

**FIVE LETTERS FROM SAN FRANCISCO**  
from the John Pierre & Myrtle Serres/Shirley Roberts Collection

A Report from the Legacy Project of  
**THE GLEN ELLEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
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## **FIVE LETTERS FROM SAN FRANCISCO**

### **from the John Pierre & Myrtle Serres/Shirley Roberts Collection**

*The Legacy Project of the Glen Ellen Historic Society evaluates and preserves locally emerging historic artifacts and documents. These valuable and irreplaceable items are very important in building a reliable history of the area — and are otherwise extremely vulnerable to deterioration and loss. We consult with local families that have historically significant ephemera and memorabilia, helping them to identify and preserve their collections while making them available for research and public display, where it is appropriate, by means of digital recording.*

*The initial phase of The Legacy Project involves the John Pierre and Myrtle Serres/Shirley Roberts Collection. This major group of artifacts and primary documents has accumulated over the past 160 years on the Serres Ranch—ever since 1851, when Joseph Hooker built his cabin on what had been the Agua Caliente Land Grant. Reports such as this are made available to members of the Glen Ellen Historical Society to promote further research and discussion.*

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Among the documents found in the John Pierre & Myrtle Serres/Shirley Roberts Collection there are more than a hundred letters written by members of the Watriss family during their stay in San Francisco, from George Watriss' first arrival in 1851 until the purchase of their ranch in Sonoma in 1858. These letters are being individually scanned and transcribed to make their contents readily available for further research.

Every attempt has been made to observe and retain the idiosyncratic spelling and punctuation of the original documents. Where words are not recognizable they are so indicated, with a best guess provided from context. Photographs of the originals are provided for comparison towards the eventual correction of these transcriptions; high resolution copies are also available by request.

The letters contain colorful and insightful descriptions of daily life in the early stages of urban life in California, with observations on the events of the traumatic events of the day: the building, industry, investments and merchandising, the fires, the earthquakes, and the crimes and vigilante proceedings felt necessary to regulate a city on the edge of the frontier, with an infrastructure just barely keeping up with demand.



*Over a hundred letters were written from San Francisco throughout the 1850s by members of the Watriss family.*

The first letter transcribed for this report was written May 29th, 1851 by George Watriss to his 15 year old son George Cabot Watriss, who had remained behind in New York to study engineering and surveying— trades that were considered to be eventually useful in California. Apparently George Senior had arrived in San Francisco only recently, and ahead of his wife and other children, who had yet to arrive by ship around the Horn through the Straits of Magellan. Here is the transcription:

San Francisco May 29 1851

My Dear Son

I am very [?] the weather is pleasant. It is now 4 weeks tomorrow night since the great fire which prostrated everything but we are recovering again fast. If they gon on rebuilding at the same rate they will have the Burnt district all built over. Some building will be better & some worse the buildings are generally of wood & put up cheap. I want you should have all letters directed to your mother sent to me at once directed to the care of Moffat & Co. I suppose Mother will arrive here about the first of July by that time I shall get a Small House for them. If they arrive here safe then I shall be happy. Moffat & Co. loss by the fire was about \$25,000 we shall get to work next week we have made some additions to the building we occupied before and If the building can be built fire proof It will be It is all Brick & iron— San Francisco is bond to be burnt up every year I shall not send any money to you till you will want some.

The proceeds of the furniture Mr Coleman takes charge off and he wrote to me that you would not want for anything. Now I think Mr Coleman has been very kind I hope I shall be able to pay him for his trouble. I had a some Whiskey in a Small Bbl in the cellar I wrote to Mr Banta to get It and send it to me. When you have a chance I want you should Ship my tool Chest. I can make the tools very useable here. When you want anything in California you have to pay for it but of you want to sell it will not bring half Its value. When you send the tool chest be very careful how you pack the things so they will not rust. Mrs Curtis & Fred arrive here by the Tennessee all well and had a pleasant passage M Curtis Keep house and I am living with him for the present when your mother arrives here she will do all the correspondence and will be som relief. California will be a great field for your occupation such as surveying and Engineering. You must be sure and stick to your school. Fred Curtis is here and does not know what do with himself their is no School and I think it was bad policy to bring out the Girls more on the account of know Schools. Mechanics are doing well since the fire they got from \$6 to 15 per day and their is great many Employed in rebuilding. Give my best respects to Mr Dauchy & C Coleman from your affect Father

Geo Watriss

The next letter transcribed was written October 4th, 1853, by Frank to his brother George, who was still studying in New York. The rest of the family had settled into San Francisco by now, and were apparently renting rooms out. The tone of this letter suggests a general discouragement with their circumstances.

