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Genesee Nov 21st 1847

Brothers and Sisters

I suppose likely that you have looked for a letter from us before this time and ~~we~~ this makes the second one that I have commenced since I have been in Wisconsin and I don't know as I shall make out a letter now but I will try enough to let you know that we are this side of the Lakes we started from York State the 16th of September and arrived ~~in~~ Wisconsin the first of October we had a long and tedious journey it was very pleasant on the Canal I see a great many pleasant places and things and those that were interesting but when I looked back and thought of what I was leaving and where I was going it spilt it all when I looked in to the water and all the little waves that receded back from the boat it seemed that every one was bearing me away from all my friends forever nothing in particular happened ^{on the canal} love to travel I see so many things which you know are new to me we got to Buffalo and took the steamboat there what a splendid building they are the one that we took was a very large boat there was a ~~lot~~ great many passengers on board we took Cabin passage had a room to ourselves which was pleasanter than to be obliged to stay with the rest of the passengers all the while if you want to see a table set in style and ~~of~~ victuals cooked in style of all sorts and descriptions you must travel on board a steamboat there is a great deal to be learnt you are waited on in style if you take a cabin passage you are as big as any of these the two first days on the Lake were very pleasant it was still there was no motion on the water only as the boat ploughed along puffing away the steam it left a road behind for a great ways there was a young

it was hard work to make up my mind ~~me~~ to consent to come there if we had no of the 20th miles was
 a long long distance to have between us I gave up all thoughts of a come here if we were not going
 you have not perhaps of this and matters we a hand I shall not ask for again, but I expect the children will all
 forget as I shall be a small side to all this you and shows you were that friends had a pair of horses I think it is well done
 I don't see but that the rest is as matters on this respect as the rest

o'clock makes her had the full

Lady on board that started with us from Yorkstate she went as far as
Cleveland Ohio after she got of there was no one that i knew i was
among entire strangers the third day the Lake was rough enough
the white caps rolled the boat rocked and tumbled we staggered
about like a pack of drunkards i was as sick as death i could not get
up i vomited ~~over a much~~ Edward was sick to be sick very much
like a white man i had to go to bed and lie flat on my back and
every time the boat stirred it seemed as if we should all sink to the
bottom she would ~~rock~~ and twist about and i thought she would all
fall to pieces O how i wished i was an land ~~that~~ we stop at
Statutabuta next i suppose that we could not have been a great many
miles from Shannab if we had known that the boat that we was on
would stop at these places we should have tried to found her but
they said that they did not run into such small ports and so we
paid our passage ideas through they was afraid that if we stop there
they should lose us the rest of the way the Lake was very rough
all the rest of the way we were on it eight days four days is the
general time for crossing the Lakes when it is good weather one night
we got stuck on a sandbar and lay most all night before we got
of and one night they run in blind an island and anchored
when they were on the sand bar they strained there engine
so that they could not keep up against great winds at all
when the wind was ahead they had to stop i was afraid the old
boiler would burst i was sick all the rest of the way i would get
out on deck once and awhile but i would be so dizzy that i could not
stay long we stop at Cannacka and at Machinaw there we had
some trout at this place there was between two and three hundred
Indians there boats and wigwags were scattered all along the shore
they had on their blankets and there warmpurs and tassels on
there heads they looked curious enough they were there after they
pay of government there was an Indian Missionary on the boat he
preached one Sabbath a pretty smart man he preached a good sermon and
there was a squaw a missionary going in company with him i went in and

see the glass works how curious and the salt works it does not seem as if man could ever learn so much

Now as to i have been trying to have Edward fill this page and tell you about Wisconsin but he says he cant write nor compose well enough to write i shall not wait any longer but tell you what i think about it its thing it is a very lonesome place now there is nothing to be seen but oak trees and log houses i have been very homesick since i have seen here the fall of the year is a bad time to go to a new place and among entire strangers and right out of a place where they have fruit of all kinds to a place where there is none but this is a new country we cannot expect every thing

in one year i am no judge of land but i expect it is just rate the farmers all say it is and people are settling in here very fast it has not been but four years since the first man moved into the place where we are and now there is a good many to be seen the fences are not close together but their fields of wheat and other crops show that there is somebody here Edwards brother the past season raised six hundred bushels of wheat 100 of oats and 200 of corn and potatoes are nice this year government land is cheap 500 dollars will so acre i suppose it will take a good many us to buy that quantity of land east and you cant raise wheat there either there is some objections to this its water is not as plenty as it is east where we are now they have to draw their water a mile but it is good when they get it they can have it nearer by digging a well which they are a going to do soon but what is more is that is not a stream of running water every now and then nor as many and rivers as there is east but that is nothing i expect a man can get a living here easier than they can there there is a great many little things that we have to do ourselves of which some rather hard but i suppose that we shall be just as well off in the long run timber is not as good as it is there there is some good timber land and there is what they call the oak openings which are not as good just for the gratification of my own feelings i should much rather live in the east than here we have got forty acres deeded and when we get a house which i think will be before many years and that some of my folks were here i should be considerable with contented but as long as i am here about i shall be subject to homesick fits but of no other disorder sets in i suppose they will not be considered dangerous this country has not been called as healthy as the east but it is healthy now and has been for the year past there has been some bad the small pox but it was brought here by some one that some of it was carried on but weather and there is now and then one that has the fever and ague some that come here have it and some never have it i should be very glad to have you all some out here but you know there is a great many bug bears raised if any one talks of going to wisconsin but they do not know any thing about it till they try it some were here and dont like the country but they cant get back again and so they will praise up the country as is to have some of their friends come but i have told the story as near the truth as i can if you should see some and should feel disappointed in the looks of things i think you will find it pretty much as i have written but come and judge for yourselves and perhaps you will not be sorry

I received your letter that you wrote the 15th of september yesterday it came to york state and brother Baughn's folks took it out of the office and they did not know but it might be something that they could answer as well as to send it to me and they opened it but found nothing particular in it and so they killed it out and sent it on i was glad to hear you that you were all well and enjoying yourselves i should be as glad to be with as any one ill assure you i suppose it is now about thanksgiving time and another good visit you will have together my thoughts were minded

I am glad that religion is flourishing there and hope that it will continue so we have some good meetings here we have preaching half of the time but the congregation is small these meetings seem like old fashioned methodist they meet in a log school house the people all dress very plain and seem to be united and if we serve god here we shall be an unbroken band in a better world than this there will be no parting there with the saints of god my paper is full and I must close you my respects to all friends Edward sends his best respects to you all and says the next time he will try to write some answer this as soon as you receive it and all the news direct your letter to Waterloo Jefferson county Wisconsin Ophelia

Wm. H. 14 4 = 1

Mr. Carlos Johnson
New Hartford
Ct.

