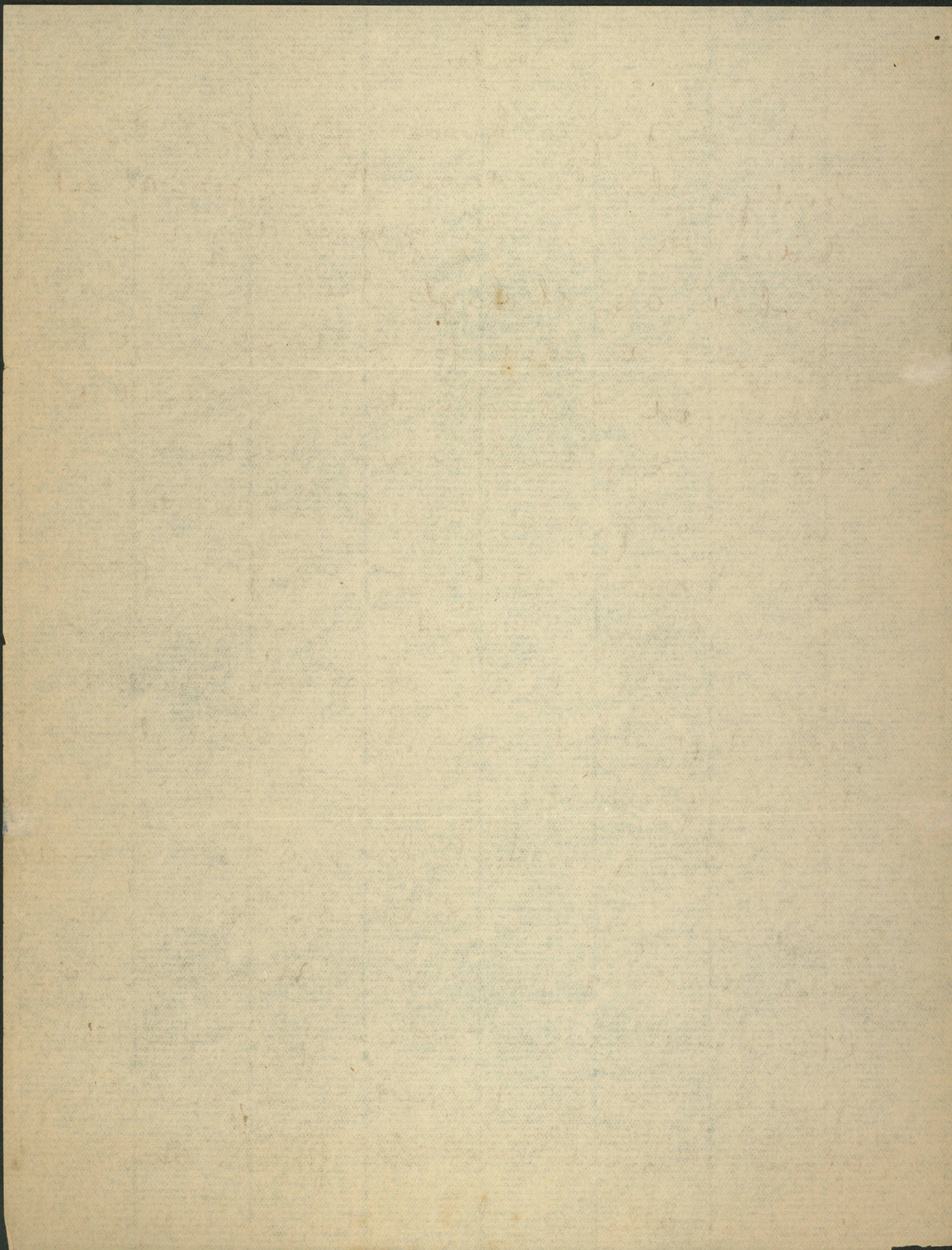
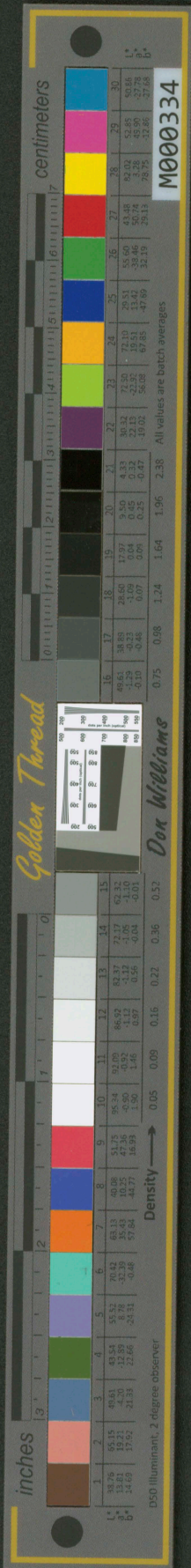


Dexter

Didn't you know Dexter? Every-
body who lived on Palmyra Street
did. He was the yellow dog who
looked as though he might have
been intended for a dachhund, but
changed his mind and decided
to be a yellow cur. Dexter's head
was long, and his ears short, he
was bow-legged in his fore-paws,
and knock-kneed behind, while
his tail had an original curl to
the left that was very stylish when
he wagged it.

