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## 19th Century Writings on the Grand Tour

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# 19th Century Writings on the Grand Tour

## **Abstract**

Two collections of writings, found in the glass cabinet on the left wall of our Wonder Cabinet, contain the descriptions of two travelers' times abroad during the Grand Tour. The first item is a travel journal written by Henry Louis Baugher, son of Pennsylvania (now Gettysburg) College's second president, Henry Lewis Baugher. The journal was generously donated to Gettysburg College's Special Collections and College Archives by Gary Hawbaker, class of 1966. Beneath the travel journal you'll find a collection of letters written by Louisa Augusta Webb about the tales of her and her sisters' travels. This compilation of letters is held by Gettysburg College Special Collections. The two pieces, when analyzed together, reveal the journeys of travelers on the Grand Tour. [*excerpt*]

## **Keywords**

Grand Tour, Henry Louis Baugher, Gary Hawbaker, Louisa Augusta Web, travel diary

## **Disciplines**

Ancient, Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque Art and Architecture | Fine Arts | History of Science, Technology, and Medicine | Industrial and Product Design | Intellectual History

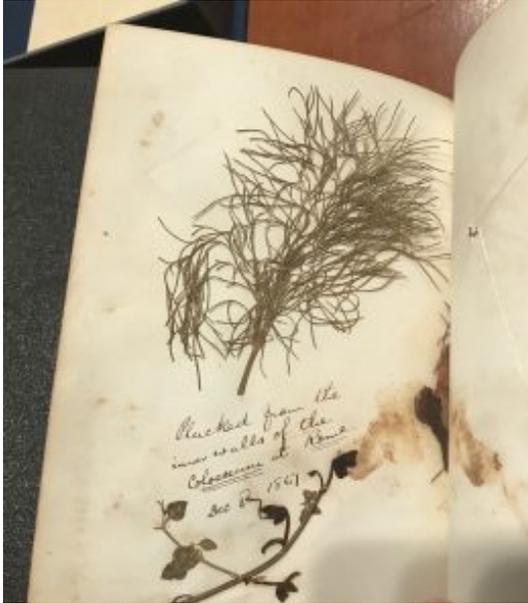
## **Comments**

Produced as part of a collaboration between Kay Etheridge's course FYS-188: Exploration of the Marvelous: Art and Science in the Renaissance, and Felicia Else's course ARTH 284: Wonders of Nature and Artifice: The Renaissance Quest for Knowledge.

Original version online at <http://wonder-cabinet.sites.gettysburg.edu/2017/cabinet/19th-century-writings-on-the-grand-tour/>

# 19th Century Writings on the Grand Tour

By Emily Elisabeth Wilcox



Pressed Plant from Travel Journal. Photo by Emily Wilcox

Two collections of writings, found in the glass cabinet on the left wall of our Wonder Cabinet, contain the descriptions of two travelers' times abroad during the Grand Tour. The first item is a travel journal written by Henry Louis Baugher, son of Pennsylvania (now Gettysburg) College's second president, Henry Lewis Baugher. The journal was generously donated to Gettysburg College's Special Collections and College Archives by Gary Hawbaker, class of 1966.



Sketch of Temple of Hercules Victor. Attributed to Louisa Augusta Webb – Attained from Mikki Stacey

Beneath the travel journal you'll find a collection of letters written by Louisa Augusta Webb about the tales of her and her sisters' travels. This compilation of letters is held by Gettysburg College Special Collections. The two pieces, when analyzed together, reveal the journeys of travelers on the Grand Tour.

These two collections of travel writings exemplify the curiosity many Europeans had and the extensive journeys they would take to gain more knowledge about the world. Grand Tourists would often purchase works of art, informative books, and natural wonders to put into their collections, or wonder cabinets. These collections, not unlike our own on display, included both artistic and natural items and symbolized the collector's vast amount of knowledge about the world.



Henry Louis Baugher, Class of 1857, Travel Diary, 1867, Gift of Gary Hawbaker, Class of 1966, Special Collections and College Archives, Gettysburg College – Photo by Emily Wilcox



Letters from Abroad Written by Louisa Augusta Webb, Special Collections and College Archives, Gettysburg College – Photo by Emily Wilcox

## What was the Grand Tour?



Map of Europe 1860. Acquired from Mikki Stacey

Following the surge of creativity during the Renaissance, Europeans traveled cross-continently to catch a firsthand glimpse of the wondrous works of both past and present artists. Wealthy Englishmen traveled to numerous cities across Europe in the pursuit of experiencing various recent cultural, architectural, artistic, scientific, and religious advancements. These curious travellers spent an extended amount of time migrating to multiple countries to gather in-depth information about the workings of the world. This travel is commonly referred to as the Grand Tour. The map above was created in the 1860s and reveals the knowledge Europeans had about the world at the time. To see a map of the entire world from around the same time period, be sure to check out the world map to the left of the glass case in our wonder cabinet!



