

Virginia City Jan 29th 1867

Mrs Josephine Wisenall

My Dear Sister

I received a letter

from you to day in reply to mine. I also received about two weeks ago the short one as you called it, directed to near the head of the Missouri river, when I received the last I had in progress one to you in which I enclosed \$50⁰⁰; I sent another about 3 weeks before that containing \$60⁰⁰ I hope you may receive them, I sent you word what I wanted done with it, if you do not receive them and do receive this please let me know. I am well and was very glad to receive your letter. The winter has been very pleasant except a few days which ~~are~~ ^{were} exceedingly cold. I am very pleasantly situated indeed, and am well contented, Thank God I have a cheerful heart, and a hopeful one too, and with you I believe I will see you all again, May Our Father grant. I think much of home and often dream of it and of being there, only last night I was there. A fellow may wander but he cannot forget, though absent in body he may be present in ~~present~~ spirit, and I am pleased to think that my home has great attractions to me, in it my earthly hopes centre, and I love to think of it. It is indeed to have something to love and live for

I hope the desires of my heart, may be in accordance with the will of God, your letter was ~~the~~ encouraging one to me, it was sweet and refreshing to my heart, provisions are getting scarcer and higher all the time, it costs us about one dollar a day to live and we do our own cooking, we have plenty to eat, bread and meat and barley coffee generally with vegetables 3 or 4 times a week and sometimes butter and molasses so that it is not only endurable, but pleasant, some of our Cousins have wives and we have them near every meal and they are a great help, we have a large cooking stove and five in the family, I can make first rate light bread and am learning housekeeping generally, I sometimes mould candles and to day I was making vinegar of rotten apples and then I do my own washing and that is the worst of all, I have a good bed or one that I can sleep on as well as ever I slept in my life, it is a kind of bunk made of poles filled with hay and plenty of waggon covers for sheets and blankets, so that it is really nice and there we have a dozen set of boys, we live as brothers and have become quite attached to each other, I am from Missouri, 3 from Omaha and one from Indiana, this last one had been sick all winter but is now about well, you want to know how my boss looks, well he is about 20 years old, nearly as tall as George Beck, black hair, black eyes and is a Methodist from Omaha, his mother is a particular friend of mine, he is not married but some think he is engaged, and worth somewhere between 30 and 20 thousand dollars, his business here has been very profitable, his goods will be sold out by Spring, he expects them to get more up the river I do not think I will stay with ^{him} during the summer though I cannot tell as yet this is the head boss, and there is another who is interested to a small amount his name is Ritchie, he is a Methodist, lives in Omaha, is about 44 years old and has been very kind to me and I believe likes me better than he does any one here, he and I sometimes have had prayer at funerals, and some time ago when ~~some men~~ ^{men} were being sent for to pray with some of them, and surely I never felt so shocked as to see their wickedness (at least some of them) even as they were led to, and were on the gallows, it is astonishing how wicked men may become, but to my subject, God has given me kind friends and I hope I am thankful, I am pleased with the prospect of this Country, as to my going into the mines, I am there already, that is, the gold digging is all around within a rifle shot and some are even digging in towns, but the last don't pay much, mining is being done on this Creek, 10 miles above and 6 or 7 below this town and there there is several other creeks in this neighborhood where they are digging gold you seem to think that this is out of the world, it does not seem so here and when the boats get to running one will be nearer still as they can come within 300 miles of here but people are such travelers now days that to come here does not amount to much

