


 Dear Alida
 happy was I with you & how I now long for
 you again. In the short interval how many
 sad changes but you have not changed & I
 have not changed & God willing we will sit
 in the little pavillion again & I shall hear
 your voice so sweet & dear to me & you shall
 comfort me as you only my best & dearest
 friend can. Your letter written just after you
 had read of the conflagration came today & gave
 me unspeakable pleasure. I gave
 father your kind message & he thanks you
 & I thank you for it. Ah darling in sad
 times like these we need friends & having
 them we prize them above all riches. I [?]

Bramhall July 8 1866

One week ago tonight, darling, how
 happy was I with you & how I now long for
 you again. In the short interval how many
 sad changes but you have not changed & I
 have not changed & God willing we will sit
 in the little pavillion again & I shall hear
 your voice so sweet & dear to me & you shall
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Contributed to Maine Memory Network by Maine Historical Society

MMN # 68362

Date: July 8, 1866

Description: John Marshall Brown letter to Alida Carroll regarding plans and rebuilding activity after the Great Fire of Portland.

with my affectionate love, my precious one & as
long as I have that treasure no loss
can make me lose heart. I was so
busy with moving into our new office that I could not find
time: You will understand, dearest that
just at this time I must have much
to do. The first depression resulting
from the fire seems now to have passed
away & people are beginning to look
& talk cheerfully. Father's courage is superb
he hasn't lost heart for a moment although
his pecuniary loss is enormous. He has
already begun to build on some of the

ich in your love, my precious one & as
long as I have that treasure no loss
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I wrote to you on Tuesday & said that
I could & would write more calmly on
Saturday but I was so busy with moving
into our new office that I could not find
time: You will understand, dearest that
just at this time I must have much
to do. The first depression resulting
from the fire seems now to have passed
away & people are beginning to look
& talk cheerfully. Father's courage is superb
he hasn't lost heart for a moment although
his pecuniary loss is enormous. He has
already begun to build on some of the

burnt lots & others are following his
example. As soon as we can get workmen
we shall begin another Sugar House &
possibly next year will be at work again.
I cannot give you an adequate idea of
the general desolation here you will see it
for yourself by & by: but you can form some
opinion from the fact that today (Sunday)
six thousand rations were issued to poor
people who otherwise would have had
nothing to eat: a great many others are
provided for at the houses of relatives &
friends making in all about ten thousand
persons rendered houseless by this terrible
disaster. May God temper the winds to the
shorn lamb.

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of course in such a disorganized state of
Society a great many lawless people are
about & great precautions have to be
taken. The Government has sent troops here
to patrol the town & protect lives & property
We have a sentinel pacing ^{down} up and
down the drive every hour: & other houses are
protected in the same way: When you add
the fact that the supply of gas is cut off
& we have to use candles for illumination
you will see that affairs have quite a
military aspect. Such a state cannot exist
long, probably in a week order will
prevail again & the municipal machinery
move along, if not smoothly yet without
any serious jars.

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We have a sentinel pacing up and ^ in the
drive before our house & other houses are
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2.

Specialist testimony, and I am sure, dear Alida,

probability does not see prudent; on night,

for my business Portland as soon as

I suggested the way, I am always your witness

that, in business, just missed the best, and I am sure

was very needed here. I shall there fore be obliged

to you to stop here, especially to Long Branch

until a day or two, for you are always so kind to

consider my business, and I shall be very glad to

as to get a report of the office, and I am sure

of the most advantage, especially for my business

2.

You will I think understand, dear Alida, that it will not be prudent or right for me to leave Portland as soon as I expected to when I came away from you. There is much, very much to be done & I am really needed here. I shall there fore be obliged to fore go the pleasure of coming to Long Branch until a few days before you are prepared to come away yourselves I shall then go see so as to act as your Escort. This necessity is very painful to me, darling, for my visit was one of the most unalloyed pleasure & I had so eagerly anticipated renewing it. It is no idle protestation when I say that I am not & can not be happy away from you. Oh if you could be nearer where I could go to you.

The workman begin again on the house
tomorrow: when I got home I found the
floor timbers laid for the first floor &
active preparations going on for completing
the building, but since the fire nothing has
been done. I shall hurry them now as much
as I can. If I could only talk to you
tonight, dearest, as we talked on those happy
nights at Long Branch when we watched
the moon come up out of the sea, a great
many matters would be explained & made
clear that it is very hard for me to write
about. I do not like to think that it may
be necessary to give up the European trip for
the present, I cannot bear of the thought of
abandoning a place which has given us both

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you would say it is happiness. Let us say nothing
about it at present & I will hope for the
best. My personal loss by the fire is for me,
a great one, but the inconveniences resulting
from it must have a limit and in time
everything will be right again. With your
love, dearest, I can look such a disaster
calmly in the face. Do not think of me as
disheartened I have good courage & with
Gods help will get all back again & more.
You would not think to see us at home
that anything had happened of a serious
nature we even manage to make merry
over it & it is only when I go down in town
& see the thousands of spectral chimneys
that mark where once were happy homes

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It is only when I think of the possible change
in our fondly cherished plans that I feel
a bitter regret. I am so anxious darling,
to hear your tomorrow's letter. I hope to
write regularly every day now & you shall
not have such a long interval again.
Tell me how your poor side is, I have been
& still am very anxious about it, and
please, darling, take the best of care of
yourself, not only for your own dear sake
but for mine. I send love to your mother
& Miss Carrie. I kiss this page before I seal
it up & send with it my hearts best & truest
love to you my precious treasure, my darling,
my only happiness & hope.

John

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