For all that, he was very lovable,
and very much beloved. His home
and abiding place was Number 56½,
the small house where geraniums
grew in the front yard and morning
glories climbed over the fence. His
mistress allowed him to indulge in

7-3-149



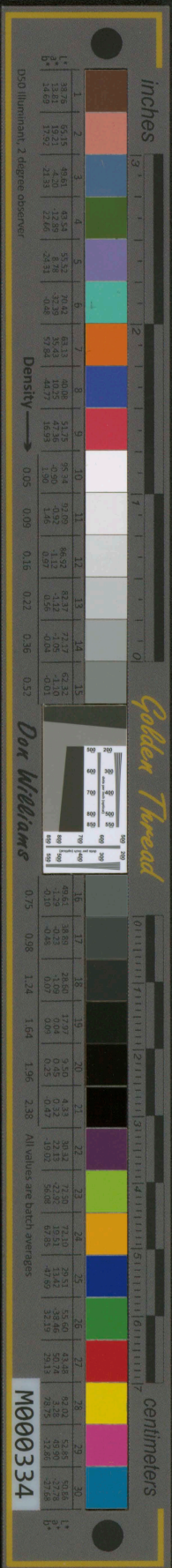
his roaming proclivities to his heart's content, only insisting that he be home ten o'clock at nights. This injunction Dexter obeyed to the letter, and came in dutifully, with business-like regularity.

Dexter was the especial friend and protégé of the young ladies who lived across the street in No 55. They were school teachers, and he felt somehow as though it was improving to his mind and that he was generally cultivating himself to be much in their company.

"One cannot learn too much," he thought as he reflectively wagged his curled tail during a learned conversation between the teachers, "I am not able to go to school, but contact is everything." And he was so edified that he immediately fell asleep.

One day he made up his mind

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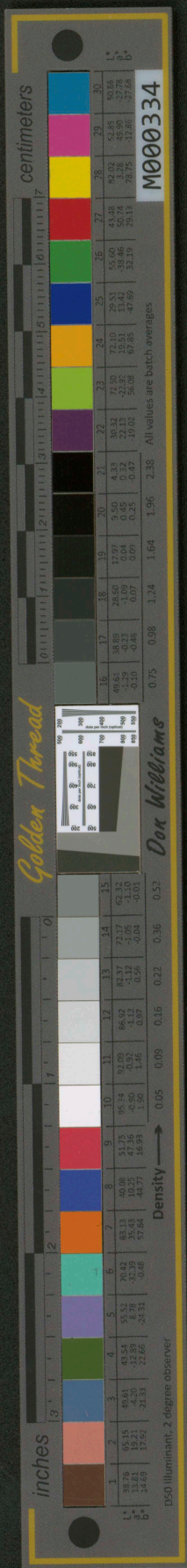
to go to school and followed one of the young lady teachers. But she paid a small boy five cents to take him home, and his educational aspirations thus cruelly misconstrued he was gloomy and sad for two whole days.

