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Family correspondence, 1838, 1855-1874 [Transcriptions].

Hastings, Lucy A.

[s.l.]: [s.n.], [s.d.]

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Oxford, May 9th, 1855

Dear Brother & Sister.

When I left home I intended to have written you before this but have been so situated that I could not very well untill now. Untill a week past we have been dodging about, remaining but a short time in one place. We had a very good journey; did not meet with any accident to ourselves, but our trunks, met with hard usage. Locks & hinges broke etc. Smead had to keep buying bedcords to tie them up with. Still we did not lose anything. It is astonishing how they throw baggage about. It needs iron trunks to travel west with.

The journey agreed with me well. I would like to give you a description of numerous places we past, but it is hard to do it on paper. We crossed on the suspension bridge at Niagra, had a fine view of the falls. It made me dizzy to look down into the water. You can hardly imagine what a curiosity the suspension bridge is.

The west is a fine country. The broad praires look beautiful, almost beyond description. How I wish you could see the nice farms, in many places. The town of Elgion in the northern part of Illinois I think the most beautiful place I have seen. It seemed almost like a paradise. Land is very high there, wood scarce there. Imagine how it would seem to cast your eye 5 miles or more almost on a level & scarcely a tree to be seen. & this is but a begining of some places.

We started from Greenfield April 4th arrived at Sister Almira's the 6th found all well. She has got a pretty place & if the girls have their health will do well. Brother Lysander was there; was not intending to work on the railroad long; knew not what he should do, thought he should not go east at present.

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Oxford is a smart little village just beginning to be built up. There are two stores a Tavern & Sawmill & Flouring mill, blacksmith shop etc. A large store & Meetinghouse to be built this summer, besides many dwelling houses. Mr. Hastings is at work here Carpentering. He has bought 80 acres of land about 5 miles from here, but will not build on it yet, as he has not enough to get team etc. to go to farming this summer. Nearly all the government land about here that is good is being taken up. People are after it thick as bees. We are now boarding out, as our goods have not yet come. Intend to keep house soon as we can. Smeads health is better than when we left Mass, it is much better for him to work out doors.

I like well, & am contented. The railroad is expected to run here before long. It does not seem much here as it does East. Everything is so different, but it will not cost half as much to live here as it does there. Wheat 1 dollar a bushel, potatoes 28 cents, eggs 6½ cents a dozen etc. There is plenty of wild game here. Pigeons by millions, I never saw such a sight, they fairly darken the clouds at times. There are some deer's. I have seen one bounding along. We have plenty of very nice fish: Succors & Pickerel weighing six, eight & ten lbs., some more.

Well I must bring my letter to a close for I must write to others. Also Smead sends love & will write some time. He likes well. Write us soon. Direct to Oxford, Marquette Co. Wisconsin.

Yours with affection

L A Hastings

Oxford, Apr 27th, 1856.

Dear Brother & Sister.

It being rainy this sabbath morning we concluded to stay at home from meeting today, &, as it is a busy time of the year we would spend a part of the time in writing to our friends.

We are both in the enjoyment of very good health & have been all through the cold winter. Since my recovery from the ague I have been able to do all my work, washing & ironing included.

We hear you have had a very cold winter. We also have had the coldest winter people say that ever was known in Wisconsin, but have only had snow enough for beautiful sleighing all winter. The ground has now been settled as much as three weeks. Grass has started considerable; in a week more there will be plenty of feed for cattle. Winter wheat looks nice; Smead is going to sow five acres of Spring wheat & have one acre of potatoes, corn, etc.

He is going to work at Carpentering again, some of the time, for he has not any team yet. He has bought a heifer ; coming in about two or three weeks from now, so hope to have milk & make our own butter. It is now worth 20cts a lb, eggs 12½ for dozen. We do have plenty of them to use, our hens are doing nicely. Expect we shall have some chickens in a day or two. We also have plenty of pork, for we have just killed a good fat hog; & if you will come in & take supper with us, we will give you some fresh meat. Have also got a pig doing nicely.

My little Canary birds are doing well. I succeeded well in bringing them out here. They were not so much trouble as my carpet bag, for I could hang them up in the cars by my side; while we were sometimes so crowded that I had to hang unto my carpet bag to keep it. They seemed to enjoy the ride & would amuse the passengers by their singing. Sometimes there were others who

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also had birds with them & when they all got to singing we had music. Dear brother, the bible says if meat make thy brother to offend I will eat none; ye, the same rule perhaps ought to hold good in all things. If we cannot lead them to see, it is not right to be offended, & want to dictate for us what we shall have & do. I hope you have not, & will not lose much sleep for fear my birds will eat us out of house & home. Why are you dissatisfied with what we are satisfied with if it does not hurt you at all. They bid fare to be much more profitable than our hens; for they will sell quick at from 2 to 5 dollars apair, & it only costs about one cent & a half a week to keep them. I now have a young pair about one week old & are already spoke for. I can sell all they raise; I have almost every day a new applicant for some. So I hope you will now rest more easy, but if my keeping them is still an eyesore to you, let me know it for I do not want to keep a stumbling block in my brothers way.

We have a very pleasant place; have got some things planted in our garden, some of our neighbors have got cabbages up. The weather is very warm here, so that many days we do not keep any fire except when cooking, have the door & window open also. Fish, Prairie Hens &, wild ducks, & Pigeons we now have here in abundance; but as Smead has not got a gun we do not have any, only when our neighbors send us some. We perhaps are not quite as much among savage people as you think; for, as Oxford & the other towns about are settled mostly with eastern people who have come within 2 or 3 years, but few have been here as long as 12 years. The manners, customs & costumes do not seem much different from Mass, but the land, farms & many of the houses, etc. seem to show a great contrast. Here in the great west are rich men worth from 25 to 30 thousand dollars & some double, & thrilble that are living in their log houses of one room & a little chamber; but these are rare cases, we have some as nice houses as you do east. There are some Indians about here, although

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there are none who live very near us; but they go about from place to place, & sometimes come here. There are now just out from the village a large number (some say two hundred or more) come to have a Jubilee. We can hear them hollow & drum, although we are one mile & a half from them. I do not feel so afraid of them as I did when I first came out here; if they are treated well they seem quite friendly. When they come to a house they always come sly & peep into the windows first, or if the door happens to be open stand a little ways off peep in, laugh, & hop about same, & talk in their language awhile. If they are not spoken to after awhile, they venture along & come in & say Buzzoo (that is how do you do), then sit down on the floor sometimes. Some of them can talk our language quite well.

Sister Charlotte, Mrs. Spencer whom you spoke of I remember, she is about 75 miles a little east of south from us. We probably come within 12 miles of her in coming out here; as we staid in Janesville over night, & she cannot be far from there. Two of our nearest neighbors at S Falls by the name of Dole are 38 miles south of us come on this spring, and we are daily looking for another man who was to be here this month. Mrs Hagnes brother has come out here this spring, and her father & mother (Mr Hunt) talk of coming in Sept; & there are quite a number of others whom we knew scattered around us.

There has been quite a revival of Religion in this place this winter. Not any excitement, it has seemed, like the spirit of God working upon the hearts of men. Smead is one of the converts; he was rather inclining to be a skeptic, & we are trying to live a Christian life. As for myself, I have indulged a hope rather over a year, but have never made any public profession untill now. We have joined the Methodist Class; & were two weeks ago both baptized by immersion, four others were baptised with us. We feel quite anxious & interested to know your views & feeling in regard to a future state; the salvation of the soul is the end of our existance, the very purpose for

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which we were made. Dear brother, do you think of these things? Is your bible daily read & studied, that you may know what is your duty to God. Do you ever pray before your family or in secret; & are you striving to do every known duty in the fear & love of God. Think when we receive a favor from man how ready we are to thank him, & also feel under obligations to him; & shall we be less grateful to him from whom we receive all things, & to whom we owe all things. Oh think of this, let not the cares & trials of this life steal all your time & affections from God, but prepare to meet him in peace. & may you & yours so live that together with all our brothers & sisters we may meet, an unbroken number with all our loved friends who have gone before us in that Spirit land, where all is peace, love & joy & where partings are no more.

