

1 **Reference Document 6: Letters from Amy Estelle Walter Eckart to Miriam Harrier Lewis,**  
2 **niece; received and recorded circa 1940; transcribed by Walter Lewis, received March**  
3 **1991**  
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6 Mary died Sept. 4, 1901 - was 72 Aug. 12, 1901  
7

8 Mr. and Mrs. John O'Brien and daughter Mary, 3 years old, with Mrs. O'Brien's sister left  
9 Ireland for Vermont. Here James, Elizabeth, William, John, George were born - moved to  
10 Illinois to a farm outside of Freeport. Mary finished the village school, then lived with Mrs.  
11 Brewster, went to school in town, met and married at 16 George Henry Moore. (Mrs. B gave her  
12 a fine trousseau and wedding - she had no children - Mama adored her). The first year of mama's  
13 married life she lost, first Mrs. Brewster, then her husband and mother - her first child was born  
14 one month after Mr. Moore's death. He was 21 - died of T.B. At 20 she married Mr. Clark. He  
15 was well connected. Clark Hubble, a nephew was head of pension dept. in Wash. His nephew  
16 Charlie Terrell a bright lawyer came across the plains with them.

17 Mr. Clarke provided well. He had a hardware business and was an expert locksmith. Against  
18 mama's wishes he sold his business, sewed \$20 gold pieces around his belt (Mama said she never  
19 again saw so much gold) but he expected to 'pick it up' in California - this was '51. Emily was 3  
20 when they started. Mr. C. was captain of his train - 30 men and mama the only woman. They  
21 came well equipped, so had no hardships of much importance. They found people dying of  
22 cholera - left water and food and went on. The wagons were closed into a circle each night, the  
23 Indians were not dreaded so much as the Mormons, and have heard Mama say: They landed in  
24 Sacramento with no deaths.

25 Emily, May and Frank Clarke were children when their father died in Sacramento. They  
26 never remembered him. May was sent to the convent by her cousin Charlie Terrell whom Mama  
27 and Mr. Clark had brought across the plains. She ran away from the convent and married Mr.  
28 Amy who kept her in style always. Alice (Walter) got her start in music while living with May in  
29 S.F. - (May) was christened in the Catholic Church - as Mr. A. was a Catholic. He and May  
30 brought more sunshine into Mama's life and ours for he was so generous to us all. Those vases  
31 you will have some day were in May's home in S.F. May never lived in Vallejo and Mr. Amy  
32 named me Amy Estelle. The loveliest doll and toys I have ever had he gave me.

33 Mama's first husband Mr. Moore died after ten months. A son was born, George Henry. It  
34 was with this son, her second husband Mr. Clarke and Emily 3 yrs. old that she crossed the  
35 plains - she was pregnant for May. They stopped off at Diamond Springs for this birth. Mr.  
36 Clarke died when Mama was 25. At 30 she married Frederick Walter - he was 32. He was very  
37 kind, too easy stepfather both Emily and May told me. He was considered a rich man and all was  
38 rosy for a few years.

39 \_\_\_\_\_  
40  
41 (Facts in the life of Mary O'Brien Walter - copied from letter and data sent by Amy Estelle  
42 Eckart - MHL circa 1940)

43 Her mother was an orphan (Catholic) raised by an aunt, Lady Jane Reynolds - displeased her  
44 aunt by marrying socially beneath her. Mary's mother was a 'lady' - very religious and charitable  
45 - the husband (was) of coarser stripe, not religious. Mary was his favorite child since she didn't  
46 put on the airs of "Lib" (Elizabeth O'Brien Hay). When (Civil) war broke out, Lib's husband  
47 Jonathan, who taught school, went as General Grant's private secretary. John and William went  
48 as privates - George ran away to go as a little drummer boy. John and William came home to die  
49 - George took land in Kansas the Gov. gave and became a respected farmer (Aunt Lib visited  
50 him and wrote about his fine wife and family - all the children were protestants like the father.)  
51 James left - to avoid going to war, which Aunt Lib wrote was humiliating. Mama answered from  
52 Sacramento "I am glad I had one brother with sense." Aunt Lib taught her husband's school and  
53 cared for her two little girls Ada and Lilly. James be"ame rich. had two daughters, one married  
54 and lived in luxury in Minneapolis, the other was deserted, unhappy and went to her sister for  
55 comfort - was so cruelly treated she walked into the ocean one day and was drowned. (These side  
56 lives are as I have heard them. History seemed to repeat itself in our family.) Aunt Lib's Lilly,  
57 married John Marshall - came home to her mother heartbroken - died, leaving a little girl - and  
58 boy, John, who is now in San Francisco. The little girl died at four - a great grief for Aunt Lib  
59 (she mentions Lily in one letter to Mama). I will write you, dear Miriam, and if you are  
60 interested, this will serve a double purpose, for I find I want someone to listen who cares. I may  
61 be very disconnected, but you can patch it up.