Waterloo N.Y.
Nov. 26
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Dear Mr. Johnson
I have just received your letter
and am glad to hear from you
I am well and hope these few lines
will find you the same
Yours truly
Ophelia

Sunprarie Nov. 21st 1847

Brothers and Sisters

I suppose likely that you have looked for a letter from us before this time and this makes the second one that i have commenced since i have been in Wisconsin and i don't know as i shall make out a letter now but i will try enough to let you know that we are this side of the Lakes we started from York State the 16th of September and arrived in Wisconsin the first of October we had a long and tedious journey it was very pleasant on the canal i see a great many pleasant places and things and those that were interesting but when i looked back and thought of what i was leaving and where i was going it spoilt it all when i looked in to the water and see the little waves that receded back from the boat it seemed that every one was bearing me away from all my friends forever, nothing in particular happened on the canal i love to travel i see so many thing which you know are new to me we got to Buffalo and took the steamboat there what splendid buildings they are the one that we took was a very large boat there was a great many passenger on board we took Cabin passage had a room to ourselves which was pleasanter than to be obliged to stay with the rest of the passengers all the while if you want to see a table set in style and vituals cooked in style of all sorts and descriptions you must travel you on board a steamboat there is a great deal to be learnt you are waited on in style if you take a Cabin passage you are as big as any of them the two first days on the lake were very pleasant it was still there was no motion on the watter only as the boat ploughed along puffing away the steam it left a road behind for a great ways there was a young Lady on board that started with us from York state she went as far as Cleaveland Ohio after she got off there was no one that i knew i was among entire strangers the third day the Lake was rough enough the white caps rolled the boat rocked and tumbled we staggered about like a pack of drunkards i was as sick as death i could not set up i vomited ever so much Edward was seasick to he looked very much like a white man i had to go to bed and lie flat on my back and every time the boat stirred it seemed as if we should all sink to the bottom she would rock and twise about and i thought she would all fall to pieces O how i wished i was on land we stopt at Ashtabula next i suppose that we could not have been a great many miles from Hannah if we had known the boat that we was on would stop at these places we should have tryed to found her but they said that they did not run into such small ports and so we paid our passage clear through they was afraid that if we stopt there they should lose us the rest of the way the lake was very rough all the rest of the way we were on it eight days four days is the general time for crossing the lakes when it is good weather one night we got stuck on a sandbar and lay most all night before we got of and one night they run in bhind an island and anchor when they were on the sandbar they strained there engine so that they could not keep up against real winds at all when the wind was ahead they hat to stop i was afraid the old boiler would burst i was sick all the rest of the way i would get out on deck once and awhile but i would be so dixey that i could not stay long we stopped at Canada and at Mackinaw there we had some trout at this place there was between two and three hundred Indians there boats and wigwams were scattered all along the shore they had on there blankets and their wampum and tassels on there heads they looked curious enough they were there after the pay of government there was an Indian missionary on the boat he preached one Sabbath a pretty smart man he preached a good sermon and there was a squaw a missionary going in company with him i went in and see the glass works how curious and the salt works it does not seem as if man could ever learn so much.

November 25th i have been trying to have Edward fill this page and tell you about Wisconsin but he says he cant write nor compose well enough to write i shall not wait any longer but tell you what i think about it i think it is a very lonesome place now there is nothing to be seen but oak trees and log houses i have been very homesick since i have been here the fall of the year is a bad time to go into a new place and among entire strangers and right out of a place where they have fruit of all kinds to a place where there is none but this is a new country we cannot expect every thing in one year i am no judge of land but i expect it is first rate the farmers all say it is and people are settling in here very fast it has not been but four years since the first man moved into the place where we are and how there is a good many to be sure the houses are not close together but there fields of wheat and other crops show that there is somebody here Edwards brother the past season waised six hundred bushels of wheat 100 of oats and 200 of corn and potatoes are nice this year government land is cheap 100 dollars will bye 80 acres i suppose it will take a good many 100 to buy that quantity of land east and you cant raise wheat there either there is some objections to this country watter is not as plenty as it is east where we are now they have to draw there watter a mile but it is good when they get it they have it nearer by digging a well which they are a going to do soon but what i mean is there is not a stream of running watter every now and then nor as many brooks and rivers as there is east but that's nothing i expect a man can get a living here easier than they can there there is a great many little things that we have to deny ourselves of which comes rather hard but i suppose that we shall be just as well of in the long run timber is not as good as it is there there is some good timberd land and there is what they call the oak opening which are not as good just for the gratification of my own feelings i should much rather live at the east than here we have got forty acres deeded and when we get a house which i think will be before many years and if some of my folks were here i should be considerable well contented but as long as i am here alone i shall be subject to homesick fits but if no other disorder sets in i suppose they will not be considered dangerous this country has not been called as healthy as the east but it is healthy now and has been for the year past there has some few had the small pox but it was brought here by some one that come up the canal in hot weather and there is now and then one that has the fever and ague some that come here have it and some never have it i should be very glad to have you all come out here but you know there is a great many bug bears raised if anyone talks of going to Wisconsin but there does not anyone know any thing about it till they try it some come here and don't like the country but they cant get back again and so they will praise up the country so as to have some of their friends come but i have told the story as near the truth as i can if you should ever come and should feel disappointed in the looks of things i think you will find it pretty much as i have written but come and judge for yourselves and perhaps you will not be sorry i received your letter that you wrote the 15th of September yesterday it cam to York state and brother Vaughn's folks took it out of the office and they did not know but it might be something that they could answer as well as to send it to me and they opend it but found nothing particular in it and so they filled it out and sent it on i was glad to hear from you that you were all well and enjoying yourselves i should be as glad to be with as any one ill assure you i suppose it is now about Thanksgiveng time and another good visit you will have together my thoughts and mind will be with you at all events it was hard work to make up my mind and to consent to come here it seemed as if 1500 miles was a long long distance to have between us i gave up all prospects then if i come

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here of ever seeing you again but we have got here and perhaps if lives and health are spared we shall see each other again but i expect the children will all forget aunt Orpha i would like to see Lucys girl and Moreus you wrote that Hannah had a pair of twins i think it is well done i dont see but that the west is as fruifful in that respect as the east.

i am glad that religion is flourishing there and hope that it will continue so we have some good meetings here we have preaching half of the time but the congregation is small there meetings seem like old fashioned methodist they meet in a log school house the people all dress very plain and seem to be united and if we serve god here we shall be an unbroken family in a better world than this there will be no parting there with the saints of god my paper is full and i must close give my respects to all friends Edward sends his best respects to you all and says the next time he will try to write some answer this as soon as you recieve it and all the news direct your letter to Watterloc Jefferson County, Wisconsin

Orpha

letter of May 27, 1860.

gone to see Mrs Harrington's, brand new baby.

"The other day little Gda wanted to
wipe dishes for me, so I let her wipe
the knives & spoons, she was so
pleased about it, she said O. Ma I feel
just as if I was in Heaven now.

Sometime ago she asked me if
God had babies in heaven, I
told her when they died, he took
their souls up to heaven, she turned
to little Frank & said when you die
you can take some matches
along and if you don't want to stay
you can burn a hole thro. & come
home. horses worth \$2 to 300 a span.

Cows \$25 to \$40 yearlings \$10. wheat .80 October
Corn .60, Oats .40 barley .45 potatoes .30 mules
\$100 a span. Expected to buy a reaper

1876 - Boys came home last day of school with
their hands full of peanuts, missed not a day for 3.

Dec. 9 - 1860. sold horses, used horse bought
farm 160 acres. for stock, that he would make
more with stock than grain. wheat .50 per bu

Feb. 3 - 1887. Grandma & Grandpa married

March 7, 1847. Grandpa died May 8, 1867

Erma born - Jan. 22, 1899 (ada married C. Bennett)

Clifford Byron Nov. 10 1887. (June 13, 1880.)

Mable Ruth, July 4, 1882

Ada died, Nov. 10, 1887.

Grandma born 1825.

