

Sunny Side
April 28th 1861

My dear Parents,

It was with great surprise & joy that I received your letter of April 16th, last week I supposed the mails were entirely stopped & I prayed God for strength to be willing to give you up if such was his will. As I write I have no feeling of certainty that this will reach you, but trust it in the hands of Him who can still the wild passions of men, as well as the stormy sea.

Before this reaches you I expect to hear that Lincoln & his Cabinet have found Washington too warm a place & have gone to Chicago, they have to contend with desperate men- men who fight for "their alters & their fires" & I tell you now that Lincoln has played the aggressor, he'll have to leave every inch of Southern soil. I need not tell you there is excitement, it is more than that, it is determination, it is the spirit of '76, the will to conquer or die.

We are planning much larger than usual, & so are others. We have about two hundred cattle which we pen on new ground, & shall keep making new pens & planting them with sweet potatoes until too late. If necessary we shall take hands out of turpentine in order to ensure a good crop. I have begun knitting **homegrown** & cotton for next winter, I have five pair of stockings about done & shall have enough for the family before they need them. I knit nights & mornings & when I cannot sew.

We have clothes enough to last some time and so shall make no purchases, & before we shall **buy** of Black Republicans, we shall go barefooted and wear homespun. Puss helps me knit- we expect John and William next month, John comes with the intention of buying land & settling here, Puss will return with them.

While speaking of cattle I forgot to mention that from all our cows we don't get as much milk as you do from one when the coloreds disperse. I want Ben to introduce one or two head of better stock. I think they might be improved. I churn three times a week and get a big pile if I have a pound.

It is Court week in Charlton Co. Ben has gone, I don't know what they will do with our case, you know if was adjourned to the US District Court! Where is that? It's not here. He told me to tell you that if my letter reached you then he would write, he has often spoke that he ought to write but puts off from day to day.

Is Mag keeping house in New Hartford? Tell her I wish her joy & shall come and see her if every I see the old home again.