San Francisco Oct 4th 1853

Dear Brother

The mail steamer arrived yesterday but did not receive any letter from you or anybody else there was about 700 passengers no sickness this trip. Our House is full and if it remains so we can make some money. We have made up our mind if we had \$20,000 in cash you would see us by the next steamer but we have it not so there is no knowing when we shall come. Provisions are very high. Fresh Butter selling for #1 per lbs Stale Butter 55¢ by the 100 [?] lbs and very scarce. Pork \$40 bbl. Potatoes 2½ cts. The flour speculation from this place to N York turn out a bad go I see by the papers by the way do you ever get any & send by every steamer The rainy season is near at hand the indians are double thatching their cabins when they are asked the reason their reply is that it is going to be a very severe winter they judge by the way a certain kind of birds build their nest. We wrote you a little matter about some bracelets that was to be made from some gold dust that Father sent home by Capt Porter who was very anxious to do us a favor by executing some little order for us he arrived here yesterday after an absence of one year and a half without the bracelets he says that he has brought the money back but we have not see it yet so much for friendship in trade We are all well. Mother & Father and the rest send you much love & we are all [?] a long as usual. So I have nothing to write but will endeavor to keep you posted when any thing does happen. From your Brother

Frank Watriss

The third letter was written May 16th, 1854 to George Cabot, who apparently completed his studies and is working now as a surveyor on the East Coast. The letter is begun by his brother Frank and completed by his mother, both of whom seem eager to hear any news from him:

San Francisco May 16th 1854

Dear Brother

We did not receive any letter from you by the last steamer it seems that some thing was missing every time a Steamer with the mail arrives and we donot get a letter from you It seems now as I write that I had not seen you for a Century. I hope we will make our pile to come home to see you. Every thing is the same since I last wrote. Our house is full Mr. Mudd leaves for the States to day he will stop at the Astor House. You must see Capt Porter if you have not he is one of Fathers best friends. To vary the sameness of things here there has been a fire and one man killed I believe that is all. I imagine I hear you say that is enough. The great enterprise here now is the grading of the streets. I will describe a street to you firt block you go up a pair of stairs about six feet and the block you go down as many more. the houses built to correspond. One Frenchman had a house built of brick situated on Sacramento street it was four stories high before the street was graded the roof is even with the street now. Yesterday the steamer from San Diego arrived she brought the news of the surrender of Capt Walker the president of the New Republic of Sonora to United States so ends that Republic

My Dear Son

Frank has written you these few lines in a great hurry and desires me to finish the letter but I have no more news than usual— we were all much pleased to hear from you and every day I feel thankful that you are so well situated with a prospect for the future I think things look more favorable with us and I feel encouraged that your father will come out bright after a while he certainly deserves it for he has indeed been through the fiery furnace enough to be seven times purified— keep up a good heart and we shall meet I hope soon to all live comfortable once more together— The Girls attend School at the same place as when I last wrote they are improving in Mind & body— As to Frank he is doing well and I think by I hope will do more than well— I presume before this reaches you Lucy Ann Stetson will have been married I cannot realize that she is of a marriageable age for I know she is but just three months older than you it makes old folks of your Father & me by the time we see you again even if it is quite soon you will be a full grown man— How is Fred prospering and what are you both about? Remember I did not receive any letter by the last mail but I came to the Conclusion you was perhaps off in the woods at too great a distance to get a few lines Conveniently to the Office and I hope I was right. rather than sickness prevented your writing do not neglect sending a line by every mail if possible. We are all well and all join in sending love to you— tell Fred I have not forgotten him and would like very much to receive a letter from him detailing all the little incidents of every day affairs that occur in your Engineering roamings and an account of the manner of living from day to day Remember me to all who inquire about me and accept a mothers love from

Martha C Watriss

This is a shocking look my letter and you better destroy it for I should be ashamed to have it seen but I know you would be disappointed not to get any therefore I send such as it is—

The next letter was written by Frank to his brother a few months later in the same year. In it he describes his business activities and political opinions, and describes a lynching.