Jan. 1887. Telle a secret, thinks W, Carl
is going to be married

Apr 30th 1891

Dear Sister

I received both of your letters but there being nothing particular to write I had neglected it we are all well as usual and hard at work we have had a very mild Winter for this latitude but little snow. we looked for an early spring but it is wet and cold yet the Boys have not got but three acres of Wheat in just a beginning. we had quite a good sugar season made 20 gal of syrup and about 60 lbs of sugar. Harmon and Carlton stay at home and work the farm Laura helps Mother she is my stand-by Adah is going to shovel out on the Prairie boards to Mr Sherburnes. you know him

my baby will be four years
old in August and George
will be seven next Tuesday 2^d of
May if you do not come pretty
soon they will be too big to pick
up as you come along. we too
can hear the "Whistle" off the
ears but we cannot see them
the nearest Depot is eight miles
they run right across the end
of the Garden where ^{we} lived on
the Prairie, we have to cross
the track when we go to town
where is the one you speak of
going to be finished, and how
much will it cost to go by rail
from here to it

Friday, another week is most gone and i
am writing on the same sheet of paper i have
not had any chance to send it to the office
hope i shall do morrow it is quite
pleasant today looks more encouraging
have got some Gardening done

i am making soap i imagine that
you have the same kind of work to do
we ^{will} have five Cows this summer to milk
the Boys have a little Colt to take care
of now. Frank's old Black Hen has
come off with 13 Chickens he thinks she
done pretty well. if you knew my
neighbors i could find some news to write
such as (Mr Bull's folks have gone to
Minnesota (Violet is Married to Joel Woods)
Mrs Brown has got a little Girl &c

we are with the children send their
love to ~~all~~ all tell Henry i will
write to him when i can find any
thing that will be interesting
my love to all i remain your
Sister O Ranney

April 30th 1871

Dear Sister

I received both of your letters but there being nothing particular to write i had neglected it we are all well as usual and hard at work we have had a very mild winter for this lattitude but little snow. we looked for an early spring but it is wet and cold yet the Boys have not got but three acres of Wheat in just a begining. we had quite a good sugar season made 20 gal of sytup and about 60 lbs of sugar. Harmon and Carlton stay at home and work the farn Laura helps Mother she is my stand-by Adah is going to school out on the Prarie boards to Mr. Sherbernes. you know him my baby will be four years old in August and George will be seven next Teusday 2 d of may if you do not come prety soon they will be to big to pick up as you come along. we to can hear the Whistle off the cars but we cannot see them the nearest Depot is eight miles they run right across the end of the Garden where we lived on the Prarie. we have to cross the track when we go to town when is the one you speak of going to be finished. and how much will it cost to go by rail from here to ct

Friday. another week is most gone and i am writeing on the same sheet of paper i have not had any chance to send it to the office hope i shall to morrow it is quite plesant today looks more encouragting have got some Gardening done i am making soap i imagine that you have the same kind of work to do we will have five Cows this sumer to milk the Boys have a little colt to take care of now. Frank's old Black Hen has come off with 13 chickens he thinks she done pretty well. if you knew my neighbors i could find some news to write such as (Mr Hulls) folks have gone to Minesota Viola is Married to Joel Woods) Mrs Brown has got a little Girl etc

we are well the children send their love to all tell Wensy i will write to him when i can find any thing that will be interesting my love to all i remain your

Sister O Ranney

Tuesday Feb 14 1882



Dear Sister

yours of the 29th is before
me very glad to hear from you once more
I think you have a remarkable winter
for old Et sleighing but no snow hills
to wallow through. the winter here has
been very pleasant Dec was like India
- summer some days we wasted the
door open it was so warm. a little
snow in January but not enough to
make sleighing. the coldest winter was
20 degrees below zero. to day there is
no snow and it looks like spring
I am glad to hear that the Friends
are all in comfortable health I
should think Mariah would get tired
of sitting still so much it must be
hard for Hiram to lift her about
do they live alone

we never see me to add the Friends from your Sister
Sophia Rannet

Isaac was out here last fall. I was
so surprised. I did not know him but
I thought it was some of our folks as
quick as I see him I think he looks like
Father all but his nose that is ^{like} the Stillmans
he did not like it out here but I
think it was the weather it rained all
the while he was here but Tuesday
we had quite a pleasant time receiving
over the days of our childhood bringing
to mind things that hapend there. I thought
he was careful to touch upon only the
pleasant side he did not mention his mother
but once he did not seem inclined to
so I did not think best to ask any questions
he told me of the changes around our
home to think it has grown up to
woods where there was not a tree seems
strange I think I should know the
old Rock and the old Stone School
House and Abmoses House for that was
built before I came away he said
he would write when he got home but he has not

Well, I will come back home now
my Girls are both married
Laura has a little Girl 2 years old a
cute little thing of course (Grandma thinks
she is) Frank is married and lives out
to River Falls a days drive from home
they have ban with me since last June
till last week I like his wife pretty well
only she is so young only 17 but I guess
she will make a pretty good housekeeper, my
two Boys that you know are old
Batches none the worse for that Harmon
lives in Minnesota he has 160 acres of
land and two town lots in the
the village of Monticello Carlton
is my Farm Boy (I shall always call
them Boys) he has worked so hard
that he looks old, he is drinking
hay for the company this winter
he is gone all the week comes home
Saturday night I think he gets the job done
this week. Ida lives at Cedar Falls she
was up home Saturday "

George and Edgar go to school
and do the chores my Unity is quite
small. Laura was down and staid a
week and done up a lot of sewing
on th Machine.

we have had quite a small Pox
scare here and all been vaccinated
this winter we were a sorry looking
lot for two weeks otherways we have
all enjoyed good health excepting colds
well Carlos I guess I want talk
talk about that visit this time things
are so changed I should feel like a
stranger in a strange land and get
homesick I should not like to start
alone I am to deaf for that like the
rest. if Wilbet should go down next
summer I may manage to come with
them. I will let you know all in good
time. but it looks like a great undertaking
my paper is most full. give my love to
Kelaide I can see just how she looked as she
set in the cradle the morning we came away

Remember me to all enquiring friends
much love from Sister Sophia
Adah L. Holcomb Jan. 10 1884

Dear Sister

I was very glad to
hear from you to hear that you
are well. we are all well at
presant. we have had fearful
cold weather for the last two weeks,
34 degrees below zero some of the
time any one out of doors had to stay
about lively or they would freeze in
there tracks not much snow yet
today it is a little warmer and
snowing quite fast. we did not
have any drings on the holidays
this year - there was no one at home
but Eddie and myself and two
little boys that happened in be-
side Christmas. I had a roasted turkey
for dinner. but it was rather dull
times. the children were all
at home about two weeks before

Sister Anne
sitting in her cradle when we came away

f new

Christmas. Laura lives just across
the road she has one little Girl 5 years
old the 22^d of this month she likes to
come in to Grandma's about meat time
pretty well and in fact she is here most
of the time she is a pretty welcome
little visitor she had a ride on the
car this summer and now her delight
is in playing cars with the chairs
in a string she will blow her whistle
and call the name of a station and
sit and wait on her passengers in a
way that is comical. Adam has one
little Girl 18 months old she runs
alone a bright eyed little thing
full of mischief her name is Mabel.
Frank has two a girl and a boy
Thannon was married a year ago
to a widow with two little Girls
he started with a family in the
best place you see they have
come back from Minnesota she
did not like it there the wind blew

in afternoon told us Frank had not written to me in 7 weeks
years

of heard last fall that Ben & Ellen was
so much and they had such fearful
storms her health is not very good at
presant. Carlton they call the old Back
he is my right hand Man and keeps the
farm a going. we had such early
frost in the fall spoilt the corn
and damaged the fruit a good deal
I went out to see one of our old
neighbors on the train yesterday
and every business concern along
the road stand empty. Larry has
16 Hogs keeping over they look
nice now says he is going to
make them weigh 500 apiece
next fall he looks enough for
one family. he has 20 head of
cattle and 20 sheep I believe
plenty of chores to do these cold
days. I went to a Silver
Wedding last fall had a pleasant
time and a nice supper it was
Mr and Mrs Parkers 50th ans. Miles
Father and other