Well I think you cannot complain of this being a short letter, so I will leave the other side of this for him. I have not heard from our friends in Michigan since Dec, all well then. Just had a letter from Erastus wife, says his health is not very good, his lungs being much affected; also says Sister Sarah has been sick with a fever. I suppose you know Elisa A is married. Joel has never written us; I have just sent him another letter & hope we shall get an answer. Write us often, Love to yourselves & children. L A H

Well it seems Lucy has spun out a long yarn; now I will try to answer your questions that she has omitted. I think you hear more about the Kansas trouble than we do. Such things dont trouble us much; we have some of Sharpes rifles here to Hunt with, but I have got no gun. The people in this vicinity are down on the Nebraska bill & the action of Congress upon questions affecting Slavery. They are mostly strong friend of freedom & equal rights.

I think there are not many organizations of the Knownothings in this vicinity, there are some in the large towns & cities. There is one in Portage 20 miles from us. I should like to see there principles carried out.

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As to making money at farming, I cant do it without a team & tools; & I shall work out this sumer at carpentering. Those who have got a team & tools, land broke & fenced can make money fast and are. Wheat is worth 1,12, corn 75, oats 75, potatoes 70. Yours, DSH

Sabbath Eve.

Sister Charlotte

I commenced writing on a half sheet thinking I should not more than fill it to you both, but I found I covered it too soon & I will scribble a little more to you. I have been kept at home from meeting on account of bad road & the weather today. This evening Smead has gone to a prayer meeting held at one of our neighbors, & I am seated alone by my fireplace. Would that you could come in & sit with me; but as that cannot be, I am thankful we can converse with our friends in this silent way.

I am glad you have taken Oscar to live with you & wish his brothers & sisters were as well provided for. What a responsibility rests upon those who have the care of children, in order to bring them up so that they will be ornaments to society.

The Typhoid fever has prevailed about here considerable this winter; & people prophecy it is going to be more sickly on account of the severe winter. You Eastern people know but little of the hardships & deprivations of some of our western people who live in log houses. It would make your heart ache to look into some that I have seen since I left Mass, & yet the inmates seemed contented, tough and happy. Still a good share of the log houses are as warm & comfortable as framed houses, but I have not yet got so accustomed to seeing them as to like their looks very well. I have three neighbors who live in such, but they are very comfortable. Timber is so scarce & high that many who commence on new farms are obliged to put up such until they can do better.

Smead has just returned home & is going to finish a letter he commenced to his brother in Iowa; & says that brother must excuse him from writing this time, but say I must say a little in regard to farming. Prices of produce & wheat is 75 cts a bushel, Corn 75, Oats 60, Potatoes 50, butter 25 cts a lb & not much to be had at that. Those who like us do not have a cow have to eat pork butter. We miss apples; think of us when you get your dish of them to eat around your fireside these winter evenings. Dried apples are 15 cts a lb.

We have just been looking over our list of unanswered letter, & find we have eleven which have lain too long; & I must now close & write to another.

Our love to yourselves & the children. Direct your letters to us the same as you have done untill we tell you otherwise; hope to hear from you soon. Excuse errors for I have written in haste.

L A H

Oxford, Jan 25th, 1857

Dear Brother & Sister.

Again I will pen a few lines to let you know how we are getting along this cold winter. Our health is good as usual, but we feel as though we had got too far north for comfort. We now have about 3 feet of snow & very sever cold weather. One day the mercury stood 39 degrees below zero, (it is a very uncommon winter).

Smead has now traded away our farm & done well. He has bought 102 acres of first rate land about 160 miles north west of here. We may never go there to live; & yet may go this spring, have not yet decided. We find it a very good way for poor folks out here to go on to Government land, make improvements then sell, & after awhile get to farming in good shape. There is a great call for land where he has bought; & if he has a chance that suits, he will let it go & we perhaps get to Kansas yet. His land is in the valley of the Chippewa river, about 90 miles from the Mississippi river. Timber there is plenty & cheap, here it is very high & scarce. Still we like here; & if he had a team & farming tools sufficient to make a business of farming without working out, he probably would not have sold.

We last week received a letter from Lysander, he was well, but said that he had been obliaged to quit work on the railroad. It was so tedious being on the Praires this cold weather, but did not tell me what he was doing. He writes me kind, affectionate letters; & I think I discover traces of a reformation of life & habits. God grant that it may be so.

I have not heard from Greenfield since Mr Hunts & family came on here. I often think of Freedom & her children, hope they are

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comfortable this cold winter. Sister Sarah writes she feels lonely now brother Joel is gone, he used to call in there so often when at home. You also says she knew not, but that he was getting well untill it was too late to find him alive. I doubt not she felt great anxiety & desired to see him; & I believe too she has tried to do what she could (situated as she is) to help him. Every one does not know all she has done for him, it is true she did not visit him often nor does she visit anywhere often; but I believe she would like to go more than she does. We must exercise charity in regard to what we consider errors in others. A woman has not always that freedom & power to do as they please that a man has. Had he been at home when sick, I think she would have done her best to alleviate his sufferings. He is gone & a train of circumstances prevented her, & you, showing what you would do had it been otherwise. Erastus wrote me a very feeling letter in regard to his death, said he was sick & could not go to the funeral.

You ask me if he has not long been a neglected brother? I admit it may be so, but what was the cause of that neglect? Was it from any ill will or hard feelings towards him? No, you as well as I know some of the causes, & I need not here mention them. We are all failable creatures, full of sin & need the assistance of God's holy spirit every moment of our lives to guide & direct that we may not err. Oh brother let us learn wisdom from the past, & strive to live in peace & union, not only with our brothers & sisters but with all mankind, so that when another is called we may not feel self-condemnation. I often think could my Father & all my brothers 7 Sister be per-

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mitted to meet with me again, the first thing I would do, should be ask forgiveness for all that I had said or done that was wrong. But that cannot be, yet I can seek for it through the merits of Christ our Redeemer, & there I hope to find it. How necessary it is for us to search our own hearts & see if they are right in the sight of God; also to watch over our thoughts, words & actions in order to live as becometh such Travellers to Eternity as we are. Oh how far short we come of being what we ought to be; I do hope the remainder of our lives will be devoted to the service of God, that we may be prepared to meet him in peace. Forgive all that I have said or done that is wrong. Write soon L A H

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 occasionly 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

Eau Claire, Oct 25th, 1857

Dear Brother & Sister.

Your last letter was received about four weeks since. I had indeed looked long & anxious for tidings from you; & if you want me to write oftener, you must do so yourself, for I always wait to hear from you before I write. You say it is a task to write, but I see not why it should be to write to me. As long as that is the only way I can hear from you, could you know how I prize your letters & how much consolation they are to me. In this western land of strangers, (as it were), away from all my brothers & sisters, & almost without a hope of ever seeing them in this world, it seems you could not complain of the task. No, dear Sister do not think so any more, but set down, unfold your heart to me often, & I will do the same.

We are both well, & doing well; my health was never better I think. I have had two boarders all summer, & for four weeks past have had three. I do all my work alone, but do not expect they will stay with us more than three or four weeks longer, as they will get through work here probably about that time. They are old acquaintances from Oxford & have been building a Presbyterian Church.

Mr. Hastings works for them for 2½ dollars a day. We have 4½ dollars each a week for the board, so you have reason to rejoice we came here instead of mourning. Besides you can come see us just as easy & cheap. It is much more healthy here than at Oxford: the water is better (it is soft & good as ever I tasted in my life), there has been nothing of the Ague here this season. Provisions are not as high as they have

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been but are well high up yet. Have just bought a jar of butter at 35 cts a lb (we have paid 40), flour is 8 dollars a barrell, potatoes 30 cts or less a bushell.

I have not much news to write. I have had a letter from Lysander, from what I hear think he doing well. Said he had been to see Almira & had a good visit; I suppose you know Almira M is married & lives about 4 miles from home. You did not tell me what Addison said about my letters, nor did you say whether Freedom had received my letter or not.

It must seem lonely indeed to you & brother Adams to have one after another taken away by death, it would seem sad to me to visit there again & not see the old friends left there. But death is not a respecter of persons; no, the loved, the rich & poor alike fall victims to his solemn call. Oh how necessary it is that we live in constant preparation for that day in which we must exchange worlds. Sister have you yet given your heart to God? Oh wait not to be better, not the righteous sinners Jesus came to call. Be hopeful, trust the boundless mercy of a crucified & risen Saviour, & all will indeed be well for time & for eternity.