San Francisco Aug 31st 1854

Dear Brother

I have not wrote to you for some time and I do not know as I should this Steamer if it had not been for your remarks with regard to myself in Mothers letter I wanted to get some of your ideas out of your head, there was some thing in your letter about myself being admitted to the Bar of this City in practice of mixtures for the stomach I detest as much as you do so, make your mind easy on that point. I have sold out of my stall in the market it did not turn out to be a good speculation because business became so dull it was two days ago when I sold so I am out of Business and on the lookout for a good place I think it will not go in to any thing with out I can stick to it I should like to have a situation in a Commission House as that kind of Business is at a stand still it will be a difficult job. Mechanics are doing nothing compared with last year at this time there is no quartz mining going on which gave a good deal of work for them. There is no show for your profession out here now This country would not suit you the country might but the people would not I am sure would not. What do you think of the Know Nothings I like the Society very much I am down on Foreigners holding office under the government. My mottos is that Americans should be governed by Americans only The Chinese are a great nuisance there ought to be a law past stopping them coming here They are the most disgusting and filthy people in the world they are all gambling and go where they live and the stench is so great they knock skunks completely in the shade and as a western man would say they are now where. Two or three days a go two men where hung by Judge Lynch across the Bay for stealing catle they where hung california fashion a laso was thrown over their necks then over the limb of a tree the other end of the laso made fast to the pomel of a saddle then where drawn slowly from the ground. Mother says it was murder by the [people?] but where there is no prisons they are obliged to do such things but I am not much in its favor The weather is delightful There is a great deal of building going on now in this city because the lumber and bricks are so cheap There is a theatre building opposite our house it is called the American and is to be finished in 60 days from the time they commenced I would write you a longer letter if their was any news I can not spin a long letter out of nothing. We are all well. From your Brother

Frank Watriss

The final letter of this series was written by Martha to her son some four years later, when George Cabot had come west to begin working as a surveyor. She begins the letter addressing her worries for her son's hardships before telling him about the ranch they had purchased in Sonoma from Joseph Hooker.

San Francisco Feb 15/58

Dear Son,

I have just read a letter from you dated Feb 2d Santa Margarita Ranch giving us an account of your perilous unpleasant experience of a surveyors life thus far. We are all very much disappointed to learn your unfortunate circumstances and do not wonder that you are sick of it and for my part I do not think you are bound to remain the three months when they have not fulfilled their agreements. In the first place in a previous letter you stated that you made a distinct bargain that you should [not?] work on Sundays and that day Sunday you was to go contrary to agreement (this is the third letter we have read from you and the third we have sent you endireted to Monterey and one before this at San Luis Obispo in one we stated there was a chance for you at Marysville but they could not wait for an answer from you but now say that when there is an other chance you shall have the preference George I am very sorry you are so discontented and do not wonder but perhaps it will do you no harm in the long run It will prepare you for labor or fatigue in some other way I hope your health will be spared you which is of the most importance I know you are anxious to hear how we are prospering and I have a surprise for you You know how matters and things were when you left well the prospect did not improve at all and finally your father proposed to Mr Rankin if he would give him the rent from the first of Jan to the 15th of the present month he would vacate the premises and he agreed to it Consequently this is our last day of Oriental Grandeur and Now for the Surprise