I have a
howie full
to night
Harmon his
Love his wife
and her love
little Girls
also two
Boys of Mr
Burt's
to morrow
Mrs Burt
and her
little Girl
is coming
which will
make it in
all more the
merrier
good night

I sympathize with Philetus in the
loss of his daughter how they will
miss her perhaps she was his idol and
God took her to be the means of drawing
him to better things. have they any
Boys. it would seem almost to Sister
Laura as if she had lost another Girl
Epie was with her so much. you would
like to had that little Grandson lived
but how much sorrow he has escaped
in this world God only knows who
doeth all things well. yet Carross
the Mountains remain the same
and will till the last. I shall
look for that letter you are
going to write. it is time
to go about supper and I will
close for this time. give my
love to it belade and little Bessie
I should like to see her. I remember you

Gulfport, Jan 11th 1891

Dear Sister

yours Oct 1st was
received. glad to hear from
you. Byrons Girls wrote me
about their Grand Mothers death.
Sister Hannah sent me a bundle
off Papers only a short time
before in one I found a note
saying she was well and
would write me a long letter
soon. it was so sudden I can
hardly realize it our family
is indeed getting small here
another year is gone with its
joys and sorrows and a new
one has commenced time is
fast passing away my Prayers
is that God will help me to
so improve it that it will not be
wasted

I suppose Walter is settled
in his new house before this
you ought to have put in 50
more pieces in that quilt and
made it 2000. I imagine you
had a nice visit with that
little Grandson. I should like
to see him. we had a Christmas
Tree at Harmons this year it
was pretty well loaded for the
little folks and some for the
older ones. 23 partook off the
dinner I staid till newyears
and visited old neighbours
and ate newyears dinner with
my Boy Frank. we are having
an open winter no snow yet
of any account some cold
days but not severe cold.

the Lumbermen begin to
think they are not going to
make anything this winter.

we have quite a family
this winter Carl Boards the
Teacher and Belle has two
of her sister's children that
go to school. I presume
you miss the Apples this ^{winter}
more than we do. we had
all the Berries we could find
time to pick. I took care off
the Baby and Belle picked the
Berries but I guess the other
baby will be so young she
will not pick many the coming
summer. Lloyd is a nice
little Boy he thinks there
is nobody like Grandma
if I say any thing about
going away he will say
no no and hang around me
so that I wont get out of
his sight. when a meal is
ready he comes and calls me
if I am not in the room and he

wont go to the Table till he sees
me start. my health is pretty
good now I take cold easy
since I had Scurvy and have
to be a little careful. there was
a great deal of fun made of
that disease but it proved
not to be very funny.

well they have all gone off
to bed and it is time I
was going on I shall not feel
like getting up. Hoping these
few lines will find you
all well (if you can read
them) I remain your loving
Sister Opha Rany

Adah S Holcomb

Cedar Falls Farm Co
Wis Aug 9th 1896.

Dear Sister

I was very glad to
hear from you and think of
you very often and wonder if
you are on the hill and alone
and yet not alone for the
watcher over his children is
in every place to keep them
I was quite surprised to hear
Walter had left St Paul supposing
he had settled there permanently.
Carlton is out there now he
expected to hunt him up and
call on him but he will be
disappointed. his wife has a sister
living there. we are having
some pretty hot weather here
this summer crops are pretty low.

though not as good as they were
last the army worm destroyed
a good deal some fields will not
be cut at all corn is looking nice
now we did not have any straw
berries but other kinds are quite
plenty I take care of Baby Lois
and Belle picks the berries takes
a horse and goes in the morning
and stays all day. they took
the teams one day and Ed
went with a load after black
berries they went so far that
they did not get home till
midnight but they got the berries
and they taste so good this hot
weather they come pretty near
melting that day and the Baby
I think thought she was being
worn for sure she is a little
blue eyed darling 6 months old

I have
has one tooth sits alone and is
learning to creep her name is
Lois Eveline. I have 14 ^{children}
when ~~they~~ ^{of} them ^{girls} I think
Harmon was 24 when he was
married and Carl 26 George
and Edgar both have their ^{girls}
but it looks as if they meant to
be old bachelors ~~first~~ before
they settle down for life. Ed brought
me some Peaches today they were
nice but not as nice as the
are fresh from the tree I often
think of the Apples and other
fruit I used to throw away
when I was a Girl. I should prize
them now. I remember the Peach
tree that stood at the corner
of your old house is it alive
now? I am sorry for Crestus
Wife having such poor health

my paper is
full and there
is all you will
want to read
not much more
hoping you
are well
will close
with love to
all from your
sister
Alpha Ramsey

to you hear from Isaac I have
not for a number of years. we
went to see Laura yesterday
she has all her teeth out if she
had a few grey hairs she
would look as old as I do
one of her neighbors said she
had to look twice to see which
was Grandma she will have
some new ones soon she is 93
Monday we had a big rain last
night and wind the barn looks
pretty flat I guess some pieces
are pretty badly damaged
we have a big wash out it is
very warm it is hard work to
breathe my health is pretty good
although I feel as if I was getting

address to Mrs. George H. H. H.

New Hartford Ct

[transcribed by Mary Richards, Nov. 1982]

Cedar Falls Dunn Co

Wis Aug 9th 1896

Dear sister

I was very glad to hear from you for I think of you very often and wonder if you are on the hill and alone and yet not alone for He that watches over his children is in every place to keep them. I was quite surprised to hear Walter had left St. Paul supposing he had settled there permanently. Carlton is out there now he expected to hunt him up and call on him but he will be disappointed. his wife has a sister living there. we are having some pretty hot weather here this summer crops are pretty fair though not as good as they were last the army worm destroyed a good deal some fields will not be cut at all corn is looking nice now we did not have any strawberries but other kinds are quite plenty I take care of baby Lois and Belle picks the Berries takes a horse and goes in the morning and stays all day. they took the team one day and Ed went with a load after Black berries they went so far that they did not get home till midnight but they got the Berries and

they taste so good this hot weather they come pretty near melting and the Baby I think thought she was being weaned for sure she is a little blue eyed darling 6 months old has one tooth sits alone and is learning to creep her name is Lois Eveline. I have
(14?) 19 grandchildren eight of them Girls I think Harmon was 34 when he was married and Carl 36 George and Edgar both have their girls but it looks as if they meant to be old Bachelors before they settle down for life. Ed brought me some Peaches to day they were nice but not as nice as they are fresh from the tree I often think of the Apples and other fruit I used to throw away when I was a girl. I should prize them now. I remember the Peach tree that stood at the corner of your old house is it alive now? I am sorry for Crestus wife having such poor health do you hear from Isaac i have not for a number of years. we went to see Laura yesterday she has all her teeth out if she had a few grey hairs she would look as old as I do one of her neighbors said she had to look twice to see which was Grandma she will have some new ones soon she is 43

Monday. we had a big rain last night and
wind the corn looks pretty flat I guess some
(? peeces) are pretty badly damaged we have a
big wash out it is very warm it is hard
work to breathe my health is pretty good
although I feel as if I was getting old
I have been looking for a line from Elen
she generally writes when she takes her
summer outing and tells me where she is
my paper is full and there is all you will
want to read not much news hoping you
are well will close with love to all from
your sister Orpha Ranney

