

April 18, 1908  
Oberlin O.

Dear Mamma: -

I cannot answer everything in your last letter yet but I'll write without waiting further. The Eldon Inn Knights considered the price you gave, prohibitive and are looking elsewhere. They will rent an unfurnished house probably and rent furniture as that will be very much cheaper than the figures you gave. I think perhaps you would rather not have them any way though they are a very nice crowd and not especially impudicious for Oberlin men.

I will put the house into Mr. Burgh...



boards with ~~the~~ instructions to either  
rent ~~the~~ whole house or the third story  
and two front rooms. Was that what  
you wanted? It would be almost im-  
possible for me to find renters myself.  
I think it will be advisable to rent  
the house if possible because it is  
entirely possible that you and Evelyn  
will be the only ones here next year  
though I hope to be. I have put in  
an application to Board at Baldwin  
next year but of course that won't  
put me under obligations to go there  
and if we planned to keep here I could  
board at home.

The college authorities are looking for  
rooms for commencement visitors for

the 30th anniversary. Mrs. Brooks  
asked me today I would be occupying  
my room and that one lady was to  
take in twelve people at a dollar a  
day each. I don't know whether you  
would care to take any in if we had  
the house, ~~or not~~.

I will stay for commencement as I  
want to be with the family for that  
week and make a complete reunion. I'll  
be able to get into everything ~~partly~~  
on account of being in the Musical Union  
which furnishes the music. Of course  
I will have to stay now that I have  
joined the union.

I haven't heard anything from the West  
very lately but I am going to write  
pretty soon to find what I can



do this summer. When Percy was  
here he promised me some sort of a job  
for the summer but of course he didn't  
know then the full extent of the panic.  
Mr. Hillis tells me many men out of  
work in Seattle are given work by the  
City for board and \$2.50 per day. Even  
if I can find something through Percy  
it may be impossible for me to find  
something for Selden. I don't know  
whether I told you but when Percy  
was here he told me of some land in  
Eastern Washington which Dr. Hillis  
invested in at about \$5.00 per acre  
which has since been put under an  
irrigation ditch with perpetual water

right at an expense of about \$25.00 per  
acre. This land now in the raw state  
covered with sagebrush is worth from  
\$80.00 to \$100.00 per acre according to  
Puey's statement which I have every  
reason for believing. Dr. Hillis is  
very anxious to get the land put into  
cultivation and would have given  
Harry Hillis half the 160 acres for  
doing it but didn't think much of  
the way he gave up the opportunities  
in the west. Puey thinks Dr. Hillis  
would be willing to make the same  
terms with me. I'm not sure but am  
going to write Puey about the matter  
and if I can get any thing like that



offer I am going to try to take it up  
with Selden. I know about the <sup>district</sup> ~~district~~  
in which it is situated and ~~as a rule~~  
it would be a very valuable piece of  
property. I would have to clear off the  
sage brush, plow and ditch the  
land and put it into some crop,  
probably alfalfa. The land would  
probably double in value for such  
treatment. It surely would in fruit  
or market garden. In case I could  
get the opportunity would you be  
willing to back my note for enough  
capital to develop the land. To  
go at the work with the right  
start and what Mr. Willis would

undoubtedly expect we two fellows  
would need at least five horses  
and a few pieces of machinery. In  
general I should try to pay for things  
before I got them but to get the  
opportunity, we'd have to invest a  
certain amount before we got any  
returns. I wouldn't borrow any money  
before I spent it so as to have interest  
allowing which we weren't using the  
money. In any case most of the money  
would really be secured by the horses  
etc even before we got a property interest.  
We could probably raise enough to  
feed ourselves and animals the second  
year. If we couldn't work at clearing



in the winter we could either find  
teaming or take our horses to the city  
and sell them. There is a big enough  
difference in the prices of horses in  
the coast cities and the plains to pay  
good profits to any one who knows  
much of the business. In case we were  
out ~~there~~ I don't know just how  
I'd plan about my school for next  
year but maybe I could leave Selden  
on the ground and possibly leave a  
good man with him. Of course  
if I don't get any more money the  
question of school for me next year  
is settled any way. It might be better  
for me to be in University of



Washington so as to be ~~near~~ to the base  
of operations especially during vacations.  
If we went out there perhaps you would  
like to go out there. The climate isn't  
any more severe really than it is here  
in <sup>the</sup> Berlin or any way than in Clifton.  
I wish you'd write what you think of  
this plan. Please don't talk it over however  
till I have made all my arrangements with  
Dr. Hillis. Please tell me whether you'd be  
willing to back my note for a considerable  
sum perhaps even as much as a thousand  
dollars. I'd have the loan made against me  
without your surety just as soon as  
I could get title to the land. Before that  
of course I would have nothing to back  
it with and couldn't borrow the money.



I should like very much to get a hold of just this sort of proposition and it would put me in the way of some other good things.

In regard to the glee club only one examination is given each year and only to fill vacancies created by members leaving school. Five graduate this year - two tenors, two baritones and one bass. I'd try for baritone which is the most contested position or four out of every five singers in Oberlin are baritone. In examination, there is a preliminary which weeds out all but the best. Then in the final the men are allowed to sing solos of their own and also sing in quartet work with members of the club to examine the quality of blending in the voice. If a single vote is cast against a man by the members he is not admitted to the glee club, and popularity counts

for a good deal in the examination.

I'm going right on with vocal this term and I think I'll get to sing in a class recital from what Mr. Hoerner tells me before the term is over. I'm working a good deal on my guitar and make good progress. I'll get a lot of satisfaction out of it this summer. I hope someday when I get pretty proficient that I will be able to get a good instrument. One of the boys here has a ninety dollar guitar and I can see the difference. It is impossible to make a cheap guitar with anything more than approximate accuracy of tone. The tone quality of mine is very good but it is not much better when just tuned than a piano that has



been used for a year without tuning.

I'm glad to hear of Evangelene's  
baby. ~~and~~ You didn't speak of the subject  
in Eveline's letter. We'd be glad to  
know more particulars.

Well I'll write more later.

With love

V. M. S.



Mrs. W. H. Belden  
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