

Colorado Springs  
11 West Dale St.  
July 28<sup>th</sup> 1901

Dear Great grandchildren,

This Grandma has been asked to write you a letter giving you a little idea of her life in its Western surroundings. It seems rather a ghostly thing to do—this writing to generations yet unborn! Maybe not my own descendants! Even my dear grandchildren, Alice five years old, Edith three, will not be living when this letter is opened and read; but I hope there will be some of their children who will be interested in the few details I shall put on this paper. It seems weird, that the paper will outlive us all and bear witness that we have lived. When I was a girl in old Connecticut I little thought that I should spend the latter years of my life in this Great West, a part of which was on our maps as the “American Desert”! A desert now has certainly “budded and blossomed like the rose.” My home in Norwich, Connecticut, was a very happy one, and I had a happy girlhood.

I married your grandfather at the close of the Civil War November 1<sup>st</sup> 1865. That terrible war between brothers, which has given you a great undivided country. My husband was Lieutenant Colonel of the 1<sup>st</sup> Connecticut Cavalry, suffered in prison and from wounds, and knew the terrible sorrows of the North and South. He was drowned in the Ogeechee river, Georgia, eighteen months after our marriage, and two months before my son was born.

It means much to have lived through those days of bloodshed, days which I suppose are almost a myth to you, but great men were ready and stood up, strong to help and to save. The greatest, Abraham Lincoln, to whose name the years will only add on glory and all time yield an undying homage. Just here, my dears let me say, never be ashamed of enthusiasm. An appreciation of greatness in others helps you to emulate them, and to follow, sometimes not far off. It is one of the most valued memories of my life, that I met Lincoln one quiet morning, (if any morning could be called quiet in those days), the second year of the war. That he bore the sorrows and burdens of a great nation showed in every line of his face, though it was lighted now and then by a glint of humour, which must have helped him, and brightened some moments, until his work for the nation and world was done.

Perhaps you will like to hear how I happened to come to this part of our country. Your grandfather, my son, was not well, and at the close of his term at the Harvard Law School, we went abroad to Switzerland and Algeria in pursuit of health, which we did not obtain, and then were advised to try California. We stopped here for a few days, and it helped my boy so much, that we have lived here since, each of us building a house and making a home. Firm health has not come to your grandfather, but he has been better, and enjoyed much. Of the fearful anxieties of those years of his ill health, I cannot write. God has ever been better to me than my fears.

Perhaps you are wondering what my surroundings are, so I will try to give you a picture of this Sunday afternoon—July 28<sup>th</sup> 1901. My little home has a wonderful view of Cheyenne Mountain and Pike's Peak, and as I look out of the door of my little den, the wondrous beauty of the mountains appeals to me so much that I should like you to see it, just as I see it. Now and then a bird's note is heard, but a Sunday quiet, a New England Sunday quiet, is over it all, and the power of Nature's grand silence is felt. The "everlasting hills" will be the same to you, which is a pleasant thought. This week is full of festivities in a public way, and I give on Friday a very informal breakfast for General and Mrs. Wheaton, who are guests of Mrs. Goddard. Gen. Wheaton was a very brave officer in the Civil War. Sunday August 4<sup>th</sup> today the Century Chest closes and I add a few words as I close this letter. We think the world goes at a rapid pace now, but what breakneck race yours must be. I trust you will not have advanced so far as to forget the truth and steadfastness of purpose of our New England ancestors.

This town is very cosmopolitan and the sanitary properties of the air have brought an infinite variety of people here. It is busy in its social life, in its business life as well—the rich mines of Cripple Creek giving out their golden treasure to some, withholding from others. Withal there is a very sad undercurrent, which must come to the surface at times, and the voice of pleasure is hushed for a little, but hearts here are full of sympathy and kindness and I feel sure that your hearts will be as sympathetic and your hands as helpful.

I enclose a photograph of myself and of my grandchildren, Alice and Edith. I must tell you an anecdote of Alice, when she was four years old. We were out in the yard one afternoon, when she asked me to come in and have some tea—cambric tea, then looking at the colored coachman, with a [plaintive] air, she said, "you come too Thomas, you're white enough"!! As I close let me put in a little plea for some observance of the Sabbath and one word of advice. No matter as to creeds or no creeds, let God's Day be a day of rest and peace to you. The advice is a quotation from Shakespeare which I heard today in a sermon: "Treat others not according to their desserts but according to your own dignity and honour."

Your very loving Grandmother  
Harriet Peck Farnsworth