Cedar Falls
Iowa to Wis
Dec 27 97

Dear Sister

I was so glad to hear from you again that you are well the thought will intrude when I think of your age that it may be the last one but I put it from me trusting in our Heavenly Father's loving care that I shall be permitted to read many more send by your loving hand. we had quite a Christmas at our house a tree that the children like so well and their hearts made happy with Dolls and jackknives candy and sundry other presents. the mittens come just in time to find a place on the tree. but amidst it all my

thoughts would wander to
Ct. and my fingers tingle to
shake hands with you all there.
I can sympathize with you in parting
with your home we are a good deal
alike going from one place to
the other, at the present time I
am at Leucas, but my permanent
home is with Carl, my bachelors
Boys George and Edgar were
married last spring their wives
are sisters now I have two more
places to visit we lost them at
Christmas they thought they must
spend the first one at Father
Danters and Frank's folks are
sevenday advents so they did not
come we were sorry for Belle and
Carl wanted them all there.

you spoke of Grandfather Demming
place I remember going there over

with Father and our step mother
the old folks sat in the corner
by the fireplace side by side &
I can see just how they looked now
Father had told me to go up to
them and shake hands with them
and it seemed to please them
wonderfully and I shook hands
with them when I came away
I guess they always sat in that
same corner as long as they lived.
another circumstance I remember
of that day Father stoped at
a house to get a drink and he
said the woman was crying over
the Bible and he talked with her
awhile I have often thought I would
like to know what he told her
but presume he explained to her some-
thing about what she was reading
and it seemed to me as if he was to

stop there for that purpose.
we have had some pretty cold
wether but not snow enough
to make good sleighing. last night
it rained a little but it is colder
this morning. we had a cool
summer but pretty good crops
not very much fruit an account
of late frost. Apples are scarce
and dearer than they were
last fall. I had a sick spell last
spring had not had a doctor before
for years Grippe is rather hard to deal
with sometimes but my health has
been good all summer and can do
a pretty good days work now but
knitting^{ing} is my principal work. I do
not think of much news. give my
love to all. I will close by
wishing you a happy New Year
from your sister Orpha
Rames

24
Cedar Falls

Dunn Co Wis
March 17th
1898

Dear Sister

you may be surprised
to get a letter from us now
but I have been knitting some
edging for aprons, and thought
I would send you enough for
one. it does not seem quite
right for you to buy yarn
and knit mittens for us
when we have got a big
flock of sheep and wool
in the house that we did
not sell last year it was
so low price I do not know
as you will care for the
edging but I could ^{not} think of
anything else

Winter is gone but we have had such a pleasant one that it has not seemed like Winter have not had but a very little snow not enough for sleighing it is all gone now which is remarkable for this country if old March does not get in a huff and go out like a lion we shall be making Gardens in a few days.

I have to look to Carl for spending money and do not like to ask for any thing often I knit for one of our neighbours this Fall and earned \$2.75 etc which will keep me in pin money a little while my health is pretty good and the rest are well as usual

18th our folks have gone to
town to day and I am alone
with my little pet Lois she
is two years old and a perfect
little flutter budget her mother
goes home and stays two or
three days and she will stay
with me perfectly contented
and happy as a lark with her
doll. it is snowing and
raining they will wish they
had stayed at home I guess
I have not much news
to write hoping you are
well and all the rest

with much love
from Sister Cypha
Ramey

Bedar Falls

Friend Co Miss
Aug 28 1898

Dear Sister

The school House
arrived all safe and looked so
natural I remember the large
stones up high and used to
wonder how they could lift
them up there. and that tree
across the road. we used to go
out and sit under to study our
Geography we were out there
one day when Elmira Peters
came along with a load of
chair seats. and the wind blew
up a leaf and scared the Horse
and he ran into the ditch and
Elmira tumbled out but there
was no damage done except a
broken thill after that if we see

his things found

a horse coming we would skip
for the house. that little tot
by the side of the house looks
as I used to I was always off
alone by myself used to think
the scholars all felt above me
because I did not dress as well
as they did I expect I was foolish
I believe they did ^{not} send me
ragged but my dresses were so
skimpy I could not run like the
rest. well that was years
ago the children now there
belong to those that were
children then I suppose. and some
like myself are in other lands, and
some have gone to their last rest
shall I know their faces when
we meet on the other shore,
who was Grandma Wodard I do not
remember any body by that name.

Edgar ~~George~~ ^{Edgar} ~~George~~ ^{George} calls his baby ~~George~~ ^{Edgar}

I have two new little Granddaughters
one born to George May 21st and
one to Edgar August 12th I took
care of babies till Ellens came
to town and now I am with her
they are all quite smart and
the Babies are cute little things
I felt so old did not think I
could take care of them but the
Boys thought Mother must come
and I have had strength gives
me to do what was required the
Bible tells me as they say is so
shall thy strength be and I
believe it. my health is pretty
good but some of the time
I feel lame and stiff cant
yet about very spray

we have had a pleasant summer
with some hot weather and
quite a good deal of rain

crops are pretty good I believe
we did not have many Blue-
-berries but Plums, and Black-
-berries are plenty and those
that have Apple trees have quite
a crop of apples we are enjoying
the Melons now.

did you get some Lace I
sent you to trim an Apron
I had a letter from Ellen she
was enjoying herself at her
summer resort she must be one
of the favored ones to have that
privilege every summer.

I do not think of much news
hoping this will find you
well will close with love to all

from sister Capha
Rammes

(given to me Nov. 1914)

1) Ophelia Bushnell Daughter of Isaac and
Ophelia Bushnell was born in Hartland Ct
Nov 3d. 1825. my mother died April 6th
1829 have no recollection of her my oldest
sister kept house and took care of me and
the family till I was six years old. then
my father married again I lived at home till
I was 18 years old then went out to work
to take care of myself. made my home
with my sister Adah. when I was out of a
place but that was not very often hardly
often enough to keep my clothing in order
I was married on the 9th of March 1847

to Edward A Ranney of ^{New} York state. we went
on the Cars till we got to the Erie Canal then boarded
a Canal Boat which took us to Buffalo New York
there engaged passage on a Steamboat for Milwaukee
Wisconsin. there we had to leave railroads
and boats behind and look for some other mode
of travel. my husband was looking around
and for some way to get to where his
brother lived. there was a teamster just
came in with his load and was looking
for something to take back for he did not
like to go back empty he found that he lived
on the road we wanted to go and the
same one that he worked for and he said
if we would stay at his house overnight
it should not cost us any thing so the

A bargain was made. they loaded up and we were on the way. we found a pleasant little family and were made comfortable in the ^{morning} he took us to Waterloo three miles from his Brothers we were soon at our journey's end for that time. he had a sister there and most of the neighbors came from ^{new} York. where he lived when he was a Boy and was acquainted with them as for myself I was among Strangers. we lived with his Brother that winter that was in 1848 my baby was born Jan 2 1848 Edward worked for his Brother and wherever he could get a job he had a farm there that was left him by his Brother when he died but he had not where with to get things together to work it he thought best to go back to York state ~~where~~ to his Fathers and get him to help him to get a start. while we were there our Baby died in sept 1848 in the Spring he rented a farm of his Uncle it was a dairy farm with lots of cows we made cheese and butter but it was a poor year very dry the crops did not amount to as row of pins that ~~summer~~ winter. in Feb. 23 Harmon was born 1849 in the Spring we went back to Ct dont know what for but he seemed to think he would come out right some where. Carlos Holcomb my Sister Husband knew of a small farm that the owner wanted to sell so that he could leave the country he got it cheap there was no land broke on it except a Garden they left their ~~their~~ goods for us to use as he had no wife but a daughter and he gave all to her