A farm or ranch was offered for sale in Sonoma containing six hundred and forty acres or a mile square called the Hooker Ranch for the sum of ten thousand dollars and it was so highly recommended that your father and Frank Brown went to look at it and found it every thing it was represented It is situated about two mile from the City of Sonoma bounded on one side by Sonoma Creek where plenty of salmon trout are caught and on one side by mountains and on the other sides by splendid large oak trees laid out they say like a fine park so you see there is plenty of wood and water and there are plenty of people who have spent weeks at the farm that declare it to be the Paradise of California well the next thing was to get it and we all thought it a splendid chance for a home for us all and a business for your father and yourself and Frank if you like it Frank is delighted with the idea I concluded from all accounts it was a great bargain and a Mr Clayton a friend of your fathers who has a ranch near but one to it says his cost him over twenty thousand and he much prefers the Hooker Ranch and that three year ago he could not buy it for twenty three thousand I concluded to make every endeavor to get it and went to Mr Griffin and asked his advise as to how I could raise the money and he wrote to his brother a Mr Jones a lawyer in New York all about it and I gave him a power of attorney to sell the house in St Marks Place and Mr Griffin told him not to sell less than thirteen thousand there is just three thousand mortgage on it and that will leave ten to pay for the farm he told him the money or a certificate of deposit must be sent me on or before the last of april next So after thinking it all over it was thought a first rate thing well there was some mortgages on the farm and Mr Stanley undertook the business and sent a man to search the records and ascertain all about it and one

mortgage has been paid and there is one of three thousand to be paid and then I have six months time to pay the rent in at two per cent a month with a [?] of paying sooner if the money arrives before and in order to pay this three thousand mortgage I sold the house in Pine Street for 18 hundred and 50 dollars and a man was employed to search the records to ascertain of the title was good which there is no doubt of and when he gets through which will be I presume tomorrow I get the deeds which are all ready in Mr Stanleys hands waiting for the money to be paid over which the man has in the bank ready as soon as this ploding searcher is through then we start for Sonoma it probably will be by Wednesday or Thursday your father has sent a man up to turn up the ground and prepare a little and most of our furniture was sent up in a sloop yesterday which will be put in a store house at the landing about three mile from the place till we reach there when it will be sent up by wagons— Now is not that a surprise Just think of us all being farmers in earnest It is to be a stock Ranch mostly and Frank Brown has sold out and goes with us but the Ranch is mine and in my name and no one else is to have any thing to do with it but your brother and Frank Brown are to be interested in the stock and if you like it you are as welcome to join as the rest now you see what I meant when I said your present experience might prepare you for hard work some other way I expect it will be hard work for a year but then every one says it is an independent fortune for us all I will not advise you whether to leave your present party before the expiration of the three months or not but I think you will be delighted with an independent home as for your instruments I would not advise you by any means to use it in your present position and I will leave it at Mr Humberts Assay Office in Montgomery Street till you please to take it away and your trunk and the rest of your things we take with us to the Ranch— we are all well anxious to start and you can do as you think best when you will come but I hope soon.

from your Mother

The original letters are reprinted on the following pages for comparison to these transcriptions, with the understanding that corrections will be sent by readers to the Glen Ellen Historical Society for later publication. We look forward to publishing transcriptions of the remaining letters as they become available, and invite questions and commentaries from our members regarding these fascinating first-hand documents.

Queries and responses should be sent to the Glen Ellen Historical Society, PO Box 35, Glen Ellen CA 95442. Reports on other aspects of the John Pierre and Myrtle Serres/ Shirley Roberts Collection will be made available to members of the organization as circumstances warrant.



San Francisco May 29 1851

My Dear Son

I am very glad the weather is pleasant It is now 4 weeks tomorrow night since the great fire which destroyed everything but we are recovering again fast If they go on rebuilding at the same rate they will have the Burnt District all built over some building will be better & some worse the buildings are generally of wood & put up cheap I want you should have all Letters directed to your Mother sent to me at once directed to the Care of Moffat Ho I suppose Moffat will arrive here about the first of July by that time I shall get a small house for them If they arrive here safe & well I shall be happy Moffat Ho loss by the fire was about \$25,000 We shall get to work next week we have made some additions to the building we occupied before fire and If the building can be built fire proof It will be It is all brick & iron - San Francisco is bound to be burnt up every year I shall not send any money to you till you will want some The proceeds of the furniture

