters. I haven't a bit of talent in that direction, and I don't know how to make them interesting. Now you needn't begin to pile on the compliments, because I am not fishing for them. But, I have been trying nearly all this afternoon to write you a nice letter, and all I can think of is the great heart-ache I feel to see you again, and have a good hug and a kiss and a nice long talk with you.

You ask about directing my letters. I suppose anything directed to me at Brighton would reach me, as I told the post-master where I was stopping, but you had better add, "care of Mrs. Gooch, Washington St." to make sure. I don't think the number is at all necessary, for I don't believe anyone knows what it is. The only trace of it I have been able to discover is "465" written in pencil, in a rather scrawly style, over the door-bell.

Well, I must stop now, and get ready for supper, and then write some more letters after supper.

Ah, little feller, little feller, how I love you! Good bye till tomorrow. Remember me to all the rest. With oceans and oceans of love,

Your own Lester

Brighton, Mass.,
Oct. 10, 1888

My own dear Dithie,

Your letter came this afternoon, but I did not get it till I got back from work at six.

How strange, how very strange everything turns out! Oh, Dithie! What can I say? There is one thing I can say, and am very, very thankful to be able to say it, — I have nothing to regret, in my past relations with Lizzie. I always liked her as a friend, but I never dreamed of anything more. I did connect her with that secret you were talking about last winter, because from your hints I narrowed it down to you, and once, in my wild guesses I believe I wondered if it were possible, — but no, I thought, what a hideous idea! And after all it was the true one.

But, now, Dithie, I am not going to talk about this matter until I can be with you, except to say this, — I am sure that I never did or said anything to give her any encouragement or hope, — not knowingly, at any rate. And, Dithie, I am sure that nothing you could have done or left undone would have changed me. You must not blame yourself, my Dithie, nor feel remorseful. Please don't for my sake. You couldn't have made it otherwise, if you would. I loved you long before I saw Lizzie, and have never loved anyone but you, my Dithie, and never would or could have, after seeing you. Do not talk or think about "what might have been." It couldn't have been.

Renie's letter came tonight, a short one. She told me, also, about Lizzie, and she is very, very sure that Lizzie was happy all the time of late and had gotten over that feeling. I am so glad! But I will wait till I can see you before I talk it all over.

It is getting late, so I cannot write much more. There was a wedding here tonight, a private one, and Mr. Volentine officiated, and I was present as a witness.

I have been hard at work all day. We started this morning, and have done pretty well for the first day. But I must not write any longer, much as I want to, for I ought to get my sleep. I have to get up early now. Good bye, my own dear little feller, my Dithie. Oh, Dithie, I love you so! If I could only be with you now! Good night, my Dithie, with lots and lots of love,

Your own Lester

I have just noticed that that letter that I got this morning is stamped “missent.”

Brighton, Mass.,
Nov.2, 1888

My dear little Dithie,
How I do love you! I am just longing and longing to see you again.

Your Wednesday's letter came this morning, instead of last night, and yesterday's letter came tonight, so I have had two today. I am glad your letters get here usually at night, for otherwise I have to carry them around in my pocket so long, before I have a chance to read them, — and then I don't always have a good opportunity. Today I read your letter in the horse-cars, going to Boston, to get some money to pay off the men tomorrow. I had to hold it up close to me so that the other people could not see how many sheets there were or what was written in it. I usually manage to leave the scene of operations between twelve and one o'clock, while the men are eating their dinners. Today my errands took a little longer, so I left at eleven. I eat my lunch whenever I find time, but I always manage to make away with it.

I did not get quite as much work done today as I expected, but we did a fair day's work, as it was on a part of the track that goes rather slowly anyway. That part will be all finished up by tomorrow noon, and then we shall go back to Beacon St., where we have been rushing so fast for the last two or three days.

The only thing I see ahead to delay me is a little piece of track that is not yet laid, which is run from the main track to the new car sheds that are now being built. I do hope they will commence to lay that track in a week or so, for I don't want to have to wait here for them, nor do I want to have to come back here to finish that up. I am going to try to hurry them up a little when I get a chance.

I wonder if it will be clear tomorrow. If it is, it will be the first clear Saturday since we commenced work, and the first week of pleasant weather for months I believe.

Yes, it is four weeks since I came here, but I am beginning to hope that I may get away sooner than four weeks more, if I have good luck. I don't like to raise my hopes though, nor yours either, for it is such a disappointment when I find that I can't get away when I expected, so I won't set any date, even in my own mind. But I know that the work is more than half done, and even with as much to delay

me as I have already had, I could finish in less than four weeks. Oh, how happy I shall feel when it is all done! I like this part of the work on one account, — when it is done, it stays done. There is nothing to disturb it, and everything is made so sure that even a break in one or two of the wires would not affect anything, and the cars would run just as well. I have finished up everything as I went along, so I shall not have to go over it again to put in a wire here and a rivet there, etc. I hope by the last of next week to have everything finished clear into Boston, including all the pesky paving, and the railroad bridge crossing, and then I shall commence on the Brooklyn extension, out Beacon St. to Chestnut Hill Reservoir. That will be the easiest of all, and how we will fly!

