

1859

Bloomington Apr 8<sup>th</sup>

Dear Sister:

Yours mailed March 8<sup>th</sup> & another  
March 10<sup>th</sup> I had received the one you wrote the  
8<sup>th</sup> conveying the intelligence of quite a number  
of Deaths and of others that were very low on the  
sick list: and the next mail I received one  
from Uncle Truman stating the Deaths of His  
Brother Harmon and so forth: you spoke in your  
last of moving to Strykersville I hope if you do  
that Henry may take to attending church regularly  
instead of Hunting and fishing; as is frequently  
the case; Because if he is about home he certainly  
can have no excuse on the grounds that it is  
not convenient; I shall write him a letter as  
soon as convenient and I want him to write  
to me as often as possible; it is high time  
for him to commence corresponding some  
and he may as well commence with me as  
any one: I hope if he delays to write you will  
put him in mind of it and not forget  
to write yourself in the mean time I  
shall hardly know whether to direct  
this to Strykersville or to Sheldon Cent

I received a letter from Cousin James Briggs a short  
time since his mother is dead; he wants me to  
come where he is I think I shall go there this  
summer he says He wants Father and Mother  
to have their miniatures taken and send them  
to him if they will do so he says he will  
pay the expenss, when you write me again  
I want you to send me the family record  
you can write it the same as it is in the  
Bible; the weather is very fine here: it about  
the same here now as it is in old Sheldon the  
last of may or the first of june People  
have their gardening done &c, you must excuse  
me this time my thoughts are wandering so that  
I am unable to pen any thing interesting enough  
for you to peruse the People here where I board  
think they could not get along without me  
but I guess they will sooner or later:  
Mary I shall have my minature taken  
as soon as convenient or remit it to  
you. Yours in haste,

Your Affectionate Brother

W. Briggs

Decatur July 9<sup>th</sup> 1835

Dear Sister

Yours of the 25<sup>th</sup> inst was a welcome  
visit. Indeed I have concluded to stop here  
during the season; my health is very good at present  
I think I left Bloomington about the right time  
the Cholera is raging there to a considerable extent  
it seems to rage most among the Irish. the 4<sup>th</sup>  
of July passed off very pleasantly in this place  
we had a grand pic-nic in a grove about 3  
miles from town and a cotillion in the evening  
at Shoofs Hall in the Public square: it was  
much pleasanter to me than it was one year  
ago: I shall probably attend the state fair at  
Chicago in September if so I shall go and see  
Cousin James C. Briggs I have promised that I  
would: Upon I returned east. Crops look fine  
in this vicinity the wheat harvest is over here  
in the south part of this state they have been  
through nearly 3 weeks: I was in Bloomington  
about 2 weeks ago the York State folks were  
all in usual health: when I was on my way there  
I wished you were along to see the Deer on the  
Prairie I saw some droves of from 15 to 20 they  
would stand until the cars got nearly to them  
then run the Prairies are beautiful in at  
this season of the year they are covered with

Miss Mary J. Briggs  
of Bloomington  
Ill. 9<sup>th</sup> July

almost every variety of wild flowers in the known world: as you pass over these wild Prairies you are reminded of the most beautiful scenery in the known world and all in the state of nature: some of these Prairies are ~~very~~ considerable rolling while others are seemingly as level as a house floor for hundreds of miles: the view is grand during the Summer season: but the scenery altogether of a different description! after the frosts commence in the fall of the year it presents to you then an empty space as much so as the deserts of Arabia: I think this town is improving the fastest of any town in the state the Illinois Central RR & Great Western RR, pass through the town and they are Principal Business roads in the state: the Great Western is now being completed and as soon as it is done I anticipate going on a Pleasure excursion from one end of the road to the other I am engaged in a Publick as Book Keeper I think now that I never will work at my trade any more: I find that I can get good wages at almost any Business and moreover that I am competent to do most any Business that I ~~see~~ the most of Business Men want done I have nothing of much import to write this time so good by offer my Love to all the friends &c from your Affectionate Brother

W. J. Briggs  
To Sister Mary L. Briggs

Decatur Sept 28<sup>th</sup> 1855

Dear Sister

It is with Pleasure that I once more take my pen to inform you of my health and whereabouts, I am still in Decatur my health has been very poor since I wrote you last I had the typhoid fever But I had two excellent Physicians and they stayed Day and night untill the fever turned; I then had the best of care and thank god and my Benefactors I am once more able to attend to the Duties of the office of the House; I had my miniature taken for the Purpose of sending to you But I shall not send it untill I look like myself again. I had it taken one day before I was taken. I hope to hear from you immediately and write me all the particulars; I will then send you my miniature without fail excuse this short Epistle and I will try to do better next time give my love to father and Mother and offer the same to all enquireing friends; Write on the receipt of this this from your Brother W<sup>m</sup> A. Briggs

ask Henry to write me a letter it seems  
to me as though he might I want  
to know more than you can write But  
I will be content to hear from my friends  
I do think some of going to Wisconsin  
this winter; But have not decided yet  
when you write tell me about all the  
friends and how they are getting along