I have received a paper from you; it was a real treat to see a Greenfield paper once more, do send them oftener & not be afraid I shall not get them.

I would like to send you some of the big fish we catch out of the Chippewa river. Mr Hastings brought up one weighing about 15 lbs the other morning, we have all we want. As for Huckleberries old montague plains is nothing compared to them. I never saw them so thick, nor near as large as they

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are here. I went out a little while one afternoon, picked 10 qts. Every bluff is covered with them. Cranberries in great abundance, but not quite as plenty as they were last year.

It is some weeks since I have heard from Mrs Haynes; they were all well then. Mrs Hunt, I think, is well contented. Is old Uncle David Newel living? One of our neighbors, Mr Willard, is a nephew of his; came from York state here, lives with his son in law Mr Kidder, the Congregational minister of this place. Mr K, I think, has a sister married & living in Gill; I do not think of the name now. I should think Mother would almost feel as though she was outliving everybody, she must be sad & lonely. Give my love to her, & say she is not forgotten. Where is Sarah P & husband? Write soon for I am always anxious to hear from you. Why does not Eliza write me? My love to her & John, & remember me to all enquiring friends. Smead sends respects also.

Love & good wishes of your Sister L A Hastings

Eau Claire, Feb 26th, 1858

Dear Sister

I was glad indeed to get a line from you, & do wish I could hear oftener. I suppose you think the same; well then let us both write oftener. We are both well & growing fat; we like here well as ever. Were you & Sister A & brothers where I could see you occasionally, I should not have any desire to leave this place. We have enough to eat & the very best of water to drink & enough to wear. If it is hard times this is more than every one can say, you need not worry about us if we are well. Business has been dull here this winter, but I suppose the hard times have been felt the least in Wis of any state in the union.

Spring is now approaching & work will probably be more plenty every where. Remember we have the same God to watch over us here, that we should have there. I have never regretted coming west. We have not had any regular boarders this winter; thought best to take life more easy through the cold weather, which by the way has not been very severe so far. We had a few cold days in Nov & a few this month. Yesterday & today is very warm, so that we hardly need any fire to keep warm.

Had a letter from Erastus & wife not long since; she tells me his health is poor, I fear he has not long to stay in this world. How I do wish I could see him, he is a dear brother to me. I have my thoughts as well as you as to somebody's being nice, by what he writes me I should think he worshiped his little Carrie.

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Last evening I received a letter from Mrs Bancroft, a daughter of Parley Meriam's. If first received a letter from him, he learned our place of residence by Uncle Jothan. They live in Waupun, Fondulac Co Wis about 2 hundred miles from us, but when we were at Oxford were only about 40 miles apart. We mean to go & see them sometime. Mrs Bancroft lives about 4 mile from her Father. They must be well off as to this worlds goods; she writes they have 260 acres of land (have near one hundred acres under the plough), 2 hood houses (one for a tenant), a good barn & other out buildings. Have been in Wis about 14 years. Although they are strangers, it seems pleasant to know that I have even a cousin so near me in this westernworld.

I had a letter from Olive T not long since. They were all well & now always write good news in regard to Lysander. Do they not write to you? Lis what makes you backward in answering the questions I ask you? If you have not burned up my last letter I want you to read it over & see you skipped them. Write out your whole heart, anything you think I want to know. I would love to show you brother E's letters to me, may be it would afford you some light & comfort. In regard to somethings which I do not think best to write, one thing I do know, unless a certain person has reformed there cannot be any dependance on their word. You will not be apt to know where the truth comes. Oh what a pity.

I hear from Mrs Haynes & folks often. Her children have been sick with scarlet fever; Sylvanus wife also, but were all getting better. The last we heard it has been very sickly

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with it about Oxford. It is not such a healthy place as this.

Go to see mother often as you can, give my love to her. How happens Sarah P to come & stay there? So where is her husband? I am much obliged for the News paper sent & ask for more. It does me so much good to get hold of them. I would send you one oftener but we do not have any published now; the foreman was taken sick sometime ago & has not been able to attend to business so we have none now. Smead sends respects to all. Remember me to Elija & say I would like to have her write me, also to Freedom & children. Write soon, & forget not your absent Sister L A Hastings.

Eau Claire, Aug 22nd, 1858

Dear Sister.

It is long since I have penned a line to you. I have had so much to do, & so many cares that it has seemed impossible to write; but Oh how much I have wanted to see you & unburden my whole heart. Shall I never have that privilege again?

My health has been good considering the family I have had to do for this summer. I have had two boarders most of the time untill a few weeks since they left. Since that time we have been alone except brother Erastus; this morning he left on the boat to go back east. It seems hard to part with him, but I suppose it is all for the best. He has never been well pleased with the place (there is nothing like Boston with him) & is so afraid to go into business that we could not encourage him to do so. Although we think he might do well, poor brother he is so downhearted & discouraged. I do not know what will become of him, how much he has failed since we left Mass. He seems like a broken down old man; how much he has reminded one of Father. There is nothing but farming that he dares to go into out here. He has been talking about buying one (may come back & buy it yet); if he should, would want us to carry if on for him.

Now Sarah, I want you to write me, tell me all about his wife. What do you think of her? Would I live with her? Tell me just what y(ou) think of her, do not be so afraid to say what you want to to me. His health has improved since coming here, & I am very confident it would be better for them to come hereif they could only be contented, but if they cannot

Eau Claire, Aug 22nd, 1858

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had rather they would never come. As for ourselves we like as well as ever & have not any desire to seek another home in this world.

I suppose you know Sister Almira was married last spring. It is now sometime since I have heard from her, or from Lysander. I must write them soon. We have had rather a wet season & a good deal of warm weather; so that wheat in many places has rusted. Corn looks well, but will not be out of they way of frost untill about two weeks more. Yesterday & today the weather is quite cool; we are almost afraid of a frost tonight.

Joseph H has been at Glen Haven ever since he first went there which was soon after he left Greenfield, is about well & will soon return home I suppose. We last week had a letter from Lemuel; his health is very poor, has some fears his lungs are diseased. The rest of the family are well as usual. Lydia has two children.

I do not remember of seeing that letter you speak of which was written to Sister. Let the past go. Could you see each other I think a satisfactory history of circumstances would be given, & both would view things in a different light. Of course both would feel different, but as that is uncertain as to seeing each other, I would advise you to write. I think you would get an answer, a correspondence ought to be kept up.

We have accounts of great revivals of religion in the eastern states. I have sometimes thought perhaps the Millennium was about commencing; God grant the good work may

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continue, & that we may share in its blessed fruits.

May thanks for all the papers you have sent. I would send you some but have none to send. I hear from cousin Parley occasionally. I have not heard from Mrs Haynes for sometime past, all well when I did. I believe I must close for this time as I have a number of letters to write having neglected all my correspondence. Please answer this immediately, & do not fail to give me a good description of all that I want to know. Do not keep this letter.

Our love to yourselves & all enquiring friends. L A Hastings

Eau Claire, Nov. 7th, 1858

Friend Adams

We have received 2 letters from Sarah recently, and presume you will be anxious to hear from Lucy again. She is not able to write, so I have all the writing to do & shall write but little, for the want of time.

I have had to leave my work & take care of her for 3 or 4 weeks past, but now we have got an old nurse, a real good mother to her, & she seems to be getting a little better. The worst of it is we cant have the old Lady but a few days, as she must go 5 miles from here to stay with her Daughter. If Lucy gets well enuf to ride I shall take her out there to be nursed up awhile. Our neighbors are very kind & bring in things for her to eat etc., but there is none of them can come here & stay to take care of her.

I have considerable work to do on our house to make it comfortable for winter. Lucy has some of her old complaints, still some different. She needs good care & I think if she can have it she will get up again. She sits up 3/4 an hour a day, and says tell Sarah we could not get money to go East with (without sacrificing too much) and if we could she is not able now to go, but wants Sarah to come & stay with her this winter.

I wish you could come out with her. There is but very little money in circulation here now, & any man with the ready cash can increase it very fast. Erastus was afraid to do anything, but I know he hardly knew what to do on account of his wife. I think she will keep him in the City till she uses up what means he has got, then he can go. Perhaps I judge too hard.