62 While crossing from Ireland smallpox broke out in the steerage, and as Mary had eaten an  
63 apple given to her by a steerage passenger, she was the only cabin passenger who took it - so she,  
64 her aunt and mother stayed in quarantine on landing while the father went on. By wrapping each  
65 finger in rags, tying the hands behind her and constant vigilance with a switch in hand she was  
66 saved a scar - this she always appreciated when she saw such disfigurements as many had, in  
67 those days, since scratching the scab does this. She always felt this smallpox was responsible for  
68 her excellent health, "fine blood" in later life.

69 When living with Mrs. Brewster who wore often a ruby ring when going to parties. And all  
70 her life she craved a ruby ring like Mrs. B. had. The nearest she ever came to it was a fine garnet.  
71 She always loved nice things and used to tell us that no lady dressed better than she did in  
72 Sacramento. She never bought a cheap piece of cloth for herself or her girls.

73 She considered Mrs. Brewster her best friend, appreciated always the privilege of living in a  
74 beautiful home with servants in contrast to the farm. Mary had brown hair, deep blue (Irish)  
75 eyes, cheeks like roses - a beautiful person (Aunt Lib told me) very gay - loved fun always. Like  
76 your mother she had little hands and feet - small waist. Mrs. B. didn't approve of anything as  
77 common as a circus - so when a widow at 17 - in a white dress and black silk shawl I still have,  
78 she attended her first circus with "Mr. Babcock" (cousin of Babcock in Vallejo). Lib now lived  
79 with her in town (Springfield) and was married from her home to Jonathan Hay whom Mama  
80 always loved. After many beaux Mama finally chose Mr. Clarke. Before she left the East she  
81 found that he had been untrue to her - (Aunt Lib cried just as your mother did when her sister  
82 (Anne) married.) Aunt Lib never liked Mr. C. Well, Mr. Clark was very penitent and hoped he  
83 was forgiven - but imagine leaving all your friends, your sister, father, home, to go to a new  
84 country with George Henry (by first husband, Moore). Emily, three, and one "on the way" and  
85 the love killed. When Mr. Clark died in Sacramento of a lung "bursting" - he said, "Mary, you  
86 have never forgiven me." And she hadn't - but she was proud of his mind, felt he was a very  
87 clever man.

88 Emily had a fine mind and was lovely to look at - taught school in Sacramento - was very  
89 musical - disappointed her mother when she married a R.R. Engineer. When Mr. Martin asked  
90 for her hand Mama said, "I didn't raise my girl to cook and work for any man." Mr. Martin  
91 repeated that in my presence. Emily had a beautiful hand and Mama never as"ed her to soil it.  
92 Emily was a great churchgoer - very straight laced - but her love of money was her chief fault  
93 and her very sarcastic tongue. When visiting her she was the best hostess - always happy. Anne  
94 was her favorite always. We both can recall many happy visits in her home in Oakland. Mama  
95 always said Emily had the loveliest eyes of all her babies, deepest of blue with long black lashes  
96 - teeth like pearls, when she married at 19.

97 Now, George Henry (Moore) was a handsome tall boy - after Alice was just walking - never  
98 returned - he never saw me. Rosie Drake met him in Nevada - said he was handsome - and such  
99 a kindly man - always "coming home" - always coming home "when he made a fortune." Mama  
100 never ceased to grieve for him - hoped each Xmas he would come - once he sent her money and  
101 a sweet letter. Emily and May both loved him, always spoke of his lovely disposition. He was  
102 name George after his father and Henry after an uncle who said "You will never call him  
103 'Henry'" - but he was never called anything but "George Henry" - this uncle put \$20,000 in the  
104 bank for him - this has never been collected. Mama wrote, "Do go get that money" but he never  
105 did. The greatest compliment Mama ever paid me was to say I had a forehead and eyes like  
106 George Henry. I began to feel this very important for I knew he was a favorite child. He never  
107 grew angry, but when Mama married the third time wrote with chalk on the barn "George Henry  
108 Moore, Clark, Walter, shit!"

109 Papa took him on teaming trips and on one he shot off a rusty gun; it exploded and by the  
110 time they got back gangrene had set in. Papa took him to a doctor who decided the safest and  
111 cheapest thing to do was to amputate the hand. A bystander spoke up and said, "That boy has a  
112 mother, you'd better save all you can" - he lost only two fingers - and Mama blamed Papa for  
113 having a rusty gun and of course he never heard the last of that. Mama was a scold if there ever  
114 was one and Vic says his father was too. They seem to have passed out - this generation can  
115 "take it" better or else they have more to fill the hours. George Henry never married. His framed  
116 picture was left in the old home along with many others.

117 I will send you a negative of the old home in Vallejo, where Anne, Alice and I were married  
118 - where Mama died and Tom and Mabel Martin were born. May is standing with me and the  
119 buggy Mr. Amy brought me when I was three years old.

120 Frank Clark was born in Sacramento - never any account - never stayed home - never  
121 married - a nuisance to May and Emily till he died. Never did any harm - just no-good. My  
122 memory of him is sitting at the piano and singing songs, with a "story" like "The Man on the  
123 Flying Trapeze," "The Captain with his Whiskers," "Poor Nellie Gray," etc. He was small, very  
124 dark, with a villain's moustache.