3) My Husband was no better off as to work only
a place to live he bought a Cow so we had milk
and Butters he had to work out the same as ever
it was hard times many ^{times} could find nothing to
get for a meal but Johnyake was very thankful
for that I kept up my part as well as I could
till Dec. 2^d 1852 when Gaston was born. the
Girl that owned the things came and took care
of us and done the work without charging a
cent her name was Julia Smith. my Brother
Ezraam was our nearest neighbor and Sister
Adah about a mile so I was not without
friends. Mr Ranney was getting tired of working
out and in the spring made up his mind
if he could sell we would go back to Wis.
and to his farm there. he had a house on it
and he would buy a yoke of Oxen and settle
down to make a home well the result the
man he worked for bought the place I
never knew how much he got for it but we
got things together and started. the means of
traveling had improved. and I had a Sister living in
Ohio we stopped there and made her a visit I had
other relatives there and they took us around and
visited them Cousins that I had not seen since I
was a Girl. Mr Veits took us to ^{the} Boat and with
to Lake Michigan there boarded ^{James} a steamboat which
took us across the Lake to the cars which took
us to our journey's end for that time. found things
~~things~~ all right it was a log house and I was
soon at work cleaning and getting ready to
move in. the farm joined his Brothers so we
were neighbors he soon got his Oxen and went
to breaking it was to late to raise any thing that
year but we were provided for. put in a ^{few} ^{of} ^{the} ^{best} ^{of} ^{the} ^{winter}

4
Wheat that fall. the Boys soon found out that they were at home and could run out doors and play and did not take them long to find out that they had some cousins in the next house ^{over} were in Lane Co Wisconsin now 1852. they had their meetings in the schoolhouse which was three miles of I left the Boys at home and walked there once but got a side home it was to much for me did not go again. we had pretty good crops there and done pretty well. Leaura and Adah were both born there. about that time there began a craze about Dunn Co Mr Sherburne moved up on the Prairie and bought a lot of land wrote back such glowing accounts of the country his Brother soon followed him several other begun ~~to~~ to talk about it Mr Ranney and Mr Beach went up to investigate for themselves both bought land there that was in July 1855 the next thing was to get ready for another move there was three families interested to be pleased for the trip was to be made with six teams and waggons covered. Mr Ranney's half Brother came up on a visit that summer and he persuaded him to go with and help him. he sold his farm at once for they were in great demand at that time they were surveying a tract for a Railroad through the place and I think that made him want to leave he said he had 50 acres of land in the timber land to sell he seemed to be lucky in finding buyers for all I hardly know how to describe our outfit we were to take our household goods that could be loaded in wagons we had two covered and 3 open of oxen. this one contained provisions and such things as we should have to use and a place for myself and the Girls for we could not walk

5th The Boys had to help drive the Cows and help where they were needed Mr Ramsey drove the team on our wagon and his Brother the other one which was loaded. Mr Beach had two Wagons and his Wife and Daughter and he had a Man to drive one team Mrs Beach helped me in getting our meals we lived mostly on Corn Meal Pudding she would make a kettle full in the morning and we had Pudding and milk for dinner we had Bread ~~and~~ and other victuals along and when we camped could have fire and cook what we wanted. Mrs B had a tin baker she set before the fire and bake if we got out Mr Gull had only one wagon and team and wife he was going up to work for Mr Sherburne was with us for company sake. I thought it would be terrible to camp out but did not find it so very bad we had a tent for the men for they had to be on guard to look after the Cattle that they did not stray away they placed the wagons in a circle, but nothing disturbed us that night or on Sunday I can't remember dates. This day we got so far we seemed to be beyond civilization no houses nothing stirring but wild animals now and then the howl of a wolf or the track of a Deer so the days passed till we got to the dividing ridge. we camped at the foot of it and the next day started it was not like climbing a wall when we got to the top and looked down it was a long way it looked as if the wagons would tip over end for end but thank God we got down all safe but our journey was not done but it begun to look a though we were going towards civilization again now and then a house we came to a place they called Sparta there were some men there they had a Barn built said these were planning to get a village started there. we had a large Cow and calf in our drove they wanted he did not care to sell but the calf was hard to drive so he let them go. we did not travel Sunday for the teams needed rest and grass was not always very good yet. we begun to meet now and then and Indians and signs that we were coming to some place and on the 15th of June 1855 - Lomed

of our
Painey's end and were welcomed by Mr Sherburne
bales. the land that they bought when they came to look
over the country was in sight and it was not long before they
got to work. Mr Ramsey built a shanty on the side of
their house and we moved in made a lounge for the Boys
with me, his Laura slept with Mrs S Girls Adah still
Potatoes Flour and meal with us to last awhile and
we had a lot of potatoes eyes that we brought along
and he told us to plant them we thought it pretty
late but he put them under the sod and they come
up grew and without any cultivation raised 14 bush
he had the lumber on the place and commenced the
house built with an upright and a lean to for a
kitchen and bedroom that part was finished so that we
moved in before cold weather. Mrs Beach built a
a substantial shanty that done for them a house till
the next year. Mr Full worked for Mr Sherburne
as he intended to. we had to go to Menomonie
for supplies when we got out not much life
the place of to day the Company had a
store on one side of the river and J B Makrann
on the other we could generally get what we wanted
by paying for it. they began to think we must have
a school there was quite a lot of children and
more coming every day they had a school meeting
to plan how to go to work they got a district laid out
but found that they had to have a term of school
before they could draw public money they hired a
teacher and had our chamber for school room
they built a school house so that they had school
that winter. well to go back to ourselves Mr Ramsey
built a Barn and fixed to take care of his stock
through the winter. we had not been in our
new home but a few weeks when a Baby came
poor little thing never opened its ^{eyes} and every breath was
a groan we buried it in the place we had planed for
a garden. we went down that street when you took
me for a ride to see the old place but such a change
did not seem as if I had ever been there before.

We lived on the Prairie about six years and got on
along pretty well did not have much sickness only
the Boys had the Measles very light did not
keep them in but a few days Mrs Gilbert from
the Falls come down with her little Girl to see
them on purpose to have her get them and she
did and liked to died had them very hard said
she would never expose another child to a Contagious
disease on purpose. Mr Rameys health began to
fail him and he got the idea that it be best to get a
lot of land in the timber for farms for the Boys
well he went and got a quarter section which
is ~~the~~ where they now live he sold out on the
Prairie and built a house up there when George was
about a year old we moved up there but I am getting
on to fast Frank was born on the Prairie in 1857
when he was a baby we had the first visit from the
Indians I was alone with the Children Edward
had gone hunting that day Carl come to me and
whispered in my ear that there was something
come to kill us I looked up there was an
Indian looking in the window I stepped locked the
door and let the curtain down in his face they
did not open the door the front part of the house was
not done of there was no window to the Buttery and
they got in there and stole some flour and some
meal we had in sacks and an ax handle that was in
the shed that was the only visit they made us
but we saw them going across the prairie many
times. there was Wolves a pack one night tried
to get a calf we had in the yard but the old Cow was
to much for them she kept them on their side of the
fence till they got frightened away. ~~that~~ when

George was about a year old we moved up there
it was in the 60's when they ~~they~~ were getting ready
for the war and he got 3 young men to enlist
brought them home for dinner and helped them
to get where they could be placed on the roll and
Mr Heasley one of our neighbors said he was

going, Mr Ranney had lent him some money
and had a mortgage on his place found he was in
earnest gave up the mortgage so it would leave his
family in possession of their home free this was
in 1864 his health failed he had a bad cough
and could get no help. May 5th 1867 he died had
consumption he was buried in Menomonie
when we got back from the funeral and
realized that we were alone no one to depend
upon it seemed as if we must give up but
there was the children they must have a home
and to keep that there was work to do the Boys did
not know how to begin their Father had talked
with them and laid out plans how to begin the farm
work Harmon being the oldest Carlton thought he
ought to take the lead but he was not willing
he was not as aged as Carl I talked with them
told them if he wanted lead to take the lead
he must be willing to follow his advice and
to help him. we had only one yoke of oxen
and they went to work in the fall they hired
Mr Peterfield to do some breaking we had Cows
and Hens and Hogs to feed like farmers. we
lived about mile from Mr Carbus the school
house was about half a mile Anna Finley was
teacher. Edgar A Ranney born August 16th 1867
three months after his Father died. the Boys
were getting along pretty well had good crops
some grain to sell and pork and other things
to numerous to mention

I have got so nervous and bewildered in
looking back and trying to remember
things that happened in my past life
that I shall have to give it up and
you can begin where I left off and
follow if you can I do not remember
when you came to Wis I have the
date of your marriage but cant tell
where you settled down. think you went
back and forth before you settled down
for good so you will look out the rest
for yourself as best you can. Minnie

Nov 1914

City of Torrington

INCORPORATED OCTOBER 1, 1923

OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY

WALTER HOLCOMB
CITY ATTORNEY

TORRINGTON, CONN.