your folks scarcely have an idea how people do roam about over
the West. I became glad to it in Omaha, as it is so great a thoroughfare
I know nothing of the founders. Somehow it seems people come from
many places but not often from Mayville. I suppose a trip across
would be pleasant to you if every thing went smooth but it seldom
does that, it is a great place to try one's patience, and if men can agree
there they can anywhere. The women generally stand it better
than men as they have less to do. 3 families came out in our train
to Salt Lake, there was 4 young ladies among them and they had
no lack of beaux, they seemed to enjoy it, but there the women here
do not seem to be well satisfied and no wonder, houses with no
wood and no furniture, seems rough to those who have been used
to better, and there it is a hard place for a woman among so many
men, but I suppose next season more will come in and it will be
different. Within the last week there has been a great rush for a
new discovery but now many are returning disappointed. So it goes
first up then down, some excitement seemed necessary to these people
letters cost a dollar each now, I send mine by some one going
in but when I receive one I have to pay, well I think it, if not
cheap, much better than no letters, and I would freely give a
dollar a week to hear from home. Paper is high too, this kind 50 Cents
a gain, and stamped envelopes 10 Cents each, no stamps to be had
I think I told you in my last of the hanging of the robes, altogether
near 20 have been executed and things seem a little safe
Our Sunday School is still alive and we have a pleasant time even
out here I wonder whether it would be any use to try to persuade you
to go to S School, really did it is a great pleasure, sorry am I that
I was once blind enough to stop it, you ask about Indians, I seldom
see one they are afraid to come about, although they are plenty in
the country around us, white men as usual are too strong for
them. A ~~great~~ many white men have Indian wives, that is those
who have lived here a number of years, I heard one say he never was
contested before, a squaw is a good creature to work, a man has but
little to do, but I had rather work harder and not have one
Every body has gone to bed but me and here I sit writing to you and
I feel happy to night, your letter done me much good and then
I think the blessing our Father is no unworthy one and that is
worth more than all the world, May He help you seek his favor
that you may know for yourself, the truth of which I speak, the world
can't give it or take it away, there did seek it for yourself, just try
it get down on your knee and ask God to have mercy on you if you
say no more, but did do it and do it now there is danger in delay
God is Father He loves us and wants to do us good there let us accept
the good He offers, May He help us so to do, did it a solemn thing
to live in this having only the Comfort its pleasures give, but

it is more solemn to die and be unhappy for ever which
must be the case unless in life we prepare for it, and Once
again did I would try to urge you to try it. Oh you know not
how willing God is to bless you I learn to praise Him
for therein is truth here and for ever, and what shall I more
say or how shall I leave off writing on so important a sub-
ject. my words are feeble I have written them time after time
and yet I write again in all patience and love, because it is
my duty to warn to entreat, because I love you and would
see you made happy, because I am satisfied that the way
I am speaking of will give you peace and rest you have not
known. God commands and invites and you intend to come
time, well now is the easiest time you will ever have you
need not await until you feel like it, but come to God now just
as you are and just where you are He comes before it be too
late, He returns to your Father's house, and you will find plenty
God grant to show you that no which you are feeding. God grant
you may see the better things He has provided, and then did
how sweet it would be for me to wonder as I am to know that
the loved ones at home were making prayer for me, I know
you love and wish me well but I would like it if you would
pray for me, will you not try. May God help. Yes all of you
pray for me that I may be kept and restored unto you
God bless my Mother and sisters and keep them for
Jesus sake, God bless them that whether they wake or sleep
they shall live together with Him.

Jan 50

This is a bright beautiful morning and I will try to finish
my letter, Saturday again how rapidly time flies. Surely this
life is more a dream of vanity than any thing else I wrote to
John Rudy a few weeks since give my love to him, surely I wish him
well for he was ever kind to me, May God bless him and his, with
I do not often hear from Omaha, but you may tell John that Asa Hunt
is dead, I wonder how Ben in Clamaho likes the sojourn, it seems
strange that he should be a man and a soldier, you may call Billy
an old Back, but it is my opinion a man is better off without a wife in
these times, surely every body there must be getting old, and I often
think of some of them as being gray. I am sorry to know Aunt Martha
has such a serious time, but a few days and our trouble all will end
as the gentleman is near ready to start who takes this I will have to
close soon. Be of good courage, as you say that is half the battle.
I will try and write to you often if it be but a few words at a time
and now I bid you farewell Remember me kindly to all
be saying I am

Your Brother
John B. Wisnall
Berquicia City, Omaha Territory