125 Mama's mistake was in marrying Mr. Clark. There was a wild steak in the blood. You see  
126 Mr. C. was a widower, had buried a wife and daughter "Arzella." Mama expressed her opinion  
127 that a widow should marry a widower - she felt "one of these boys could not be such an  
128 understanding father." Emily Arzella was their first child. Mama earnestly believed she marked  
129 May - who was Mary Elizabeth till she changed her name herself while in the convent to "May  
130 Josephine." While Mary was a widow the first time she had many beaux - one, the minister's son  
131 whom Aunt Lib wanted her to marry. At a dance he passed her a candy heart on which was

132 printed "So fair, yet so deceiving." This I think always hurt a little when she repeated it. Mama  
133 loved poetry - Moore's she practically knew from cover to cover. She knew her English and  
134 French history - admired Queen Victoria; knew just who each of her eight children married and  
135 where they were, etc. Queen V. was like a relative - yet, she was always hoping she could live to  
136 "see" Ireland free!

137 Mr. O'Brien died with Lib. Mrs. O'Brien used to say "Do keep a civil tongue, you may die  
138 with Lib yet" and he would answer "God forbid," but he did.

139 Mary's first days in Vermont, she weaved, knitted, and went to school. When she took James  
140 for the first time he came home and said "That teacher has nothing to eat in her cup-board." The  
141 children used to blow out eggs, fill them with maple syrup, and let them harden in the snow. One  
142 of these James wanted to take to the teacher "to make her sweeter."

143 When they moved to Illinois, they had a good farm - the children all went to school. The  
144 counties held spelling bees and Aunt Lib was the best one in two counties - at one she spelled all  
145 down - old and young with the exception of her own teacher. She refused to spell "against my  
146 teacher.

147 Mrs. O'B. wore her best bonnet only to church. It was kept in a box. Mary had seen her  
148 mother put it on many times and thought it lovely - but her mother did not believe in vanity -  
149 thought it actually wicked to admire yourself - only used a mirror to get her bonnet straight. So  
150 Mary decided the crown would never be missed, so she cut it out to make her doll a bonnet.  
151 Another childhood prank she never forgave herself for was - her Mother had a gold band tea set  
152 almost too precious to use except for rare tea parties. Mary climbed up on the table while her  
153 mother was at the gate to bid her friends "good-bye" when the table leaf tipped and spilled the  
154 dishes (she was getting sugar to eat out of the bowl). To Mama there was nothing like gold band  
155 dishes. I inherited that, I guess (I wish she could see mine). In Vallejo she collected a set -  
156 inexpensive but pretty - a sort of imitation of Mrs. Brewster's. These were broken all at once -  
157 someone knocked the whole shelf down - I have forgotten whom, but we never heard the end of  
158 the lament, Poor Mama - those were tragedies.

159 In Sacramento, when Mr. Clark died leaving her with George Henry and his three children,  
160 for Frank was a nursing baby, he left her a business, a two story house, located where the Capitol  
161 now stands. To save a baby's life she took a newborn baby whose mother died of T.B. and nursed  
162 and cared for it. The father was a rich mining man. Mama loved this child, brought him up to be  
163 a healthy child - then his father married again and took him. For this Mama got \$75.00 a month  
164 (plenty to keep her family going in those days). Soon she began to sing in the church choir. Here  
165 she met Fred Walter, a widower - twice. When he left Iowa, captain of his team, he left two  
166 children with his family; later he sent for them, Jane and Daniel. For he had married "Angeline"  
167 who died with fever after birth of her first child (Papa never took his clothes off for three weeks -  
168 never left her side more than he could help - always gave her the medicine.) After nine months  
169 she was dead - and I believe this was his deepest love. He was a rich man - his teams paid well.  
170 He fell in love with Mama while singing in the choir - Mama has told me that the first she ever  
171 heard of him was when Emily came home from school and said "I feel so sorry for Jane Walter,  
172 her own mother died and now her new mama is dead and she was such a lovely mama." Papa  
173 sang Angeline's praises and Mama always said, "She was a fine woman, I always heard."

174 When Mary and "Mr. Walter" married, each for the third time, he was 32 - she 30. Annie was  
175 born during a flood in Sacramento. The family moved to the "Golden Eagle" Hotel. Mary could

176 not be moved, with boats coming to her bedroom window, she received care. When the river  
177 went down - all the mahogany (the mirror and chair you have, were dug out of the mud; the table  
178 in your father's house was in a dozen pieces) - Mary and baby had such awful head colds - Mary  
179 became deaf; the baby's ears "ran" and Dr. H. said these abscesses hardened the ear drum, the  
180 cause of much deafness in the old days. When "Mary Angeline" was two, she dressed in hoop  
181 skirts and every elegance. Her parents had a carriage and five span of black horses. Then the  
182 brick business boomed and Papa made more money. (Mama would say, "He would lie in bed till  
183 nine and let his business run itself.") However he knew he was not a keen businessman honest  
184 and took everyone's word. His last contract was for the Capitol building - \$1,000,000 contract -  
185 he failed - paid \$.80 on the dollar - tried to get Mama to put in her home; this she refused.  
186 Through a political friend he got a job on Mare Island when Alice was a baby. The state bought  
187 the property - and with this money Mama bought the Vallejo home - after we had lived on  
188 Kentucky Street where I was born and lived till nine months old.