Yes, Dithie, I selected that napkin ring myself. It was bought some time ago. When I get back to Brooklyn, I will tell you about it. I am glad you liked it. Of course I had to get Renie to select the roses, and to send everything up to you.

How the wind does blow tonight! I like to hear it. It makes me feel kind of cosy, sitting in a nice warm room. By the way, that reminds me that I am not so comfortable as I might be, if I should take the trouble to take off my shoes and put on my slippers, so here goes. — Thew! That feels better.

I suppose you are all at the theater tonight. How I wish I were with you! It is the first time you have seen Jefferson, isn't it? You must tell me how you like him, — but I know you will like him.

I am so glad to hear that Minnie is better, especially the cough, as that seems to be the most obstinate and persistant(sic) symptom. Give her my regards the next time you write to her or see her.

I must stop now, and balance up my cash account, etc., etc., and then go to bed. I shall be thankful for Sunday, as this has been a busy week. When I get home, I will hug you and kiss you to make up for all this lost time, — see if I don't.

With ever so much love,
Your own Lester

Brighton, Mass.,
Nov.10, 1888

My dear little feller,

How it has rained today! I am glad it didn't clear off, however, for if it had, I should have been mad at myself for not working. But now I can enjoy my holiday with a clear conscience. It hasn't been much of a holiday either, for I spent the morning riding around Boston in the horse cars, doing a lot of business that I had left for a rainy day. So the day was not entirely lost after all, for if I hadn't done these things today, I should have had to do them after the work here was finished.

I don't mind rain very much when I am all rigged up for it, with a rubber coat and an umbrella, and pair of porpoise skin shoes. But when my rubber coat gets so wet that the water runs down in little streams on to the bottom of my pants, and thence into my shoes, through the open place in front, I begin to feel like getting back to the house and getting dry. I had to start out again right after dinner, to look for a sledge hammer that I had borrowed and lost. The men said it had been left at another blacksmith's shop, when I left some tools one night, so I went down there. I had to walk a mile, or wait about an hour for a car. I walked. When I got there, the shop was all locked up. None of the neighbors seems to know when the man would be back, but one man suggested the trap door in the floor of the shop. I acted on the suggestion and crawled up through it. The shop is like this, — (ed.-The picture is of a side view of a building on pilings, reaching to the water's edge. The building is built on a slope with the road in front and the water at the back.) I didn't find the sledge, however, so I shall have to pay for a new one. I walked back that mile, and then took two cars home.

I found Miss Nash here calling on Mary when I got back. I sat down for a while and heard them talk about dress-making and bonnets. (Women always talk about dress making and bonnets when they get together).

It is nearly supper time now, and raining harder than ever. I am glad tomorrow is Sunday, for it will have one more day to clear off in, and by Monday I hope for some fine weather.

The post-man has just been here, and left me a letter from Turner, but none from Dithie. I guess it will come in the 7 o'clock mail.

Ah, my little feller, you are so cunning, and I love you so very, very much!

I think part of the reason why you liked my first visit to Nantucket best, and I liked the last one, was because there is a certain feeling of satisfaction or contentment in knowing that the one you love best is living and sleeping under your roof, in your home. I used to go to bed with such a happy feeling when I thought that you were sleeping in the next room. And I felt that you were sort of visiting me, even if Renie did do the inviting. And I just loved to help (!) you pack your trunk and rope it up, and then sit down in that big chair where there was room enough for two. Wasn't that nice, my Dithie? And wasn't that a nice little time we had on the wharf, when the nine o'clock bells were ringing? And then we went out to dear old Hummock Pond, and although I was fishing and you and Renie were together, it felt so nice to think that you were near me! The fishing wouldn't have been any fun, if you hadn't been there, my Dithie.

Well, the supper bell has just rung, so I suppose I must stop for a while.

Oh what a supper I ate! I am afraid Mrs. Gooch will lose money on me, if I stay here much longer. My appetite seems to be very fine.

You ask me if I don't like Mary. I do, very much. She has lots of common sense. She and Mr. Volentine have made it very pleasant for me here. I should have been ever so much more lonesome without them.

It is raining harder then ever now. I am going out to the Post Office pretty soon, to get my letter from Dithie. Then I am going to have my Saturday night game of chess with Mary. She lets me play Saturday nights, as I don't have to get up early the next morning.

Later.

I have just finished a game of chess with Mary. She beat. It is now ten o'clock, but I must write you a little more, before I go to bed.

I got your letter at seven o'clock. It is post-marked Brooklyn, Nov. 10, 7:30 A.M., so it must have left this morning. That is pretty good time, considering. I guess that is just the difference between

the letters that get here at five o'clock and those that arrive at seven. The former are collected in Brooklyn the night before, and the latter in the morning.

You must never imagine that you don't suit me, my Dithie, for you do suit me just exactly. I just wish you were here so that I could show you how very much you do suit me, you cunning little feller you. But I shall see you soon. I don't dare say when, for lots of things might happen, but I am nearly through here. It has stopped raining now, and I guess it will clear off for good. If I can only get three days more of good clear weather! Saturday is always rainy. I might have expected it, for it has rained or threatened to rain every Saturday since we commenced work. I don't see how the weather can tell when Saturday comes round, but it seems to be able to.

