

Grand Rapids. April 14. 1840

My dear Mother,

Your letter of March 14 was duly received and I give you many thanks for it. I had been threatening you with a letter some weeks more definite in regard to settling ourselves before writing again. But as I am still in the dark and like to remain so, I will delay no longer.

We are all well but Turner he is not quite recovered from Ague yet, looks thin and pale and is nothing as strong as he use(d) to be. A little matter tires him out, and he is obliged to betake himself to the bed. He has about given up the idea of getting away from here; there is (sic) so many difficulties in the way. I don't see how he can.

The boys won't hear of going back; they think the worst is already got along with; And to leave now, when there is (sic) prospects dawning would be all folly. I think myself it will be better for Charles and Aaron to stay here. They have got seasoned to the climate; and do not dislike the country. And if they go on as they have begun they will in process of time, scrape enough together to get land sufficient for us all to have a comfortable living.

And I do not feel as though I could go, and have them behind houseless and homely. For when they are sick, no one can make them as comfortable as I can. And if we all stick together, we can take care of one another. I do not feel that I am as far from you; that I can't come and see you. It is barely possible. I may come this summer. I talk of it some, lately. I feel more answers to some since I got your last letter; and heard how sick my father had been. I can't bear to think I shall never see him again.

I know the journey is long, but I don't mind that. I could go and get back in two months; I don't need any extra clothes. I have enough and should not need to buy an article. Caroline could keep house with her father's help as the family would be small and easily got along with. But don't tell anybody I have hinted such a thing; for they would think it a downright piece of nonsense for me to come a visiting so soon. They can't understand my feelings on the subject, but would say at once if I have any money: Better to put it to some other use than scatter it over the country. This may be true, we have but little money and a great many ways for it. But still we know not what a day may bring forth much more of a year. And in a year more we may all be in our graves. I want to come while the

family circles remains unbroken. I know you would not think it foolish for me to come, because you want to see me.

Want of money is still the prevailing cry of all classes. It is stated in one of the Michigan papers that ALL the money in circulation there is in the State, does not average 60 cents a head. Perhaps when we get new rulers, we shall have better times.*. Charles will go on with his house, money or no money. Turner could do a good deal about it if he had tools to work with. But he has none-the place Charles has picked upon for building is in the depth of the forest 4 miles from any human habitation. When he gets there he can say like Ribison Cruso (sic) "I'm monarch of all I survey." I have no objection myself to living there. I rather like it. I love the "solemn grandeur of the woods"

The forest trees grow to a tremendous height here; Pines in particular. I have seen many a fallen pine tree that would reach from your garden gate into the little orchard. When they fall, they come with a crash that shakes the earth to its foundations. The land where pine grows is not worth much and is bought merely for the timber, small pine trees make good log houses But I hate and despise a log house anyway. They are rough, dark, gloomy, ill looking places; moreover they are full of thousand legged worms and bed bugs and all manner of unclean things. A log house can be built cheap and that is why they are in general use. The house we live in is the only frame house this side of the village. All the rest are log houses with chimneys built of mud and sticks. I hate a mud chimney worse than a log house and never intend to come in contact with either if I can help it. We shall have a good house.

Turner is making a garden; the weather is warm and vegetation is coming on rapidly, we had but very little cold weather last winter. It has been a poor spring for sugar. Turner has made a barrel full into about six inches which will be plenty for our own use; besides, he has made two barrels of vinegar. He tapt (sic) as many trees as he did last year but has not made near as much sugar. There is but little sugar made here. The people are too indolent to help themselves. Every one can have the privilege of making as much sugar as please whether they own land or not. Uncle Sam has thousands of acres covered with maples. Every body can tap as many trees as they choose and no questions asked. Last year, the folks around here contrived to get a great many pounds out of us. And they are expecting to this year. But they won't. I shall be pretty short with them for I don't care a snap for any of them.

I don't make any butter now, our cow gives so little milk I can't and we have to keep her shut up in the barn yard, for as soon as she gets out, she steers straight to the leeks. They are up six inches high. I can't abide leeky milk, it is the worst tasting stuff that can be. Cows give more milk when they get leeks than they do to feed them with hay, but the milk is of no use to us and we can't use it.

We have not had a particle of butter in the house in a month. We can't eat old firkin (?) butter, nor leeky butter, and there is no other to be got also, so we go without, we miss it and want it, but we shall have to do without till leeks are gone, the people here don't mind about the leeks, eat them themselves. We can't go leeks, no how-

Turner is going to speculate on onions this year. They have always been scarce and dear in this part of the country, There is but few that raise them at all. And those only enough for their own use yet they grow to perfections large and fair. Turner thinks, if he is well, he can raise 75 to 100 bushels. He has plenty of land to work but as a great part of it has never been put to the test, we can't tell how it will turn out.

