

To-night
my love
to all
your affec.
My dear Mary & Lisa
Ely July 27th 1887 5748

I will begin my letter here, and take it with me to finish. I had a very busy time the last few days of my stay at Acton, helping Mrs Taylor with her Cookery book. There were several guests arrived also, who were to have come earlier in the month. The number for Halifax was one, Mr Shaw, with his wife. Nice, honest North Country people, with an only son and £30,000 a year. I got on very well with them, and Mrs Shaw gave me a very cordial invitation to go and see them at Queen's Anne's, Salisbury, where they stay during the Session, and said she would take me to the House for a debate. They are strongly Unitarian. He has been eight years in Parliament. We all had a delightful picnic on Saturday, to a farm of Mrs Taylor's on the top of the Chiltern Hills, and had tea at the Bailiffs house, and to walk to see the splendid view, right over to the Valley of the Thames. It has been very hot weather, which has been the only drawback to enjoyment, and just as the day became pleasant. Dinner and dress are used up the time. ^{Thursday} I started

two nights at Ely and saw the Cathedral in the day between them. It is a very beautiful one partly Norman, like Winchester. There was a very nice Berger going round with two Americans and I joined them and learned a great deal from him. Afterwards I had a talk with him, and he sent a man with me up to the galleries which run round the upper part, as in York, and across the East window

The view downward was very fine. I heard
one thing which was quite new to me - that
the light passing through the old stained glass
does not cast a coloured light upon the
surface it falls upon. It is only ^{modern} glass
which gives that effect. He showed me
the sun shining through both new glass
and old glass windows. It is curious.
From Ely I came on to Brandon a station
seven miles from Didlington. I reached
Brandon at 9.30 and walked on to Shun-
ford, four miles, getting a lift for a couple
of miles from an old farmer who was
going on his way. At Shunford Didling-
ton Park begins. There is a carriage road
three miles through rather a wild sort of park
feeding ground, with trees of all sorts, some
of them very old, scattered about, and oozy
streams winding here & there. At last I saw
the Hall, red brick and stone, with a high tower,
a large place, but not beautiful. It was
built by the family to whom the Goldich's
sold the property. Close by, in the Park, is the
Church. I got the keys and went in. It had
been "thoroughly restored" forty years ago, and
I could find no trace of the tombstone which
covered the grave in the chancel. There
were several monuments to the late and
present people, but none of ours. Still
there was the church itself, and a very
ancient font, with old shields round it.

all worn smooth now. I inquired if there
were any old people who could remember
the church before the restoration, and was di-
rected to a cottage at Colveston where I found
an old couple nearly eighty years old. The old man
had been born in the cottage. They could not
remember any details of the old appearance
of the church. But they took me to the ruins
of Colveston church close by, which with the
old Hall there, belonged to the Goldich people.
I could trace out the foundations of the
church. Of the Hall there was nothing visible
but a huge vault, which apparently was too
strong to be carted away. Then I got the
old woman to make me some tea, and I came
back to Shunford, and found a very comfort-
able old-fashioned inn to put up at. After I
had rested I went out into the village to
see the church. A jummy dry antediluvian
old clergyman gave me the keys, and then came
out and took me over it. He told me of an
old housekeeper at Didlington ^{Hall} who would be
be able perhaps to give me information
about the church, so this morning I went
again and was very hospitably received by
the old lady, who sent for an old workman
from whom finally I found out what I
wanted to know. The old tombstone in the
chancel close by the altar is there still, un-
touched, but underneath the present pavement
which is beautiful polished marble - the

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Showed me exactly where it lies. There is the vault beneath it. Then he took me into the belfry and showed me the bells. There are five - one is a very old one and said to be the only one. There is the maker's name round the top part. "Parker made me" He rang it for me to hear. It has a splendid tone. The four others came from Worcester Cathedral when it was restored. He wanted me to go out on the top of the tower, but I did not feel sure of getting safely over the great cross beams above the bells. He opened the great trap door leading up on to the chabs, and the ivied battlements in the sunshine looked so beautiful. The tower is covered completely with ivy, which judging from the gnarled trunks must be hundreds of years old. There are some fine old carved oak seats in the church, very ancient - The whole church now is seated with new ones like them. The old black oak altar table stands now in the little vestry, which is really the north porch of the church. The south porch is used for the congregation to enter by. There are only about 100 inhabitants, one farmhouse and a few cottages. The clergyman has two parishes, and lives at the other one - Crayke. It is quiet enough. It would suit you when Liverpool is done with. I meant to have gone on to Bryn St. Edmunds this evening, but I am tired and shall sleep here again to-night, and go on in the morning. I paid 4/6 this morning for a good supper bed & breakfast. I hope you are enjoying your Welsh visit. I will post this