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Money can be let out here for from 25 to 50 per cent with good security. If a man is here he can see for himself what the security is; I know how it is. Eastern Capitalists need not be so much alarmed because Sonie have been shaved. You can let any amount of cash at 12 per ct & perfectly safe by Law, but a man can make more by trading.

We have had no Snow here yet & not very cold.

It seems to me we had our share of sickness years ago, & it comes rather hard to have Lucy dow again while we are trying so hard to get a good comfortable home. But we must try to be reconciled to our lot & do the best we can. If Lucy can get a little better I may try yet to get her to Northampton; & if she ever get well again she shall not work so hard.

The route here after the River freezes will be from Chicago by Portage City to Sparta, 80 miles from here, by Rail Road & from Sparta by Stage. Boats are runing yet.

Yours with out love to all. D. S. Hastings

Eau Claire, Dec 30th, 1858

Friend Adams

As Lucy has been writing a little to Sarah, I will pen a few lines to you, & will comence by wishing you all "A Happy New Year." It will not be so happy a new year with us, as it might if we both enjoyed good health. But if Lucy ever gets up again I mean to try to keep her from overdoing. There is a poor prospect of her recovery here, but I think if she could be at Northampton awhile She might be cured or be made comfortable.

I should have taken her there or to some other place East long ago if I could have got money. But there is no cash to be had here, ro when there is a little it lets for 5 per cent a month & some higher. I was hopeing we should be able to get us a good comfortable home soon, but if it requires the sacrifice of what little we have got to get Lucy up again then it must go, but I think it will not all of it.

I have a good Lot & House not all finished worth \$800, all paid for & no incumbrancebut cant raise cash on it here now. Now if you or any one that knows me will send us \$100, I will well pay it when I am able to sell or earn it with good interest. That will do to go East with, but I shall want more before we return.

The weather here has been quite mild so far. Just snow enough for good sleighing. Yours with love to all. D S Hastings
Dear Sister

The temptation to write you again is so strong that I shall scribble awhile if it does hurt me. In some respects my system has improved a little, but disease is not removed nor is there any signs of its being done. No I see nothing

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but suffering & death before me here; & I might not be cured anywhere, but think there is a chance if I could have such treatment as I need. It is my old complaints of course.

I wish myself back to Northampton.

Money is very scarce here. We have a house & lot here worth at least 700 dollars & have tried to raise money but cannot. & Smead has 200 dollars at his command due next fall but cannot have it now. I think I could stand the journey & if could only raise a hundred dollars should start immediately. But we cannot so I must resign myself to my fate. Oh how I do want to see you. Why do you not write me? You ask me Almira's husbands name; it is Pulhemus. I do not know whether he is a widower or not; he has a shoe shop in Dexter is a Deacon of the Baptist Church. I believe Sister was very sick through the summer, but was so she done her work the last time she wrote. Lysander was there & well, also is very steady. Thank God for that Sister. Parley Meriam & family have all been sick this summer, their daughter, Mrs Brancroft has lost a child. I am tired out & must stop. Write immediately.

Love to all from L A H.

Eau Claire, Jan 26th, 1859

Dear Brother & Sister

We received your letter yesterday stating that you had sent us \$100, & today the money came to hand having been forwarded by the Express Agent at Reeds Landing, situated at the mouth of the Chippewa River. There being no Express Office here, it was sent to one of our Merchants.

I ought to have requested you to send a Draft on N. York, that would bring the face of it or one per cent premium here. But it may be as well as it is, for if we go East your money will be better.

I cant tell how soon we shall start if at all for Lucy is not so well now. One or 2 weeks past she has seemed to gain some, but the last 3 or 4 days has lost & last evening she had a very poor turn but is better today. Sends her love to all & says she will try to write you a little soon. We are having comfortable winter weather.

We feel grateful for all you kindness to us. Yours &
c. D. S. Hastings

Eau Claire, Feb 22nd, 1859

Dear Brother & Sister

I suppose you are anxiously looking for a line from us, so I will try my strength at writng again. My health is again improving some, so that I can sit up some & walk a little. Oh how much sickness & suffering I am carried through. How much cause for gratitude & love to God for his goodness & mercy to so sinful & unworthy a mortal as myself. I do hope I shall live more faithful & devoted to him the remainder of my life.

We have not given up the idea of going east, but shall not start untill the river opens, as it will be so much easier for me to ride in a boat. We are now having mild, beautiful weather. The ice is rotting away & the prospect bids fair that the boats may run as early as they did last year. The first one came up the 28th of March.

Disease has seemed to come to a crisis; & my Physician here thinks I may regain comfortable health, but never be as well as I have been. I think Dr. Halstea would again cure me, but I sometimes think if I can only get so as to do my own work perhaps I had better not go to Northampton again as it will be attended with so much expense. & I feel as though I am hardly worth having so much done for me, & then again I think I am liable at any time to be clear down again & if so, the expense may be more than if I should go there, besides the risk of getting up again.

I am quite undecided yet, the money you sent us in safe keeping so that we can go if we think best. Mr. Hastings spoke of sending a note in this letter but concluded he would not this time as the letter he sent would serve as a receipt

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untill we made up our minds whether to send the money back, or go back ourselves, & thenmake it right.

I do not know as have any news to write. Smead's health is not very good but is able to work all the time, although could not get work to earn much this winter. But as spring opens trust he will be able to get work & earn something. He works now finishing our own house, I wish you could see what a pretty place we have. It makes life too dear to me, I love it so. Well, it has been hard times here as well as in other places, but we have been comfortable every way notwithstanding our afflictions. Have not heard from Almira of late, nor from Lysander. I am getting tired & must stop.

My love to Mother & all inquiring friends. Do write soon as you as get this & you may expect to hear from us often. Our love to you all. L A Hastings

Eau Claire, Apr 20, 59

Dear Brother & Sister.

It is a long time since I have taken my pen to write you. Sickness is my only apology & that I consider sufficient. Mr H ought to have written you oftener, but his daily cares pressed so hard that he kept putting off for more leisure, thus our correspondence has not been very frequent on either side.

My health has improved considerable for the last two months, but I am far from being well. Yet if I can only get so as to do my work, I will not complain if I do suffer some. Can now do a little but have to be very careful. We have intended to go back to Northampton, & may yet, but if I can get tolerable well think we shall not on account of the expense of going & coming back. Yet I can never be as well as I have unless I go there again.

Smeads health is about as usual, has not had much work at his trade this year as yet, but hope there will be more building going on by & by. Our winter has been quite mild with only about snow enough for sleighing. March & Apr thus far has been cold & backward with frequent snow storms. Boats commenced running over the Chippewa river to this place about two weeks since.

I've received a letter from Charlotte E while she was at Sister Adams. Was pleased to see the improvement she had made in writing. Think she has done well, hope she will write us again. Cousin Parley Meriam wrote us about one year ago, since that we kept up a correspondence. His daughter, Mrs Bancroft writes occasionally. They have two children living, buried one child last fall. There is a family lately moved

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into this place who used to be neighbors to them. Say Cousin & all his family are well off. I have not heard from Sister Almira or from Lysander for sometime, believe I wrote them last. You must not expect a long letter from untill I am better for I become tired very easy & have quite a pile of letters before me to be answered. They have been gathering ever since my sickness, & must be attended to fast as my strength will admit.

Should I continue to gain you will probably hear from us oftener than you have done, but God only knows what is for us. We have only the promise of today, & if we are only what we ought to be, it matters not what tomorrow brings. Write soon & often. Our love to all. L A Hastings

Eau Claire, May 3, 59

Dear Brother & Sister.

Long & anxiously had I been looking for a letter from you. At last one come, & now I am going to write & answer it immediately so that you may follow my example & not have to wait untill I get almost out of patience & think you have forgotten me or are sick.

My health is somewhat better than when I last wrote you but am not good for much yet. Still I am thankful to be as well as I have been. If I can only do my own work, with what little Smead would help me, it is all I ask I will be contended. Your advice in regard to taking care of myself is good, & I shall endeavor to do so. & I assure I do have to rest often times a day in order to get along any way & gain. I shall never attempt to keep boarders & do as I have done; indeed, I cannot if I would.

