

Dear Brother Washburn December 28th 1833

Want of time is the only apology I have to make, in not writing to you long since. Yours came to hand in the beginning of October I intended to write in two or three weeks after the receipt of it but have delayed to the present time. When the ice having stoppt the mill by strangely collecting in and about the throat so as to prevent the gate from shutting and in fact preventing the usual leakage (ancher or flush ice) consequently I have set apart this day to making out a letter to you and all others who take an interest in our welfare, residing near the old homestead I have an other hand helping me on the Saw mill I commence at one A. M. and leave off at one P. M. and sleep on the saw mill this regulation commenced two weeks ago. least you might think this would leave me time plenty on hand. I shall just inform you that the first week I could sleep but little which rendered me in a manner incapable of writing, at least very indifferent about it. And then as it was a very muddy time and little or no lumber hauled from the mill. I had the lumber to stack up and carry out of the way. I have had but little experience in having two hands on the mill and what little I have had inclines to me to think that it is harder work ^{for me} when I have a hand to help me than when I am alone. The difference in sawing in a week is about (from one hand to two ^{hands} 8000 to 12,000) that is I can saw 8000 feet a week: when myself and another hand can saw 12,000 feet. We have repaired the mill some this fall and made the throat an inch wider (it is now three inches wide) the mill goes quicker and stronger than it ever did before. We intend to run the mill night and day until we are back watered in the spring. say 1st of March. Our sawing this ^{year} will amount to a little over 330,000 feet from nearly 1100 logs. We furnish the oak lumber for the Court House in Ann Arbor 26,000 feet at \$5 per thousand. The Court House is to be buildt of brick October was a rainy and disagreeable month. December has been unusually mild and the beginning of it pleasant. Christmas was a warm and pleasant day, some snow and a great plenty of mud on the Roads. The roads have been very muddy and very bad this fall. The Chicago Road in particular. The Roads froze up the 26th and we hope that mud is over with for some time; no playing yet. We have three hundred logs in the mill yard to begin the new year with. Lumber still continues in good demand and we think the demand will increase I am calculating to saw 200,000 feet next year if there will be logs enough for that amount. 1000 logs more I will want

The people of Washtenaw have considerable to say about Rail Roads having meeting upon meeting both in Ann Arbor, and Ypsilanti. The Ann Arbor plan is to petition Congress for a grant of Land for a Rail Road from Detroit to the mouth of the St Joseph's River. The Ypsilanti planists have an act passed by the Legislative Council of Michigan to incorporate a company to make a Rail Road from Detroit to Ypsilanti. They say that there is a probability that the stock for that distance might be taken, and a Road built in the course of a year, or two. By moneyed men in the City of New York. It is pretended that it would be something of an object and that men might be induced ^{to} invest money in it. They hope so. The Ypsilanti planers say there can be no hopes of raising money enough to build a Rail Road from Detroit to the mouth of the St Joseph for several years yet and that it must not be urged at the present time. I agree with them and would be glad indeed if a Rail Road could be constructed from Detroit to Ypsilanti. I am very doubtful whether so much as that can be accomplished for a few years yet. Michigan itself can do but little and Washtenaw still less. Our only hope is from abroad. Wheat is now selling at ⁵⁹ 69 cash and 62 1/2 ^{to} take pay. Corn 37 1/2 & Oats 25 cash per Bushel. Wheat would be worth 75 in Flour. The want of Flouring mills prevents. Money is more plenty this fall and winter, than this time last year. The New York market regulates the price of Grain now. Considerable of Wheat and Flour were carried off before navigation closed bad as the roads were. I am told it cost 1.25 per Barrel from Detroit to the City of New York .50 per Barrel from Ypsilanti to Detroit. Jacob Carley could tell you probably that it once cost 1.50 per Barrel from Campbelltown and vicinity to Philadelphia. In five years I don't think it will cost that from Ypsilanti to the City of New York probably not more 1.25. I have been this particular on this subject as have some thoughts of trying the Gristmill business as soon as I can make it convenient. I don't think that I am able myself to go on with it single handed. I want to know what you would think of going into the business: say a year from next spring. Robert would do something. I am willing to do half: that is find half the means to build a Gristmill. It is said it would cost \$4000 to build a Gristmill with two reacting wheels and four pair of stones. One Water wheel and two pair of stones might answer for the first year, or two years. We would not wish to build any but a first rate flouring mill. Brown & Co of Ann Arbor boast that their brand is the best in the Territory. I would be pleased to equal if not surpass them. They do pretty much as they please in this County. They will not make superfine Flour for market: for any but themselves.

