

1893

- New York Stock Market crashed
- Katharine Lee Bates writes “America the Beautiful”
- Willard is 28 years old and Ellen is 25.

[This letter, dated **January 6, 1893**, was written from Staffordville, CT by Ellen to Willard. She describes a beautiful sunset on a white-mantled earth. She talks about various day to day things. Letter from the collection of Cynthia Elmer Amend and donated to Yale in 2010.]

[Envelope addressed to: Mr. Willard L. Beard, Hosmer Hall, Hartford, Conn.]

Staffordville, Ct.,
Jan. 6", '93.

My Dear Will,

Such an exquisite painting of a sunset is just now hanging in the evening sky! I would send it to you in the form of a word picture had I the power, but you will see the original if you stroll through Nature's Gallery tonight; and should you not imagination aided by memory will picture it for you, as you have seen something similar- in Stafford Street, I believe.

As I look out upon the white-mantled earth, the clear blue sky with its lingering fragments of storm clouds glowing in the sunset light, and the eastern hill tops kindled with the same ruddy glow, it hardly seems that the scene now so serene and calm was but a few hours ago swept by a howling, blustering storm.

And where do you think its arrival found me? On the road, of course, walking up from the Springs, through the Street, facing the wind all the way and on the best possible route to appreciate its keenness. But frozen ears and fingers were not so much as thought of, and the distance was made in one hour ten minutes altho encumbered with the paraphernalia of a pack-peddler.

It seems to be taken for granted that our prayer-meeting (Thursday evening) is conditional on the weather; and I think many of us remain at home on slightly inclement weather for no better reason than our belief that others will do the same, the same conditions would not enter into the consideration at all if an entertainment were in question. So many times we have no meeting when "two or three" might "be gathered together" except for our fear that there would but one.

Perhaps my criticism can hardly be justly applied to this week (except in my own case) but it can be to many such occasions. However, there was no meeting.

The continuance of the storm today gave us one session of school closing at 2 P.M. This gives me a fine opportunity to exercise my pen in visiting with dear friends when my lips can not communicate my thoughts.

This afternoon and evening was appointed for a meeting of the ladies society at Mrs. A. S. Eaton's. The storm may not interfere with its being held, but I find it much pleasanter to stay at home and have a little chat with you than to wade through the snow.

The wheel of duty in the C.E. Society has made another revolution and the indicator points to my name as leader of the prayer meeting next Sunday. You will remember me in that capacity with a prayer for Holy Spirit's guidance and strength that the duty may be performed according to His will?

I have heard many expressions of pleasure and gratitude from C.E.'s for the gift from Hosmer Hall friends; all seem to think it just the thing needed and admire the selection very much. I shall have the pleasure of using it Sunday evening.

You may be sure that your arrangement of your visit here a week hence is very satisfactory to me; but I hope you will not sacrifice to my selfishness, any duty to yourself.

A few words in your letter concerning my visit at your home gave me pleasure and I thank you for sending those words to me.

And thank you for that armful of love and I return as much to you. Hoping to see the object of my love soon and to hear from him sooner. I am

Very lovingly yours,
Ellen.

[This letter, dated **January 27, 1893**, was written from Staffordville, CT by Ellen to Willard. Ellen mentions Hotel Booth, which is probably her nickname for the home in which she is boarding. She and a friend, as

members of the Ladie's Society, are to help entertain the public. She talks about various other subjects. Letter from the collection of Cynthia Elmer Amend and donated to Yale in 2010.]

[Envelope addressed to: Mr. Willard L. Beard, Hosmer Hall, Hartford, Conn.]

Staffordville, Ct.,
Jan. 27", 93.

My Dear Willard,

Had you looked eastward from the window of the stage as it stopped on the corner last Monday morning, to the window under the west veranda of Hotel Booth, you might have seen a face "dimpled o'er with smiles" (audible ones too,) looking out through a thawed spot of the frosted window pane, to catch a last glimpse of quite a curiosity,- a flying parson.