You ask if our unfinished house was comfortable through the winter. The part we occupied was, Smead fixed it nice. You need not worry but that I shall be well cared for so long as he has his health & can work. It has been & is now hard times. Ther is not much work to be had, & cannot get money for what is to be done, but we have got along thus far comfortable. We do not have the dainties you eastern people have & you perhaps would think it hard fare, but we have enough to eat, drink & wear (if it is not so nice. As the place becomes older, things will be cheaper & more plenty.

You ask if I have used my carpet; I have some, winters, & a nice thing it is for me too. It makes a room so much warmer & saves so much hard work. I have not had a Rocking

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chair untill since I was taken sick. Smead bought one like my Cane seat one I had east, only it is light colored. & what do you suppose he paid for it? Well it was six dollars; he would have got me one before, but I was not willing to have him pay so much for one if we could do without. We paid one dollar apeice for our wooden bottom chairs; & they are not any better than those we had east you remember. It will not always be so. When they get to making them in this country they will be cheaper. We lived some four or six months without any chairs, except one which a neighbor purpose (?) for me. We used stools & so did all the Aristocracy for they could get nothing else for a long time. Chairs and nearly all the furniture are brought from Cincinnati or some eastern place in the boats. I used nothing but a pine table which Smead made. Am going to wait untill tables are more plenty & cheaper, then I will have a good one.

Well I have most filled my sheet & have said nothing about that money which you sent us. We have concluded to send it back soon as we hear from you & shall give up going back east at present for if I can only be comfortable we cannot afford to go &, if I get down again perhaps some way will open so that I can go. We do not feel right to keep it any longer for it has not been put out to interest. We have just kept it in the house, so that we could start any time if we thought best. Mr. Hastings wants to know if it would do just as well to send you a check on some N. York Bank, or whether

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you prefer to have the money itself returned. What did you pay for having it sent? We shall not be able to pay any Interest on it just now, but will as soon as we can; pay whatever you think is right. Write immediately, for we want to start it on to you some way.

L A Hastings

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 you 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

Eau Claire, Feb. 26th/60

Dear Brother & Sister

Long and anxiously have we looked for a letter from you. At last it has come, & I am going to give you an immediate answer, hoping thereby to obtain one from you sooner.

My health has been quite good for me all winter, far better than I had reason to expect, considering all the sickness I have passed through. I have done my work alone, & got along well.

Lemuel H. came her last October, & has been with us ever since untill last thursday, when he started for home. He thinks of going east in the spring, to spend the summer. If so, you will probably see him, & then you can learn all about us. He has been out of health for about two years. He improved rapidly while here. The soft water & pure bracing air off this country seemed to have a very beneficial effect. We have had a mild open winter with the exception of now & then an extreme cold day or two at a time; have not had any sleighing to speak of. Nearly all of Feb. has seemed like spring. Today is a lovely day, warm enough to sit comfortably without a fire.

Now I must tell you the good news, we have a calf five weeks old & we have a plenty of milk to use & make our own butter. Oh you do not know how we prize it! I hardly ever see the cow or look at my pans of milk without thinking of you & feeling grateful for your present by which means we obtained the cow. We make a complete pet of her.

The times are rather dull & money scarce. Smead has not

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been able to earn much this winter, but we have got along well. Raised a plenty of corn & potatoes & have had some to spare. The time is now at hand when he can get work & be earning something, although there is not a very good prospect of much building being done this year.

I received a letter from Erastus & Carrie a short time since by which we learned he was very feeble. I fear he will not live long, how I wish I could see him once more though it were but for an hour; but I suppose that can never be again in this world. I have not had a letter from Almira or Lysander this winter.

Tis sad indeed to think of the fate of cousin William. I believe this is the first instance of anything of the kind ever happening to any of our relatives. I believe Ruth & her mother are all that is left of the family. How does Ruth & husband get along?

Well I do not know as I have much more to say this time, so I will send my love to Mother. Tell her she is still remembered; & though we meet not again here, we will hope to meet in Heaven. But with you there is a feeling that we shall yet meet again, it may not prove so, but there is comfort in the thought, & it affords me joy in many a lonely hour. I cannot forget brother Adams promise to visit us sometime, & this is the secret of my hope. Smead joins with me in sending love & good wishes to you & yours. L A Hastings

Eau Claire, March 11th/60

Dear Sister.

Your letter was received today noon, & this evening I will stay at home from meeting & write to you. For it is the only way I have in my power to express my deep sorrow & sympathy with loved friends in affliction. Oh it is sad to think of our dear brother's lot in this world. What you say in regard to his wife does not surprise me for from what I learned of her by him when he visited us & by her letters to him (he always showed them to me), I was satisfied she did not care anything about him. But it does seem strange that she should treat him so unkind now that he is so very low. I would suppose a sense of duty would cause her to do otherwise, even to a slave & much more so to one who has been so kind, & loved her so deeply as E has. I pity the reflection she will sometime have; may God have mercy on her. Were he within my reach, she should have no more chance to abuse him. I would take care of him myself if it cost me my life. But Alas, he is far from me, & I cannot soothe or cheer his wounded spirit. But God can & will do it, if he only goes to him with it all & pleads through the merits of the Saviour. Oh that I could see him once more, though it were but for an hour. It seems sometimes as though I could not be denied & yet I suppose I shall be & must be resigned & leave him in the hands of him who careth for us. It seems his religious views & feelings are much the same as when he was with us. It used to make me feel bad sometime to hear him talk as he did about somethings, & yet in some respects he seemed like a Christian. He was so good & kind to every body, that I often felt that he was one, & his errors or strange views were mistakes of the head &

not of the heart. You do not say as he said anything about me. I have sometimes feared that he felt hard towards me for not being more anxious to have him stay with us & move his family on. Had he not been married he would never left us untill death called him, but as it was with my feeble health & knowing what I did of Carrie, I felt that I could not do as he wished me to. He wanted to get a farm & have us live with him, all in one family. Did I do wrong by not being willing too? I felt that I could not live so, he would not do anything about it unless we did.

He did not seem like himself any of the time while with us. He often said it seemed as if he should be crazy. He knew not what to do, we tried to have him go into some business in the village & live in the house with us or build on his lot here, but no he was so afraid he could not make anything because it was so different from Boston that we could not persuade him. He might have done well in the Grocery business or others that I could mention, if he had only been contented & willing to try. I think his life might have been spared many years yet if he had staid. He gained strength & flesh while here; I sometimes feel as though I done wrong in not trying to all live together. & yet I feel taht I could not have lived so long. Tell me Sister, did he say anything as he blamed me for anything that transpired during his stay with us or that I did not do as I ought? Oh how my heart aches to see him. Untill his late sickness I had secretly hoped he would yet sometime come back & live with us & let Carrie take care of herself, for I knew he did not & never would enjoy

himself with her. Were he able to come I would now urge him to come. If he could only get sufficient strength the journey might do him good. I wonder how she dared neglect or speak harsh to him while you were there. Did she know that you felt it? Did E say anything to you about her treatment? Tell me everything you can think of. I received a letter from them a few weeks since; E commenced it, Carrie finished it. I wish he was able to write me a long letter & tell me his whole heart.

I am sorry to hear that you are not well & that brother Adams has been sick, do hope that he is now well & able to hear. It is one of the greatest of misfortunes to be deaf. When Lemuel H first came here last fall, he took a severe cold & his head was bad, for several weeks was almost entirely deaf. H used an ear syringe night & morning to wash out his ears, sometimes took Castile soap & water, sometimes clear water, after awhile got about over it. Freedom too is sadly afflicted, I often think of her & the family. How do they live & what will become of them should she remain blind? Who has Sarah J married & how did she happen to go to Boston to live? What is his business/ etc.? I do not know but you will be tired reading so much, also think I have asked too many questions, but you must excuse me for I feel anxious to know all about things.