I think you are a way ahead of me in Political Economy and Civil Government and politics generally. I have never taken up those subjects, but I must do something of that kind this winter. I should like to read all sides of these questions, so as to be able to back up my opinions with good solid arguments.

What a lot of things I have decided to do this winter! And after all we may be busier than I supposed, as there is a good deal of inside wiring that can be done all winter is we can get hold of any of it.

It is time for me to go to bed now, my little feller. I am glad tomorrow is Sunday, as I can sleep late. And yet I am in such a hurry to finish up this work that I can hardly wait for Monday to come.

I think I shall begin to pack my trunk tomorrow, as I want to be all ready to start when the time does come,

I must stop now. Good night my own little feller. I send heaps and heaps of love to my Dithie, from her own

Lester

Brighton, Mass.,
Dec. 3, 1888

My dear little feller,

Boston is such a long way off from Brooklyn! I kept getting further and further away all last night, and now I am here! I got here just in time. It wouldn't have done me much good to have come any sooner, but one day later would have made a pile of difference, for they paved a lot of track today. I got in all my wires ahead of them, however. They had to tear up a lot of the track that I had already connected up, so I had some of my work to do over again.

I got to Boston this morning at six o'clock, and I didn't feel very rested. I believe I informed you once that sleeping in the seat of a railway car, even if you have the whole seat to yourself, isn't at all comfortable. Well, I want to make that same remark again, but with more force. The seat of a railway car, if it had been specially designed to give a fellow the cramps in his legs, a "crick" in his back, put his neck out of joint, and freeze him to death, could not have been made more effectual in the accomplishment of the above named objects.

Well, I arrived at last, and got my breakfast, and wrote that letter to you, and just caught the train to Brighton. I got off at Allston, to see what they were doing there, and took the horse-cars to Brighton, hired my horse and wagon, and got a man to drill and drove to Mrs. Gooch's to get some of my tools. Mary and Lillie and Mr. V. were very much surprised to see me so suddenly, but I didn't have much time to talk, as I was in a great hurry to get to work. I am very well satisfied with the day's work. It has been a lovely day, but is coming up rather cloudy now. We have just been playing some whist. Mary and Mr. Volentine beat Lillie and me two games. I don't believe I should have been beaten if you had been here. Ah, my little feller, won't I just hug you when I get back!

Mary and I have done nothing but gape ever since supper. I am dreadfully sleepy, and pretty tired, too, so I will not write a very long letter tonight, especially as I want to get up early and get the morning mail before the carriers take it out to distribute it. They take such a long while to get round. And I want to mail this letter, too.

I cannot tell how long I shall have to stay here. It doesn't

depend on me at all. They have got to lay some track in the car sheds, and the floor is not yet laid. They think it will be done in about a week. Fortunately the weather will not affect that, and the outside work will only take a day or so more.

Tomorrow morning we do not work, but wait till afternoon, so as to give them a chance to lay some more track.

I forgot to bring Robert Elsmere, after all, but I can borrow it here, if I get any time to read. I am afraid I shall not, for tomorrow and Wednesday there is to be a fair, and I shall probably go to that for a while, and then, of course, I have letters to write, so I don't have much spare time. Mary's Sunflower affair did not come off, after all, as it was postponed on account of the weather, so the curtain and the music were in good season after all.

It is nine o'clock, and I suppose you are by this time in the midst of a dress rehearsal at Bethesda. I wish I could be there, too! All those people will see my Dithie all the evening, and won't half appreciate it, and I can't see her even once, when I want to so much! Ah, little feller, little feller! I love you so much! I am glad I am not here for six weeks this time. I may have to go back sooner than I expected, if I have to attend to that Cincinnati business.

I must write to Renie tonight, and a note to Turner, so I guess I had better end this, though it is a kind of "measly" letter. But I love you enough to make up for it, anyway.

Good night, my little feller, what I love, good night, with lots of love.

Your own loving
Lester

Brighton, Mass.,
Dec. 21, 1888

My own dear Dithie,

I feel rather discouraged today, for I am afraid I cannot leave before Monday night. Things are about in the same condition as when I left two weeks ago, and there seems to be no prospect of their getting that track laid before Christmas, though they are going to do a little tomorrow. I have been packing up my tools and paying bills and settling my bank account today, and tomorrow. I have a little work on hand, where they are going to take up a switch, and put down another one. I am going to try to arrange everything so that I can go back Monday night and not have to return again. It raises all my wrath to think of having to come back here a fourth time, but I hope I shall not, and to arrange things satisfactorily, I may have to spend Monday here, — and probably shall, — so don't count on seeing me before Christmas day. You may count on seeing me then, though, even if I have to walk!!!

I have only a few minutes more just now, as I must meet a man on the Electric Car that is going to start at five o'clock, and it is a quarter of five now.

I have a real pretty looking black eye, that I got this morning, through my own clumsyness. I was coming down the narrow stairs in the barn, carrying a drilling machine, and one end of the thing caught in a basket sitting on the stairs, and I lifted up the machine to clear it from the basket, and the top of it wobbled over and hit me right in the eye. It doesn't hurt at all, but it makes me look like John Sullivan after a fight.