W. D. Briggs

Direct a before

Bloomington Nov 24<sup>th</sup> 1835

Dear Sister,

Yours of Oct 9<sup>th</sup> was forwarded to me from Decatur to Bloomington; I was much pleased to hear from you and to hear that you were all as well as you are; I left Decatur in a very low state of health; and came back to Bloomington where I soon began to recover and became able to labour some in a short time; soon after we had a very large fire burning nearly all the business part of the city; I was present at the fire and worked very hard nearly all night, and there being a cold bleak wind at the time I took violent cold together with my overdoing, threw me into the back ground; I took some sort of a relapse and went the down Hill road till I could no longer help myself; I then had a Homeopathy Physician called He was very attentive for some two weeks when he assured me that my disease was so far removed that I might apprehend no danger in being so that I could walk around in two weeks and to day completely the time; I have been out on the street to day for the first time; and one thing is certain if I live till Spring I shall go to Wisconsin or Michigan for I am certain I never can have my health here; there are too many fevers constantly raging here, which seems particularly fond of Eastern People; I have been boarding at the same place where I did last winter and have rec<sup>d</sup> the kindest attention from them. They were formerly from work state and are very hospitable people; I have calculated all the time on going to Chicago as soon as my health would

admit so I spoke of it yesterday But they would not hear  
one word of it, and said I should not leave till spring  
any way & this gentleman has some writing to do every day  
in the Express Office and it will perhaps take me from  
15, to 20, minutes each day, that is all that it will cost  
me for Board, and I need not do that unless I feel  
disposed, so I think I will stay here untill spring when  
I shall ~~surely~~ go to some different climate and country from  
this either to the south or north, but I think it will  
be north, without any doubt for I am determined not  
to expose myself to any of those fevers which are so frequent  
in the south; the south here we as smooth and dry as in  
midsummer and we are having now what we used to  
call Indian Summer in the east and people here calculate  
this will last untill christmas. Mr Humphreys people are  
all in very good health the Holcombs folks were well the last  
time I saw them. Julius Powell & wife were well the last time  
I saw them Julius had been having some trouble with one  
of his neighbours and his neighbour shot one of his horses  
and it was in the city foaming, trying to see what he  
could do about it; But I guess he had to let it drop for  
he could prove nothing; and you know good evidence  
is the main thing in a close point of law, this is all  
that I think of at present that would interest you and  
I suppose that my letters are all of a very dull nature  
but I do not feel as though I was in the right  
mood for writing anything of interest, but I wish you  
to write often and be sure to give me all the news

The evenings are beautiful now and from  
my chamber window I have a splendid view  
view of the prairie fires there is something grand  
and picturesque in the scene; and yet to some it  
would appear so frightful as to become a spectacle  
of horror; to all appearance these are many times  
thousands of acres of these wild and beautiful  
Prairie swapt in flames at one time throwing  
a grand light upwards to the stars; after these  
fires take place it looks like one vast ocean of  
perfect waste; perfectly desolate and barren except  
you can see plenty of Prairie Chickens; and some droves  
of Deer cropping these broad Prairies from one grove to  
another; if I was well enough at present I should  
spend about 2 weeks in hunting Deer and Turkey  
which are very plenty in the vicinity of Decatur;  
my hands tremble so that I cannot write, so I shall  
have to come to a close by asking you to remember  
to the family in particular and the rest of the friends that  
my sister to enquire after me; I shall send you  
my miniature some time this month I have it  
taken in pocket form; I shall probably send it  
as soon as I receive an answer from this; so if you want  
it I am sure you will not delay in answering  
this; My Affectionate Mother

P. V. Dicot to

Birmingham

McLean Co Illinois

W. J. Biggs



Gainsville. Sun. 1<sup>st</sup> 1866.

Dear Mary.