Our wheat looks well, if nothing happens to it we shall have enough and more than we shall want to use. If we can tough it this year, we shall do very well next year. I am not concerned about anything if we are all well. I feel that we shall do better here in point of getting ahead than we could to pull up stakes and get rid of what little we are in possession of at this time. We have now got started, and with ordinary luck in a year more, we can have a house and home of our own. This is the only inducement I have to stay here. I want a place of my own and I have jogged about for five years all the time. I have lived in four different places in Michigan. And if we were able to buy this place, I would never move again. But since we are not, I am willing to move once more. If I can settle for life I did not use(d) to mind shacking about, but now I dread the job of moving more than anything else.

We can go and build on Uncle Sam's land-no one will molest us; we have no law to protect us but laws of honor; a frail law to be sure; yet it is strictly adhered to. No one buys land from under a settler. They would not dare do it. Uf.....ntiment (a piece of the letter is torn out here) is against all speculations and in favor of settlers. I hope some of my nephews will yet come and see Michigan. I should like to have Elijah come here; Charles thinks if he would come and see our place in the woods he would

like to live here and wants to have me tell him he must come out here this summer.

Our folks think the land is better where they are going than any they have seen in this country. As I don't know whether it is or not, I shall not say anything about it till we have tried it. Charles is another Uncle Lem. He weighs 150 pounds and is strong as Sampson. Aaron does not grow as fast as the other children. Caroline has already outstripped him, is taller and heavier. Hollis is very large and strong and is thorough going little backwoodsman. He will chop down a tree a foot through, then yoke the oxen himself and draw it to the house and cut it up for firewood. He is fat and rosy and is as sweet a looking boy as you would wish to see. I wish his Aunt Caroline had him and yet I don't know how we could live without him. He is a darlin (sic) boy. Charles and Aaron are kind good boys and Caroline is a good girl, so you see they are all about right.

I was glad to hear from Ann. I wish she could come here to live, she might have got my letter before this time. If her husband intends moving to a new country, he may as well come here as anywhere. I am sure he would like the looks of it and as to fever and ague he must run the risque. It is in all new countries. Some escape it, but most part has a touch of it—

We were glad you thought to mention poor old Tom in your letter before the last. It is the only time we have heard from him since we left. I hope he will stay at the old house. He will then have enough to eat at all events. We have heard by Holmns (Henry's partner) that Mrs. Henry is not coming back till fall. So I may see her in Bennington that If I come. But don't you think anything about it or lie awake a minute more on account of what I have written, for there is no certainty of my getting started-as to the lake; I don't dread that at all. I wish the dry land was half as easy got along with. I have not heard when Mr. Henry is coming back. I wish Betsy would write by him. How is Jeanette's health now? Give my love to them all.

Tell Ann we have received several papers from her. The Oliver Branch. And several from Lucinda. Charles was highly entertained with brother Jonathan and the other papers she sent. Then we have received the Spectator. Tell Aaron to send the paper that has the the Queen's marriage in it, if he has it. We have not seen it yet. I have time to read all the papers that come in my way. We have first rate ones from Arlington, New World. I have just work enough to do to keep me busy. I don't work hard but live as easy as I could wish. And if I could only see you and my other

kin it would be all I could wish. I have enough to eat. I want to have you write you how Buckley Squires (?) Gets along. We heard he was blind. It is so. Likewise write how Dewey and Alife (?) Prosper. I never hear from them, only by you.

In the margins

How does Ann get along in her house keeping concerns? Tell her to write me a good long letter. She has not written much to me for the last year. You have never written me about Laura Merrill's baby. Is it pretty? How is Laura's health and the rest of the family. Tell Lucretia I have not seen or heard from any(piece missing from the letter.)

April 28th. I have had this letter written a week yesterday, and have had no chance to send it to the office, now it can't go till Saturday. You will think me ungrateful for not answering your letter sooner.

Hollis has began to go to school, but I am afraid the school will blow out. They can't raise scholars but seven schollars (sic) on this district enough to go. Aaron says I must tell Grandma his sow has got nine pigs. He bought a little runt of a sow last summer and is now rejoicing in his incredible increate (?). They are fine pigs. Caroline has got thirty-four chickens. We have fine warm weather, but a great deal of thunder and lightening. Last night it thundered and lightened teribly (sic). We rarely have a warm day, but we have thunder at night.

Turner is making shingles for our house and has sold some. They are only a dollar and twenty-five cent each thousand. He can make a thousand a day. He gets the stuff of Uncle Sam.

I hope sister Caroline will be able to make you visit this summer. I wrote to her in March...and write to Cath (Catherine?) next. If you see Mother Hills give my love to her. I ought to write and would if I had anything to say. I have nothing new to write. To use one of your old sayings: I'm like a horse in the mill my days are all alike. I am now piecing a bed quilt and going to put a quilt on next week.

How is Mr. Scott's family? Give my love to them all. Turner says he wants Aaron to write to him.

Yours most affectionately,
Adelia