It is generally understood that this class of mortals is preeminently angelic, but that desirable characteristic was not supposed to comprehend the equipment with wings for rapid transit through mundane space. The only specimen known to exist was, therefore, deemed not-worthy. (What irreverence!)

Now I know just what your thoughts are telling you,- "Well, if she was so pleased to see me going, I guess her heart was not very seriously wrung with pain at parting."

The reality or realization of parting comes after the excitement which attends it has subsided, and then the sense of loneliness creeps in to claim many hours.

But I was amused to see you make the distance between the house and the corner, and was also heartily glad and much relieved that your speed accomplished its purpose. One would have thought you were fleeing some wrath to come or at least making good your escape from some savage foe. Well, that foe is savagely loving isn't she. But she has promised herself with all the solemnity that she would promise a minister (which she herewith does) that she will endeavor to evince a higher civilization along that line, in the days that shall follow.

Were I to be in Putnam tomorrow, you would have received an invitation to run down on your way to Hampton Hill and spend an hour or two with me at home reaching your destination by a later return train.

I am attempting to wade through the preparations for a little entertainment, up to my eyes in difficulty. It has devolved upon Nettie Swift and myself to entertain the public under the auspices of the Ladie's Society, with what success, time alone will tell. I am hoping however, for rather more gratifying results than crowned the efforts of our predecessors. How do you manage with grownup people "who can sing and won't sing," to make them sing? I can manage children with some degree of success in this line, but the line which limits my authority, is drawn at the point where people are no longer children.

In the practice of your profession you must have learned the art.

The last Christmas Gift of the season came in yesterday,- which was a very pretty volume of Longfellow's "Evangeline", from Mrs. Eldredge.

We had the largest attendance at our prayer meeting last evening that we have had for several weeks,- thirteen, all told.

The monotony of the social routine characteristic of S'ville life was very agreeably varied for me by your refreshing visit, and was again broken by a pleasant call from Mr. and Mrs. Peel and Charlie who took tea and spent the evening with us last Wednesday.

I suppose to-morrow will be a red-letter day for our cook who is highly appreciative of household conveniences; for then a new range takes the place of the old stove in her kitchen. So we shall begin next week with greatly improved culinary prospects I trust.

Amy Walbridge returned home Monday arriving safely though somewhat fatigued with the journey.

I have not called yet, thinking it more kindly consideration for her in her present condition, to wait until all the others had called and she had had time to recover from the exhaustion necessarily resulting from the protracted visits of inevitable callers, at such a time, whose motives however can be counted as none but the kindest.

One evening this week I enjoyed a very pleasant call at Mr. Ballantyne's. As I walked home alone in the moonlight, I recalled the first time I ever went down to their house do you remember it?

Certainly, my dear Will, I will answer those letters from your home. You surely could not believe me so discourteous as to ignore them when their kind remembrance had preceeded the accomplishment of

my purpose to open correspondence or, at least to send a little message expressive of my appreciation of their kind efforts to entertain me so enjoyably, and of the pleasure my visit at your home and the new friendships there formed have given me.

A letter from home recently brought the pleasant news that Elbert was one of the two successful competitors for the prize essay writing. His whole class joined in the competitive writing and two of the best were selected to write for an entertainment a few weeks hence. I think their subject is "The Immigration Question."

Etta writes that our "Morford House Party" (at the C.E. Convention, N.Y.) had another reunion in the form of a sleigh ride followed by an "Oyster Supper" at a late hour of the evening.

A delightful time was reported; and I am missing all these reunions you see.

I am very sorry that you became so tired out with your visit out here; but you really must not wrong yourself by speaking of it as laziness. And I must be more careful and considerate of you, my own dear Will, when you are so kind as to devote yourself to my happiness, - and I will be.

Now I have thrust upon you three times the literary trash that the length of your letter would justify me in returning to you, but remember that when you have taken your fill of it, the flames are always eager to swallow up what no one else has use for.