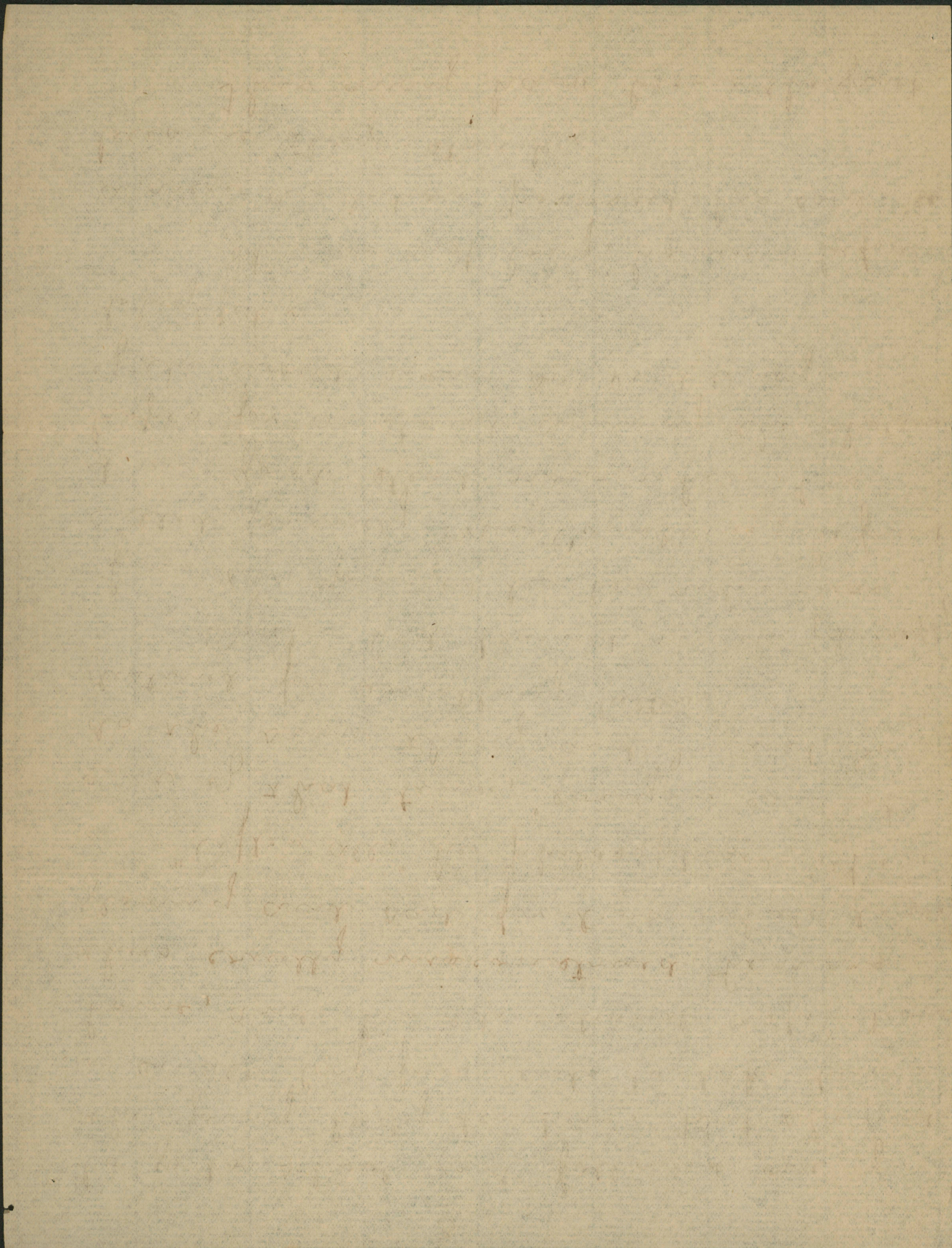
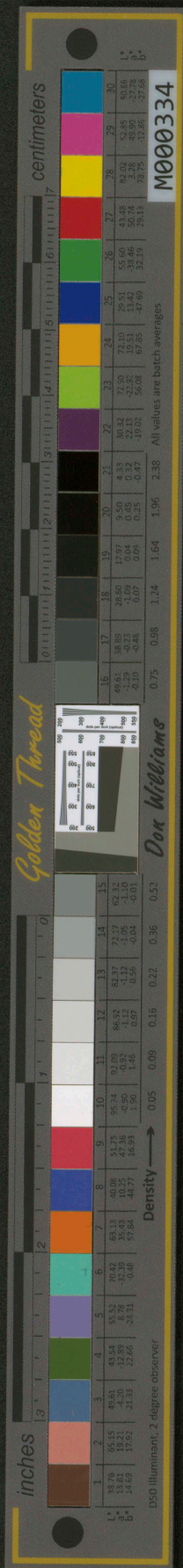
"After all," he philosophized, "at the end of that time, "everyone cannot do the same thing, and I must be destined for something better."

Dexter had learned much philosophy from the younger teacher who was called generally Miss Constance; he found it in good stead now, when his hopes for a stand among the scholars of the world were so suddenly blighted.

It was not long, however, before a new ambition possessed his soul. He became stage-struck.

This may have been the faint





of Miss Constance, who for all her learning and philosophy was over-fond of the glitter of the stage and was something of an amateur actress. Then it may have been Curly's fault.