Mr Coleman takes charge off and he wrote to  
me that you would not want for any thing  
Now I think Mr Coleman has been very kind I hope  
I shall be able to pay him for his trouble  
I had a some Whiskey in a Small Bbl in the Celler  
I wrote to Mr Banta to get it and send it to me  
When you have a chance I want you should  
Ship my tool Chest I can make the tool very  
Useful here When you want anything in California  
you have to pay for it but if you want to see  
it will not buy for its value When you send  
the tool Chest be very careful how you pack  
the thing so they will not rust Mrs Curtis & Fred  
Arrive here by the Tennessee all well and had a  
pleasant passage Mr Curtis keep house and I am  
Living with him for the present When your  
Mother arrives here she will do all the  
Correspondence and will be some relief  
California will be a great field for your  
Occupation - such as surveying & Engineering  
You must be sure and stick to your School

wrote to  
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inde I hope  
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you should  
be told very  
thing in California  
want to see  
when you see  
in you speak  
Curtis & Fred  
and had a  
use and I am

Fred Curtis is here and does not know what do  
with himself there is no school and I think it was  
bad policy to bring out the girls more on the  
account of know school mechanics are doing  
well since the fire they got from 76 to 18 per  
day and there is great many employed in rebuilding  
Give my best respects to Mr Dauchy  
& C Coleman from your affec. Father

Geo W. Waters

San Francisco Oct 4<sup>th</sup> /53  
Dear Brother

The Mail Steamer arrived yesterday but did not receive any letter from you or any body else there was about 700 Passengers no sickness this trip. Our House is full and if it remains so we can make some money. We have made up our mind if we had \$20,000 in Cash you would see us by the next steamer but we have it not so there is no knowing when we shall come. Provisions all very high. Fresh Butter selling for 1<sup>st</sup> pr<sup>ts</sup> States Butter 55<sup>c</sup> by the 100<sup>th</sup> and very scarce Pork 40<sup>c</sup> bbl. Potatoes 2 1/2<sup>cts</sup>. The flour speculation from this place to N. York turn out a bad go & see by the papers. By the way do you ever get any news by every steamer. The rainy season is near at hand the Indians are double thatching their Cabins when they are asked the reason their reply is that it is go<sup>g</sup> to be a very severe winter they judge by the way a certain kind of birds build their nest. We wrote you a little matter about some bracelets that was to be made from some gold dust that Father sent home by Capt Porter who was very anxious to do us a favor by executing some little order for us he arrived here yesterday after an absence of one year and a half with out the bracelets he says that he has brought the money back but we have not see it yet so much for friendship in trade

We are all well. Mother + Father and the rest  
send you much love + We are all going a  
long as usual. So I have nothing to write but  
will endeavor to keep you posted when any thing  
does happen

From Your Brother  
Frank Hatfield

Capt Walker

San Francisco May 16<sup>th</sup> 1854

Dear Brother

We did not receive any letter from you by the last steamer it seems that some thing was missing every time a steamer with the Mail arrives and we don't get a letter from you It seems now as I write that I had not seen you for a Century. I hope we will make our pile to come home to see you. Every thing is the same since I last wrote. Our house is full Mr Mudd leaves for the States to day he will stop at the Astor house you must see Capt Porter if you have not he is one of Fathers best friends. To vary the sameness of things here there has been a fire and one man killed I believe that is all I imagine I hear you say that is enough. The great enterprise here now is the grading of the streets. I will describe a street to you first block you go up a pair of stairs about six feet and the block you go down as many more. the

Houses built to correspond. One Frenchman had a house built of brick situated on Sacramento street it was four stories high before the street was graded the roof is even with the street now. Yesterday the steamer from San Diego arrived she brought the news of the surrender of Capt Walker the president of the New Republic of Sonora to United States so ends that Republic.