If my pen has recorded my message just as it was dictated it is deserving of great credit; for while I am shouting into one of its ears in an effort to be heard, a "Babylovish Jargon" is pouring into the other from sources hard by.

I haven't a single flower of any sort to send as a messenger of love, but the written message bears none the less, which is more than tongue can tell.

Yours Lovingly,
Ellen.

P.S. - Just what were your feeling when you addressed that envelope?

[This letter, dated April 12, 1893, was written from Staffordville, CT by Ellen to Willard. It sounds like a district school master is staying briefly in the same boarding house as Ellen. The school master and boarding house owner are playing music and telling stories while Ellen writes the letter. She attended an entertainment the evening before which may be one that she took part in planning. She sang a solo for it. Letter from the collection of Cynthia Elmer Amend and donated to Yale in 2010.]

[Names mentioned in this letter: Mr. Booth, Mrs. Eager, Miss Walbridge.]

Staffordville, Ct.,
Apr. 12", '93.

My Dear Will,

The tone of these lines ought surely to be musical since my pen is moving to lively measures and the atmosphere is agitated with vibrations set in motion by the grinding of an organ, the scraping of a fiddle, the shrill notes of a whistler and the melodious tones of human voices, harmoniously blended.

It would be quite possible to weave in a humorous thread too; for, during the last hour I have heard nothing but witticisms and nonsense, interspersed by peals and roars of laughter in which I have frequently participated. So I hope you will appreciate my efforts to write although the attempt is quite promising of failure. Mr. Booth has found more than his match at story telling now in the person of the "singing-school master" who "boards around the district."

Well, the story tellers have finally, for the fiftieth and last time told "the last one" and "expired", so I have the floor now; and 'though the hour is late yes, very late, I am going to finish this while I am sure of no interruption.

First, "Pay that thou owest", which is a good big "thank you" for sacrificing your Sunday afternoon calls, for my sake and for lots of other things I neglected to acknowledge. Mrs. Eager has a kindly little grudge against me for robbing her of the promised call.

Since I have heard nothing to the contrary I infer you reached H- in safety and in time for the first lecture, - but very tired, I fear.

Tomorrow evening the singing class closes its brief term of six evenings. The professor requested us to invite our friends to attend on that occasion.

Accordingly I invite you to be present on the closing evening to pass your judgement on the progress made.

Were I to express my opinion of the entertainment of last evening I should say, that the prospectus was quite as grand as the reality, in every respect except length. But you know I am always harsh in my criticism, except when the object of criticism is self; but even that dear object does not escape this time. Most of the participants took their parts very creditably, - excepting ego, (or more correctly, me). But the management of the stage was far removed from elegance and gracefulness. The manager was a permanent fixture to the stage (except when he was flying about among the audience consulting his performers) and was strictly ornamental.

Of the four hundred expected who were to be crowded into the aisles and stage dressing-rooms from which the partitions were to be removed to accommodate them, seventy-five found seats very comfortably in the center of the house. The ice cream was good, though; I ate a plate for you as well as one for myself, for I feared it would not keep to send in this letter. You'll probably receive the bill, though.

You would instruct me to retire if you knew the hour, so I'll do it.

Good Night.

Just imagine how feelingly I sung that solo,-
"You may sigh for subjects many
I have not a wish for any
Only one to bend the knee
And give his heart's best
love to me."

I can't tell whether it called forth smiles or tears from the audience but it must have touched some side of their emotional natures.

Miss Walbridge has been out of school two days sick but has resumed her work today.

I expect to make a journey to the Springs Saturday or Friday night if it does not snow before that time.

With my best wishes and my "best love."

Yours,
Ellen.