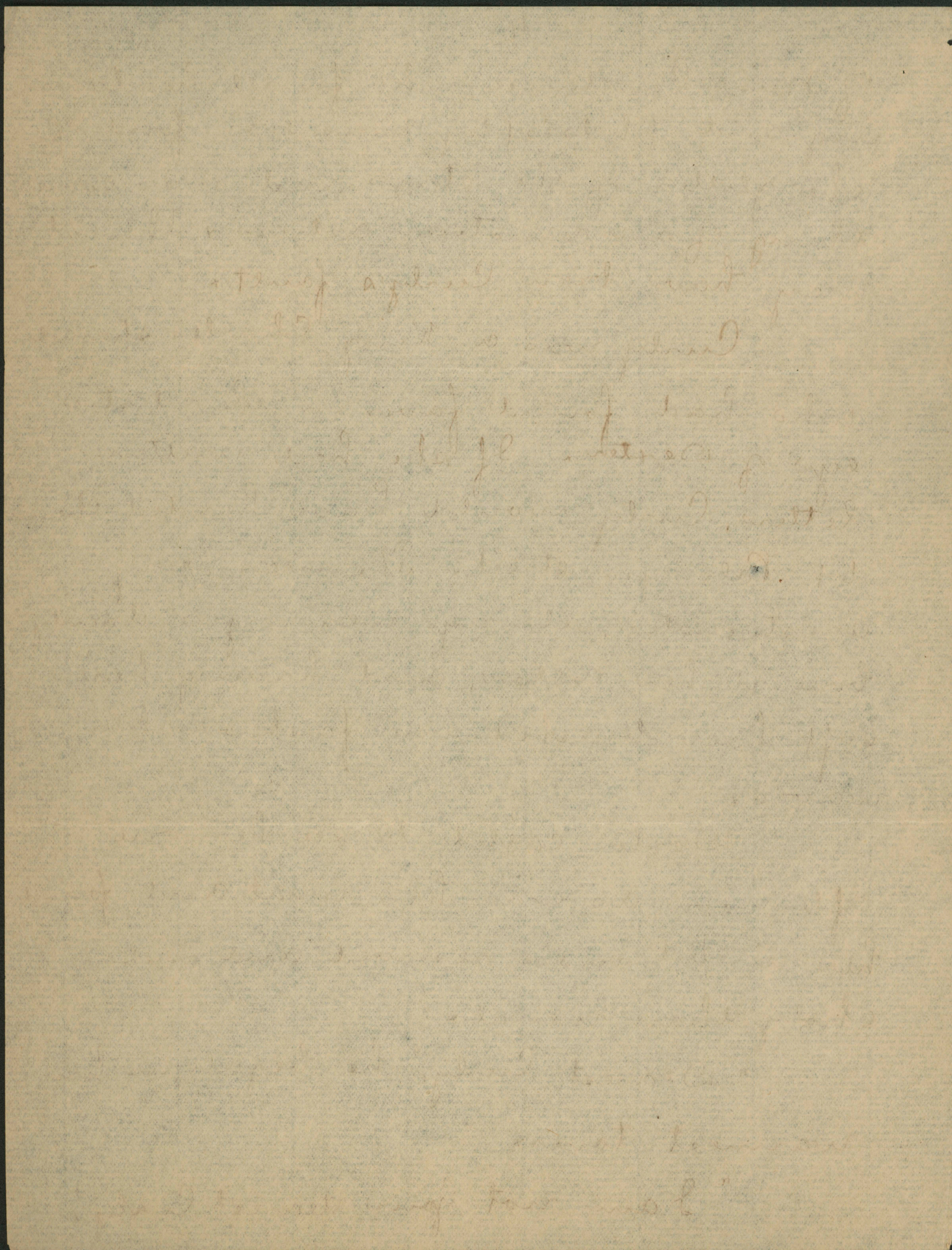
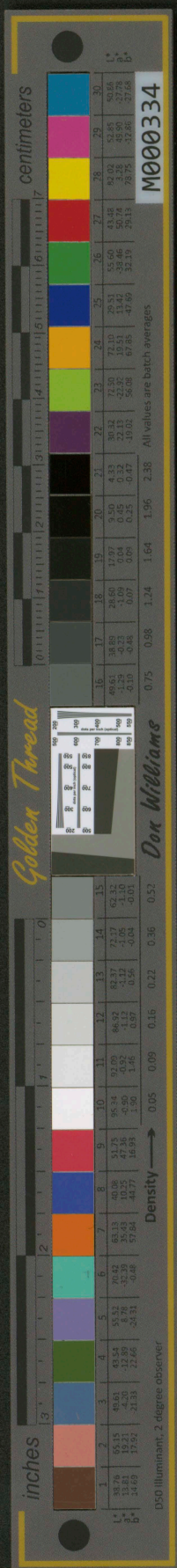
Curly was a King Charles spaniel who had found favor in the artistic eye of Dexter. If she had written letters, Curly would have headed them 61 Palmyra street. She was very aristocratic, always wearing a dainty bow on her collar, and having her soft hair brushed in fashionable waves.

Dexter called to see her one afternoon as was his wont and found her a bit more reserved and melancholy than usual.

"Dearest Curly," he began in his warmest tones.

"I am not your dearest Curly,"





she retorted x

"Dearest Miss Curly, what ails you? What have I done? Why are you cross with me?"

"Dexter Lavoisier," exclaimed Curly rising in indignation, "you are the most perfect actor I've ever seen x you know only too well that you only pretend to care for me, and that you really are in love with that - that - that - hideous pug-dog at the corner - you! - you! -" Here she burst into tears x

"I assure you, Curly -" pleaded Dexter, but she would not listen to him, and still calling him a false, deceiving actor, drove him away x With a dejected droop to his artistic tail, Dexter moved sorrowfully towards home, and Curly's house saw him not for several weeks x