189 Mama loved her new home. She had the largest parlors in town - two marble mantles and a  
190 bathroom. Papa thought it crazy to get such a big house - ten rooms (she added an eleventh later).

191 Jane married at 16 - a man as old as her father - a kind man who was in the S.F. mint. Daniel  
192 married a widow, farmed in Oregon. I saw him only once, he never had a child. Mama didn't care  
193 for Daniel but everyone loved Jane. I used to visit her when she lived in S.F. in the mission (once  
194 a year with Mama).

195 May it was who gave Mama the many luxuries she loved. Mr. Amy never failed to visit us,  
196 long after their divorce. He was fond of us all - and to Mama he was a little above human. When  
197 May left him she went to Emily's in Carson and Mama always blamed Emily's envy for most of  
198 this trouble. She called him "the frog-eater, etc." Envious because May had more than she. Yet  
199 May shared with her most generously. Maude's baby clothes were all convent-made. Emily's  
200 babies were all so dear to May.

201 I will send you a few letters, some you can keep - others return please - I hope Harriet Louise  
202 will care someday.

203 How strange it seems for me to find in you, my niece, a nearness I cannot get from my own  
204 dear child. I am sure when I am gone it will be you that Harriet Louise will turn to. When her  
205 family is raised, when the demand on her time is less, she will have time to think and it may be  
206 that she will be interested in all these little events I am writing you.

207 When May was Mrs. Amy she and Emily had written always to their cousins Ada and Lilly.  
208 So she wrote asking Aunt Lib and Ada to visit her in San Francisco. Aunt Lib and son Walter  
209 were with us in Vallejo most of the time; but Ada found a beautiful bedroom prepared for her -  
210 in blue - so she stayed on and on - she was engaged to Sam Putnam, and neighbor when she  
211 came. Mr. Redington, a lifelong friend of Mr. Amy's cut him out. Sam Putnam was so crushed,  
212 he volunteered to go on the boat sent to find the "Jeanette" - I believe it was the "Rogers." It was  
213 burned, not a soul saved - this was the U.S.N. Mr. Redington went back East to marry Ada - this  
214 was after the break-up.

215 The last time I saw Mr. Amy, Anne, Alice and I were in S.F. (I was not married); we met on  
216 the street. He asked where we were going and as we were going to lunch and he to his breakfast  
217 we went as his guest to Marchand's - and such a meal - ordered all in French. One thing, I  
218 remember and cooked after I was married was French fried onions in olive oil.

219 Another year has gone, and my darling baby, Miriam - will celebrate another anniversary. I  
220 do hope you are well and that God will bring you his choicest blessings - what a joy you have  
221 always been to me.

222 I do love you so! I always see this "dear Mary" bathing you in the kitchen by the oven and I  
223 can hear her exclaiming, "Did you ever see such a baby" to the doctor who said, "If you don't  
224 stop kissing it and dress it, you'll kill it."

225 As I walked home I met Tina Sharp and I was glad I could talk to someone, I was so full, I  
226 could hardly contain myself. I kept house for Papa so Mama could be with Alice for two weeks.  
227 We were glad it was a girl for Walter was still the most wonderful boy in the world to me. I do  
228 wish you the comfort and real pride in your grandchildren that Barney is bringing to us! It is just  
229 since we have had him here each Sat. night and I have taken him to Sunday school that I can  
230 appreciate what a real little gentleman he is.

231 Emily wrote me such a letter as this on request. I have not located it. If I do I will send it to  
232 you. Love to each of your precious ones - your devoted Aunt Estelle. P.S. This lace mat was one  
233 of Mama's many treasures. It was on the arm of a satin chair in May's front parlor. You may keep  
234 it and your mother's letter. Please return the one of Mama's (all I have).

235

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236 I remember when Alice and I were having lunch together in S.F., she said to me "If May did  
237 wrong when she left Mr. A., certainly her love for children and all she did to brighten their lives  
238 should compensate." She left Mr. A. who was many years older than she for her real love Willis  
239 Lawrence. He was a civil engineer - the most gentle, kindly man I ever knew. If you have a pin -  
240 a fan on a bar, with colored quartz - that Willis gave Alice when she was in high school. It was  
241 May who asked me to pray for her when she was ill at our home. She said, "God listens to  
242 innocent children, and if you ask Him, He will make me well." I don't believe she ever had a  
243 wicked thought and as Mama said as she looked at May's picture always where she could see it  
244 "She will be the first to meet me when I pass beyond." Everyone who knew May loved her. She  
245 left Willis for the German she said, and I believe it, so she could once more have a home for her  
246 sisters to come to. Willis had been caught in the gambling fever of that time and they lived from  
247 day to day. She knew her mistake almost at once and I think her unhappiness led to the break in  
248 her health. She died before she was forty.