World Map. Displayed in the Gettysburg College Wonders of Nature and Artifice Exhibit. Photo by Emily Wilcox

Grand Tourists made visits to prominent cities in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and more, but the most influential stops on their journeys were their visits to Italian cities. In particular, Rome was a favorite destination among most Grand Tourists. The two collections of writings held in the Special Collections at Gettysburg College describe the traveling experiences of two Grand Tourists traveling in Rome at approximately the same time.

### **Who Went on the Grand Tour?**

Travelers on the Grand Tour were primarily male members of the affluent middle classes.<sup>[1]</sup> Grand Tourists typically had abundant financial means, ample free time, and a passionate interest in art to partake in this journey across the continent.<sup>[2]</sup> Grand Tourists visited multiple art collections to see world-renowned pieces and studied plants and animals to gain insight about the natural world around them.

Travelers were particularly interested in visiting to Italy on their journeys due to the large amount of scientific innovation and artistic progress originating from Rome and Florence.<sup>[3]</sup> In order to remember their travels, Grand Tourists oftentimes kept travel logs or diaries to commemorate their experiences. To inform those who were not fortunate enough to experience the Grand Tour themselves and to clarify discrepancies among travellers, these travel logs were often published.<sup>[5]</sup> In addition, Grand Tourists commonly wrote to relatives back home about the wondrous things they observed and experienced.

## Henry Louis Baugher's Travel Diary



Travel Diary of 19th Century Grand Tourist – Photo by Emily Wilcox

The travel diary contains both written supplements about travels across Europe and pressed-plants from the places he visited. The Grand Tourist starts his journey on July 18<sup>th</sup>, 1867. The traveller was a very enthusiastic man whose penmanship alone can be admired for its beauty.

The Grand Tourist's long, descriptive entries of Rome reveal his admiration for the historical city. Accompanying his written entry about his time in Rome is a pressed-plant plucked from the inner walls of the Colosseum. The small plants from the Colosseum are pressed into the back of the diary and are labeled with a description and a date of December 3, 1867. The Grand Tourist likely picked these plants to commemorate his time in Rome and study some of the natural features of the city.



The Colosseum. Attained from Wikipedia

This Grand Traveller's collection of plants from his journey across Europe relates to the interest collectors had in understanding of natural life and expanding the scientific academic field. The plant pressed into the travel diary remains slightly green, with an overall brown hue, due to being plucked 150 years ago. The Grand Traveller's experience of the natural life surrounding the Colosseum lives on today in his travel journal!



Detail of pressed plant from travel diary. Donated by H. Louis Baugher. Photo by Emily Wilcox

## **Letters Home from Louisa Augusta Webb**



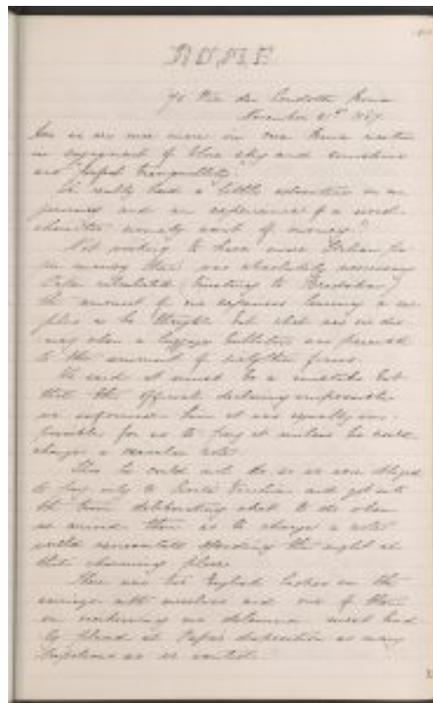
Collection of letters from Louisa Augusta Webb. Photo by Emily Wilcox

The collection of letters written by Louisa Augusta Webb to her aunts includes supplementary sketched images of sights she saw in Rome in the attempt to accurately represent her time abroad. Webb embarked on her Grand Tour from 1862 until 1868. She was traveling at approximately the same time as the writer of the travel diary. Webb's collection of letters offers a unique feminine perspective of the Grand Tour.