Well Sarah we are all poor sinful, suffering creatures, of a day as it were, & we do need something to lean upon & bear us up. & that is just what our Saviour came into the world for, to "seek & save that which was lost." Oh Sister

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lean on him with faith, plead his merits & you are safe. We cannot save ourselves, he is our righteousness. Look away from self, see what he has done for you, yes for you he suffered & died that you might live. Sis believe love & bless him. You ask me to pray for you, be assured I do, but you must pray for yourself. Go to God with all your hopes & fears, tell him your whole heart just as you would to an earthly parent. Believe that he is the hearer & answerer of prayer, & he will hear you. Never be discouraged, persevere till death & may the Lord give you peace.

How does Freedom bear her trials? Did you ever talk with her upon the subject of religion? Poor Ophelia, I often think of her & sometimes wish I had taken her with us. I do hope she will yet be better, my love to them. Do not let her die without talking to her upon the subject. Excuse mistakes, write again soon. Love from D S & L A H.

Eau Claire, May 22/60

Dear Sister.

I have delayed writing you longer than I ought, but have not been very well for a weeks past, & have not had ambition enough to set myself about it. I am now feeling some better & will try to pen a few lines.

It seems sad & lonely when I think of Erastus. He has been almost like a Father to me, & now to know he is dead & that I can never see him is indeed a deep sorrow. He owned a lot here & I had flattered myself he would be out here again. I would have been glad to have had him lived with us & if he had not been married probably would not have left us long as he lived. I have always been afraid that he felt hard towards me, because I did feel as though I could undertake to do as he wanted us too. I tried hard to have him get into some business in this village & either build or live in the house with us, just as he thought best. But no, he would do nothing unless we would go to farming or something that we could all live together. Sometimes I think I wish he had never come out here, for I feel as though he had never felt towards us as he did before. But I do not know, it seems he has not left a parting word for me. Did he never enquire or say anything about us or our affairs? Oh how I wish I could have been with him as you & Addison was. You cannot think how I miss his letters, he generally wrote often. I believe I have all the letters he has written since we came west. The last one he sent us he only wrote a little & Carrie had to finish it.

Do you know who will be the Administrator on his estate? Did he say anything about a note he held against Smead given

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when we lived at Oxford? He told us we need not ever pay it unless he asked for it & that Carrie knew nothing of it, & if he was taken away it would be destroyed, we should not have it to pay. I did not know but he might have said something to you or Addison, but he wrote me immediately after Erastus died, but did not say E left a word for me. There are some other things I should say to you were you present but dare not trust it on paper.

I wrote Carrie some three or four weeks since, but have not received an answer. I wrote just as good a letter as I could & hope she will answer it. I am glad E was carried to Greenfield to be buried; it seems pleasant to think he will lay by the side of Father. Oh how would I love to visit their grave & shed my tears there instead of shedding them over this paper, but there is a long distance between us & probably I shall never be there, yet we do not what may be. But one thing we do know, death is certain sooner or later. Oh let us try to live prepared for it.

You speak of the hardness of your heart. Did you ever think who gave you to feel its stupidity & hardness? & it is for just such as you & I that Christ came into the world for Sinners not the righteous. Jesus came to call, you remember the hymn, "Come ye sinners poor & needy." Read it & ponder well its meaning. As to Erastus Christianity, I do not know as it is right to say any thing about it. I think his mind has been at times much exercised, but that for a number of years past it has been settled into a fixed state. It seems he talked with you about the same as when here; I often felt

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bad to hear him talk, & yet, he had some excellant views & he was always so kind & generous, etc. I can but feel at ease about him, we know he is in the hands of a Holy & just God, & there I am willing to leave him.

I have not had a letter from Almira or Lysander since last fall. I wrote las to them & now I have written again to A, hope to hear soon. Sarah I wish you could find a book called Memoir of Carvosso. If you cannot find it at the book store, you may find it among the sabboth school books in the Methodist Church. If you are as much struck as I was with the resemblance of his likeness to Fathers, you will wish to get the book for that if nothing more. I did, & found the reading also very interesting, it may do you good.

We received the paper containing the news of Nahums death. It seemed very striking, he possessed such a strong constitution & was so well. Just think how much I have been sick & how may I have outlived of our relatives & acquaintances. & for what am I spared? Poor, unworthy me, what goodness & mercy are shown me. My letter is full of mistakes; I have writen in a hurry. Love to all our friends, write soon. Love & kiss from L A & D S Hastings.

Eau Claire, Feb. 25th, 1861

Dear Sister Sarah.

Long have I looked in vain for a letter from you, & now I have come to the conclusion that I must write & stir you up, or there is no telling how much longer I might have to wait before I hear from you. Remember this is my second one to you, since you wrote me. Sometimes I have thought, I would wait & see how long it would be before you would write, but I find that too hard a case. Now Sarah if you are not sick, it is too bad not to write oftener; if sick surely some one might let me know it. I know you might find time to write two or three lines, at least, if you set yourself about it. Way off here as we are from all our relatives, it seems hard to have you so negligent about writing. There have I said enough to stir up you ideas? If so, I will forbear & expect to hear from you soon.

My health is, & has been all winter, extremely good for me; I think better than at any time since my sickness at Greenfield. Smead is about as usual & we are comfortably situated. He has not earned much this winter, there cannot be much to be done at Carpentering in the winter, but we raised plenty of provisions, & so are well cared for. I said this because you are wondering how we are getting along.

Our winter has been very mild yet extremely changeable. Yesterday was cold & tedious, today if very warm so that I have had my door open considerable of the time, & this is a specimen of what our winter has been. How about yours? We have only snow enough for good sleighing.

It is now almost year since brother Erastus died; it has

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been a lonely time to me. He used to write me so often. Oh how I have missed his kind & affectionate letters. Carrie writes to me occasionally.

One of her letters I would like to copy for you, but I do not think best. Yet will tell you somethings she said. "July, 12th. she says, the last four months have been lonely ones for me bereft as I am of my stay & helper. God bless him. I trust & feel sure he is perfectly happy. I sent a trunk to Greenfield containg all of Erastus clothes (except four of his best articles) which he desired should be given to his brother Joel's family. The four articles, he told me to sell, for he knew I should want every cent of cash which I could obtain after he was gone. But have not heard of its arrival, shall write soon. In it I sent some of his own usefull articles thinking Mrs Adams would know best how to divide them. I have acted exactly according to his own directions.

While on this subject I will continue & mention the possession of two notes he held of yours, & when I repeat what he told me to write to you, I trust you will not be offended. It was tell them you will be glad to have some or all whenever you find yourselves able to send me." The above is copied from Carries letter, more I do not think best to copy. If I remember right, it is not far from 60 dollars that we owed him; you know what I told you he said to me when out here. It does not trouble me any, although I am very anxious to have it paid, & we intend it shall be as soon as we can dispose of some property we have on hand. Smead has a village lot here without any buildings on it; we shall sell it soon as possible

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& hope to pay it up. What we owed him is all we owe. I should not have said anything to you about this, but after telling me what he did, I did not like to say anything to Carrie & thought perhaps he said something to you. So you must excuse me, for you must know it caused me some anxiety. It is all right, he was ever a kind & benevolent brother to me. Carrie says she will send me her little girls likeness, she I suppose has lattly written you.

I had a good letter from Lysander not long since. He always speaks of you & your kindness to him, wishes he could repay it. Olive's husband has bought the old homestead & they all live together. It must be pleasant for Sister Almira she has not wrote me for a long time. Have you written to her yet? If not, do write & not let there be such an estrangement, remember how uncertain life is. Olive has a little daughter.

How is Mother? Give my love to her. I have forgotten her age, she must be very old; for only think you & I are quite old Ladies. How is its do you look much older than when I last saw you six years ago? I believe I look about the same, excepting I have lost my front teeth. Smead says when we get able I shall have some put in. Now I think of it I will give you an expression Lysander made in his letter. It was this, "You speak of growing old, it is very true with me. I see my whiskers are quite gray, wrinkles running every which way on my expressive countenance. Leaves have their time to fall & I don't know as I have any petickular wish to be the last one to stick on. Does not that sound just

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like Lysander; poor dear brother, I do hope he will be ready when called.

Where is she that was Sarah Pratt & how getting along & all the rest of the folks, I used to know. I hope to hear from you soon. Our love to you all. Do not keep this scroll.