249

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250 (Copy of only letter of Mary Walter in possession of Amy Estelle Eckart.)

251

Vallejo, April 29, 1894

252 My dear Estelle - I am very tired this evening but I must write to my Baby. Mabel and Dr.  
253 Halsey came over to spend the day and I had all the family except Dora - she is in Oakland today  
254 with Dr. Burk. She is not entirely well yet. I had chicken and ice cream. Mr. Halsey said I had a  
255 fine dinner, green peas, mashed potatoes, salad, so you see I am tired. The house is looking very  
256 well for me; if you were here it would be better. The yard is loaded with flowers more than ever  
257 before but I don't get time to gather and make bouquets or fill the vases, which is a great addition  
258 to a room. I will try this week to have some flowers in the house. The babies are both well now;  
259 Miriam has two back teeth and more coming. Emily's folks are all well. I received your two last  
260 letters, also the money. I put twenty with it and it is in the Bank in your name so you will be  
261 getting a few cents interest. Keep on. The best of all is to hear your health is good and you are

262 happy. They are playing croquet at Alice's this evening. Lilly was here after the balls - the  
263 Damuth girls and a young lady friend, a very pretty girl cousin of theirs. I have not seen any of  
264 the Fountains since you were here. Am glad Alice (Fountain) is doing so well. It won't be long  
265 before your school is out. Well I will close by wishing you good night and God Bless you.

266 From your ever loving

267 Mother

268 Mary Walter

269

270 Ada Hay Redington - daughter of Elizabeth Hay

271 Walter Hay - son of Elizabeth Hay

272 Louise Redington (Hewlett) - granddaughter of Elizabeth Hay

273 (Letter from Elizabeth Hay - sister of Mary Walter, to Amy Estelle Eckart - 2509 Scott St., San  
274 Francisco)

275 My dear niece,

276 Your good letter just rec. I am so glad your husband goes home each evening. Something for  
277 you to look forward to. Mr. Redington leaves today for Sacramento to meet his wife and  
278 daughter who are expected to arrive there tomorrow. We have a fine Chinese cook. He is a  
279 "Christian" wears his hair short. He is very nice and respectful. Has a wife and three children in  
280 this city. He lived with one family for fifteen years so you see he is not very young. He surprises  
281 us each day with fine meals. I think it is fine for your husband to have something to take up his  
282 time during vacation and earn a little money while his salary goes on just the same. I think father  
283 Eckart is a generous man to do so much for his children. I hope he may live many years as such  
284 men are scarce. He is generous and kind to his children. I hope Ada will let me go home by the  
285 first of June. Even if I leave here then it will be July before I reach Seville as I intend to stay a  
286 short time in Kansas and I may take in the Fair and then a short time in Chicago.

287 Alice left Cleveland last Thursday for home. Will stop in St. Louis on her way home where  
288 her father will meet her and show her the sights for a day or two and then home - and on her  
289 return she intends stopping off again to visit the Fair in earnest - and it may be she will find  
290 Walter there to meet her. Walter is now in Allegheny, Pa. where he went to superintend a plant  
291 to be built for the great pickle man. I think his name is Heinz or some such name. His factory  
292 covers acres of ground. Allegheny is just across the river from Pittsburgh. Is that the place Mr.  
293 Eckart is? Well never mind my dear girl if you cannot go to the fair. You may be able to attend  
294 the next one. You are so happy anyway and you have the faculty of making others happy too,  
295 which is a great blessing. If you should come up here before I leave (which I hope you may) be  
296 sure and come and see me. Angele has the house in fine order, ready for the strangers and you  
297 should see their mail. Well, with love to yourself and husband. I am your loving aunt.

298 Elizabeth Hay

299

300 (From letter of Elizabeth Hay to her sister Mary Walter)

301

Seville Ohio

302 How far from this Chippewa Creek did Mr. Walter live? There are many around there by that  
303 name, whether relatives or not I cannot say. They have sailboats and a steamer on the Lake. Two  
304 weeks ago Sunday, Daisy Houghton a young lady aged 19 came here with her two sisters to visit  
305 her parents and spend their vacation. She went out in a sailboat with two gentleman friends and a  
306 squall of wind capsized their boat and Daisy was drowned. Neither of the men could swim and it  
307 was with difficulty that they were rescued. Her sisters were on the bank and they were frantic  
308 and just as they were starting for the lake their Mother made them promise not to go on the  
309 water. Two young ladies were drowned there last summer. They were locked in each other's  
310 arms. Well this is enough of drowning business.

311 Which Bill are you going to vote for? I want McKinley and don't care a straw about the  
312 money question as it will make no difference to the prosperity of the country but will do for an  
313 issue. We will have to have a William anyway and both have Irish blood in them. The country is  
314 getting hard up when they are obliged to take men whose ancestors were Irish - but they need  
315 men of ability and brains, so took them as the occasion demanded them. We will know in Nov.