I didn't sleep extra well last night. In the first place I was so afraid the porter would forget to call me in time to dress and get out at South Framingham. And then, at about one o'clock I tried to find out what time it was, and discovered that my watch had gone off on a little spree of its own, and hadn't got back. I had put it under my pillow, but had been shifting the pillows all around, trying to get comfortable, forgetting my watch entirely. So it was gone, apparently, and I hunted all over the bed, and felt down all the cracks around it, but it was no use. I had an upper birth, and I decided that it must have dropped down. So I stuck my head out between the curtains, and looked for the porter, but he wasn't in

sight. So there was nothing to do but to wait till he did turn up, so I waited. In a few minutes I heard him talking to the man below me, and the man was saying something about "falling down and hitting him in the head," and I stuck my head out and told the porter that I had lost my watch, and he passed it up to me. The man below had evidently just given it to him. I wonder if it did fall down on his head. Poor fellow! It must have waked him up pretty suddenly, if it did. It evidently had slipped down the crack at the head of my bed. I was mighty glad to see it, for I was afraid I had lost it. Poor little watch!

So I didn't get much sleep last night, and I am pretty tired now.

This different colored ink marks the place where I went out to ride on the electric car. It went very nicely. They run it out every afternoon, at about five o'clock, — to give it some fresh air and exercise, I suppose.

Ah, my little feller, I get so lonesome for you, away off here in Brighton! I wish I could have you with me this evening. But Christmas will soon be here, or there, rather, and I shall be there, too. There is hardly a chance of my getting there sooner, however.

I must write to Renie before supper, and get both letters into the mail before seven, so I will have to stop now. Good bye, my own dear Dithie, and may God bless you and keep you always. With lots and lots of love,

Your own Lester

363 Henry St.,
Brooklyn, N.Y.
Dec., 28, 1888

My dear Dithie,

I guess I shall not be able to get to 290 today, after all. I am afraid that old ankle will keep me in the house for two or three days. Isn't it mean, just when you have some nice holidays that I should be laid up.

I am lying on the sofa in the sitting-room just now, and trying to write, but it is rather awkward, and I am afraid my writing will be rather scraggly.

I am requested by the ladies of the house to invite you to come down and take supper and spend the night here. Renie says you can have the Bakery. Do come down. It will be awfully dull here, I am afraid, to lie on the sofa all day with nothing to do, and nobody to talk to. Renie says she is going to make me read something that I don't like, — because I read the things that I do like at other times, without being made to.

I must get somebody to mail this now, so that will get it as soon as possible. Come and see me.

Good bye, with lots of love from

Your Lester

Marlboro, Mass.,
May 15, 1889

My Dear Little Dithie,

I have just been playing on my cello for a little while after supper, and now I am writing to my little feller, so feller. I like to play on my cello, especially "Andante von Glueck," and "Musette," etc., etc. I have those two books of cello music with me, and somehow they remind me of you, my Dithie.

We have had some fine weather today, again, and we have been blasting this afternoon. I hope to get all those holes blasted out this week, and most of the poles set, if possible. We blasted about eight holes today. Everything seems to be going on pretty well, but some of my stuff that I want right away hasn't come yet, especially the pole-ratchets, like the sample I put into my bag, the last thing, when I left.

That bag always makes me think of "Then," somehow. I guess it is because I always think what a nice big bag it will be for us to go traveling with.

I guess I shall have to postpone the rest of this letter till later, for Hall is making me a visit just now.

I have just had a glass of ice-cream soda with him, and he has gone over to his hotel, so I can write some more on this letter. While he was here, I wrote a business letter, and straightened out my cash account, so I can devote the rest of the time (which isn't very much, tonight) to my Dithie.

If I only had you here with me, my little feller! But another day has gone, and we are one day nearer each other. I am going to try to get more of a vacation this summer than I had last, but I never can tell about it until the time comes. I do hope I can get a whole week, at least, with my Dithie. It would be so nice, and we haven't had as much as that together since I sprained my ankle.

Your letter was waiting for me when I got in to supper tonight, and I was mighty glad to get it. I may go to Brighton Sunday, and I may not. I shall probably be on the fence until the last moment, and if I feel the need of a little more sleep Sunday morning, I shall have to deny myself the visit to Brighton.

So you do not class me among terrestrial affairs! What am I, an

angel, or the other thing? I know I am not an angel, so I have but the one alternative.

I shall have to make this letter the same size as yours though I wish I could write ten pages. But it is getting late, and I am very sleepy, so good night, my own little “True-Love,” with lots and lots of love from

Your Lester.

P.S. My sore throat and my eye are both entirely well.

WOODBRIDGE & TURNER,
Electrical Engineers and Contractors,
74 CORTLANDT STREET.

June 2, 1889

My dear little Dithie,

I thought I would send you a sample of our new letter paper this time. We have just had it printed, since we moved into the new office. You won't be able to see that new office for quite a while, will you, my Dithie? Not until next fall sometime, unless you go over and call on Turner, and I don't believe you will do that.