My Dear Son

Frank has written you these few lines in a great hurry and desires me to finish the letter but I have no more news than usual - We were all much pleased to hear from you and every day I feel thankful that you are so well situated with a prospect for the future. I think things look more favorable with us and I feel encouraged that your Father will come out bright after a while he certainly deserves it - for he has indeed been through the fiery furnace enough to be seven times purified - Keep up a good heart and we shall

meet - I hope soon to all live comfortable  
once more together - The Girls attend School  
at the same place as when I last wrote they  
are improving in Mind & body - As to Frank  
he is doing well and I think by & bye will  
do more than well - I presume before this  
reaches you Lucy & Ann Steben will have  
been married I cannot realize that  
she is of a marriageable age for I know  
she is but just three months older than you  
it makes old folks of your Father & me  
by the time we see you again even if it  
is quite soon you will be a full grown  
man - How is Fred prospering and what  
are you both about? Remember I did  
not receive any letter by the last mail  
but I came to the conclusion you was  
perhaps off in the woods at too great  
a distance to get a few lines conveniently  
to the office and I hope I was right  
rather than sickness prevented your writing  
do not neglect sending a line by  
every mail if possible - We are all well  
and all join in sending love to you - Tell



I need I have not forgotten him and would  
like very much to receive a letter from him  
detailing all the little incidents of every  
day affairs that occur in your Engineering  
sojourns and an account of the manner  
of living from day to day Remember me  
to all who enquire about me and  
accept a Mothers love from

Martha C. Watriss -

This is a shocking looking letter and you  
better destroy it for I should be ashamed  
to have it seen but I know you would  
be disappointed not to get any therefore  
I send such as it is -

San Francisco Aug 31<sup>st</sup> / 1854

Dear Brother

I have not wrote to you for some time and I do not know as I should this steamer if it had not been for your remarks with regards to myself in Mothers letter I wanted to get some of your ideas out of your head there was some thing in your letter about myself being admitted in to the bar of this City in practice of Medicines for the stomach I desire as much as you do to make your mind easy on that point. I have sold out my stall in the market it did not turn out to be a good speculation because business became so dull it was two days ago when I sold so I am out of business and on the lookout for a good place I think it will not go in to any thing with out I can stick to it I should like to have a situation in a Commission House of that kind of business is at a stand still it will be a difficult job. Mechanics are doing nothing compared with last year at this time there is no quartz mining going on which gave a good deal of work for them. There is no show for your profession out here now this country would not suit you the country might but the people would not I am sure would not. What do you think of the new dothings I like the society very much I am down on foreigners holding office under the government. My motto is that

Americans should be governed by Americans only  
The Chinese are a great nuisance there ought to  
be a law passed stopping them coming here they are  
the most disgusting and filthy people in the world  
they are all gamblers and go where they live and the  
dench is so great they knock skulls completely in  
the shade and as a western man would say they  
are now where. Two or three days ago two men were  
hung by Judge Lynch across the Bay for stealing  
cattle they were hung californian fashion a lass  
was thrown over their necks then over the limb of  
a tree the other of the lass made fast to the pommel  
of a saddle then were drawn slowly from the  
ground. Another says it was murder by the people  
but when there is no passion they are obliged to  
do such things but I am not much in its favor  
The weather is delightful. There is a great deal of  
building going on now in this city because the  
Lumber and bricks are so cheap. There is a theatre  
building opposite our house it is called the Am-  
erican and is to be finished in 60 days from the  
time they commenced. I would write you a longer letter  
if there was any news I can not spin a long letter  
out of nothing. (We are all well)

From your Brother  
Frank Wasieleski

San Francisco Feb 15/58

My Dear Son

I have just read a letter from you dated Feb 2<sup>d</sup> Santa Margarita Ranch giving us an account of your perilous unpleasant experience of a surveyors life - thus far we are all very much disappointed to learn your unfortunate circumstances and do not wonder what you are sick of it - and for my part I do not think you are bound to remain the three months when they have not fulfilled their agreements In the first place in a previous letter you stated that you made

and that day Sunday you was to go contrary to agreement - (this is the third letter we have rec<sup>d</sup> from you and the third we have sent - you indicated to Monterey and one before this at San Luis Obispo in one we stated there was a chance for you at Marysville but they could not wait for an answer from you but now say that when there is an other chance you shall have the preference George I am very sorry you are so discontented and do not wonder but perhaps it will do you no harm in the long run It will prepare you for labor or fatigue in some other way I hope your health will be spared you which is of the most importance I know you are anxious to hear how we are prospering and I have a surprise for you