Welch & Co in the old part of Ann Arbor village buys Wheat and pays
the Cash (he buys on Commission) Brown & Co acts as if he thought he was
crowding on his right: and I am told wont Grind nor flour for him
which occasions some inconvenience as their no other Mill so well calcu-
lated for Flouring in Washtenaw. The Mills in Ypsilanti are trifling and
so are the rest. ^{in the County} There is nothing like a mill, having a great name amongst
Yankees. Brown & Co's mill must have cost considerable as the talked consid-
erable about it before hand and then commenced in the wrong time of the year
and without having anything ready. They fairly sowed money.
Here is my plan I want you to sell Fathers farm next summer payable 1st
of April 1835 (that is first payment) I would have \$700 coming from that quar-
ter. He owes me \$385 (he was along to day and tells me he can pay 300
next Wednesday and the rest in a year) And Washtenaw now owes me \$400 which
can be collected. (besides Isabel money) which makes \$1500 by the first day
of April 1835. If I have no bad luck next year I think I shall clear
\$400 more out of the Saw-mill. Consequently I consider myself amply able
to build half of that Grist mill. If you think of trying it I would want you to manage
it. (not make a slave of yourself like I do) but see to things I dont think you can go
into a more profitable business in this country if you if you wish to come here to abide.
Mr Hawks was talking of entering into the Grist mill business but we could not agree
in the preliminaries. I am a little afraid of him as he is a hard case though a great business
driver. It was him that put me in the notion of attending to the Grist mill business again
another thing I shall have some money at command which ^{is} ~~is~~ have earning something. I think
I am do^{ing} well at saw-milling and dont care about leaving myself for a short time yet as I
think I can clear \$400 per year at it and pay all my pocket and other expenses (I work too steady for a
breadwinner) I am sorry you have so many difficulties to combat in father estate, I dont know
that I can help you. I wish you would send me a copy of your settlement of Fathers personal
estate. I would take \$5 per acre rather than not sell during next summer. I would
endeavour to sell private sale. I could not understand whether you had settled that Harper
lawsuit or not, reading your account of that made me wish. I was a lawyer and I would
leave Michigan and ~~straiten~~ ^{straiten} them rascals. I wish when you send me any newspapers you
would draw two strokes with the pen across what you have wrote on them. As the Post
master in Ypsilanti charged me .25 for the last Journal of Health and ~~charged~~ ^{charged} of charging .25
more for the wrapper. because on the inside of wrapper you had wrote the conditions of
sale of Fathers farm. I did not get the Journal of Health at the office myself. when I next saw
the Postmaster I told him what I thought. He said it would have cost you \$5 I told I
rather pay .25 than blush for the meanness of Michigan. by exposing it so shamefully in Pa.
He did not say much. He dont know me since. It was the only wrapper I have seen in some
time. It is the last time he will think of speculating out of me in wrappers. The tax the wrappers of
the papers in this country: we dont see one in ten of them. You did not tell me what you
would ask for your land here: another man has called to ^{know} ~~know~~ whether it was to be had and
at what price. The times are called good now in Washtenaw money is inling plenty
much plentier than was this time last year. We are all in good health. Jake, Isabel & wert well
last account. Samuel Geddes bought a small farm in Niagara Co N.Y. near Lockport
his son Paul with his wife and four children come on late in the fall and settled in Seneca
County about 30 miles from here. I have attended to your taxes. there was but little
charged in the office, I payed it. I had almost forgot to tell you the fate of my Dutch
bill. On the last Sunday of Sept. when I got up I noticed as soon as I came into the
room that my desk was not in its place after some search it was found about 150 yards
from the house along side of the road towards the Saw-mill all the money that was in it
taken off or missing my pocket book was left and all my papers. I had but 11 dollars in
a. the Pocket Book ten of them was that Dutch bill. There was three or four dollars
in specie in the Desk besides: making my loss about \$15. Robert lost nothing. Maria's
sister Nathan have lost about \$30 which was in the drawer of the desk. We suspected a
man that worked for Robert during the summer: but could not find him nor any of the
money I did not mourn much, for I thought I was in the midst of willing fortune
I happened to have less money at that time than any time previous during the summer
I lent eight dollars the morning before more for accommodation than any thing else
I saved that