Page 1.

Orpha Bushnell, daughter of Isaac and Orpha (Demning) Bushnell, was born in Hartland Ct. Nov. 3. 1825. My mother died Apl. 6th. 1827. I have no recollection of her. My oldest sister (Laura) kept house and took care of me and the family till I was six yrs. old. Then went out to work to take care of myself. Made my home with my sister, Adah (Holcomb) when I was out of a place, but that was not very often, hardly often enough to keep my clothing in order. I was married on the 7th. of March 1847 to Edward A. Ranney of New York State. We went in the cars till we got to Erie canal, then boarded a canal boat which took us to Buffalo, New York. There engaged passage on a steam boat for Milwaukee, Wisconsin. There we had to leave railroads and boats behind and look for some other mode of travel. My husband was looking around for some way to get to where his brother lived. There was a teamster just come in with his load and was looking for something to take back, for he didn't like to go back empty. He found that he lived on the road that we wanted to go, and the same one that he worked for, and he said if we would stay at his house over night it should not cost us anything. Page 2: So the bargain was made. They loaded up and we were on the way. We found a pleasant little family and were made comfortable. In the morning he took us to Waterloo, three miles from his brother's. We were soon at our journey's end for that time. He had a sister there and most of the neighbors came from New York where he lived when he was a boy and was acquainted with them.

As for myself I was among strangers. We lived with his brother that winter. That was in 1848. My baby was born Jan. 2. 1848. Edward worked for his brother and wherever he could get a job. He had a farm there that was left him by his brother when he died, but he had not wherewith to get things together to work ~~with~~ it. He thought best to go back to New York State to his father's and get him to help him to get started. While we were there our baby died in Sept. 1848. In the spring he rented a farm of his uncle. It was a dairy farm with lots of cows. We made cheese and butter but it was a poor year; very dry; the crops did not amount to a row of pins that winter. In Feb. 23rd. Harmon was born, 1849. In the spring we went back to Ct.; don't know what for but he seemed to think he would come out right somewhere. Carlos Holcomb, my sister's husband, knew of a small farm that the owner wanted to sell so that he could leave the country. He got it cheap. There was no land broke on it except a garden. They left their goods for us to use as he had no wife but a daughter and he gave all to her. Page 3: My husband was no better off as to work; only a little to live on. He bought a cow so we had milk and butter. He had to work out the same as ever. It was hard times. Many a time I could find nothing to get for a meal but johnny cake; was very thankful for that. I kept up my ~~part~~ part as well as I could till Dec. 2nd. 1852 when Carlton was born. The girl that owned the things came and took care of us and done the work without charging a cent.

Her name was Julia Smith. My brother Hiram was our nearest neighbor and sister Adah about a mile, so I was not without friends. Mr. Ranney was getting tired of working out and in the spring made up his mind if we could sell we would go back to Wis. and to his farm there. He had a house on it and he would but a yoke of oxen and settle down to make a home. Well, the result, the man he worked for bought the place. I never knew how much he got for it but we got things together and started.

The means of traveling had improved and I had a sister living in Ohio. We stopped there and made her a visit. I had other relatives there and they took us around and visited them; cousins that I had not seen since I was a girl. Mr. Viets took us to the boat and we went to Lake Michigan; there boarded a steam boat which took us across the lake to cars which took us to our journey's end for that time.

(Over)

Found things all right. It was a log house and I was soon at work cleaning and getting ready to move in. The farm joined his brother's as we were neighbors. He soon got his oxen and went to breaking. It was too late to raise anything that year but we were provided for. Put in a piece of winter (Page 4) wheat that fall.

The boys soon found out that they were at home and could run out doors and play and didnt take them long to find out that they had some cousins in the next house. We were in ^{Dunn} Co. Wisconsin, now 1852/ They had their meetings in the school-house which was 3 miles off. I left the boys at home and walked there once, but got a ride home. It was too much for me; didnt go again. We had pretty good crops there and done pretty well. Laura and Adah were both born there. About that time there began a craze about Dunn Co.. Mr. Sherburne moved up on the prairie and bought a lot of land; wrote back such glowing accounts of the country, his brother soon followed him. Several others began to talk about it. Mr. Ranney and Mr. Beach went to investigate for themselves. Both bought land there. That was in July 1855. The next thing was to get ready for another move. There were three families interested to be planned for. The trip was to be made with oxen and wagons covered. Mr. Ranney's ~~xx~~ half-brother came up on a visit that summer and he persuaded him to go with and help him. He sold his farm at once, for they were in great demand at that time.

They were surveying a tract for a railroad through the place and I think that ~~xx~~ made him want to leave. He said he had always kept ahead of the railroads. He had 50 acres of land in the timber land to sell. He seemed to be lucky in finding buyers for all his land and got a good price. I hardly know how to describe our outfit. We were to take our household goods that could be loaded in wagons. We had two covered and three yoke of oxen. This one contained provision and such things as we should have to use and a place for myself and the girls, for we could not walk. Page 5. The boys had to help drive the cows and help where they were needed.

Mr. Ranney drove the team on our wagon and his brother the other one which was loaded. Mr. Beach had two wagons and his wife and daughter and he had a man drive one team. Mrs. Beach helped me in getting our meals. We lived mostly on corn meal pudding. She would make a kettle full in the morning and we had pudding and milk for dinner. We had bread and other victuals along and when we camped, could have fire and cook what we wanted. Mrs. Beach had a tin baker she set before the fire and bake if we got out. Mr. Hull (or Stull) had only one wagon and team and wife.

He was going up to work for Mr. Sharburne and was with us for company sake. I thought it would be terrible to camp out but didnt find it so very bad. We had a tent for the men for they had to be on guard to look after the cattle that they didnt stray away. They placed the wagons in a circle but nothing disturbed us that night. Am sorry I cant remember dates. This day we got so far we seemed to be beyond civilization; no houses; nothing stirring but wild animals now and then the howl of a wolf or the track of a deer. So the days passed till we got to the dividing ridge. We camped at the foot of it and the next day started. It was most like climbing a wall. When we got to the top and looked down, it was a long way, It looked as if the wagons would tip over end for end but thank God we got down all safe, but our journey was not done but it began to look as though we were going towards civilization again. Now and then a house. We came to a place they called Sparta. There were some men there. They had a barn built; said they were planning to get a village started there. We had a large cow and calf in our drove they wanted. He didnt care to sell but the calf was hard to drive so he let them go. We didnt travel Sunday for the teams needed rest and grass was not always good yet. We began to meet now and then an Indian and signs that we were coming to some place and on the 18th. of June 1855 came in sight of our journey's end (Page 6) and were welcomed by Mr. Sherburne's folks. The land that they bought when they came to look over the country was in sight and it was not long before---(Continued on next page)

City of Torrington

INCORPORATED OCTOBER 1, 1923

OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY

WALTER HOLCOMB
CITY ATTORNEY

TORRINGTON, CONN..

they got to work. Mr. Ranney built a shanty on the side of their house and we moved in; made a lounge for the boys to sleep on and Laura slept with Mrs. Sherburne's girls. Adah still with me. His brother occupied the wagon. We had potatoes, flour and meal with us to last a while and we had a lot of potatoes eyes that we brought along for seed. Mr. Sherburne had got some land broke up and he told us to plant them. We thought it pretty late but he put them under the sod and they came up, grew and withput any cultivation raised 14 bushels.

