

William H. Stillwell to wife, Sarah Stillwell, in Pleasant Valley, Dutchess County, N.Y. /File 1846, June 30, WSHS MS Coll./

Ceresco, June 30, 1846

Dear Sarah

[comments on her last letter, health, etc. Describes trip from Milwaukee to Sheboygan, and then overland--stopping twice over night in "temperance" houses, the first "a very respectable temperance House". Trip took four days from Milwaukee to Ceresco. "I did not see in all my travel from Sheboygan to Ceresco a single farm which I would like to have as my own save two."]

"Soon after my arrival in this place [Ceresco] I made application to the council for work. which they granted forthwith without ceremony and I have been to work ever since this being the third week. My wages will be between nine and ten cents an hour, I can easily work twelve or fourteen hours per day. My kind of business is not School teaching but the trade of a carpenter and joiner not sawing a [tic?] of wood like the old rigga but to work on a mill for which I have gotten out nearly all the siding and putting the same on the mill for my present occupation, I board at the big table it is supposed that our board will not amount to over fifty cents a week for the present year, so you see I am making pretty good wages for a stranger and being in a strange Land. I wished for you to be in this place more than once in order to see how you would like it. There is as great a field for usefulness in this place as in any other place that I know of as you will learn when I describe it more fully. the people have a very beautiful Location not to be exceeded by any of the most splendid sites of Hyde Park or the flats of [fishkill?] planes, already they have eight dwelling Houses one of which is two hundred and twenty feet in length capable of holding twenty four families and the rest three and four apiece. Their Mill is of the first quality. They also have a School of stone in which is taught most of the ~~the~~ ~~branches~~ [sic] common to the English Language the evrag number is about thirteen. The whole number of children is about fifty so that by this time you may jude [sic] what kind of a sabbath school might be established. They have a school at present and call it a sabbath ~~school~~ school but it is conducted in ~~the~~ a most ~~recite~~ [?] manner, the child is requested to do nothing by [but?] recite one verse or two and probably a very smart [sic] child will learn three and as soon as they have done this the Superintendent asks a few questions and requests them to sing and then goes home and the next school is conducted in the same way. all the books they have is a few worn out stories formerly been in some School Library yet this is better than no school, but little interest is taken to get the children out on a sabbath. Last Sunday I had the charge of the school and I tried to urge it upon the teacher, (of which there are two both Ladies) and scholars to get all the children in the place to attend at which they appeared to be very pleased and... [can't make out rest of line].

" Since I have been in this place I have had excellent times in prayer and class meeting ~~the~~ the former was not established when I arrived here at first but at present we have both at the same time. We have preaching on each sabbath of the week Methodist once a week and Baptist once a week aso [sic]. I forgot to tell you that I make /sic/ application to join the company but to invest not property. I Learned after I got here that a man could not draw the same wages that the association did unless he be an member of the same therefore I thought it better for me I join then and go to work which I have done. I would like to have your opinion on the subject. In this company there is no ardent spirit of any kind allowed to be used unless in sickness swearing is strickly forbidden ~~by~~ ~~the~~ ~~association~~ and I have herd now since I /ms. torn here-- at least one word missing/ been among the /m?/ and from strangers who are continually /ms. torn here; word missing/ all parts of the Union Gambling is also forbidden as is -CONT.-

/W.H. Stillwell to wife, June 30, 1846, continued/

breaking the Sabbath by hunting fishing &c. and such like vices an all of strictly forbidden by the constitution and also the charter which the Legislature granted as a ~~corporation~~ incorporated company

"Since I came to this plac I have been obliged to buy me a pair of pantaloons to work for the reason that having left my trunk at Sheboygan I had neither Pants, coat, shirt or any of my wearing apparatus which I took with me nor have I got them yet but I expect them in a few days as I sent for them four days ago so you must think I am rather in strait circumstances.

"When you recieve this I hope you will not faile to write immediately as I shall be happy to hear from you at all times, also mail me a paper each week. I think I shall work till the first of September unless you desire me to return before that time or at Least I Shall be home about the firs (sic) of that month. Tell mother that Uncle Laban Aunt Julia and children are all well send their love to them ~~and~~. tell Renselaer ~~that~~ I have not purchased any as yet nor do I know that I shall for it is better for to hire out /can't read/ in this conty /country?/ and then work for a livin

"I was very much edified and encouraged by reading you(r) letter you exhorted to prayer and I have tried to obey the admonition in wrestling /sic/ with God for you and may ~~the~~ he reward your care for me with the desire of your heart remember to pray for me that I may be faithful and...."

/marginal notes follow below/

"we are going to look at some Land to morrow." /no explanation of "we"/

"Money is worth /money is worth/ twelve per cent in this place with the best kind of security any thing you ask for if they can only get the mony"

"John is to work at his trade and is well"

"It is a very hard matter to find Land to suit one in every respect you may find beautiful Lands but there is no water on any of them the Paries /prairies?/ are also of the same quality a person can do much better the second year than ~~the~~ /can't read/ and for that reason they must sell"

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William H. Stillwell to his wife, Sarah, Pleasant Valley, N.Y.
/File 1846, June 30, WSHS MS Coll./

Ceresco, July 29, 1846

...."I am still at work in the Ceresco company but not in the mill as I stated in my Last Letter but in the harvest field~~//////~~....I have been traveling when an opportunity offered to see what could be seen in this country and from what I saw I must say that if you were with me/ and as well pleased as I am I do not think that I should ever return to York State under any consideration whatever. I have had several opportunities to purchase land but I did not choose to do so untill I know of a certainty wether I intend to locate."

/Relates his trip to Waupun to a church meeting where he met a "brother", who/ "offered to sell me a place which he~~///~~ had prepared for a store which was in the middle of a thick settled neighbourhood the largest portion of whom /torn/ members of the M.E Church and this brother was one of the Locall preachers.... this I think I should have done if you had only been with me but to fill the store and leave it in the charge of any man I choose not to do it, though he offered me great inducements...."

/As to future plans, intends to/ "wait a few days Longer for a letter, if I recieve none then you may expect me home the last of August."

"I have thought several times since I left you and was in reality asshamed of the small some of Mony I left with you I have inclosed two whole dollars for your present relief but you shal have more by and by Uncle Laban's /i.e., Laban Stillwell/ people are all well and are desirous for us to come and join with them in the co but they cant come it as I do not like the(m)? at all"....

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