I have just started a new pen, but it doesn't give me much trouble, for I get a coarse one, anyway, and then wet it and rub off all the grease before dipping it into the ink. This paper is pretty rough to write on, and I ought to use a steel pen. I think it looks pretty neat, though, — the printing at the top, I mean.

It was raining like fury when I woke up this morning, but it has cleared off elegantly. Hall and I went to the Congregational Church this morning, and heard a rather queer sermon on Heaven. I think that minister gets short of something to say, sometimes, and fills up with things that haven't very much connection with the subject.

I have written lots of letters today. I wrote to Renie, and Mamma, and one to Papa, asking him to get a piece of red glass for my ruby lantern, and to get my instantaneous shutter out of my closet and give them to you to put in your trunk. Do you think you will have room for them with all those new dresses?

I also wrote a letter to Charlie and one to Turner, and this one is to a little feller in Brooklyn, and I have still to write to Mary and ask her to find a room for me in Brighton for Saturday night, if I find I can stay. I will arrange to take my meals with you all, at Mrs. Gooch's, if I can.

It has all cleared off here beautifully this afternoon, and I guess we shall have a good day tomorrow for our work. I am going to try to get to bed early tonight, so as to be able to get up in fine condition for a big day's work.

I took quite a long walk this afternoon with Hall, and we got out into some pretty nice country, where the houses were far apart, and it seemed so much nicer than the noisy street of the town. I always keep wishing I had you with me, instead of anybody else, no matter where I am. Hall is a nice fellow, but I think I would get tired of him after a while. He hasn't had what you would call a higher education, as he is one of those fellows, like Elmer, who got tired of school and went into business. And there is another thing that I don't like about him, — he has been engaged before, and broke it off himself, and from what he says, I should imagine that he didn't consider either the engagement or the breaking of it very seriously. Perhaps he is different with regards to the present one, as the other was some time ago. But I don't see how anybody can be engaged to a girl unless they really love her, and if they love her, how can they break it? But I suppose there are no two people alike in this world. I am glad you and I fit so nicely, and love each other so much. Our love is such a blessing!

Only six more days, now, and I shall see my Dithie once more! I am going to keep just as busy as I can, so as to make the time go faster.

We took a walk again just after supper, and on our way back, we were passing the Baptist church, and Hall said "Let's go in," and in we went. They were having a sort of children's missionary meeting, and were discussing your favorite country, Japan. The children had learned pieces of its history and dialogues about it, and all that, and they recited it all off, and then some of them passed the contribution boxes around. We only heard the last part of it, and didn't hear all of that, as the children spoke so low,

I think you and I have been very lucky, so far, in not having to be separated very long at a time. It seems ages, but it isn't half so bad as it might be. Suppose I should be away for six months. Wouldn't it be awful? Six weeks is plenty long enough, and I shall be so glad when it will be only six hours, perhaps. I wrote to Mamma that I thought late in the fall or early in the winter would be a nice time for us to get married. I do hope we can arrange it so. I am just longing to be able to call you my wife, and to feel that we are not to be separated again. But June is going slowly but surely, and when July gets here there will be only five months to wait. I wish it were five days, or five hours, or five minutes. I wonder how you will look,

all in white, with your train and veil, all dressed for the wedding. I bet you will be just the nicest little bride there ever was, and I just love you with all my might, and I always shall.

I had a bath a few minutes ago. It is rather hard to find an opportunity in this hotel, there are so many here, so I took advantage of my turn, when it came.

I wish I could get a letter from you on Sunday. I don't like to have to wait till Monday morning for it. I suppose it is in the mail box now, if I could only get at it. But I can't, so I shall have to wait.

I suppose this week will go very fast for you, you will be so busy. You must look out for yourself, my Dithie, and not overwork, for I want you to feel real strong and well when you get to Brighton, so that we can enjoy our visit together to the utmost. I rather imagine I shall be here long enough to see you again the week after, but I cannot tell what may turn up. I am getting awfully impatient for that visit.

How long do you expect to stay in Brighton? I suppose you are to stay there until your folks come along and take you off to the White Mtns. It will be a pity if I go back to Brooklyn, and leave you in Brighton. How exasperating that would be!

I must stop this letter now, and write to Mary about my room for Saturday. Good night, you dear little feller you, with lots and lots of love and hugs and kisses, from

Your Own Lester

WOODBRIDGE & TURNER,
Electrical Engineers and Contractors,
74 CORTLANDT STREET.

July 6, 1889

My dearest Dithie,

It is now just 2 P.M., and I have about finished my work for the day. I have been trotting around New York on various errands, writing letters, fixing up the books, etc., etc. I am going to try to get away early this afternoon, as it is Saturday.

That Wilmington contract is not decided, after all, so I am still in suspense. I don't believe I shall know until Monday or Tuesday. As for L.I. City, they found by looking up the contract that the local people are going to do their own construction. I shall go out and interview the local people, and see if I cannot get a contract direct from them.

Your fourth of July letter was here this morning. I am still in doubt as to whether my letters have reached you at Waterville, as the letter you mention having received was a special delivery, sent to Brighton, and forwarded from there, I suppose. As for the punishment, I guess about the worst one I could choose would be to let you tease me on the subject, and as I cannot very well prevent it, I might as well make a virtue of necessity, and choose that. But, I will pay, oh ever so many kisses, as part of the forfeit, when I see you again, you little feller, you.

