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Letter from Jeanne Carr to Louie Strentzel, 1876 Jun 12.

Jeanne C. Carr

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Chicago, June 12, 1876.

Dear Louie:

I have been looking through the book of ferns and arranging them this P.M. for such use as may be thought best at the Centennial. Have been up to my old home in Madison, Wis., for a week, where every day and hour has been richly filled with joyous reunions. As I wrote Mrs. Daggett from one of the Madison homes, I felt all unworthy of so many kindnesses.

I wish you could see the East in the rich luxuriance of June grass and elm tree shade. I rode Sunday afternoon with one of Dr. Carr's cousins who keeps the seventh day as a Sabbath, through and over his farm. A rye field of one hundred acres was covered with the heaviest growth I ever saw, and not yet fully grown. We rode through a hundred acres of twenty year old timber already having many characteristics of forest and gathered moccasin flowers in the shade thereof. All the gude-man's brothers and sisters have forests growing on their farms. There is more timber to-day in the central counties of this state than at the time of settlement.

I had the happiness to find my old home in beautiful Madison exquisitely kept, and nearly all the wild plants I had naturalized in a flourishing condition. Not only so, but wild Clematis, Moonseed [and] Whitethorn had become the fashion.

Many charming surprises awaited me. I stayed one night at Mrs. Ward's, whose husband had gone to Philadelphia, and going down to a late breakfast found other ladies had gathered around the table, and such a reunion as we had, such a showing of pictures of children and grandchildren. Our University too was thriving, and as I saw the young men and maidens moving in groups around the charming grounds (about 400 of them) I was made happy by the thought that other eyes would see the same at the Berkeley site. Orchards, vineyards, and farm crops were all in excellent condition. In Baraboo, Wis., I visited the fruit ranch of Mr. Albert Tuttle, who has about one hundred acres of nursery, 50 of which are in Russian apples. He thinks the new crabs will prove a great acquisition to northern growers. I could but remember old Lemon of Yosemite whose fruit was so handsome and high flavored.

Ladies have been in to-day to admire the grasses and ferns you sent. Dr. Carr forwarded them to me. I expect to leave tomorrow for Michigan and Castleton, Vt., thence to New York and Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington. How I wish I could take you through this house. Over the mantel in the reception room hangs the Immaculate Conception copied for Mrs. D. in Seville by a famous copyist. She has a small original - one landscape of Claude, a Rubens (portrait), one Correggio, one Titian, and many excellent copies. The Library is as rich in works of art as our State Library, and has probably the best collection of prints and photographs in the country. Mrs. D. has also many exquisite wood carvings and bronzes. But under the portrait of Mr. D. stands the daily offering of fresh white flowers, for he who made the charm of this lovely home is now a saint in heaven.

Dear Louie, I wish you could be all summer at the Centennial. You would not be distracted from the study of it by so many dear voices of old friends, and could bring away so much more than I shall. But I will bring all I can and hope to share it with you and your dear father and mother.

This is awful writing for your eyes, but the best I can do when moments are so precious. Thanking you again for the ferns,

Your,

Jeanne Carr