316 Tom Giblin will be in favor of silver as all the Western States are. He told me if it would be  
317 free silver he would be a rich man again. He looked like a fine distinguished gentleman and does  
318 not touch a drop of that which caused his downfall. I want to go to the -----? to meet Margaret  
319 and would, were it not for Lillie's children. John Marshall comes every summer and enjoys it so  
320 much as we have such fine grounds and shade trees with two hammocks under them. I have  
321 another one on my veranda and Walter will not allow anyone in that but Mother as he brought it  
322 to me from Chicago. Our front veranda is 8 X 28 and is very artistic. I have sweet brier and  
323 climbing roses near it but will allow nothing to climb on it, as it is too pretty to cover even by  
324 climbing roses. I will tell you what I want Mr. Walter to send me - some bulbs of calla lily. They  
325 have such small ones here -

326 I know Stella will think her auntie very rude for not writing sooner. She was very kind to  
327 send me her picture and really I am very proud of it as she has a lovely face. The people coming  
328 in will say what a beautiful face; who is she and then I proudly say "My niece," she was such a  
329 neat careful little thing. I used to say she was like you in that. Be that as it may, she is a very  
330 pretty girl and had the good sense to get an education, which is a fine passport everywhere. Now  
331 Stella be careful to whom you give your sweet self. The world is full of lovers, but good  
332 husbands are few. You know there is no vice like advice but it is so natural for old folks to give it  
333 and just as natural for young people to laugh at it. So I can only pray that I may be good and then  
334 you know that marriage is not a necessity. You are independent and can provide for yourself.  
335 The sun is now shining just as though it was laughing at us the children say. Well I am glad the  
336 rain gave me a chance to stay home and write you a letter. You remember how fast I could work.  
337 Well I can get but one or two hours of hurry. Just uses me up. I have grown old since Lillie's  
338 death. [1894] Oh how I miss the dear sweet patient girl. I wish you could have known her. You  
339 would have loved her. Everyone did. I never saw her angry. She was a perfect saint purified  
340 through sufferings if anyone ever was. Her little girl is very much like her. Well Mary, it will  
341 make no difference one hundred years from now to you or me. So let us put our trust in Him who  
342 doeth all things well. Love to all the family and many thanks to Stella. Love to Mr. Walter.

343 As ever your loving sister,  
344 Elizabeth Hay

345



346 Letter from Elizabeth Hay to Estelle Eckart; Seville, Medina County, Ohio [Note: Amy Estelle  
347 was married 6 Jun 1900.1

348 October 23, 1899

349 My dear Estelle - What a dear good girl you were to write me such a nice long letter telling  
350 me all the particulars. You write a good descriptive letter. Reading it was almost like being there.  
351 You are to be congratulated, my dear girl, in getting such a smart nice looking man and he is  
352 good, too (unless his looks deceive). And I enjoyed his mother's letter ever so much and think  
353 you will be very proud of her and love her for she is the exceptional mother-in-law. Your  
354 prospects for future happiness looks very bright and if you are as happy as your Aunt wishes you  
355 to be you will be very very happy. You have ever been a dear good daughter and I think he is to  
356 be congratulated too, for he will get a good sensible wife. May God bless you both is my fervent  
357 prayer.

358 We are having lovely weather "Indian Summer." There, you don't know what kind of  
359 weather that is (only from hearsay). Ask your mother. Mr. Redington writes Ada from Maine  
360 that he was enjoying every hour. Never saw a more gorgeous sight than the forests, all tints,  
361 scarlet, gold, brown and all tints of green. I hope some day you will spend an autumn with me,  
362 and a June too. And to hear your Mother say "Why do you stay in that horrid climate." Well  
363 there are months that are to be dreaded but then we find pleasures indoors and we are prepared  
364 for them. Warm rooms with our hard coal stoves and our blooming plants and plenty to eat in our  
365 cellars and good books to read. Socials and dinner parties. We manage to get through the winter  
366 nicely but I often wish I was able to spend part of each year in California or Florida. To be  
367 obliged to stay in California all of the time I would feel like an exile.

368 I am looking for Walter, Alice and the baby to come and make me a visit this winter. They  
369 are expecting to go to her parents after visiting me. I don't want John (Marshall) to go to S.F.  
370 until after their visit for he is so fond of them both and he said, "I am so glad they have given me  
371 another cousin." He is so fond of babies. He has been clerking in a tin store for 7 weeks. I want  
372 him to stop, as it will take sometime to get his hands and fingernails in presentable shape. Tell  
373 your mother I have not forgotten that I owe her a letter. She is good to write when she has so  
374 much to do and I know she feels letter writing a task.

375 Many many thanks for your invitation to visit you. I hope I may be able to do so some day.  
376 With love to your mother and all the familv I am

377 Your loving aunt

378 Elizabeth Hay

379 Note by A. E. E.

380 "John" is John Marshall - son of Aunt Lib's daughter Lily who died leaving John and a beautiful  
381 little girl. This girl lived with Aunt Lib, died and was a terrible sorrow for Aunt Lib. John was  
382 going and did go to San Francisco to live with his Aunt Ada and work in Redington's wholesale  
383 drug business. Walter is Aunt Lib's only son. He once visited us with his mother in Vallejo. He  
384 and I were great pals. He called me "Pretty face" and Maude "Freckles." You can imagine the  
385 harmony.