I finished "Lucille" last night, and I like it very much indeed, don't you? I believe there are lots of people who would develop into much nobler men and women, if they had only the strength of will to bring out what is good in them and stifle what is bad. Perhaps they will have a better chance hereafter. It does seem as if some people really don't know what it is to try to build up a good true noble character in themselves, and I am afraid we all of us forget it too often. But I really don't see how a man can be so vacillating as to be really in love with two girls at the same time. But then, there are some very queer people in this world.

I do wish I could be with you there in Waterville for a while, — but what's the use of talking about it, for it will only make me all the more lonesome. But we will go there sometime after "Then," and what fine times we shall have! I am sure we shall be just as eager to get off alone, somewhere, as we are now. And what a lot of it we shall have, too! It is so nice to think about!

I am going to try to write my letters to you from the office in the afternoon, hereafter. I have it all to myself, and am not very often disturbed by callers, and I think it will make a good deal of difference in the time that you get them, for they will get to Boston early the next morning, that is, if they go that way, and I suppose they do. And the letter that you write to me on Friday, that leaves Saturday morning, you had better address to 456 Henry St., Brooklyn. Then I can go to the P.O. on Sunday and get it, instead of waiting till Monday morning. It is an awful long time to wait for a letter from Saturday morning till Monday morning.

I have been counting up, and find that my letter which I wrote to you Tuesday night, from Brooklyn, ought certainly to have reached you by Thursday night, but it evidently hadn't, so I think it must have gone astray. I do want to get it forwarded before they open it to find out who wrote it, so I am going to the P.O. again about it. I have some other errands to do, too, before the stores close up, so I shall leave to go now. Dood bye, little feller, with ever and ever so much love,

Your Lester.

74 Cortlandt St.,

New York City.

July 30, 1889

My dearest Dithie,

The memorable day is here again, and such a day! I believe I am hotter than I was on July 30, '87. It has been raining, off and on, all day, and the humidity has reached a very high percent. Then the man in the office opposite has been away nearly all day, and his door has been shut, keeping out what little breeze there was. But he is back now, and I begin to feel more comfortable. If I were only a salamander! But I doubt if a salamander would be perfectly comfortable this weather.

Papa arrived this morning, but I didn't go to meet him, for I slept until seven o'clock, and the boat was in at half past six. I might have met him, though, if I had known that he would be in bed until eight, as he did. I went around to Elmer's office about half past twelve, and telephoned up to see if he had arrived, and invited myself out to lunch with him, leaving Elmer to eat alone. I usually go out with Elmer. Of course I got all the latest news from Nantucket, especially in regard to the fishing in Long Pond and Hummock Pond and Miacomet Pond, (please pronounce that word the way it is written) and the blue-fishing. He had had two fishing excursions, one to Long Pond, where he and Aunt Matt caught 2 between them (I didn't like to ask who caught those two, as he was paying for my dinner) and one to Hummock Pond, where he and Aunt Matt and Mary Frank caught 46. The latter individual caught 3. I wish I had been along, to have had some fun with her.

Your two letters came this morning. I am so glad you found the key of your trunk. I have heard of a lady's going out leaving the house empty, and putting the key under the door mat, with a note to her husband on the door-knob telling him where to find it, but I never have heard of tying a trunk key to the outside of the trunk. It is certainly a very novel idea, and possibly its very novelty would make it comparatively safe. I suppose you will know where to look for that key next time. But as for you always packing your trunk yourself, after this, I beg to differ with you, for I know that you will be only too glad to have my assistance, occasionally, and probably you will want to surrender the key into my custody, especially if you happen to have on one of those curiously constructed dresses with a

pocket in it somewhere mysteriously concealed, and discovered only by chance at rare intervals.

I am so glad that you feel that you can trust me so fully, my Dithie, for I do want you to so very much! And I feel just that way toward you. There are very, very few people to whom I ever care to talk at all about myself, — nobody to whom I care to tell everything, except you. And when “Then” comes, and we have that constant companionship that will wear away all reserve and draw us both so close together, — oh, Dithie, won’t it be nice! I can’t help filling my letters with longings for you, any more than you can, for I do love you so much! How awfully slowly the time does go!

I always like the name “Edith” for you, though it isn’t so cunning as “Dith” or “Dithie.” The reason why I called you Edith at first was because everybody else called you “Dith” or “Dithie,” or “Edie,” and I wanted to be different. I always call you Edith now, when anybody is around, for I don’t like to have anyone else hear me use any pet names for you, my Dithie, but I love to use them when we are alone. I certainly do want to see you a great deal more than I did after that July 30th, two years ago. How our love for each other has grown since then! I hope it will keep on growing, and I feel sure that it will, though it almost seems as if there wasn’t any more room for more. I shall do my best to get to Nantucket, but I really cannot tell anything about it now, for there is no telling what may come up. It looks as if I ought to be able to get away when one of these two jobs that we have on hand is finished, even if we have another to start on, for a new one would not come on for a little while after we got the contract, and we shall have by that time three good men to look after things, besides Turner and myself. But there is no telling. If we are so busy that I cannot get away, that fact will partly console me for the loss of my vacation. If it wasn’t for seeing you, little feller, I would care a snap about vacation, but I do hate to be away from you so far, for such a long time.