*[This letter, dated **October 2, 1893**, was written from Birmingham, CT by Willard to Ellen. He is glad that Ellen made it to Oberlin safely and refers to her being strong in the ordeal. He reminds her of the evening a year ago when they became engaged. Letter from the collection of Cynthia Elmer Amend and donated to Yale in 2010.]*

[Envelope addressed to: Miss Ellen L. Kinney, Lord Cottage, Oberlin, Ohio.]

Birmingham, Conn.
Oct. 2nd, 1893.

My Own Dear Ellen:-

Your two letters came to me in rather undue season, for the latter reached my hands not until Friday night. I am very glad that you wrote the first just when you did for it gave me a true picture of my heart's idol as she arrived at College after a tiresome journey- in the midst of strangers and surrounded by strange objects. Not that there was any delight in it; for I would have done any thing right to have shielded you from the hard lot which I know was yours during several days. But you know it is natural for human beings to follow thro trials, as well as thro pleasures of life, those whom they love, and it sometimes seems as if we really thought that we were helping others if only we know of their trouble. I am as glad as you that the ordeal has been passed safely. And I have no doubt now that it is all over that you rather glory in it, and feel that a victory has been won. Well it is only by overcoming difficulties I believe, that strong- and shall I not also say gentle characters are formed. And I think that you agree with me, that woman is just as capable of a strong character as man, and I think that the gentleness which characterizes her sex makes her

strength all the stronger. It was so at least when you captivated my heart. I shall always be interested to hear all about your studies, for you know that all except music are right in my line. Miss Manley was my Matron for a year and I shall always remember her with pleasure.

You were very fortunate in finding a room in Lord Cottage. How did you come to find it,- who found it for you?

When you want money please be very frank with me and let me know long enough beforehand so that it may reach you in time. I'll let you pay it back by sewing on suspender buttons, one of these years. I have \$150.00 by me now.

Two weeks ago last evening a series of meetings began in our new ch. They have been held every evening except Sat. and Mon. and on Mon. afternoons. The attendance has been good. The results can not of course be estimated. Three or four young men have come out for Christ and others are thinking hard on the question.

I have been at Grandfathers all the time except late Wed., Thurs. and Fri. I came home Tues. evening and was going to the Fair- our town Fair- but it rained. About noon Mr. Solandt came in. He stayed till Thurs. morning. I took him to the train early and caught Uncle Dan, rode to Grandfathers and went to the Fair with Aunt Lo.[Louise] I came home for good last evening- for good. i.e. till Wed. and then I must change the farmer's garb for the student's. So the next letter will come to Hosmer Hall.

I wonder if your mind has gone back over the past year and stopped at the scene in Mr. Booths parlor a year ago last night. I feel as if the first anniversary has come. Another will soon be here, and then the event which shall make the anniversary will be looked forward to with joyous anticipation. But between this and that what a deal of hard study!

Flora is in East Berlin. Oliver is at his Fair in Newbury N.Y. Mr. Sumner has just returned from the saddest occasion of his life. His Lady- a Miss Houston of Ind. has been called to her heavenly home.

May God favor us with health and success in our studies. Then may he unite us in holy and happy union to serve Him with all our powers and talents.

Most Lovingly Yours

Will



Lord Cottage in Oberlin, Ohio

[Photo postcard purchased from ebay by Jana Jackson]

[This letter, dated **November 13, 1893**, was written from Hartford, CT by Willard to Ellen. He tells about staying and preaching in Rocky Hill, CT. He and Mr. Brewer started a petition on one of their professors. Letter from the collection of Cynthia Elmer Amend and donated to Yale in 2010.]

[Envelope addressed to: Miss Ellen L. Kinney, Oberlin, Ohio (Lord Cottage)]

Hartford, Conn. Nov. 13th 1893- 8:20 A.M.

My Own Dear Ellen:-

Work will line up so prodigiously this week that I will perform the happy task first, so that it may not be shut out later- or put off as it has been so much of late.