L A Hastings

Eau Claire, Sept. 16th, 1861

Dear Sister

I suppose you are almost out of patience with me for not writing sooner, but really so many cares have come along every day that it seemed as though I could not well find time. Besides I have been sick, was taken the first of April and for eleven weeks had to keep a hired girl. Since that I have kept around and done my work, but still can not very well. But if I can only do my work I will not complain.

Oh how I wish I could have one of Joels girls to live with me. me; I regret it more and more every day I live. I am glad you like Melissa so well. She must be a great comfort to you. And now you have Mother with you; I think you are doubly blest. How I would like to have her come and stay with me awhile; it seems as though it would do me good. Give our love to her.

Sarah I feel a little childish. I feel just like having a good cry, I want to see you all so bad. Just think, her I am without even the most distant relative that I can see, & do not often hear from any one. Oh what a blessed privilege to be so near Addison as you are. Poor brother, I know well how to sympathize with him on account of his health. Do not think I am homesick, for I am not. I had rather live here than in Mass, but I do want to see you once more. Why could not John kept on and made us a visit when he went to Ohio. It is too bad. We would have been so glad to have seen him, well perhaps he will come sometime. I have not heard from Almira for a

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long time. I wrote her last. I had a letter from Lysander last spring. He was then at Ann Arbor but thought he should not stay much longer; would have been glad to have come out here if we could have given encouragement of doing well, but that we could not do, for it is dull hard times. He sent me his likeness. It looks very natural, although it looks old & careworn, like the rest of us I suppose. We are old people now.

Well how do you feel in regard to the war. Is it not dreadful? Do you remember what Father used to say? Who ever (never?) lived to see it. There would be war yet between the North & South or dis-union of the North & South. Here it is in part. War is upon us. What will be the result we know not. Eau Claire has just sent off a fine company. We had a great time when they left, music and marching with them to the boat, & then a time of parting. I tell you it was a solemn time. There was about eighty soldiers perhaps but few if any will ever return. God only knows there is talk of getting another company, but I do hope they will not for we have scarcely men enough left for a home guard if necessary to form one.

You will wonder what we want a home guard for so I will tell. There is danger of the Indians coming upon us. They have already committed depredations in some places & many fear if this war continues through the winter we may expect dreadful

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times. I almost wish myself back east when I think of the danger to which we are exposed for I tell you it is not very pleasant to think of being murdered & robbed by the Indians, but then they may remain quiet. Eau Claire has always been considered neutral ground. There has never been any here since we came to this place untill a few weeks since. There was five ventured here. They were the Chippewa's. They and the Sioux are at enmity with each other. That is why this is neutral ground. Should they meet each other there would be a battle. The people here told those five that were here that the Sioux were coming & they cleared quick.

I tell you we should stand in no fear of the Indians if it was not for the secessionist. They are stirring them up. The government bought this land of the Indians and it so happened some of the commissioners that were to pay this money to the Indians were secesionist and instead of paying the money to the Indians, paid it over to the southern people to carry on the war, and tell that we cheated them, & so get them to fighting with them & fight us. In some places they have already enlisted but we will hope for the best. Perhaps I ought not to have mentioned this for I fear you will worry about us but I trust no such trouble will come upon us.

We have had a beautiful season. Crops are excellent although wheat is not quite as good as last year.

I had a letter from Carrie not long since. She was well but little Carrie had fallen down the steps and cut a large gash on

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her nose. It was then getting better, but had been very bad. How I wish I could have her. If Carrie does not provide any grave stones for Erastus, we will try and do something towards getting some. Do not let his grave be neglected, dear kind brother, it must not be neglected. I want you should set something out around it for me, a white rose at the head, or a willow. Is there anything around Joel's grave? I would like dearly to go that graveyard. I have written just as fast as I can make the pen go. Consequently it is badly written, but if you can not read it bring it to me & I will read it for you. Our love to you all.

L A H

Eau Claire, Dec. 27, 1861

Dear Sister

I have just laid aside my work with a determination to write you before another day passes off. I am now hurried sewing and knitting to make ourselves comfortable for winter. You will think I am rather late about it, but we have to get things when we can and that is not always as soon as we would like. My health is as good as usual for me. Smead is also well. He gets some work to do, but not as steady employment as in the summer. We have had a delightful December untill now. For a day or two past it is very cold. The last week in Nov. was tedious indeed. The river froze up and was excellent crossing and there fell just snow enough for good sleighing and we thought winter had set in fairly and we had made up our minds for a hard one, when Lo it turned around and thawed out the ice, carried off the snow, and untill now it has seemed like spring. I tell you it is biting cold. I do not like to stir from the fire.

I have just received a letter from sister Almira. She says her health is good as usual but has not strength to endure much. Lysander is still at Ann Arbor, comes to see them occasionally, got out of work last summer and worked for them a month, says he is a firm believer in Spiritualism. She speaks very affectionately of him, says he resembles Father very much, also says he sometimes talks of going to war but she does not think he will. I wish you would write to her, I do think it would please her very much.

Now about the Indians. There is not as much excitement

about them as there was, yet we stand in some fear of them. Occasionally there comes two or three in the place, but we do not much think any will dare come to do any mischief.

Eau Claire has sent off two more companies to the war since I wrote you last made up of men in and around this place. I tell you it is sad and melancholly times here, but probably not any more so than in other places. God only knows when and how it will end. Be it as it will, hard times must follow.

The pink seeds sent are safe so you need not fear to send things in a letter, for I do not think I have ever lost a letter from any of my friends since I come west. I believe I did not tell you in my last about the blue berries we had this year, such an abundance I never saw or heard of and many of them measured an inch and a half and some of them two inches around. Now if you do not believe this I have got some preserved in cans, and if you will come out you shall have some of the big ones to eat. Thousands of bushels must have wasted on the ground for almost every bluff was covered a great many miles we know not how far. It took but a short time to pick a twelve quart pail full. We generally have a good many but this has been an uncommon fruitful year.

In this place, would you believe it, there has been seven pair of twins born in Eau Claire, some not in the village but close by, and all within a year. All of them are now living and doing well, what place can beat this story.

Cranberries are plenty, but not Apples. Well I have got most to the end of my sheet and it is almost bed time. Smead is popping corn & I must take a bite and bid you good night for this time. No, not just yet, one thing more. I want to say

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first you may think Lysander partial in sending his likeness to me, but not so I asked him for it or I should not have had it. I told him I wished he would send one to you. Love to Mother and all. Lucy A H

Eau Claire, May 11th, 1862

Dear Sarah

I suppose by this time you are somewhat impatient to hear from me, but I trust you well know that my affection for you is as strong as ever, although I do not write as often as I used to. I find as I grow old it is much harder to set myself about writing. Consequently, I put off from day to day untill I get ashamed of it & then I go to writing.

My health has been good all winter, indeed I am so well it almost scares me to think for I never expected to be so well as I am. Do you not think I know how to prize it!

Well the winter is over, but the war is not ended, what a sad thing it is. Oh how many homes and hearts are made desolate already by the loss of loved ones. Any yet there are but few perhaps comparetively to what will be before it closes. Alas that it should be so! Have many that we know gone from your place?

The excitement about the Indians has subsided. They did not trouble us at all in the winter. A few came into the place once in a while but seemed friendly. I do not think they will ever trouble us.

Smead is well and hard at work as usual. We now are having unusual warmweather which makes grass & things start. April was a very cold and windy month.

I have not heard from Sister Almira for a long time nor from Lysander, but perhaps it is my fault for I have not written for more than a year. It is too bad, and I think I shall soon write. You ask if I now have any Canary birds. I have two singers, one of them is one that I brought with me from Mass.

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is now almost 11 years old as I have now had him almost 8 years. You may believe he is my old pet, he has lost two wives, but I now intend he shall live alone the remainder of his days. If you will come out here, I will give you the other one, it is almost 4 years old.

Remember me to Mother, tell her she is not forgotten, how glad I would be to see her once more, but suppose that will never be this side of the grave. I wonder if she still wears a pair of spectacles given her by a certain person, by the way do you ever hear or know anything about the one who gave them? I always have to laugh when I think of that time, there being a little temper on both sides caused by what was intended as an innocent joke.