So I can have as many scores as I please, can I? I wonder if you can imagine how many that will be. I am afraid that you will get so spunky by that time, that I shall never have time to pay up all that you deserve, without attempting to go back to old scores. Are you counting on that, when you give me such full and free permission to pay up all the scores I please? But you may depend upon it, that all the scores I please will not be any more than as many as you want, but

I think that will be a good many.

And you really think that you are going to keep me and my belongings in order a'la Mary and Mr. V.? What a wild flight of the imagination! As for that little remark about my hands, and my room, etc., that will certainly swell the score enormously. I believe if I had been around when you made that remark, I should not have been able to wait for the day of reckoning, — and I don't know that I shall, even now. I would inform you that 363 does not look like "Sanc," so you are entirely mistaken. I have cleared up my room twice since July 1st, and the rest of the house doesn't need it, except to the eye of a very fastidious person.

It is time I left for home now, so I will say good bye. This is a rather longer letter than usual, as I have had a little more time to write. Give my love to B. and R., and tell R. that I am going to send her a newspaper clipping to read to you.

Good bye, little feller, with lots and lots of love, from Your own
Lester.

WOODBRIDGE & TURNER,
Electrical Engineers and Contractors,
74 CORTLANDT STREET.

July 27, 1889

My dearest Dithie,

Your two letters, and one from Bessie, all from N. Woodstock, were here this morning, and I was mighty glad to see them and rather surprised to see the Postmark. And so you have found the chaperones, have you? Or are you a chaperonee? If you consider yourself the latter, you must make the most of it, for you have only four months more of it. I wish it were four days!! It will be, if I wait long enough, I suppose, but waiting is awfully hard work.

I left 363 at half past seven, this morning, and got to Hunters Point at 8:30, but the Mayor was not to be found. I put in my time, while I was waiting, by getting a little breakfast, as my "department of the interior" was reminding me that there was no longer any surplus in the treasury. So I got some chops and coffee, and then went to look for the Mayor again, — but no Mayor. I waited some little time, and then left my card and when I got to the office, I wrote him a letter.

I developed two more pictures for Elmer last night, and they came out very well. As it was Gus' last night, we spent most of the evening playing a game of chess. It was a long game, and hotly contested, and he beat me. That makes three games in succession for him. The game lasted until after 12 o'clock. I don't think I ever saw anybody pick up chess so quickly as Gus has. I certainly played a better game last night than the first ones I played with him, when I beat him every time. We are going to have some postal card games as I perhaps told you.

In regard to our visit to Nantucket, it will have to come, if it comes at all, at some time when I can conveniently get away. I haven't the least idea when that will be, though. I mentioned August, because I thought perhaps you might be coming back to Brooklyn in September, and besides, the bathing is rather better in August. But I like September just as well, if not better. However, as I said, I shall

be only too thankful to get a few days or a week off with you my Dithie, no matter when it comes. But I don't dare count on it very much, for very likely I shall not be able to leave at all. I don't think it makes any difference at all to Mamma, and she did not state my particular time. I have just written to her, telling her how uncertain I was.

I would like to go there with you ever so much. We could pick out some nice days for canoe sailing, I guess, and we could find lots of pine woods, couldn't we, my Dithie?

Please, Miss, when is your scheme to inveigle Renie to Waterville? Oh, that elegant scheme! I have heard of being knocked down by your own gun, of being hoisted by your own "petard," of being caught in your own trap! Yes, I have heard of such things, but never before did I see them all illustrated so aptly, so beautifully as in the present case. Please tell me how you did it. Was it animal magnetism? Did you try to draw her by the patent influence of your will, and then find after all that in order to succeed, you would have to imitate the great prophet? Well, I think Mahomet was very sensible, and I think you were very sensible to follow his example.

Those instructions about the spelling of North Woodstock were very, very naughty. You have done your full share of teasing already, and all this is extra, to be expiated at the grand day of reckoning. Oh, what a score you will have! Won't it be fun! (No answer to this, I'll bet.)

It is a nasty, sticky, rainy day, today. If it wasn't Saturday afternoon, I should have to be trotting around on errands, but the stores are all closed, so I shall go home early. I must write a few lines to Turner, now. Give my love to R. and B., and tell B that I will send her rosin (spelled rosin, when used for the violin, and resin, when otherwise used.) Good bye, little feller, with lots and lots of love, from

Your own Lester.

363 Henry St.,
Brooklyn, N.Y.
Sept. 15, 1889

My own dearest Dithie,

What an elegant lot of letters from you! Such a feast! And after such a famine! I have just been reading them all over again, — the three that came last night, and the one that I got at the P.O. this morning. But how my heart does sink way down into my boots at the idea of your not getting back to Brooklyn until Tuesday. I feel more lonesome than ever. It is always such a disappointment, after planning to see you at a certain time, to have that time postponed. But I suppose we ought not to complain, for there are so many people much worse off than we are, — some that have lost thousands of dollars, others who have lost friends and relations in shipwrecks, — and we ought to feel thankful that we are still safe, for each other. I always try to reason myself into a state of contentment by some such process, but somehow or other I always find myself in about the same condition of lonesomeness as before.

