

Hanover, Feb. 24<sup>th</sup> 1864.

My Friend Maria.

I am ashamed to write after having let such a period pass by, but I had good reasons, and could not find time to write. I have been enjoying vacation the last two weeks, but not at home part of my time. I spent with an aunt, and had a very pleasant time and made several new acquaintances, and flirted with great success as I afterwards heard. The rest of my time was spent with my grandmother. Had a pretty good time, though rather still. I am now at home again and school commences next Monday, on the whole I have had a very good time and expect to resume my studies with fresh zeal, as this is the beginning of my last year at Hanover Academy, then I shall either stop going to school, or go away to finish my education. I cannot tell which the times are so hard. Our gymnastic class has finished, no more gymnastic for us, as our teacher has left for good. I could not help feeling sad the last night as some of the happiest moments of my life have been spent there.

There is a new flame in Hanover at present, B. H. I will not write his name in full as it will do no good. He is very handsome and we are all after him. I met him on the street and bowed yesterday, and he returned it so politely that I lost my heart. But this is my common way of expressing

myself and you must not take it as it sounds for only one person really and truly possesses my heart or love either and he is far away on the battle field and may be fighting even now. but although one is engaged it is not likely I shall sit at home and turn my eyes away from every other gent. that happens to pass; at least I do not, perhaps you do not approve of flirting to me there is a fascination in it, that mother says will prove my ruin, but she need not fear, I think far too much of my character to do any thing to injure it.

Have you any soldier friends or any near relations in the army, I think it one of our proudest ornaments at this time, and although I can boast of no nearer relation than a cousin yet it is because I have none nearer I am confident that had my father been living he would have been one of the first to go forth to crush rebellion. I have six cousins and an uncle in the army, one of them is in the Richmond prison at present, I have lost a cousin within six months, a fine fellow 17 years old, a great many of my friends have gone there are few at present in Hanover.

Oh what an awful awful war, how many thousands have parted with friends never to meet them again, how many widows and orphans whom it has made desolate, I cannot look at the lists of wounded and killed without shuddering. Do you sew for the soldiers or belong to any of the aid societies I would be glad to but unfortunately cannot sew, I visit for them last winter but have done nothing lately, the most I can do is to patronize, all the concerts lectures, balls fair &c there is to be a concert in the Academy hall next week.

Sunday eve, I have been making preparations to attend, these affairs seldom cost me anything I think fellow who are too great cowards to enlist had better spend all their money for the soldiers and therefore do not scruple to have them pay.

But I am writing a long letter, I think that I have paid for my past neglect, for if you recollect your letter was very short. please write a longer letter next time and tell me every thing you can think of. If you hear from Susie often, when you write tell her I am patiently waiting for an answer to my last letter.

How ever, if my letters are not interesting please write their faults and I will amend if possible, do not show this to any one.

From your affectionate friend,

Mary,

(Mother, Susie and myself send love,)