

Holland Ottawa County, Michigan
February 7th 1852

Dear Uncle and Aunt

We owe you an apology for so long delaying to acknowledge your prompt answer to our letter. Now, as a swing to the other extreme, we should be very happy, if agreeable to you and if it would not tax you too much, to commence a regular stated correspondence. We will write you, once a month, regularly, whether we have anything to write or not; on condition that you do the same. Of course, in making such an arrangement neither could wait for letters to answer. Now, if it is not asking too much, I should be very happy to make such an arrangement establishing a regular and continuous line of communication between Michigan, and Oregon. My experience admonishes me, that it is very difficult to keep up a correspondence, unless I make it a stated and fixed duty to write. A duty, which at the appointed day knocks at the door, and refuses to be turned away. I am aware that the benefits of such a correspondence would be principally on our side, as, while you are in a land of novelty and change, whose every day develops something new and interesting, we can give you but little interesting intelligence. But may we not in this manner at least maintain our acquaintance.

Only one more suggestion. Please fold your sheet as I have this, and leave the back margin blank, in case you should adopt my suggestion. This is simply that they may be stitched together for preservation without rendering any part illegible. As it will be at least three months before we can expect to hear from you, we shall until we do, send you a letter per month at any rate. My frank extends, by right, wherever the United States mail is carried. And I am entitled to receive free as well as to prepay which the P.M. of Portland will doubtless know.

We have no recent intelligence from Vermont. Probably you may have heard from there since we have. Uncle Francis is carrying on his business as usual. Selling goods and completing a large brick block, which will be a very handsome and profitable property when finished. It now gives him \$1250. - rents per annum, and will when finished, pay \$2000. Uncle William has sold his place and removed to Olibet in Eaton County, last fall, intending to engage in the ashery business. But he has returned to Kalamazoo, and is about engaging in a partnership to carry on a planing machine. It is said to be a promising business. Rollin D. is at Hastings in Barry County. The last time I heard from him, he was attending bar in a hotel. We hear from Father and Mother quite frequently.

Mother's health is not very good this winter - hardly as well as usual. However, we hope she will regain her health as the Spring comes on. Brother Hoyt is at Grand Haven, 22 miles from us. He is County Clerk, which confines him at the County seat.

Cousin Robert Duncan is there also, and is doing well.

He left Keesville, a year ago last fall, and went to Minnesota. Last Summer, finding it difficult to get business there, he started on his way back to Clinton County, N.Y. I accidentally met with him in Kalamazoo, and invited him to come to Otterwa County and see us. After he came here, we persuaded him to change his plans of leaving the West in disgust, and he finally concluded to try his fortune here. For awhile he suffered with the blues: Once, he almost made up his mind to decamp for California. But we urged him to persevere, and now, he begins to see his way clear for a very good business. He makes friends and his talents and education begin to be appreciated.

He has been very successful thus far, and considers himself as permanently established. He is destined to make a figure

yet, if he gets the Yankee rust rubbed off. Why is it, that so many of our New England young men, though possessing other qualities qualifying them to occupy a high position in society, are almost ruined by diffidence, and awkwardness? There is surely some defect in the system of early education. Now modesty, is much praised, but an excess is a great failing. A man must have coolness and self-possession in all circumstances, and an easy address, to qualify him to make his way in the world. Cousin Robert, for example, was set down as very awkward and helpless in Salamago, and was not appreciated at all, although the sterling gold was plain to be seen in his character. And now, having visited all the friends, we will return home. I am engaged in settling up our business. Whether I shall leave or not, cannot be determined at present. However, we do not expect to leave. My thoughts of emigration to Oregon vanished on making a slight calculation of expenses and risks. I could not command the capital requisite to make the journey thither and establish myself fairly in a substantial business there, and as I could do well here, I resolved to let well alone. We hope to commence a new business next spring. Our village is slowly growing, and must, yet become an important place, though it never will vie with Portland. By the bye, here the Oregonians no originality, that they must add another to the long list of "Portland's." You have also a second "Milwaukie." Now, it were far better to perpetrate some of the euphonious Indian names. We had quite an occasion to our village and society last fall. Rev. Dr. DeWitt, Wyckoff, Menselus, and Hon. Thos. Keltinghousen, and others of the Magnates of the Dutch Reformed Church in America, have taken measures for the permanent establishment of a Clerical School here, which is known as "The Holland Academy." The principal, Mr. Walter P. Taylor, came here from Geneva, N.Y., with his family of eleven persons, last October. This is intended to

become a college, ultimately. Our newspaper is in bad hands and is consequently languishing. It is expected that it will either change hands, or a new one will be established soon.

Should the new one start, it will be half English, and I will forward you a copy occasionally. As to religious privileges, the few Americans who are here, are entirely destitute of Sabbath privileges. We cannot meet together, we are so scattered, and the only service here is held in Dutch. We hope if we get a few more American residents to have meetings and read sermons if we cannot hear them preached. We can only hope and pray for better privileges. In this respect we are not as pleasantly situated as you, although you occupy missionary ground.

Do you receive newspapers from this side the mountains? The New York Independent? How do you prosper in your efforts to plant a church among the gold seekers of Oregon?

Do you yet reap the harvest of your labors? We feel a great interest in your welfare and progress, both temporal and spiritual. May God give the increase, and may your efforts to plant New England churches on the shores of the Pacific be abundantly blessed! How are your schools? Have you yet a system of public schools? Or, are you not so far organized

It is to be hoped that the churches and schools will be commenced, and remain under healthy influences. Have you any Catholic influence to encounter? I might multiply questions, but that is useless. You may expect to hear from us again next month. Anna sends love, and will try to do her part in the proposed correspondence. Can we send our pictures so that they will reach you without much expense?

Your affectionate nephew
Henry D. Post