386 "Maude" - daughter of Emily Clarke Martin and grandchild of Mary Walter. Died in childbirth.

387 \_\_\_\_\_

388  
389

San Francisco  
June 3, 1904

390 My dear girl. How very good of you to send me the pictures. Bless your dear kind heart. I am  
391 surely growing better and wish to tell you I can go to bed without the hot water bottle. I have  
392 used up four of them and Ada gave me a new one, which I am going to keep in cases of  
393 emergency -----

394 I had a letter from Brother George today. They were looking for me but I wrote him today  
395 that he might rec. a letter now any day telling him to meet me.

396 (E. H.)

397

398 Note by A. E. E.

399 George, Mama's baby brother who was a drummer boy in the Civil War lived in Topeka, Kansas.  
400 Aunt Lib used to visit his fine family. Mama's two older brothers were killed in the Civil war.

401 Aunt Lib's husband, Jonathan Hay was Gen. Grant's private sec. Aunt Lib taught school while he  
402 was away - she then had Ada and Lilly.

403

404

Seville, Ohio  
March 22, 1901

405

406 To Mary Walter

407 My dear sister:

408 Just as I sat down to the desk to write you a letter, Alice came from the office and handed me  
409 one from you and one from John Marshall. I was a little nervous about opening yours, as I had  
410 not answered your last one. And it is not your custom to write twice to my once. I was so glad to  
411 get your letter and know that things were in better shape. I was so sorry to read about your house,  
412 when you felt that it was fixed for your life and then I thought - what after all is the loss of a little  
413 property to losing one of the family - and then Stella had her wedding in it - and no more  
414 daughters to be married and you could take your time to setting it to right again and besides you  
415 had the means of repairing the damage. My dear sister: life is too short to worry over things like  
416 this too much. Do not let your thoughts go too much to laying up treasures that perish by the  
417 using. Poor Mr. Walter. How I pitied him; but what a comfort for you to say "I told you so."  
418 Now you and Mr. Walter have but a few more years (at the longest) to spend together here. Just  
419 be as loverlike as possible. Just have the best of everything for your own dear selves while you  
420 stay. If you don't others will, and think much more of you for using it now for your own  
421 pleasure. Your children are all pleasantly situated and take life easy. Why not you? Just wait till I  
422 go there. I won't let you save a cent.

423 Walter and Alice and little Frannie came here the 20 of December to spend the holidays.  
424 Frannie was taken sick and for four weeks she was at death's door. Two physicians gave her up.  
425 We were all worn out with anxiety and watching and now she seems as well as ever. She is 18  
426 months old today. I think they froze her almost to death taking her out in the severest weather an  
427 hour at a time - but she had a showy cap and lovely white fur robes which was all show instead  
428 of warmth and she came down with inflammation of lungs, stomach and bowels. Oh, such a sick

429 child. We had such an excellent Dr. often staying with her all night. Well I hope they will not  
430 repeat it, if they do they will have no Frannie. Alice is a good mother but lacks experience.

431 I have all my summer gowns made and ready for the hot weather. I wish Maude would come  
432 and visit me before she goes back. Tell her so please. Why can't you come with them? and then  
433 we will go to Buffalo to the Exposition and then we can go to Niagara Falls as it is right near  
434 there. I am going anyway with my ——? What is the use of staying at home all the time? Home  
435 is doubly dear after being away from it for a while. Ada may come for Louise this spring when  
436 her school closes but Ada would come in May as she enjoys the Spring here when the buds are  
437 just putting out their fresh leaves. She is always homesick for the East in the Spring and Fall, but  
438 she detests our summers and severe winters. I like all the seasons and would miss them in your  
439 climate. Give my love to everyone of your children and don't forget Mr. Walter, my big brother.  
440 Now Mary put away your worry here for if you don't you will take it with you. We are building  
441 for Heaven now right here. With warmest love from your affectionate sister.

442 Elizabeth Hay

443 Note by A. E. E.

444 The wind blew the tin roof back and rain poured into the parlors! Even on the precious piano.  
445 Anne told me how terribly Mama felt - had plaster replaced with wood ceiling.

446

447

448 Seville, Ohio  
449 August 28, 1901

450 My dear Estelle - I cannot stand this anxiety any longer. I have no heart or courage to ask a  
451 question. My heart is like ice and no one to speak to about it as I am alone and strangers cannot  
452 understand. So I just keep the sorrow and anxiety to myself. Do please write, you dear girl.

