

If he will have been down since
a week ago yesterday, but I have
worked all week.

Monroe, Wash.
March 11, 1906.

Dear Momma: I have had more letters this week than for a long time. One from Whitney, two from Coelina, one from Mary enclosing one of yours, and one from Selden's with a note of yours, and a letter from you. If you think I am mistaken about the number of letters I have received from you I'll tell you the dates of the last three or four. The one you sent me this week you dated March 3, and the one you sent before was Jan. 20. The one before that was Jan 11, and the one before that was Nov. 27. It is possible that I have overlooked one that came in January, but I am sure that I had none in December or February. I guess I have been just as poor a correspondent as you and probably with less excuse. I guess it is six weeks anyway since my last letter home or any where else for that matter.

I have been "backing" this week. The two Harrys are up in Clallam county attending to some business connected with their claims. Percy has a position in Seattle buying lumber for a retail lumber company. Joy has been spending a week in Seattle preparatory to leaving for home. She will have a fine trip home around through Colorado, California, Nebraska etc making a number of stops. I think her ticket costs about 71 dollars. Second class without stop-over privilege is about 59. You know the fare here from Chicago (this direction only) is \$33. Easy enough to get out but awfully hard to get back.

You wonder why I haven't written about Joy. I guess it is largely because I haven't written at all. I hadn't meant to skip her. I think her health and appearance have improved a great deal since she came. She ~~takes~~^{took} care of our room and made

the beds etc. We often allowed trash, clothes to accumulate but has spasmodic fits of clearing up once every week or two ~~and~~ ^{or} oftener. No trash is allowed in the sitting room or parlor. I think we get along fairly well in our household although we have our troubles, I guess there have been no open breaks although there have ^{sometimes} ~~been~~ been some rather hard feelings on every side. Joy tried the washing when her mother first left but found it too hard for her. I think Joy has had kind of a monotonous existence out here without any friends of her own age, and with four rough boys to keep house for. I am sorry Percy has gone. I think that he is probably the most unselfish one of the lot and the most capable of seeing things from another standpoint. Harry likes to dictate shall do, and think and I like to have my own way. and when we all get pretty tired and cross anyway, it's like juggling with nitro-glycerine to open your mouth or do or not do anything else. Luckily no explosion has yet occurred.

You ask if we go to church Today is the first Sunday I have missed this year. I have been every evening this year and all but two mornings. I either make the trip twice a day or stay down all day and maybe take a walk off through the hills of five or ten miles. Harry Willett has gone down with me in the evening three or four times but no one else goes except in the morning. Sunday is about the worst day in the week although I am always glad when Saturday night comes.

We have a little congregation of twenty or thirty in the morning (mostly women) and probably more than double the number in the evening. There is a little choir of about eight or ten and a little reed organ. Dr. Stephen's wife plays the organ and although she has no difficulty

in reading the hymns, anthems and in playing preludes etc, she doesn't seem to get a bit of music out of the instrument. Do you remember how Harlow Ferris would often play even when he made no mistakes? Well her playing doesn't sound exactly like that but it gives you the same feeling - just as if you wanted to yell. I think the trouble is that she doesn't play ^{all} her fingers together and often holds one chord or part of it after she has struck another. Of course a little of that might be effective but when you get it all the time it doesn't give a clean-cut result. I think perhaps she would do better on a piano. Several times I have gone a half hour early to C.E. and played till it was time for people to come. It was Communion last Sunday and Mr. Richardson (pastor) asked me if I wouldn't get a letter from home and join next communion. I told him that I might. There are twenty-eight members. They are trying to raise enough money for a building. They need about 600 more. Two thousand dollars will build the church and they really need one badly. I've been thinking of giving something toward it.

You asked if my boils were gone. I was only troubled with one that really deserved the name. You know I lost four days with it. I can't believe that it is something in our food as you suggest that causes the boils. Joy has just developed a magnificent boil on the end of her nose and Percy and Harry have both had some. You see we board at different places and have different food. I think it is something in the climate that has to do with it. Doesn't a very even climate tend to thicken the blood? I know one way that a great many people are affected that way the first year that they are in this country. Harry Willitt had a siege of boils when he was in Tacoma for a year several years

ago, although he has never had boils when at home in Iowa.

I don't claim any any great deal of common sense for our sex, Stephens. He prefers to use a knife when possible and trust to Epsom salts for the rest. I suppose you would endorse the salts probably. We have canned fruit of some kind every evening and I always eat some. I am very regular in my habits except that I rarely eat any breakfast. You see breakfast is at 6 while work begins at seven. There is no place to go for three quarters of an hour unless you come clear back home and build a fire. Harry Willard doesn't generally go but brings home some cookies at night to eat in morning. I go without anything and don't find that it inconveniences me.

It is about the coldest weather today that I have seen out here. Last night water froze on our water bucket out doors so that I had to take my fist to break it. It has been very warm, till yesterday when the wind come from the mountains and although it is bright and sunny out doors, it must be below freezing in the shade. Purry Willows have been in blossom for over a month now and last Sunday I picked some very pretty red, and white blossoms off of bushes about seven miles from here up in the hills, and saw some orchard trees in blossom that looked like prunes from a little distance.

Will you tell Selden that I will try to answer his letter some time this week. I want to see if I can get my check changed. There is a mistake of about five dollars in it. They may cheat me out of it however. There is a lot more I have to say but I fear I won't get this letter off. I send Whitney his money this week and send for my bill at Cook's which I have just about enough to pay up. Tell Selden to keep on with his word hunt and maybe I can't lend him anything but I'll see. I do hope those boys who broke our lock weren't treated too severely. It would do them far more harm than good to "be made examples of."

With love Willie

FROM
STATE OF WASHINGTON



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