

## **Pieces From Maria Mitchell's Journal**

### **Maria Mitchell's description of a Solar Eclipse in Denver**

July of 1878

“One of our party, a young lady from California, was placed at the chronometer. She was to count aloud the seconds, to which three others were to listen. Two others, a young woman from Missouri, who bro't with her a fine telescope and another from Ohio, beside myself stood at the three telescopes. A fourth, from Illinois, was stationed to watch general effects and one special artist [perhaps her sister, Phebe M. Kendall], pencil in hand, to sketch views. . . absolute silence was imposed upon the whole party a few minutes before each phenomenon. . . .

Happily some one broke through all rules of order and shouted out ‘The shadow, the shadow’ and, looking toward the southeast we saw the black band of shadow moving from us over the plain and toward the Indian territory. It was not the flitting of the cloud shadow over hill and dale, it was a picture which the sun threw at our feet of the dignified march of the moon in its orbit. And now we looked around. What a strange orange light there was in the north and east. What a spectral hue to the whole landscape. Was it really the same old earth and not another planet!”

### **Maria writes about her sister Phebe after she has married her new husband Joshua Kendall**

Fall of 1854

“I have no sickness of heart for a long time comparable to that which Phebe's absence gives me. I could cry daily at the things for which I miss her. She had so much mind and was almost always with me, good natured and that is invaluable in the home circle.”

### **Maria looks at a lunar eclipse from the observatory at Vassar**

1881. Sunday, June 12.

“The eclipse at one o'clock this morning was beautiful. It had rained for a week and cleared off last evening . . . . I got out a little before 1 a.m. and went to bed at 2 {a.m.}. Roses are plenty.”