

Grand Rapids, Sept.13, 1852

My dear mother,

When I wrote you last I told you I should write again in (a) month or so, but, of course, you knew I should do no such thing when I said so; therefore, you have not been disappointed (sic). But, never mind, I shall make amends now for all my back sliding. I take it as a matter of course you all are well as I have heard nothing to the contrary. I have not heard a word from Bennington since your letter; many changes must have taken place since that time.

Is the railroad completed yet and the cars running? Have you been to Connecticut this summer? Or New Jersey or seen either of the girls? I have written to both places but have not heard from either in a long, long time.

I suppose they are going to follow my example and let a letter be six months or a year before they answer it. They have a much better excuse than I have, for they both have large families, and a thousand cares that I am free from. I can plead nothing but want of energy. My health is good, my family small; and my time my own. I can read or write, work or play, eat or sleep and no one to say why do you so? I sometimes think I will write today, why do you do so?

I, sometimes, think I will write to my nephews and nieces just by way of remembrance and then I think I have nothing to say without I write about myself and a that would be rather of a hum drum subject, I might as well let it pass.

Did Mary and Lucinda spend the summer in Bennington? And has Hubbell Conklin made you a visit with his bride yet? I suppose she is a wife by this time to all intents and purposes. It would be a wonder if she was not. When there is Kina? And has she been in Ben.(nington) this summer and does Charles Swift follow in her wake yet with his harem scarem looks ranting about something he don't (sic) know what himself nor any body else; and poor Hina as so much of her mother in her that she is a continual martyr. I should like, of all things, to see her and have a long confab with her; and ask her if that lover of hers has ever showed himself yet or whether he is still enveloped in clouds and darkness. I am sure there one somewhere though Hine never would own it, but time enough yet.

I want to hear from all the family connections (sic) How does Judge Stephen get along, is he any better yet and Betsy Olin? She looked so poorly last summer that I think of her often.

If I had not gone my journey last summer, I never should have had courage to have started. This year travelers have been killed by wholesale to such a degree that the public are astounded. One of my neighbors was on board the Atlanta when she was wrecked (?) And escaped by a miracle (sic)

Charles and Hollis are at Muskegon yet; they come home to keep the "glamorous fourth;" was home a week and then went back. Charles will be home again sometime in the course of a month. He holds the office of supervision and will obliging to meet with the board the first week in October. And will stay at home long enough to see that I have everything provided for my comfort throughout the winter.

Aaron is at the Rapids in the livery stable. This makes it convenient for me; for if I need anything, I can send a line to him; and it comes forthwith and no grumbling. I have got the best boys in the world.

The little community, in which I live, has been visited by some heartrending calamities within the last month. A family by the name of Porter living in the house where my own dear girl lived and died; lost two little boys in a most distressing manner. They were missed by their mother about six o'clock in the afternoon. She ran immediately to the neighbors in different directions and could hear nothing from them; when returning from the last place, she saw the hat of the oldest one in the mill pond. She gave the alarm; search was made, and both boys were taken dead from the water. The cries of the agonized parents were heard here a distance of half a mile and soon a messenger came running to tell me the dreadful news.

I went directly and there lay the two fair boys (one four and the other six) on the carpet. They had been in the water two hours, at least they have not been seen by any one within that time. They were very bright, smart children and the only ones. The parents are left childless; all that kind neighbors and friends could do for the afflicted parents was done, but we could not restore them their lost darlings.

In two weeks after Mr. Porters' children were drowned; my old friend and neighbors, Mr. and Mrs. Colton lost their youngest child in an equally distressing manner. He was a boy thirteen but not larger than Georgy. He, with another boy of their own size, went into a barn to swing.

The swing was suspended from a stout pole laid across (sic) the great beams; and to give it a force, a strap was fastened to each rope.

Henry Colton had hold of one strap and Georgy the other swinging the other boy.; when by some means the strap held by Henry caught him around the ankles (sic) and threw him to the floor with such violence as to cause his death. The accident hapened (sic) between 4 and 5 o'clock PM.

I was there when he came home; we was (sic) quilting up stairs. He came up with 'Georgy; told his mother he had hurt his head and that it ached very bad. She wet his head with camphor and laid him on the bed and then came back to quilting. Soon after, he was taken vomiting; then sank into a stupor and died next morning at eight o'clock. He had his senses all night, his stupor was not so heavy, but that he would answer when spoken of and the family did not think his dangerous till five o'clock in the morning. They then sent for the doctor, but he did not get there till after he was dead

Henry was Mr. Colton's worshiped (sic) idol yet he maintained perfect composure through the trying scene while Mrs. Colton was well nigh distracted. They had but three children: John, the older, is a surveyor left home last June with a company of men for the purpose of surveying the country in the region of Grand Travers Bay. Six town ships are to be laid out which will take till the first of November.

When he got home, Aaron and Ann was (sic) going to be married. Preparations were already on foot to get up a wedding on a scale of unexampled liberality; a hundred invitations would have been given out, and a great merry making was expected.

But now, the house of feasting is turned into house of mourning. Poor Mrs. Colton, from being one of the most busy, bustling women in the world, is now one of the most inert and despairing. She says John is gone and Henry dead. How can she part with Ann?

She has had Ann sleep with her and Mr. Colton ever since Henry died. She seemed perfectly broken down whether she will ever rally again or not. I don't know. She has worked day and night to get Ann ready to be married. She told me the day before Henry was hurt, that she had just put away a hundred yards of bed ticking, all made up and ready to fill. Piles upon piles of quilt comforters, sheets, pillow cases, tablecloths and towels

(In the margin) are made up and laid away for Ann and all of the best kind; whether the wedding will be put off on account of Henry's death, I don't know, but I think not.

Aaron walked with Ann next to Mr. and Mrs. Colton in the funeral procession. Mrs. Colton requested him to; they all appear (sic) (to) consider him one of the family and have this two years.

If it would not be asking too much, I would be very glad to get a letter from you. I know it is a great task for you to write. I wish Aaron or Lucretia would scribe (sic) me a few lines just to let me know what you are all about.

I am going to see Mrs. Hinsdill next week. I expected to go this week but can't have a team. I have not seen any of them since Bingham's death. This is such a dying world that we do must be done quickly and now, dear mother, adieu. I hope this letter will find you in usual health and able to write me again.

From your ever affectionate daughter,
Adelia

Some punctuation, I have added. The letters seem to "run on." I cannot decipher Hine or Kine...probably the same person. JAC. 1/19/23