

March 22 1906  
Oshkosh, O.

Dear Mamma: -

I just heard today through  
Coelina that the Newells are planning  
to take one of the Tonk cottages next  
year and consequently will not  
take our house again. I have been  
trying to think what plans would  
be the wisest to make. I don't know  
at all what your ideas are as to  
whether we should keep house next  
year or not and also whether you  
want Selden to be in school next  
year. I am not at all sure of what  
the best plan would be in regard  
to the house if the Newells do not

Come back, but I have a plan which if feasible may be a good one though I'm not at all sure.

One of the boys' lodging houses is going to be next year turned into a girls boarding house. The fellows are a very nice class of men perhaps not the very richest or swellest men in school and certainly not as a whole a rowdy bunch at all. Of course they <sup>are</sup> all alike but all seem to be gentlemen and some of them ought to be able to pay for fairly nice rooms. Quite a few of them work for part of their expenses though some of them do not. The bunch as a bunch want to stay together next year and they do not want to get into a large crowd. There are fifteen in the house now

and I suppose they'll most of them <sup>will</sup> be back next year if not all. If we could take the whole bunch in to our house it might pay us as well as renting the house and of course we want to be sure of something definite before the beginning of the year. In case we took the fifteen boys into the house there would not be room I think for you and Evelina to live in any sort of civilized way. I would rent all the seven up stairs rooms and the parlor probably to accommodate the fifteen men and I would fit up the dining room as a bed room for my self and possibly take in a room mate. We could hardly rent the hall probably unless we rented the parlor and hall as a suite and likely no one would be willing to pay for both especially as they probably could

use the hall to a certain extent without  
paying for it. As I say I'm not altogether  
sure of this plan but am submitting  
it to you. I could care for the furnaces  
and the lamps, and we would have  
to have some one come in regularly  
to make the beds dust and sweep. Of  
course in an emergency I could with Eve-  
lin's help attend to the beds but as  
a rule it would be too big a thing for  
me to attend to. I'm not sure the boys  
haven't found a place yet but think they  
have not. I might suggest the idea to the  
fellows of having them rent the house  
and pay all the running expenses  
etc but think it would be better  
to have some one more or less responsible  
in the house. If you think either of

These plans wise of course I'd want your estimate of what prices we would have to charge. For renting the rooms I have as a possible plan the following prices.

Third story front } 2.25 - <sup>no. of days</sup> 2  
 " " back 1.25 - 2

" " back 2.00 - 2

2nd story little room 1.75 - 1

" " back by " 2.50 - 2

" " front } 2.75 - 2

2.75 - 2

Parlor } 3.00 - 2

Total \$ 19.25 - 15

Also possibly roommate 1.50

" hall with <sup>or without</sup> one extra 3.00

21.75

Probably the figure \$19.25 per week is about as cheap as we could manage the thing. I don't count in my rent or I should earn it by keeping furnals and lamps. That figure would amount to a little over \$80

for a calendar month. Out of <sup>extra</sup> ~~the~~ thing  
dollars would have to come the <sup>water,</sup> coal, light  
and possibly gas for heat, the laundry bills,  
and the extra wear and tear on furniture  
and the pay for keeping the rooms swept  
and beds made.

I wish you would answer this letter  
at your very earliest convenience so  
that I can get the boys before they  
decide to go elsewhere. Also I'd like  
to know about what furniture would  
be used in the different rooms. How  
about the book cases in the parlor. Can  
they be taken out if so desired, or are  
they built in. How about closet room  
for those on the third story. Could they  
use the one in the hall. How would those  
in the parlor get along. What furniture would  
go down stairs.

Of course under the plan I have outlined  
you and Evelina would board as I would also.  
I think that would be better for you till  
you are perfectly strong again, and I think  
the worry would interfere with Evelina's  
work very much next year if we try  
to keep house. If we have fifteen boys  
in the house there will not be room for  
you probably to live in any comfort. I don't  
believe you'd even find it very convenient  
coming down stairs even if you boarded  
out on account of the walking though if  
you did like that plan you could have  
the dining room and I'd either take the  
kitchen or go some where else. I don't  
believe you could use the kitchen as a  
dining room and the dining room as

bed room reception room etc. You see  
if the parlor were rented you could use  
the hall to any extent as the rooms are  
too close together. Perhaps you could  
keep the whole first floor, using parlor  
as bed room and having dining room  
kitchen and reception <sup>and study</sup> room besides  
though you wouldn't have very much dining.  
Of course you'd have the advantage of  
being where you could look after things  
but also where you would be able to  
work. In that case you'd have to shove  
two men up stairs, one more maybe  
in the little room and there is one  
of the big rooms. If the attic was finished  
off I could take it with a room mate at a  
lower price maybe. You could go much below  
the 19.25 a week and make the thing pay.

Please write as soon as possible if you think anything of my plan and give as much detail as possible. Whether we rent rooms or the house it is going to be very difficult to arrange the house at the last moment as we will have to do on account of the wedding. I will be out west this summer for sure and possibly next year though I'll probably be back to finish school. I think if I stayed out I could earn a good irrigated farm with Selden's help and maybe <sup>the</sup> ~~a~~ loan of some money. Possibly I can do it any way. Of course I may not have enough money to be back or I haven't yet heard. In case I don't come back it wouldn't make change this plan as a man could be found to

earn his room by taking care of the  
furnace etc.

Please answer just as soon  
as you can and give my love to every  
one.

Lovingly

Willie.

Oh, I just happened to think  
that the Miss McLeary (8?) who  
was with Mary + Ellen at Clifton  
Springs one summer married the  
Harry who was with us in Monroe  
Washington and is a cousin of the  
Hillis family. He met her in  
eastern Washington and lives  
now in Iowa. He's just about her style

though he isn't a college man and  
she's an alumna I believe

Harry is going to marry Fanny  
Wagner about the first of May.  
I don't know what he will do. He  
had a little while ago an offer from  
the biggest men in Portland to go  
in real estate business with them  
they to furnish the capital and he to get  
one third profits. I don't think he  
took the offer. He's on A no. 1 sales  
men I think.

Mr. Hillis is very likely coming back  
to O'Fallon. He will in any case go back  
into Sunday school work, I believe.

Times are very hard in Seattle  
just now and Mr. Hillis tells



me the city is giving work to a large  
number of men who can't get employment  
and paying them \$25 a day and board.

Perry is on the coast now and has  
gone up north on a trip into the  
woods.

I'm getting along with my guitar  
very well and practice every morning.  
I'm going to like it very much.

March 23, 1908



Mrs. W. H. Belden  
Care of Mrs. G. S. Humphrey  
250 Bement Ave.  
West New Brighton  
Staten Island  
New York.