He had the lumber on the place and commenced the house, built with an upright and leanto for a kitchen and bedroom. that part was finished so that we moved in before cold weather. Mr. Beach built a substantial shanty that done for them a house till the next year. Mr. Hull(?) worked for Mr. Sherburne as he intended to. We had to go to Menomine for supplies when we got out; not much ~~like~~ like the place of to-day. The company had had a store on one side of the river and I. B. Makhann on the other. We could generally get what we wanted on paying for it. They began to think we must have a school. There was quite a lot of children and more coming every day. They had a school meeting to plan how to go to work. They got a district laid out but found that they had to have a term of school before they could draw public money. They hired a teacher and had our chamber for school room. They built a school house so that they had school that winter. Well, to go back to ourselves. Mr. Ranney built a barn and fixed to take care of his stock through the winter. We had not been in our new home but a few weeks when a baby came. Poor little think never opened its eyes and every breath was a groan. We buried it in the place we had planned for a garden. We went down that street when you took me for a ride to see the old place but such a change didnt seem as if I had ever been there before.

Page 7 We lived on the prarie about six years and got along pretty well. Did not have much sickness, only the boys had the measles very light. Didnot keep them in but a few days. Mrs. Gilbert from the Falls came down with her little girl to see them on purpose to have them get them and she did and liked to have died; had them very hard; said she would never expose another child to a contageous disease on purpose. Mr. Ranney's health began to fail him and he got the idea that it would be best to get a lot of land in the timber for farms for the boys. Well, he zent and got a quarter section which is where they now live. He sold out on the prairie and built a house up there. When George was about a year old we moved up there, but I am getting on too fast.

Frank was born on the prarie in 1857. When he was a baby we had the first ~~visit~~ visit from the Indians. I was alone with the children. Edward had gone hunting that day. Carl came to me and whispered in my ear that there was something, something to kill us. I looked up; there was an Indian looking in the window.

I stepped; locked the door and let the curtain down in his face. They tried to open the door. The front part of the house was not done off. There was no window in the buttery and they got in there and stole some flour and some meal we had in sacks and an axe handle that was in the shed. That was the only visit they made us, but we saw them going across the prarie many times. There were wolves. A pack one night tried to get a calf we had in the yard but the old cow was too much for them. She kept them on their side of the fence till they got frightened away. When George was about a year old we moved up there. It was in the 60's when they were getting ready for the war and he got three young men to enlist. Brought them home for dinner and helped them to get where they could be placed on the roll, and Mr. Heasley, one of our neighbors, said he was

City of Burlington

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

WALTER H. JOHNSON

(Page 8) going. Mr. Ranney had lent him some money and had a mortgage on his

place; found he was in earnest; gave up the mortgage so it would leave his family in possession of their home free. This was in 1864. His health failed; he had a cough and could get no help. May 8th. 1867 he died; had consumption, He was buried in Menimonic. When we got back from the funeral and realized that we were alone; no one to depend on, it seemed as if we must give up. but there were the children. They must have a home and to keep that, there was work to do. The boys didnot know how to begin. Their father had talked with them and laid out plans how to begin the farm work. Harmon being the oldest, Carlton thought he ought to take the lead, but he was not willing. He was not as rugged as Carl. I talked with them; told them if he wanted Cael to take the lead he must be willing to follow his advice and to help him. We had only one yoke of oxen and they went to work. In the fall they hired Mr. Bererfield to do some breaking. We had cows and hens and hogs to feed like farmers. We lived about a mile from Mr. Furbu's. The school house was about half a mile.

Anna Finley was teacher. Edgar N. Ranney born August 16th. 1867, three months after his father died. The boys were getting along pretty well; had good crops; some grain to sell and pork and other things too numerous to mention.

I have got so nervous and bewildered in looking back and trying to remember things that happened in my past life, that I shall have to give it up and you can begin where I left off and follow if you can.

I donot remember when you came to Wisconsin. I have the date of your marriage but cant tell where you settled down. Think you went back and forth before you settled down for good, so you will look out the rest for yourself as best you can, Minnie.

... We lived on the prairie about six years and got along pretty well. Did not have much sickness, only the boys had the measles very light. Did not wear them in but a few days. Mrs. Gilbert from the Falls came down with her little girl to see them on purpose to have them and she did and lived to have died; had them very hard; said she would never expose another child to a contagious disease on purpose. Mr. Ranney's health began to fail him and he got to a place where he had to get a lot of rest in the winter. They now lived out on the prairie and built a house up there. When George was about a year old we moved up there, but I am getting on too fast. Frank was born on the prairie in 1837. When he was a baby we had the first visit from the Indians. I was alone with the children. Edward had gone hunting that day. He came to me and whispered in my ear that there was something something to kill us. I looked up; there was an Indian looking in the window. I stepped; looked the door and let the curtain down in his face. They tried to open the door. The front part of the house was not done off. There was no window in the buttern and they got in there and stole some flour and some meat. We had to make an axe handle that was in the shed. That was the only visit they made us, but we saw them going across the prairie many times. There were some solvers. A peck one night tried to get a calf we had in the yard but the old cow was too much for them. She kept them on their side of the fence till they got frightened away. When George was about a year old we moved up there. It was in the 30's when they were getting ready for the war and he got three young men to enlist. Brought them home for dinner and helped them to get where they could be placed on the roll. An Mr. Hestley, one of our neighbors, said he had

LAW OFFICE OF
HOLCOMB AND HOLCOMB
115 MIGEON AVENUE
TORRINGTON, CONNECTICUT

Dec. 4. 1934.

My dear Frank and Minnie:

Your letter of Nov. 22nd. last received. I have run off Aunt Orpha's memoirs and return you the original together with such copy. Grandmother Bushnell was a Demning and I have taken the liberty of so indicating it. I am sending your letter together with like copy of Aunt Orpha's memoirs to Adaline and Bessie together with a copy of this letter, so they will know just what I have written.

It certainly was a joy to see you folks and we hope you liked to see us as much as we wished to see you all. We could not go through Menomonie without letting you see what kind of humans we were, and in addition we wanted to meet the descendants of mother's youngest sister. I very much appreciated that pamphlet regarding the esteem, cousin Hiram Bushnell was held in. In fact I gather that that is the only copy you have, and so I am returning it as I feel that it should remain with the folks of his own stamping ground. If I am in error there, it is a simple matter to remedy, as, I confess that our members of the family appreciated him very much.

When I was in St. Paul, I went down to Prescott and staid over Sunday with his family. I was up and had Thanksgiving with Adaline and Bessie. Carlos and his wife as well as Clara and her family were there. A reading of Aunt Orpha's memoirs shows that she was a sturdy soul who would "stand without hitching" and she took life as it developed, and stood by her man and her children. I wish I could have known her. Well, I guess I had better get this in the mail and send it on its way.

Remember us to all of the relatives out there.

Sincerely,

Walter Holcomb