I have not heard from Carrie since last fall. I wrote her in March, but have not recieved an answer. She never has sent me little Carrie's likeness, and I fear never will. How I wish I could have her. I frequently hear from Parley Meriam by way of his daughter, Mrs. Bancroft. They must be well off in life: they have two hundred acres of land under the plough; they raised over fifty bushels of Apples last year (and if they can be raised there we think they can be here). At any rate we are going to try. I must now say a few words to Melissa. Our love to you all. L A H

Dear Melissa

Right glad was I to receive a few lines from you and know you cherish the memory of your Fathers sister. Although distance and time has made us as it were strangers, I hope you will again write me and I will try and write more to you next time. I am glad you stay with Sister Sarah and imagine

you take much comfort together

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you take much comfort together, would that I had one of my dear brothers children with me. But alas, here we are without a relative near. I would love dearly to visit you all once more. Perhaps some of you may come and see me sometime. Love to your mother & all. Lucy

Joseph & Alfred Hare in the Army in Missouri. We have heard from them, but once Mother H is in Iowa with Obed.

Eau Claire, Oct 27th/62

Dear Brother & Sister,

Once more I am seated to write you hoping this may find you and yours in as comfortable health as it leaves us. My health is surprisingly good for me, and since cold weather has come on Mr H is much better so that now he is able to work all the time and eat quite hearty.

I believe I have not written you since the time I told you of our Indian fears. If I remember right it was the Sabbath after I wrote you. Our village was thrown into a terrible consternation by a report being brought us that there was coming three hundred Indians strong and were within a few miles of us burning and destroying every thing before them. The news spread from house to house like wild fire, and in a short time the streets were alive with people. Every old gun was put in order, axes, shovels, & hatchets, pitchforks, and in some instances lightning rods were speedily taken down and fixed into spears. & almost everything that could be converted into weapons was brought forth, such a time I never saw, and hope never to again. The home guard was called, pickets sent out and many sent of horse back in every direction to learn the truth of it. If true when within hearing distance of our pickets, they were to blow a horn and they in turn to give us warning so that all the women were to flee for refuge to a large three story building. The men were to protect it, but on return of our scouts it proved there was but small foundation for the fright. A few Indians had committed some depredations in the back settlements and frightened the people away, told them to leave, as more were coming. I suppose all they wanted was to get them

away so that they could get the better chance to steal. However there has been awful murders in Minnesota, and they are still trouble yet, and there has been great reason to fear the Chippewas (these are nearest us) would make war upon us, and we still have some fears though small because a treaty has been formed with the old Chief of our tribe and he seems quite friendly. And we trust other tribes will be subdued before they reach us, and even if they should come we feel tolerable secure for the Governor of the state has sent us one hundred guns and ammunition, so that with what we had of our own in the village we feel tolerable secure.

You speak of the deplorable state of our country, it is indeed in a sad condition. I little thought I should live to see such a time as this. Do you remember our Father used to say, who ever lived to see it, probably not in his day, but there would be war between the North and South or else it would be divided. Well his words have proved true; war is in our land with all its train of evil and desolation. What awaits us in the future God only knows.

You speak too of the war meetings in your place and of the fife and drum, this is all familiar to our eyes and ears. Eau Claire has sent of four companies already, and now there will soon be drafting, I suppose. The soldiers marched and drilled in our streets daily before they left. I cannot if I could describe the feelings it gave me to see them; many of them have been killed on the battle field, others sicken and die in the hospital, and some return wounded and crippled for life. When will men learn war no more?

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Brother, I never intended to give you reason to think your letters if frequent would be considered a burden. I wish I could always think and speak aright, but I am a weak erring creature, full of faults. Will you not, can you not overlook all and believe that I mean well? Happy to hear from you any time. Our love to all, good bye. L A H

Ps, Brother Adams writes me he has got some grave stones for brother E. Words cannot express the gratitude I feel for his kindness and generosity. He has given me one hundred dollars, have just received fifty the other I can have when I call for it.

Eau Claire, Mar 25th, 1863

Dear Brother

We read yours in due season & were glad to hear that you are comfortable. As I am laid up with a lame knee, I thought I would help Lucy write a little. My health has been good this winter untill about 10 days ago. I had been at work for some weeks about $1\frac{1}{4}$ mile from home & the long walk & going with wet feet some brot on my lameness, but it is recovering & I hope in a few days to be able to work again.

We have got the old machine worked over & renovated so that I guess it will run quite well awhile. I still work at the Carpenter & Joiner work, but I hardly know how business is going to be the coming season. But the prospect looks quite favorable for a plenty of work; money is more plenty here, & every thing lively. But our national affairs are in such an unsettled state, & still some fears of more trouble from the Indians that we cant make safe calculations for the future.

I expect wages here this season will be \$1.75 to 2.00 per day and Board ourselves (last season 1.50). I may possibly sell our house here in the Village, & build on my land & go to farming. I have 40 acres $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles out, $\frac{1}{2}$ improved but have no team & shall not go to farming until I have one of my own. Farming will be good business certainly as long as the war lasts. We have had a wonderful mild , pleasant winter, but little snow & that is about all gone now & I think the frost will soon be out of the ground.

War is a terrible scourge to any people, however well it may be conducted & by whatever party. Every war has had it opposers, we cannot all see alike and I hope & pray this war

may soon cease.

Yours truly, D. S. Hastings

Dear Brother & Sister.

I think that my excuse for not writing sooner is a very good one so I will give it. We have been having a very sickly time here, and I have spent nearly every leisure moment in visiting, and trying to do something for the sick. There has been more sickness and deaths in the last six months in this place than in all the time we have been here before. Fevers, measles and dipthera have prevailed, one may lost all of his children (three in number) within ten days, another man lost his wife and two children in less than two weeks. Some days there were two funerals a day. I never saw such a time. The sickness is now abating considerable, I do not know of but two now who are very sick, both children. One of them probably will not live untill morning, the other they have some hopes of yet.

March 28 The other day while writing to you I had company come in. Of course this sheet had to be laid by, and have not untill now found time to finish it up. Smead is some better but gains slowly. My health continues quite good for me.

You say Charlotte E and Charles are teaching school. I cannot realize that they have grown up and become teachers. Oh how strange the past seems almost like a dream. I sometimes get almost lost when thinking of the home of my childhood, and the loved ones that were there, and of the changes that have taken place since I left. Brother I often think of you left there in old Mass as you are, the last one of our family. You

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must feel sad and lonely. I know but there is one comfort for you yet, you can visit the graves of both Father, Mother, two brother and two sisters. None the rest of us can do so much as visit the grave of one. I often think it would be pleasant to go back and make a visit, but oh how sad it would seem to meet so few of those whom I have known. Probably I shall never do it. Well my sheet is full , but I have not said one half I would like too, but this must suffice for this time. My love to all. You do not how it makes our mouths water for some of your apples when you write about them. Perhaps we will send for some next fall. Write often. Lucy A H

Eau Claire, Apr 9th/63

Dear Brother.

It seems a long time since I have heard from you, hope none of you are sick. My health has been good all winter. I think it has been better than it has before since we came west. I do feel truly thankful for it. Mr. Hastings has been well as usual except two weeks was laid up with inflammatory rheumatism, is now quite well.

There has been much sickness and a great many deaths, mostly children. I think there has been more sickness and deaths in this place the last six months than in all the time we have lived here before. Fevers, measles and dipthera have been the prevailing diseases. One man lost all his children (three in number) within ten days; another man lost his wife and two children within two weeks. Sometimes we have had two funerals in a day. The sickness is gradually abating and I trust will soon disappear. We have had a very mild open winter; our Physicians think that has been one cause of the sickness. Spring bids fair for farmers, the frost is nearly all out of the ground and they will soon commence work.

The first boat of the season came up the Chippewa river to this place the third of this month which is earlier than usual. We expect soon to have a railroad through this place to St. Paul. It would seem pleasant indeed to hear the whistle once more and see the cars come rushing on. It would be a great help to the place if we do get it, and I think there is not much doubt but what we shall.

The Indians near us are still very peaceable, but in Minnesota the people are expecting more trouble with them soon unless government prevents. We often think and speak of you and other friends, it would be gratifying indeed to see you, but I suppose you think it too much of a journey to come out here, so we must be contented with hearing from you. Carrie has not answered my last letter as yet. I suppose she is still in Philadelphia. Remember us to all your family and all others who may enquire.

Yours with affection L A Hastings