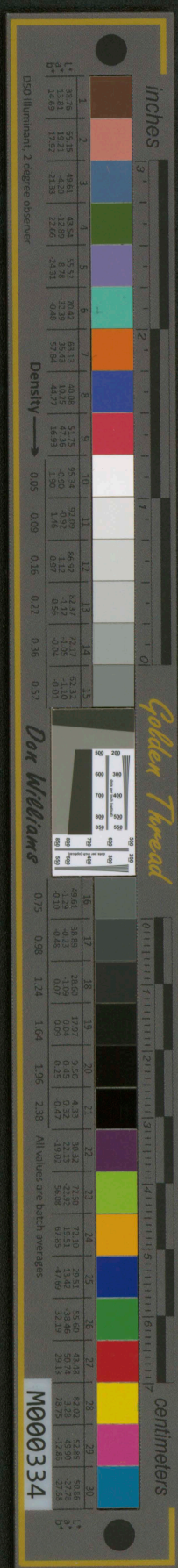
It was about this time that

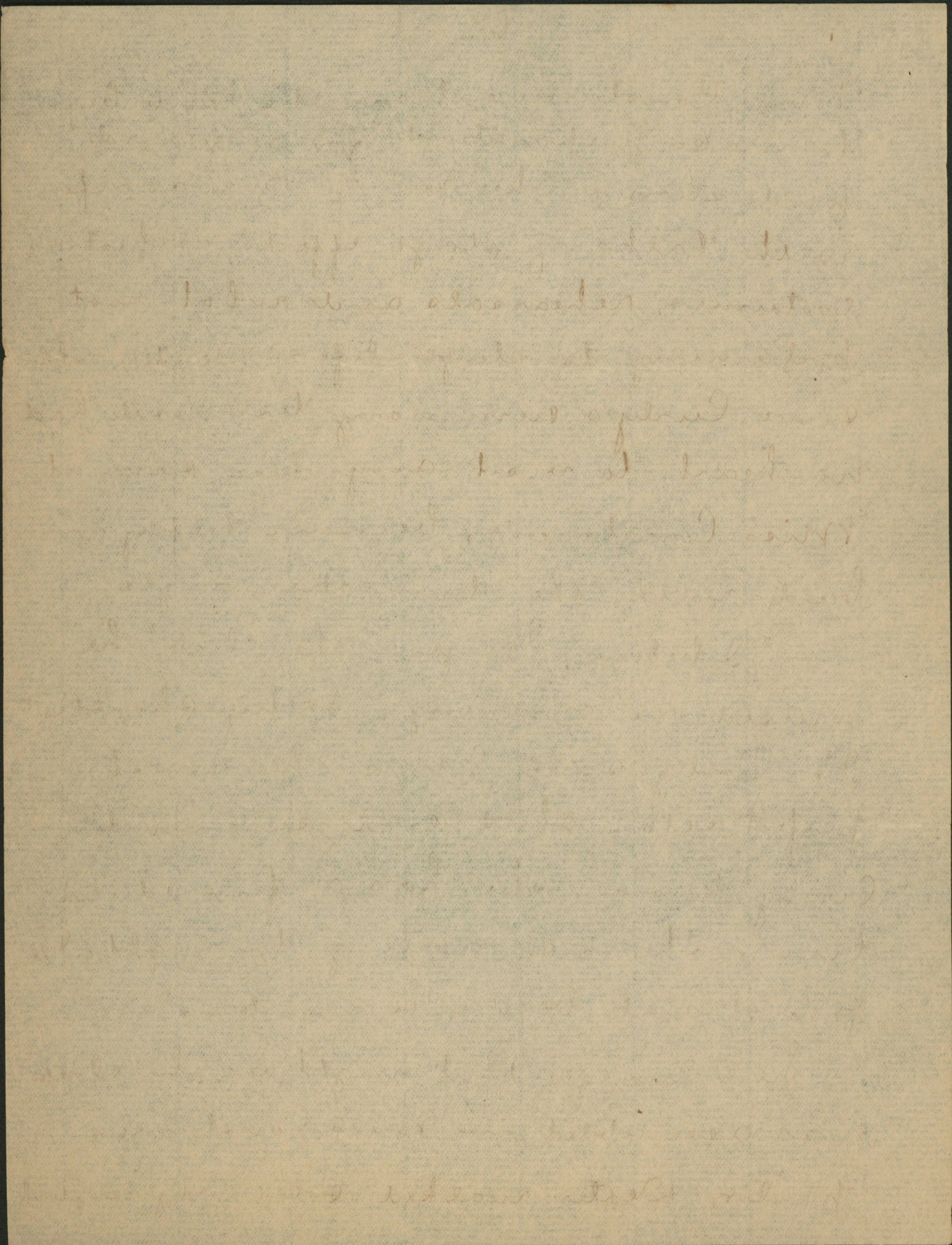
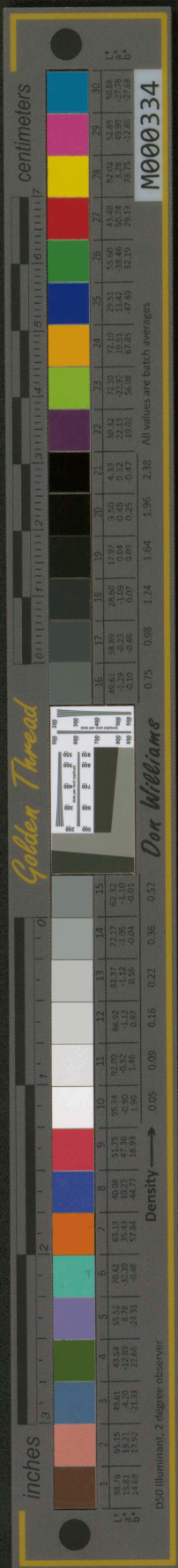


Handwritten text in cursive script, likely a letter or document, written on aged paper. The text is faint and difficult to read, but appears to be a personal communication. The handwriting is elegant and consistent throughout the page.

