

tell how far
I have to walk.
Mrs. Payton send
her love to you.
I make a friend
deal & exchange.
Good my Kitty
my dear Kitty
Yours aff
M. Spring

Washington
April 16th 1854

My Dear Kitty

I was much gratified upon coming home from my office the day before yesterday to find letters from you and your Grandfather, and pleased to find so much improvement in your handwriting. Your good Aunts must have given much care to you the last winter, and I know you have been good and merited their kindness. It makes me happy and partially contented to have you away from ^{me}, when I hear such good accounts of you, as Grandfather sends me.

You wish to know what day of this month will be your birth

day, as you wish to give a little tea party, and exhibit the pretty China Set that Cousin Helen gave you. Why! dear Kitty, you must have been quite overwhelmed at Christmas, between kind friends and Santa Claus - Work boxes, Work baskets, Tea Sets, Dolls, Peter Puzzlemix &c. &c I think you must have been puzzled to know what to do with them - all, Sunny Side could scarcely hold them. ~~Still~~ Well, this is not telling you the important fact when is your birth day - You will just have time to give out your invitations and make preparation for the celebration of the day, which is the 20th of this month, when you will be nine years old - quite verging on to a Young Lady.

I am glad your Aunt Kate has undertaken to teach you upon the Piano, and very grateful to

her and I for her kindness. You must be very patient and ~~careful~~^{be} attentive to her instructions. I hope you will grow up as fond of music as I am. Many hours I amuse myself upon Mr. Paytons Piano, and now can play many tunes quite well. I have always been sorry I did not take lessons upon it when young, but it was not the fashion in those days for gentlemen to play, except upon the flute and violin.

Mary Payton still takes lessons from that frightful Miss Waince, who attempted to teach you, but who scared you so, you learned but little. Mary has grown quite a large girl and romps more than ever when away from the eyes of her Grandmother. She still goes to Mr. Combs school.

I heard from Willie about three weeks ago when he was well and contented. I shall, however,

send for him as soon as I can learn of an opportunity to have him brought on. I wrote to Thos. Senex, a week ago, and told him to have him sent to New York from whence I can find, perhaps some New York Member coming on who will take care of him for me.

Tell Grandfather I was much gratified with the news of the family in his letter, and that I will write him in a day or two, - that I am hard at work in my new office, - that I am much pleased with it - and am more contented than I have been since I have been in Washington, and that there is not much chance of being disturbed by a change of Administration, some now in the office having been in it for twenty and thirty years. I have a good walk to the office and back - beyond the President's House, upon the same square, it is however good for my health. You must remember the music we used to have in the President's grounds. So you can