

Grand Rapids, Dec. 1, 1841

My Dear Mother,

Your long expected letter came safe to hand the 18th of Oct. and I should have acknowledged it; but waited to hear from the box first. This too, I am happy to inform you, has reached us in perfect safety. Parker, the man to whom it was directed, was true to his trust. He wrote the same day the box got to his store house which was the 24 of Oct., and we got the letter the same week.

His letter ran thus: Received by this day's cars 1 box weighing 85 lbs. Charges on box to Detroit 1.33. Railroad freight 12 cents, our charge 25 cents, Total: 1.70. Said box is now subject to your order. I have written you the particulars as I think you would like to know how it got along. Fortunately, as trusty teamster was going to start for Detroit the next week and Turner engaged him to bring it in. The man said he should get back in twelve days from the time he started. But owing to heavy rains and bad roads, he was gone three weeks. As soon as we heard he had come, Aaron, who is now at home, went to the village for the box.

This was Wednesday, the 24 of Nov. I had done a fortnight's wash that day and had just backed out at the door with my old mop pail and scrub broom as he drove up with the box. It was 4 o'clock pm. Caroline had been labouring to get a good meal against (?) I got ready to sit down and had succeeded when he came. No farther notice was taken of the eatibles.

She ran and got a coverlid, spread it over the damp floor; placed the box in the middle and we formed a circle around it. As soon as the cover was taken off and the old block removed. Hol's (Hollis' ?) caps appeared. This at once set him uproarious which was not lessened when he saw a nice silk handkerchief added to his best cap.

Caroline kept tolerable composed till she saw her bonnet and got her treasures heaped around it. She then had to make a strong effort to keep within bounds. I had never thought of that old bonnet since I came to Michigan and should not have thought it possible to have made such a nice one out of it. It is the same fashion that is worn here. And is very becoming to a round fat face. She needed a bonnet very much for summer and this will be ready against she wants it. She has a good silk hood for winter. She is not less pleased with the dresses you sent. She

sends her best love and thanks to all who so kindly and liberally remembered her.

To Betsy for the fancy handkerchiefs and artificial (?). She sent to cousin Ann for the fruffle (?) and Daniel for the gloves. My wonder is the with Jenette with her family could spare time to work such a beautiful apron to give away.

The ladies at the Rapids are all engaged in working with cruel s (crewels?) And that even Little Mary should send her such a pretty bag. She is much pleased with the beautiful needle book Margaret sent. All she can do in return is to thank her for it.

The box was larger and the contents more valuable than I had anticipated; and my gratittude (sic) could only exceed my astonishment when I saw how generously each one had contributed to our wants. I feel that sister Betsey sent too much in giving a new dress ready made. It will fit me exactly by taking it in under each arm. The skirt is long enough and is a valuable acquisition to my scanty wardrobe. This, with the dresses father and Harriet sent me; will keep me quite above board for years to come; if I should live to need them.

Although I might go ragged and dirty with impunity (I see so few people), I do not wish to do it. But, rather prefer to keep up a decent external apearance (sic). By what magic did Laura find out that I had worn the same ribbon on my bonnet that I put on before I came here, and that it was old and faded and that I needed some new for this winter? It is equally misterious (sic) that Maria should send precisely the quality and quantity of cloth that I wanted to get. This admits of explanation; which I will give hereafter, but I can't now.

The boots and shoes fit well. Turner claims the vest that sister Sally sent so I shall make it up for him. I am not likely to get out of work this winter. I believe I am better off for stocking yarn than many that own large flocks of sheep. We have already commenced upon it.

I have not time or space to particularize such an abundance of good things as we received. Suffice to say, we apreciate (sic) every thing and only wish we could, in some way, make some return. Should an opportunity ever occur wherein we could show our grattitude (sic) we shall not be slow to do it.

I shall write to Caroline and Catharine soon; likewise to Arlington. We seem to prosper on all sides. Our crops turned out well. We raised went bushels of Rohan potatoes from one peck of seed. And a hundred and fifty

bushels of beautiful turnips from less than an ace of ground. We raised lots of pumpkins and great winter squashes. Charles took a load of squashes to the village and sold them for sixpence apiece. He engaged them previous to taking them. They have sold several bushels of turnips at twenty-five cents a bushel and eight sucking pigs ready dressed for roasting at one dollar apiece.