7-3-154

These Constance's dramatic club began
to make preparations for a grand
production & she one of 55 was wife
with talk of stage effects, orchestras,
costumes, rehearsals and what - not
pertaining to stage-life & Dexter, who
since Curly's summary dismissal had
no heart to wait anywhere save at
Miss Constance's, became deeply im-
bued with the dramatic craze.
"I believe see you the club," he
inquired one morning. "Why shouldn't
I? Curly said I was the most
perfect actor old ever seen, and
Curly knows! she has a fine educa-
tion & there's a meeting to night, I'll
go to it, and become a member."
was assembled in Miss Constance's
parlor. Dexter walked solemnly in, took





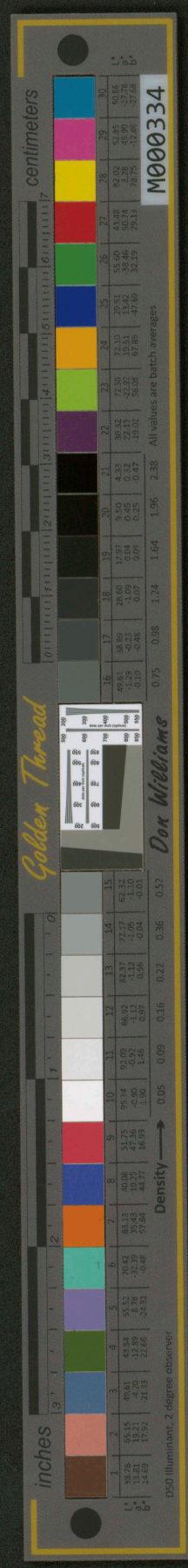
a seat on the hearth rug, and gravely winked one eye at the president.

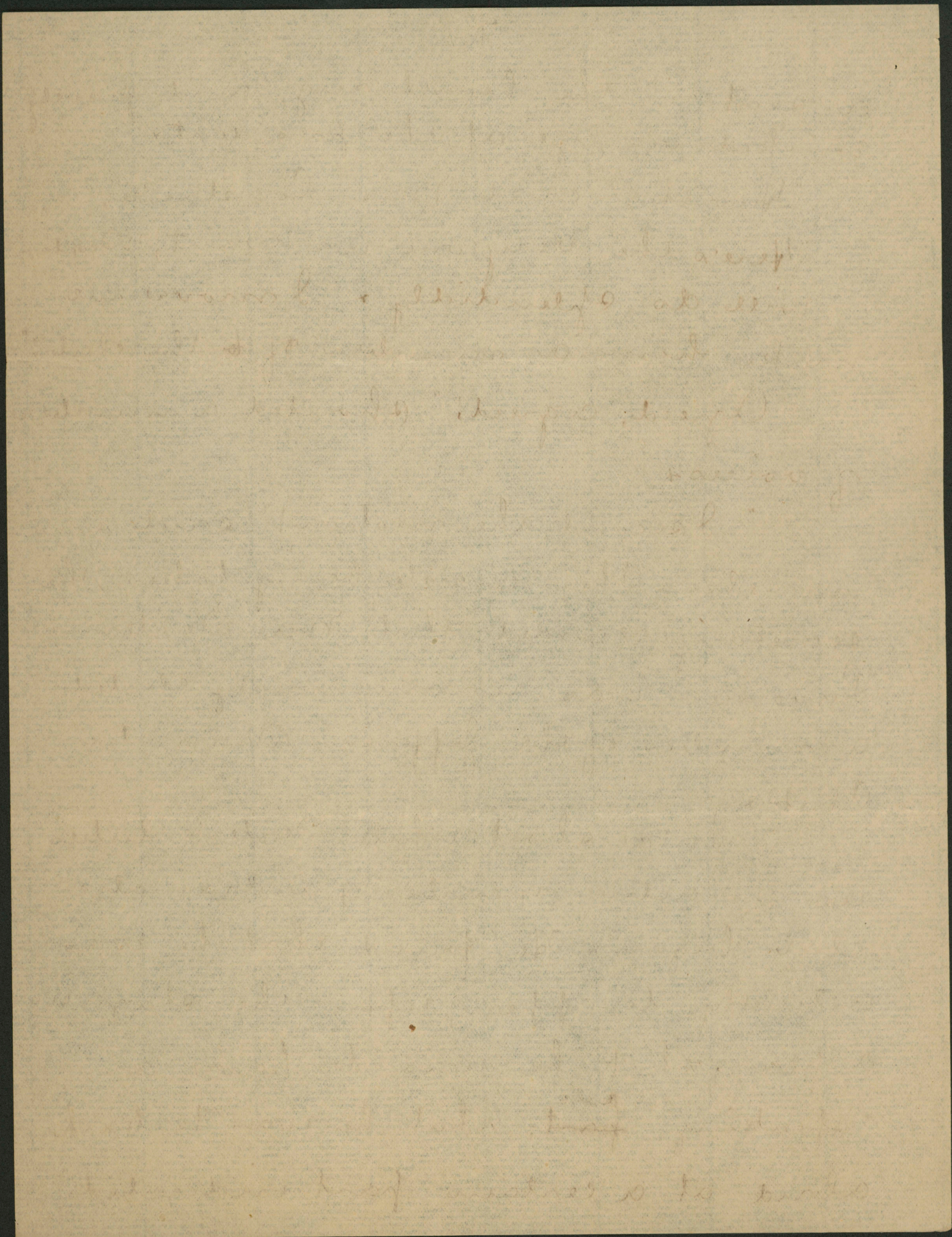
"Hurrah!" cried Miss Constance, "Here's the very one we want, Dexter will do splendidly. I move we make him a member of the club!"

