

February 23, 1859. Grand Rapids

My dear mother,

In my last, I promised to write to you in February-well, I'm going to be as good as my word-though I have nothing very special to communicate-I wish I did have-that is, if it could be of an agreeable nature. But I live so much alone and meet with so few adventures that I have nothing to make an interesting letter out of—(?even the less) time passes off rapidly and not unpleasantly.

I never had so short a winter as this has been-already we are making preparations for sugaring. Aaron tapped two hundred trees last Friday the 17th and had a good run that day-Saturday it rained-Sunday it snowed-Monday it froze and blowed all day and has been as cold as Greenland ever since. So he has turned his nice tin bucket upside down and concluded to wait till the weather is more propitious—Georgie intends to make sugar on his own hook-though his conveniences are of the most primitive kind. He has eighty troughs and the clumsiest kind at that (made by our hired man a year ago). One cauldron and two small kettles—Yet, if sap runs, he will make sugar. Perseverance is his ruling trait. He would stay all night alone in the woods and boil sap if need be and he did do that last spring.

Our winter school will close in about a week more it has kept four months. George does not want to sap to run till his school is out. He is a big boy now; weighs a hundred and fifty pounds, is perfectly healthy strong and active-he is taller than I am.

Aaron and Ann have been to Muskegon this winter- they found Charles and his family well. Their little Carrie is still very backward physically and morally. She is just beginning to sit alone and is sixteen months old-she is a mild, patient little thing, but I am afraid she will never know much.

You should see Ann's baby, now nine months old. She is the darlingest Rosebud that ever lived. Ann left them all, the baby at home, when she went to Muskegon. Charles sent groceries enough by them to me to last ail summer and all the very best kind-and a nice calico dress.

I received a kind affectionate letter from him this morning; he wants to come out home very much; but has not a day or an hour he can call his own-This winter he has kept the books in adition (sic) to his other duties. But how do you get along and how has the winter passed off so far? Not a day passes, but I think of you a great deal and hope we shall live to see each other in the flesh once more.

I have just received a letter from sister Caroline. She wrote me about Hubbell's wedding-bridal gifts and so on. Well, it is not the richest folks that are happiest after all—we see that every day. I have neighbors that seem always free from care or trouble, and yet they can scarcely keep the wolf from the door. I wonder at it, but so it is. You know our path in life has been in the middle, ever so poor, but we have mingled with the rich, nor never so rich but we have mingled with the poor and as my experience goes, there is no great difference.

Well, my sheet is full and I have not wrote (sic) anything yet that I intended to-I was going to tell you and had made four new woollen (sic) sheets and lots of knitting and sewing-to say nothing of reading newspapers, magazines, novels and whatever else comes in my way. My time is entirely my own to do as I choose and I prize the blessing.

I hope I shall hear from you before a great while but whether I do or not I shall write again soon. Give my love to all my kith and kin.

Adelia

(In the margins of the letter)

I am dreadfully ashamed to send such a mean letter. I have written hurriedly. I am going up to Mr. Ellis's this afternoon. Their little Harry is sick-is threatened with croup. He is one of smartest kind of children. Talks everything and knows it all. I think as much of him as any of the children. He will be three years old in April.

We have had a great big dog come to us-that looks exactly like your old Hector and I have allowed him to stay on that account. But he is awful ravenous and I shall have to send him off.

I think you will see sister Read next summer. You don't know how much I want to see you all, but you, more than anyone else. I hope you are well. I dreamed of you last night.

(Fragment found with the above letter)

I have not heard from Caroline or Catherine in a long time. I owe Catherine a letter. I have not written her since last July-I think she will make you a visit this winter. I would if I was not farther off than she is-She may let company wait on themselves for a week or so and get her own neck out-The last letter I had from her was in October. Caroline wrote (in) August. I am expecting a letter from her every day.

I ought to make some apology for sending you such a mean letter. I have wrote (sic) with a miserable pen and pale ink and all together it looks orfully (sic) but if you can only make it out, that will be enough.

Charles and wife has sent me two pair of stockings to color black..so it goes!

Comments: A Great deal of dashes instead of periods. I have added some commas and periods to try and clarify the statements. JAC