This morning, after breakfast, I went around to the P.O. and got your letter, and then went up to see Turner, as I hadn't seen him since Friday noon. He was out, so I went around to Elmer's. He was out, too, and Mr. Bell said that he and Turner had gone down to my house, so I hurried back as fast as I could and found them here. Elmer wanted us to go up to Bethesda this afternoon and help cover their library books. There was to be no Sunday School today, as Bethesda is being repaired and recarpeted. I was rather doubtful about going, and when afternoon came, I decided to "lay off" and rest, in order to be ready for a hard day's work tomorrow. Besides, I wanted to write this letter, and although Elmer offered me pen and ink up there, I decided not to go. I suppose Turner went up, and there were several others going, too, so I wasn't really necessary.

It was about half past ten when I got back here and found them, and we all went around to Dr. Storrs' church at eleven, as the Dr. has just returned from his vacation. He preached a very good sermon, and after the sermon, to the astonishment of the whole congregation, he announced that he should be pleased to shake hands with them at the close of the service. This was a very unusual exhibition of

sociability for him, and we all went up and shook hand with him, to encourage him to do it again, sometime.

While we were eating dinner, it commenced to rain again, and I tell you I felt pretty discouraged. I was afraid we should have a rainy day tomorrow, just when I wanted to start work setting poles, etc., out in Jamaica. We are behind hand with that work already, and I do hope we shall not have any more rain.

It is now about four o'clock, so I shall have to write fast, to be able to send you a letter of respectable length. I spent rather too much time dozing on the bed.

When I saw that I had only three letters from you last night, I did begin to wonder what had become of your Friday's letter. But it soon occurred to me how it happened, — that the boat left Friday morning with the three, and there wasn't any noon boat that day, so your Friday's letter must have left Saturday morning, and arrived in New York late Saturday afternoon, after the office was closed. So I shall get that one tomorrow, rather out of its turn. But as there was probably no boat on Sunday from Nantucket, it is just as well that it happened so, for I shouldn't have had any letter from you tomorrow, otherwise.

The sky is all clear and blue at last, and I do hope for a fine day tomorrow. I shall leave this house at six o'clock tomorrow morning, and try to get things well under way. I expect, before the end of the week, to have a gang of fifty or sixty men at work out there, if I can get hold of them.

I wish I could have known that you would stay in Nantucket over Sunday, so that I could have sent my Friday's letter there. You little feller, you, you won't get my Brighton letters until Monday, unless Mary remailed that Friday letter in time to reach you Saturday night. She might possibly have been able to do that, but it is rather doubtful. If she mailed it too late for that, you will not get it until you get back to Brooklyn, I guess. Then I shall have to get hold of it, for it will be too stale for anything by that time.

I must write to Charlie, this evening, and tell him to plan to come back in time for the great event in November, — that happy time that comes so very very slowly. It is seventy two days off, now.

I didn't mean to give you to understand that I really thought I was the only one who was looking forward to "Then." But for four long years I was in the habit of telling myself that it would be

the height of presumption and conceit for me to suppose that you cared anything about me, however much I cared for you. And it is not surprising, is it, that this habit of thought finally grew pretty strong, so strong that it still crops out at times, although I know better. For I know that you do love me ever and ever so much, and are probably in just as much of a hurry for "Then" to come as I am, if that were possible. I am in an awful hurry, though. I cannot stand any more of this separation. It is too awfully lonesome. Only think of being together all the time! It will be so joyous not to have to leave you and go off for six or eight weeks, but to be able to take you right along with me.

I am still wondering when you will get back to Brooklyn. Your letters seems so very uncertain on that point. I hope it will not be any later than Tuesday. I shall be on the lookout for that telegram every evening. I don't suppose I shall hear anything definite until Tuesday evening, anyway, and then I shall probably find your letter and telegram both waiting for me, for I do not expect to go over to the office tomorrow, or Tuesday, so if your letter goes there, it will be re-mailed to Brooklyn. In fact, unless you get to Brighton in time to mail a letter before 7 o'clock in the evening, it will not be delivered until so late Tuesday that I probably would not get it until Wednesday. But you might write on the journey, and mail it in Boston.

It is getting to be pretty nearly supper time, so I shall have to stop, in order to mail this in time. I send you just oceans and oceans of love, my Dithie, and I hope I shall see you soon, to give you such a good big hug, and such a lot of kisses! Good bye, my little feller,

Very affectionately,
Your Lester.

363 Henry St.,
Brooklyn, N.Y.
Oct. 23, '89

My dearest Dithie,

I have a few minutes to write you a few lines, before Papa goes out to mail some letters. I wish you were here, you little feller, it is so lonesome!

I have been copying that list all the evening, and it is nearly finished, except the addresses.

Be sure to come early tomorrow afternoon, and perhaps I may come home a little earlier, and be here by five o'clock.

Five weeks from tonight! Time is going, crawling along, but still going.

I must stop, but send lots and lots of love, and a good night kiss, from

Your Lester.