I know these are small affairs; but you will be glad to hear we are begining (sic) to live on our own hook.\*. I also sent down fifteen pounds of sausages for a venture by Aaron. He sold them every one to the first man he asked for ten cents a pound though pork is only three dollars a hundred..

I think we are in a fair way to live since we can get our own victuals and our friends clothe us. The chimney was laid up with sticks, Michigan fashion, we have taken it down and laid up with brick and had a nice brick oven made. Then, we have built on a buttery table twelve feet square and boarded up our stove shed snag to keep tubs, barrels, baskets etc. in, besides building hog pens, sheds and all other convenient outhouses.

We are very glad to hear of Aaron's intention of buying land fur us. Charles went to see Mr. Ballard about furnishing the purchase money last week. He said that he did have the money at one time behind but that he had used it and an had no means of getting it again.

Aaron will, therefore, make arrangements for sending the money or a draft on some bank. Turner has spoken to the merchants about it, and they will let him have specie on a draft or large bills. Turner was going to write (?rite. Right) himself but financially could not get time and so left it for me. Aaron will suit his own convenience about sending it as there is no particular hurry. They have long had the land in view they wish to purchase, it joins our own.

I was glad to hear you had such a good visit to Con. And that you found the girls in such good circumstances. I think much of them and rejoice in their prosperity and hope if we all live, I shall see them again. But life and health are so uncertain that I do not set my heart on anything. (I felt disapointed (sic) that Caroline had given up visiting us next summer, but I hope it is all for the best.

How does Mrs. Hinsdill enjoy her visit to Bennington? Give my love to her the best. Tell her they are all well at home. When Charles was there last week, Mrs. Ballard was making tarts; Aunty was tending the baby and Jenette rode down to the village with Bingham and him. Mrs. Henry

has lost her second boy that was born while brother Aaron was at the Rapids. Mr. Henry was in Chicago at the time.

We are in a continual state of alarm and anxiety about Carolines' health. Another sore broke out in her hip early in Sept. and has run ever since. It now appears to be healing but is more troublesome than it has been on account of healing to the hip bone. It hurts her to walk. She has had another gather (?) And break in her back this run nine weeks, but is now about well. She is very fleshy and to all appearance (sic) perfectly healthy. Neither of the sores have been painful or confined her to the house for a day. The doctor thinks her good constitution will finally prevail as she is now regular in her habits. And that when they are healed, she will not have any more. They both broke up in the same places where they were lanced and have never been larger than the width of the lancet .

She does not intend to go out to any party or ball this winter. It is fortunate for us she is content and happy at home. She is making a cap today for her father out of materials that you sent. She is very ingenious (sic) at any such work. She beats me all to nothing.

#### In the margins

Turner says he would like to have Aaron send on his draft while the sleighing is good as he will have to go to Iona (?) to the land office. There is no receiver at Rapids now. It is forty miles to Iona.

I should rather have had curtains than the dried apples. I wanted them for my bed this winter to use as they are. Still you could not do any different from what you did, for Mother Hills would feel that dried apples was (sic) worth more than anything else in the box. I was well pleased with the apples only I wanted the curtains more though I can use the same I did last winter only yours look better.

You inquire about Charles' foot. It has never got entirely well. It is very numb and he is afraid it will freeze this winter. He could not bear any weight on it in seven weeks. It almost took his life to step on it but he could not lie by any longer; he's losing so much time though sadly behind hand. But they are getting ahead now.

Turner says I must thank father for the nice handkerchief he sent him. He is very much pleased with it as well as the boys.

They all send their love and thanks from your ever affectionate,

## Adelia

\*What's in a Word/Garrison: p.78. "Own hook..."

...codfish...an adventurer signed on as a semi-independent operator... described as sailing "on his own hook." It became customary to say one takes chances by operating in solitary fashion does so "on his own hook."