453 Your loving Aunt

454 Elizabeth Hay

455 Note by A. E. E.

456 Written when Mama was dying. Elizabeth Hay was Mama's only sister (my only Aunt).

457

458 Letter by A. E. E.

459 An incident:

460 When Mary and Mr. W. [Walter] got acquainted, comparing notes, they found they had crossed  
461 the plains at the same time. Made camp so close one time Mr. Walter hears there was a woman  
462 and two children in the Clarke camp. So he sent two men over with a bucket of milk (he had  
463 brought along a milk cow) for the children. Mr. C. met them and poured the milk on the ground  
464 - afraid to expose any of them to the dreaded cholera. Mr. W. saw this from afar and was very  
465 angry. This they both remembered. There were no women in the Walter's camp. He often said it  
466 was the happiest year of his life. Mary said it was an awful nightmare. They passed men dying of  
467 cholera along the trail; they left water and food, and passed on.

468 Mary's always bragged of her "good, healthy Irish inheritance;" she never had a stitch taken nor  
469 any operations of any kind, was never examined by a doctor. With the care we get, who knows,  
470 she might have lived ten years longer.

471 Her mother, a devout Roman Catholic; all the children, Protestants.

472 When Mary was a widow, to please her mother she brought her baby home to be christened - the  
473 village priest started in to criticize his curls, his silly gown, etc., her family. Then he said, "I  
474 suppose you think you are married; who was the man? Some horse thief?" Mary said "Don't you  
475 dare touch my child." Her mother fell on her knees and prayed aloud; her father took her part so  
476 he was not christened - Mary said. (Mary was married each time by a Presbyterian minister.)

477 When Alice (Walter) favored the Episcopal church - since she played the organ there, she pulled  
478 us all to that church. When Mary was dying, she requested a communion in her bed. We all  
479 gathered and Mr. Ballard brought it from the altar. The next day she sank in a coma, died on —  
480 ——. We were all comforted by the fact that her wish had been satisfied. She said "when she  
481 was on her deathbed my mother would say 'Thy will be done.' I say 'Thy will be done if I can't  
482 help myself for I would like to live ten years more.'" She talked of Mr. Moore and May - had  
483 perfect faith that she would meet them.

484 She was a high strung race tied to a good truck horse when married to Mr. Walter - always  
485 pulling apart. She, so ambitious for her children, ready to work for their welfare; cooking for  
486 boarders so she could pay \$4.00 per yard for Anne and Alice's dresses; to pay for Alice's music  
487 in S.F., and Anne's singing lessons. She loved music and craved it and was so proud of Alice's  
488 ability.

489 Since Alice was my teacher, I didn't get far, and Mama always regretted this; felt I didn't get a  
490 right start. But she had to save when she could.

491 When Alice taught South, we wrote regularly. She sent me \$5.00 a month with which I took  
492 music lessons of dear L \_\_\_\_\_. Alice and I were very much alike; it was our marriages that made  
493 us grow so far apart. I was always very proud of my sister Alice; I wasn't so sure of Anne. She  
494 was kind, but I felt she was coarser - her laugh always embarrassed me. I was a very proud child  
495 and suffered more than anyone could know; Alice was too.

496 When Anne at 18 was visiting in Oakland for weeks once, Alice and I slept together. We're so  
497 fond of one another, I found myself wishing that Anne would stay in Oakland, for when she  
498 returned I would go back to my room and be just a "nuisance" again.

499 It is time for lunch. Dear Will is here.

500 Love,  
501 Aunt Stell

502  
503

504 **Notes on Letters from Amy Estelle Walter Eckart to Miriam Harrier Lewis, niece; received**  
505 **and recorded circa 1940. [Questions asked by Walter Lewis on these letters.]**

506 Page 1 - "Mr. and Mrs. John O'Brien and daughter Mary, 3 years old, with Mrs. O'Brien's sister  
507 left Ireland for Vermont. Here James, Elizabeth, William, John, George were born."

508 Item 1 - Is there any other confirmation of the name John? It is not used anywhere else in the  
509 letters.

510 Item 2 - Is there any other reference to the sister of Mrs. O'Brien?

511 Item 3 - The brothers William and John are continually mentioned. Is there any other  
512 confirmation of these names?

513 Page 1 - "The first year of mama's married life she lost, first Mrs. Brewster, then her husband  
514 and mother."

515 Item 1 - If true this is a nice benchmark date.

516 Page 2 - "John and William went as privates. John and William came home to die. James left - to  
517 avoid going to war."

518 Item 1 - The contradictions involving the names and war service of the brothers is obvious.

519 Page 5 - "When he left Iowa, he left two children with his family; Jane and Daniel."

520 Item 1 - Is there any further confirmation of information on Frederick Walter's earlier mar-  
521 riages?

522 Page 5 - "I feel so sorry for Jane Walter, her own mother died and now her new mama is dead  
523 and she was such a lovely mama."

524 Item 1 - What interpretation is there of when and where Fred Walter's children were born?

525 Page 8 - "How far from this Chippewa Creek did Mr. Walter live?"

526 Item 1 - Can we assume that this is somewhere in Ohio?

527 Page 8 - "Tom Giblin"

528 Item 1 - This name appears on county maps next to Pat Giblin property. Could Tom be  
529 connected with Mary Curly's sister since Vermont?