I was out at Rocky Hill yesterday. It is only about nine miles from Ht. [Hartford] down by the river. I did not leave till 6 o'clock Sat afternoon and I arrived on the 8 o'clock train this morning. I had a very pleasant time.- One sermon and after that a most interesting Bible Class to teach because the old gentleman who acts as teacher had had his teeth out and could talk only with difficulty. In the evening we had a Union meeting between the two Young Peoples Societies of the Cong. and Meth Ch.'s. I stayed with a widow - her 16 year old son,- two daughters, (one a school teacher the other in the Normal at N. Britain) and a young lady friend. So it is needless to say that I was pleasantly entertained. I wish I could send you some of the crisanthomums [*chrysanthemums*] which I bro't in with me. And I also found a lot of inch plants and have a rose jar full now ready to grow for all winter.

Flora stopped Sat. evening on her way out to Talcottville and I saw her again Sat. P.M. on her way back. She enjoys her school at East Berlin more than any that she has taught I think.

We are having quite a tussle with the Faculty over Education. Our class thro myself and Mr. Brewer handed out a petition for 2 hours of work under a specialist [??] on the ground that our Prof had not given us either in "quantity" or "quality" what we tho't was right?? to have. The answer came Sat. to the effect that the fault was ours due to a lack of cooperation on our part with the Profs. theory and methods- but acknowledging that we ought to have more training in that line and offering us \$100.00 to do with as we best arrange for a course. Now our problem is how to use that money- for we are bound to do it in some way.

I preach my sermon before the Sem. a week fr next Wed. To-day and to-morrow the physical exams are taken Gym opens Thurs. An exam in Ch. Hist. Fri. ETC. ETC. So as I want this to go on the first mail and as also I may not have an opportunity to add more. I'll enclose a loving embrace and a warm kiss and remain your Lover. Will

[This letter, dated **December 20, 1893**, was written from Hartford, CT by Willard to Ellen. He bought her a fountain pen for Christmas and is working on his creed for the ABCFM. Letter from the collection of Cynthia Elmer Amend and donated to Yale in 2010.]

[Envelope addressed to: Miss Ellen L. Kinney, Oberlin, Ohio Lord Cottage]

Hosmer Hall
Hartford
Conn
Dec. 20th 1893

My Dearest Ellen:-

I have just returned form a trip down town, where I have bought one Christmas present. That present I am using now to see if it is a good one. It seems to work all right. I am not sure whether you have a fountain pen or not. If you have one already, why just send this right back and I can find use for it.

I finished my creed for the A.B.C.F.M. this morning. But shall not send it till next week. It must be copied, and my copyist is in Putnam. I may find a substitute at home. There are only seven pages of foolscap. Perhaps I'll send it to you if you would care to peruse it. You may like to know my heretical views if I have any.

One of our members Mr. Carleton who applied some time since received his rejection this morning-ostensibly on account of his wife's health.

Your loving letter came this morning. I wonder how you fill the time during vacation,- whether you will remain at Lord Cottage, if you have "come on" at one of the Conservatory Recitals ETC, ETC. Yes I know the Messiah was Grand- It is the grandest oratories I ever heard. And it was grander each of the four times I listened to it.

Very Affectionately Will.

[This letter, dated December 26, 1893, was written from Birmingham, CT by Willard to Ellen. He tells about a story that he and eight other college friends wrote for entertainment. He went to his family home and visited with relatives. Letter from the collection of Cynthia Elmer Amend and donated to Yale in 2010.]

[Envelope addressed to: Miss Ellen L. Kinney, Geneseo, Ill (Mrs. Ann K Paul). The return address that is pre-printed on the envelope is; Oliver G. Beard, JR. Commercial Nurseryman and Florist, Century Farm, Birmingham, Conn.]

At Home Dec. 26th 1893.

Dearest Ellen.-

Another message came from you this morning. I received your parting letter Saturday morning before starting for Putnam. It came just as I sat down to write an examination, so I had to keep it an hour while I told on six pages of fools-cap the life of Mohammed and his fifteen wives.