You know how matters and things were when you  
left - well the prospect did not improve at all  
and finally your father proposed to Mr Rankin  
if he would give him the rent - from the first of Jan  
to the 15<sup>th</sup> of the present month he would vacate the  
premises and he agreed to it - consequently this  
is our last day of Oriental Grandeur and now  
for the surprise

A farm or Ranch was offered  
for sale in Sonoma containing six hundred and  
forty acres or a mile square called The Hooker  
Ranch for the sum of ten thousand dollars and it  
was so highly recommended that your father and  
I went down to look at it and found it every  
thing it was represented - It is situated about two miles  
from the City of Sonoma bounded on one side by Sonoma  
Creek where plenty of salmon trout are caught and  
on one side by mountains and on the other sides  
by splendide large oak trees laid out they say like  
a fine park so you see there is plenty of wood and water  
and there are plenty of people who have spent weeks at  
the farm that declare it to be the Paradise of California  
well the next thing was to get it - and we all thought  
it a splendide chance for a home for us all and  
a business for your father and your self and Frank  
if you like it - Frank is delighted with the idea  
I concluded from all accounts it was a great bargain  
and a Mr Clayton a friend of your fathers who has a  
ranch next but one to it - says his cost him over twenty

thousand and he must prefer the Hooker Branch and that  
three year ago he could not buy it for twenty three thousand  
I concluded to make every endeavor to get it and  
went to Mr Griffin and asked his advise as to how I  
could raise the money and he wrote to his brother a Mr  
Jones a Lawyer in New York all about it and  
I gave him a power of attorney to sell the house in St  
Mark's Place and Mr Griffin told him not to sell less  
than thirteen thousand there is just three thousand  
mortgage on it and that will leave ten to pay for  
the farm he told him the money or a certificate of  
deposit must be sent me on or before the 1st of  
April next so after thinking it all over it was thought  
a first rate thing well there was some mortgages on the farm  
and Mr Stanley undertook the business and sent a  
man to search the records and ascertain all about  
it and one mortgage has been paid and there is one  
of three thousand to be paid and then I have six  
months time to pay the rest in at 7 per cent a month  
with a privilege of paying sooner if the money  
arrives before and in order to pay this three thousand  
mortgage I sold the house in Pike Street for 18  
hundred and 50 dollars and a man was em-  
-ployed to search the records to ascertain if the title  
was good which there is no doubt of and when he  
gets through which will be I presume tomorrow  
I get the Deeds which are all ready in Mr Stanley's  
hands waiting for the money to be paid over which  
the man has in the bank ready as soon as this plotting  
searcher is through then we start for Indiana

it probably will be by Wednesday or Thursday  
Your father has sent a man up to turn up the ground  
and prepare a little and most of our furniture  
was sent up in a Sloop yesterday which will be  
put in a storehouse at the landing  
about three mile from the place till  
we reach there when it will be  
sent up by Maggors - Now is not that a  
surprise just think of us all being farmers  
in earnest - It is to be a stock ranch mostly  
and Frank Brown has sold out and goes with  
us but the Ranch is mine and in my name  
and no one else is to have any thing to do with it  
but your brother and Frank Brown are to be  
interested in the stock and if you like it - you  
are as welcome to join us the rest - Now you see  
what I meant - when I said your present expe-  
rience might prepare you for hard work some  
other way I expect it will be hard work for a  
year but then every one says it is an independent  
fortune for us all I will not advise you whether  
to leave your present party before the expiration of the  
three months or not - that I think you will be  
delighted with an independent home as for your  
instruments I would not advise you by any means  
to use it in your present position and I will leave it  
at Mr Humberts Assay Office in Montgomery Street -  
till you please to take it away and your trunk and the  
rest of your things we take with us to the Ranch -  
we are all well anxious to start - and you can do as you  
think best when you will come but I hope soon  
from your Mother