

Eau Claire, Jan 1st, 1860

Dear Brother & Sister.

I shall commence my letter wishing you all a happy new year. Yes, most sincerely, do I hope it may prove a happy year, but alas, we know not what is before us & I often think it is well we do not. For if we did we should hardly think we could endure the many trials & changes awaiting us.

We have just received your letter, & today has been so cold I dare not venture to Church, so I have concluded to spend a little time this evening in silent chat with you. It seems you have just about such weather as we do. I do not think the season through has been any colder or more changeable than in almost all the northern states. We have had slight frost every month but not so as to injure our corn much. Some fields however were entirely cut off. Potatoes are not as good as they were last year on account of the drouth. We have had only a few days at a time of very cold weather as yet, did not have any snow untill Nov & have not had any sleighing yet. Now have three or four inches of snow. This morning the mercury stood 26 degrees below zero, but the weather is moderating a little. I think I never knew such sudden extremes in the changes of the weather as those we have had in the last four weeks.

My health is comfortably good, far better than it seemed possible for me ever to be again. Oh, how much sickness I have been carried through & yet my life is spared. What shall I render to my God for all his gifts to me? Smead is well as usual; is at work most of the time now for himself. Cannot earn much in the winter; it is dull times here as well

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as in other places, but we have got plenty of corn, potatoes to eat. Also a nice pig to kill in the spring, & hope soon to have milk our cow will come in the course of a week or two, & we have some fourteen hens or so. & a little Canary bird hatched yesterday morning, my little birds are quite a help to us. I find these hard times I can sell all I raise; a few weeks since I sold one for a dollars worth of butter & two bushels of wheat.

It is sometime since I have heard from Almira. She was well the last time she wrote, she is married again. Olive is also married & lives some three miles from her. Almira M has a son born last Apr I think. I have had a good letter from Lysander not long since he was then in Ann Arbor. I think there has a great change come over him in regard to his life. Poor brother I wish he had a home of his own & some one to love & care for him.

Charlotte I often think of you since the death of your Mother. Oh how sad & lonely it seems to loose a parent. It brings fresh to my mind the day of my fathers death, now almost fourteen years since. It seems but yesterday & yet when I remember all the changes which I have passed through it seems longer than it really is. It must have been pleasant for you to be so near your mother that you could occasionally go & send a helping hand or give her a comforting word. It is hard to part with friends, but let us remember we must soon follow them, we know not how soon.

Our place is under great excitement in consequence of two robberies which have just been committed. One on the

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Eau Claire bank, the other United States government money.
N B Boyden, the Receiver, was sitting in his office making
out his returns about 9 o clock in the evening when he was
taken blindfolded, gagged & tied with a rope to his writing
desk & his safe robbed of about fifty four hundred dollars.
He was to start for Washington the next morning. As yet we
know not who done it.

Love to all. L A H