## Women on the Grand Tour

While women were the minority among travelers, the Grand Tour offered an opportunity for women to expand their views on the world, improve mental and physical health, and allowed for many to become published writers.[\[1\]](#) Travel writing, in the form of letters home, offered women the unique opportunity to articulate opinions on the world around them.[\[2\]](#)

Women Grand Tourists sought to observe ancient and contemporary pieces of art and architecture. Women formed a comprehensive judgment on matters of taste after seeing a work of art firsthand.[\[3\]](#) Women, like male owners of wonder cabinets, collected pieces from the various cities they visited to demonstrate their knowledge and developed taste for art as a result of going on the Grand Tour.[\[4\]](#)



Rome Entry from letters from Louisa Augusta Webb. Attained from Mikki Stacey

Because it was uncommon for women to travel on the Grand Tour, the women who set out on the journey made sure to share their experiences with their female loved-ones at home through written letters.[\[5\]](#) Louisa Augusta Webb wrote detailed descriptions of her experiences on the Grand Tour to her aunts back home in England. Webb's cross-continental journey was segmented into three tours: September 23, 1862 – December 25, 1862, May 9, 1863 – August 20,

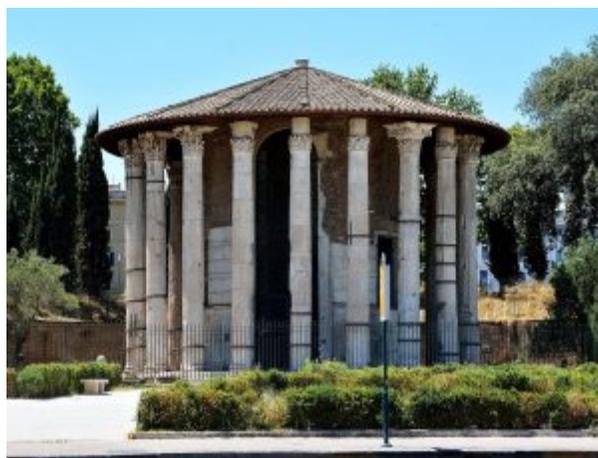
1866, and October 5, 1867 – May 21, 1868.<sup>[6]</sup> Webb and her family traveled to cities in France, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Belgium.

Louisa Augusta Webb's letters include an interesting written description of her time spent in Rome in 1864. Louisa and her sisters, with whom she was traveling, were able to partake in a foot washing ceremony exclusively for women at Trinità dei Pellegrini. Her father watched the male equivalent of the foot washing ceremony in a separate location.<sup>14</sup> Because more men than women embarked on the Grand Tour, not many written descriptions of that event existed in travel diaries or letters. Webb provided a detailed description of a female-exclusive event that otherwise would be unknown by male travellers.



Temple of Hercules Victor. Attributed to Louisa Augusta Webb. Attained from Mikki Stacey

In addition to her detailed written entries of her experiences, Webb included sketched images of Roman architectural sights. Her drawing of the Temple of Hercules Victor is especially impressive because of its realism and congruence with what remains of the Roman temple today.



Temple of Hercules Victor. Attained from Wikipedia

This realistic image of ancient Roman architecture allowed for Louisa Augusta Webb's aunts to have an accurate depiction of the types of sights their niece was seeing. Along with her drawings

of Rome, Webb included numerous sketches from her time in Italy, such as the image below from her stay in Florence.



A View from Near Florence. Drawn by Louisa Augusta Webb. Attained from Mikki Stacey

To read more about Louisa Augusta Webb's Grand Tour and see more of her captivating sketches, visit this website created by another Gettysburg College student: <http://ladiesonthetour.sites.gettysburg.edu/a-ladys-tour-of-europe-1862-1868/index>

[1] Dolan, Brian. *Ladies of the Grand Tour*. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2001,) 6.

[2] Dolan, Brian. *Ladies of the Grand Tour*. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2001,) 5.

[3] Dolan, Brian. *Ladies of the Grand Tour*. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2001,) 188.

[4] Dolan, Brian. *Ladies of the Grand Tour*. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2001,) 197.

[5] Dolan, Brian. *Ladies of the Grand Tour*. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2001,) 273.

[6] Three Sisters in their Victorian Context. Available from <http://ladiesonthetour.sites.gettysburg.edu/a-ladys-tour-of-europe-1862-1868/introduction?path=index>.

[7] Wilton, Andrew & Ilaria Bignamini. *Grand Tour*, 299.

[1] Dolan, Brian. *Ladies of the Grand Tour*. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2001,) 93.

[2] Sorabella, Jean. *The Grand Tour*. Available from [https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/grtr/hd\\_grtr.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/grtr/hd_grtr.htm).

[3] Chaney, Edward. *The Evolution of the Grand Tour*. (Portland: Frank Cass Publishers, 1998,) xi.

[4] Dolan, Brian. *Ladies of the Grand Tour*. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2001,) 185.

[5] Dolan, Brian. *Ladies of the Grand Tour*. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2001,) 191.