We members of '94 H.T.S. had a class racket last Thursday evening.- We wrote a story- each one of us a chapter- nine college fellows camping out by a Lake- a farm house about a mile away at which a party of college girls were staying under the care of a chaperone- Miss Viola Pickles aged 50 more or less. Well it took us from 9:15 – 11:30 P.M. to read it. Of course we laughed till the tears ran and our sides ached. I received a postal from Mr. Solandt that afternoon at 4:30 to the effect that he was coming up the next day. A telegram brought him for the racket. He remained till Sat. morning and will spend this week in Staffordville.

I went out to your home and remained long enough to get a good supper. Then went back to Pomfret and rode over to Abington. I had a very pleasant Sunday again. The congregation has increased steadily each Sunday. Next Sunday I shall try again to preach in the church at White Hills.

I found Ben at the station yesterday morning waiting impatiently for me. It seems that a family gathering had been arranged at our home. I thought it was New Years day. When we got here they were all assembled except Uncle Dan and Aunt Ella who came in time for dinner, this makes the record gathering this Winter- or within a month.

Grace is coming to-night for three days. Aunt Louise has asked Flora and me and Grace and Oliver to come up and spend the evening. This is Grace's debut as the to-be-grandaughter and niece.- in fact as the new daughter and sister, for we have not seen her since the engagement was announced.

You do not know how glad I was to hear that you were going to have such a pleasant time vacation. I almost dreaded to think of you as in Oberlin all the time, it is so lonely there when all the rest or so many of them are away. I wonder do you find Miss Cormany a congenial friend. I used to think she was a real nice little girl-don't quote that to her. She may resent it after these five years.

Elsie is spending a few days with us. She came up yesterday with the others and remained. The mud is about as delicious as it was last Spring in Putnam. I think it must be that you never rode much in the mud, or that ride would not have been so indelibly ground into your mind. But you should have seen me running *[blot of ink here]* through the mud Sat. night after dark as I went down to the depot. All that delightful dust which was so social last June was wet up with water and made a good pudding.

I left a couple of Xmas cards on the hat rack in the hall and forgot to say a word to your mother about them. Etta's and Emma's names were on them, so if they open the package it will be allright.- That Reading Girl. Who was it intended for? Whose workmanship was it? It came just as I was leaving my room for the term so I have not studied it much yet.- Here I am bumping against the lower edge of this sheet so please excuse this blot above and have just the best time you possibly can. A happy happy New Year to My Love. All the rest want to send love so you will have a good dose this time.

Lovingly, Will.

[Written on the top of page 2] This is Buff's Love- this pencil scrawl.

[Written on the top of page 1] Flora wants me to wish you a Happy New Year. They are all gabbling away, and if I should send all the messages you would have no time to visit and your mind might be distracted. W.

[Included in the envelope with Willard's previous letter is a letter from Willard's thirteen year old sister, Ruth Beard]

[This letter, dated **December 26, 1893**, was written from Birmingham, CT by Ruth Beard (13 years old) to Miss Kinney. Ruth wishes Ellen a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. She tells about her gifts and what they have been doing for Christmas.]

Birmingham, Ct.
Dec. 26, 1893.

My dear Miss Kinney,-

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Papa gave me a ring for a Christmas present, Aunt Louise a rose gar [*jar*] with rose leaves in it, Aunt Ella a bottle of perfumery and a handkerchief, Aunt Hanna a dish and I had a merry Christmas.

We had all of the folks come here Christmas.

We have had a school entertainment at the committees house the scholars spoke and sang and we had come dialogues and tableaux we took in over eleven dollars.

The Cong. Sunday School Huntington are going to have a New Years concert and after the concert a supper.

Last Sunday night the 24th or Christmas Eve the Episcopal Church had a concert and Christmas tree.

Cousin Elsie Nichols is visiting here now.

I suppose Willard is helping papa saw down a tree now.

With love from
Ruth Beard.

Mamma sends her love and Mary the same.