"Agreed, agreed!" shouted a number of voices.

"I second the motion!" said some one else. Then a vote being taken, the secretary recorded that Mr. Dexter Lavoisier was unanimously elected a member of the Jefferson Dramatic Club.

In a short while Dexter's duties as an active member of a dramatic club began. He found that he was actually to appear upon the stage in a play; that he was to have a "speaking" ^{role} ~~part~~; that he was to bark aloud at a certain part indicated





by Miss Constance with a gentle rap on the head. The knowledge of his own importance appalled Dexter. He was overwhelmed, astonished at the realization of his own dreams.

He became a gentleman fengagements. Now-a-days, when Curly, repenting of her rash jealousy, called him with most inviting tones to come and see her, Dexter replied with a scornful bow, and "regretted that he had to go to rehearsal." For his part required practice, and Miss Constance was very particular about all members of the club being present.

The night of the great event arrived. Dexter, feeling a bit nervous, and wondering if he was going to be afflicted with stage-fright, went early to Miss Constance's house and sat about looking cheerfully miserable.



Handwritten text in cursive script, likely a letter or document, written on aged paper. The text is faint and difficult to read, but appears to be a personal communication. The handwriting is consistent throughout the page, suggesting it was written by a single person. The paper shows signs of age, including discoloration and some minor staining.

At home, his mistress, after carefully decking his collar with a red satin bow, had retired to dress for the evening & Dexter was painfully conscious that the entire neighborhood was going to turn out just to see him on the stage, and a great gulp came in his throat as he realized that one joy would be denied him — Curly would not be able to see his triumph &

Having been led to the hall by the small brother of Miss Constance, he sat behind the scenes, occasionally peeping out at what seemed to his excited fancy a veritable ocean of faces and bonnets & He became so dejected that the president of the club suggested a glass of nervo tonic to brace him up &



[Faint, illegible handwriting on aged paper]

The evening was slowly away
 performer after performer went before
 the footlights to receive applause, and
 return behind the scenes smiling.
 Finally, the last number in the
 was to appear, was announced. The
 program, the face in which Dexter
 was to be called just before the
 cue was to be called. A bell was to
 close of the first act. A bell was to
 ring, and he was to march on the
 stage. Then after returning slowly, he
 was to march on again, barking loudly.
 with a crowd of children. The marching
 went over his part so as to be sure
 there would be no mistakes.
 Ding-a-ling-a-ling! At last!
 With a outbursting heart, about in-
 covered by a hat on the head from
 me of the hunter, Dexter opening on
 the stage & Miss Constance's hand

851-2-158



look re-assured him, and he went off just as easily as though it was an everyday affair.

He congratulated himself on his freedom from stage-fright, and sat complacently awaiting the next cue.

Trig-a-ling-a-ling, went the bell a second time, and the crowd of little boys and girls who were to troop in with Dexter barking at their heels, started on the stage.

"Bow-wow-wow-wow!" said Dexter, while the children laughed and rushed around the stage.

"Bow-wow-wow-wow!" again. Then Dexter gave a startled glance at the great audience and lost his head completely.

"Bow-wow-wow!" and instead

12
=

of rushing that the stage exits, he leaped over the foot-lights, and into the audience.

"Bow-wow-wow!" and down the aisle he rushed, while frightened women screamed and grabbed their skirts.

"Bow-wow-wow! Ki-yi!" The ushers tried to catch him, but he eluded them, and dashed wildly down the stairs and into the street. Once outside in the cold winter air, he regained his senses, and was overcome with shame at what he had done.





