

Washington & Lee University
October 2nd 1871.

Dear Papa,

As you well know that I am not gifted in the art of letter writing, you can of course look over the many errors which I am afraid I will make in this my first attempt at epistolary correspondence for nearly four years, when I promise that I will try and improve and do better in future. Indeed I have not written for so long that I hardly know how to begin. I ought to have written before this I know, but as Lucretia wrote about a week ago I thought that that would do for a while, so I postponed writing until now, and I fear that I will fail yet for want of something to say. Perhaps an account of my trip to this place would not be wholly uninteresting, so I will try and relate some of the incidents that occurred on that memorable journey.

Well, we arrived at Covington a few minutes ^{after} eleven o'clock, and there we met Major Hoays, who very kindly invited us to take dinner with him, and being not very hard to persuade to go on such excursions, Gave and I went, Luche and the rest of the troupe went to the Merchant Hotel in Cincinnati.

In the evening we all went to the Exposition which was I expect the ^{largest} fair of the kind ever held in the United States. We spent 6 long hours at the Exposition and I suppose did not see one fourth of articles on exhibition. It would not do for me to try ^{to} describe any thing I saw as I haven't language at my command sufficient to describe it in ^{the} terms that it deserves, Enough is to say that it was the grandest affair that I ever saw or expect to see soon. We left Cincinnati at 10 O'clock precisely for Washington, and I think that was about the hardest night I ever spent. We reached Washington the next night about half after eleven. Next morning we got separated, Shawhan and myself & went to the depot where our baggage was, the rest of the party went to another depot.

We found the Trunks of the whole party, but as Lucke had the checks and also my ticket, we had to stand on the platform and see the cars move off. When they (the cars) reached the other depot and they (the boys) saw that neither we, nor the trunks were aboard, they delivered the checks all over to Cave who came back and found us at the hotel, so we had a day in Washington to see the sights and we made use of it too. We went to the Patent Office, the Capitol the White House &c &c. We left Washington ~~Wednesday~~ Thursday morning about 7 O'clock and arrived at E. Koshen about 6 O'clock that evening. We then took the stage, over the roughest road I ever saw, for Lexington and reached here about 1 O'clock Friday morning.

I was very much disappointed in this town, as I expected to find it about four times as large as it is. We moved to Mrs. Patrick's Friday evening, and remained there until this evening, when Lucke and myself moved to Col. Johnston's, and Cave went back to Mr. Alexander's where he was last year.

I have just gotten fairly started in my studies, and I think I am

doing
very well so far. I am studying Latin, Greek,
English, ^{and} Mathematics; I am in the jr. class in all
except the Greek, in that I am in preparatory.
I haven't been home sick yet, but I would like to
see you all about now.

Give my love to all the
family, and tell them all to write to me, and tell
Lucie Dills that I would like to hear from him.

I am, as ever your
affectionate son
Jack Desha.