

Eau Claire, June 22nd, 1857.

Dear Sister.

Your letter of Apr 19 received, also the one of Feb 23d which you supposed was lost. It did not reach Oxford untill after we left, but our friends there sent it on to us here. So cheer up sister, if our letters do not go back & forth as quick as we wish they get along sometime.

You say you are sorry we have to be moving about so much, could you know the benefit it has been to us, you would say how glad I am. We did not leave there because we did not like; no, we had become attached to the place & People & had it not been for Smeads sickness, we probably should have been there now. But that put us back by getting us some into debt; & he had such a good chance to sell, get clear & do better, we could not withstand the temptation. Buying & selling is every day business with our western people. Some make themselves independantly rich buying & selling land, but we do not calculate to speculate quite so much as that. But if life & health is spared, we shall have a western home we shall not be ashamed to have you come & see. I am not sure but you would think I did actually gain an "iron constitution" by coming here; if you could see how my health has improved since I came, am getting fat & tough. Think you would stand a chance to get a good shaking if I could get hold of you. Do not be alarmed about our going to this end of the globe, we calculate to keep within bounds, bread & butter right side up. If the best & only excuse for not coming to see us is "you should not know where to find us we move so often," I think you have none at all, for we stayed in Oxford almost two years. You might have come there in a week, & it will not take much longer,

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if any, to come here.

Besides you can come much easier: take the cars at Greenfield, come to Chicago, then take the Chicago & Galena railroad to Dunleith, there take the Steamboat up the Mississippi river to Reeds landing, then up the Chippewa river until you reach Eau Claire. Probably as you passed along you might see me standing in my door, or on the bank of river looking at the big boat as she glides along in the water to land a little above our house. We do like here very much indeed; I have never seen the place since we left Mass which suited so well as this. & unless sickness or misfortune happen some way, this will probably be our home. The only objection to this place is its being so far north, but from all accounts it has not been colder here nor are things more backward than in Mass & many other places.

Smead is not going on to his farm at present but is at work in this village at his trade; gets 2 dollars & quarter a day & is soon to have 2 & $\frac{1}{2}$. This is a fast place & every thing is fast in it. Provisions are high: wheat 2 dollars a bushell; potatoes $1\frac{1}{2}$ dollars; butter from 35 to 40 cts lb; Pork from 18 to 20 cts; sugar 15 to 20; Lard 20 to 22. We are not troubled with fat, but our Pork here is equal to old Mass Hogs, & we eat it too.

Smead has bought a village lot & is now building a house on it. I do wish you could see how pleasant it is out here; truly the western country is beautiful. You cannot imagine how handsome the Prairrie are at this season of the year; would that I could describe them, but I cannot, so come & see for yourself. I have sent & will send you a news paper occasionally that you may know what is going on here, & wish you would send me one occas-

ionally. Also send a Circular that you can imagine some what a place this is getting to be. Smead says tell brother Adam money lets here for from 40 to 60 per cent interest & goes quick at that. Well Sis I am indeed sorry to hear such news of Freedom & family, had hoped her afflictions might lead her to see the folly of living wholly for this world. For all things are passing away here, & Eternity is drawing near to us all. I have written a letter to her, would like to know what she says about it. Have had a letter from Addiss & Charlotte; they say you have made them a visit & that they enjoyed it much. Did A show you any of my letters & what says he? I have also a letter from Erastus, he says he has a little daughter(thats pretty well for an old man). I would like to see the little darling. Have not heard from Almira nor Lysander for a long time; I know not what is the reason, I have written to them. Just had a letter from Mrs Haynes & Mrs Hunt, they are well & doing well. Mrs Haynes has a daughter born last Feb, she has named it after me.

We have some of our old Oxford neighbors here with us, & we are getting acquainted here, & like the people well. We have Huckleberries & Wild Plums, Cranberries, & Snakes in great abundance; also have all kinds of dried fruit plenty by paying handsomely for them, dried Apple is 20cts a lb.

You say Sarah Pratts husband is west, should they come on would like to know where they are. Give my love to her & Mother & other enquiring friends. I am glad to have you write us about old acquaintances, for we often thing & chat about them. Death has made great changes in your town & at S Falls; we hear from there occasionally by our old friends. O let us strive to live so that we can meet death in peace, & may God bless, & keep us till

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we meet to part no more. It is now

It is now time to get supper, so I will not try to fill this sheet for I have not time. We have three cases of Small Pox here, but am in hopes there will be no more. Let us hear from you soon & often. You may laugh hard as you are a mind to over this letter, & then burn it up & send me another good long one to pay for it. My love to you all, Smeads likewise.

From your loving Sister

L A Hastings