[Faint, illegible handwriting in cursive script, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]

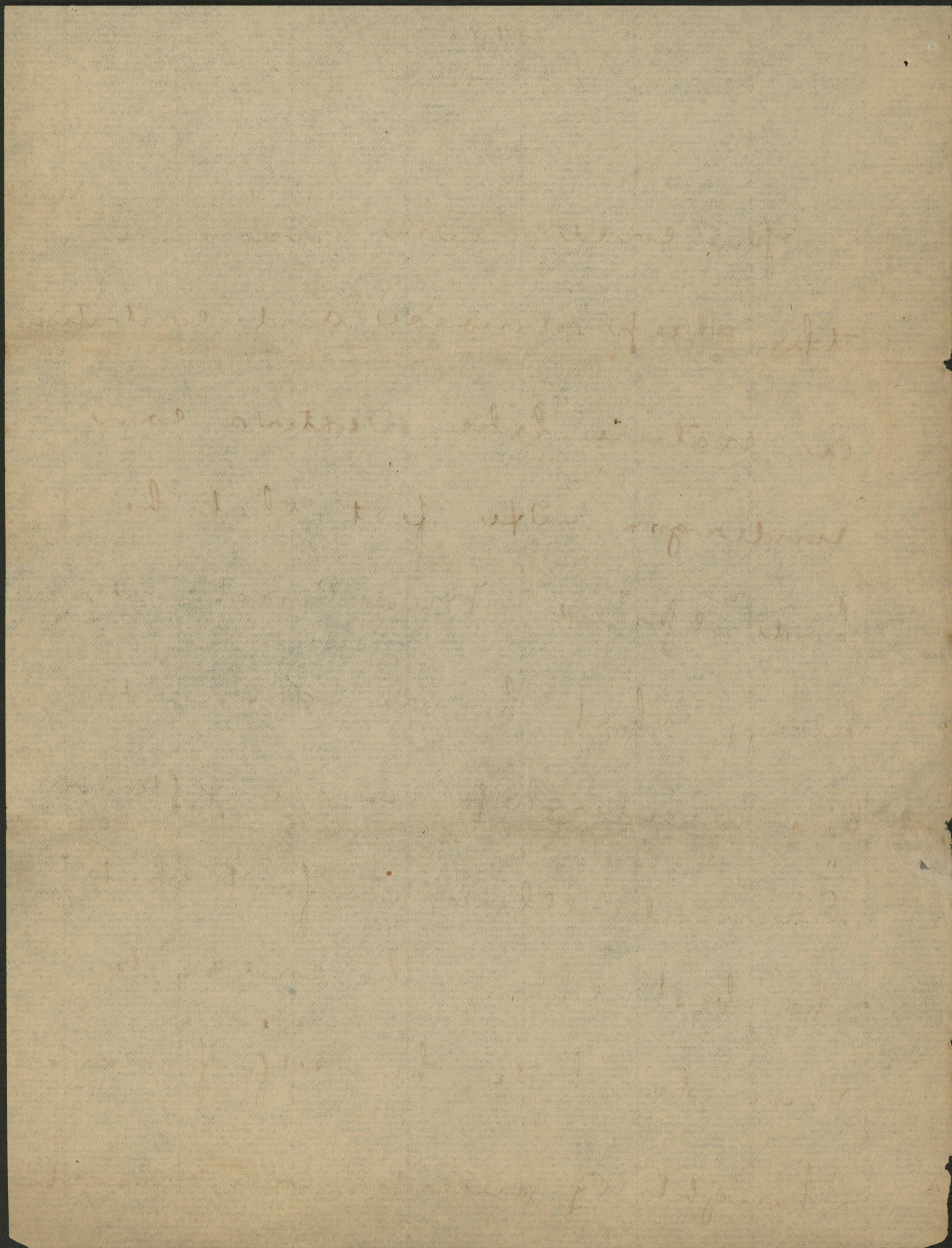
You could never measure
 the deep remorse and contrition
 a mother like Mother can
 undergo + she felt that he
 had spoiled Miss Constance's
 life; that he all - destroyed
 his membership in the Jefferson
 Dramatic club; in fact that
 who best thing he could do
 was to hide himself forever +
 thought of suicide, even, crossed

7-3-161

13 *

[Dexter]





his mind as he walked over the
Village street bridge. It was an awful
experience. & the president-

When Miss Constance came home
late that night, she saw a miserable
looking yellow object curled up on the
front stoop; the flaming red satin bow
dirty and bedraggled; the artistic tail
hanging in a doleful droop.

"Poor Dexter", she said, patting the
head that hung remorsefully, "did you
think you spoiled the play? Why it was
a great success; the audience thought
it was intended so. Cheer up, doggie,
you're all right."

And Dexter told Curly next day
that he was the star of the evening.

Alice Dunbar

1934-4th St. N.W.

Washington, D.C.

The president was so impressed
by Miss C's kindness that he asked
a certain question that had
been in his mind
for a long while.