I have the head ache very hard  
this afternoon but will try and write a  
little to you. We are very pleasantly situated  
here in the corner room of the third  
story of the Seminary we have got the <sup>best</sup> few  
out room in the Seminary. O! how I wish  
you were here to spend the evening  
with us we would have a nice visit  
would we not? it is nearly dark so that  
I cannot see to write very well but per  
haps you are practiced enough to know  
that twilight is the sweetest time for  
a friendly conversation. I like the school  
very much all I don't like is, to write  
compositions I had to read one last Fri'  
day and have got to read another a week from  
next Friday. I am & <sup>not</sup> my head ached so  
badly last night that I had to go to bed  
and leave my letter unfinished

but will go on now as fast as a dog can  
trot. Why can't you ~~come~~ Henry up to bring  
you out here this summer and why can't you  
all come out and see us you could come  
and go back the same day if you had good  
sweet horses. How Mr. Little's people gave  
me a get off that home, I suppose you feel very  
lonely, and your folks dear as skin, or how they  
forget the me, or how they look down as what  
is the reason they don't write to me.

We had a splendid walk last evening  
after study hours we study until 8 o'clock  
in the evening and then have 4 hours  
sleep. But I must hurry and finish  
my letter so as to go down to work I  
have to work mornings it is nearly  
6 o'clock and the bell will ring pretty  
soon there it's ringing now, so  
I should write more but have not  
time. Don't write to me often. The  
train will be out the 10<sup>th</sup> of June  
Tell me all the news when you write

Tell Frank and Amelia Belkorn  
that I will write to them in a  
week or two now if you don't write  
I shall write to you again sometime  
that, give my love to all and as many  
more as inquire after me.

Yours ever  
Chya

~~Newfield, Town~~  
 Newfield, Town  
 Sep 20 / 1854

My Dear Cousin

As i had a  
 few moments to spend i thought  
 that i would spend it in sitting  
 to you, i have been waiting for  
 some photographs & have not got  
 any yet i have sat 4 times  
 within 4 weeks & have had them  
 spilt at the Artiz i shall  
 try again i think yours & Mrs  
 Gases future were very good &  
 am much obligd i suppose you  
 have heard of Frank Tuck <sup>wedding</sup> ~~and~~  
 it seems to have a bad effect  
 on us all Frank Curtis & Charles

& myself was sick & had the  
bilious fever & did not leave my  
room in 4 weeks, I suppose Mack  
Kelllogg is on the married point.  
Tell ~~me~~ I am glad to hear that  
your health is improving, till  
Apr base that I am waiting,  
I think some of attending school  
at Ithaca this winter if not I  
shall spend a good part of  
my time at Lenson I wish you  
would come out this winter we  
would have a good time, Mathie  
wants his love & Charles says  
he would like to take a ride  
with you Uncle John Gillitt  
Judd is all well they talk of  
going west on a visit in a  
week or so, The weather is very  
warm here & we have not had  
any snow yet

Charles Kelllogg is married

5  
of Hanks & Mathie lives. This with  
Spib Greag is sitting post office  
& has got it in the military  
shop & many works at his  
brother Grampa is well & all  
the rest of the folks I  
believe

Clary has gone to her  
father to Washington & Aunt  
Mary is alone they had  
a lot of speaking & I eat for  
you & myself,

it is nearly dark  
& I shall have to close give my  
love to the folks & you <sup>self</sup> few

Yours yours faithfully George  
Spibbie Tetch

for a Union of their Sections. Eliza is in favor of it she is well and likes it here. I occasionally spend an afternoon in visiting some of the Wisconsin emigrants. Darry the Mr. Brownell & some other gentlemen which if I should name you would not know. Eliza, Reformation, H. H. Witt and myself went to Mechanics Rock and upon Mt. Peke they are beautiful the most splendid sights I ever saw. Ceclaw grows all over the Mt. We are getting up a literary institution to write and read papers. We have some good speakers. I have had many good books as I have had time to peruse. I went out to Mr. Guller's the other day they have got their Cozy Log House done she enjoys herself well but she writes Eleanor here every day she sends her love to you and says you must come when she comes. Mother is quite smart and is as contented as a Lamb only she wishes quite often that she could go and see Aunt Key she says it would do her good but I guess it will be some time before she will have

that privilege. But I mean to see my friends in old York state before many years. Now are all the folks in Strickensville when you would tell me all of the news I have so many to write I have to go some place to write I have a room here I will add if it is not as soon as I can could write think not. Mary that is so my dear or that I like that you say that will not be so long as Memory has its place. Is your school flourishing and who is going to teach the Sunday School. As the Eve is far about I must bid you adieu and good night and still remain your affectionate friend  
"to you"  
Minnie  
With this I have  
sent a line to Prof  
Purdor"  
1836  
Thinking I should  
write you in return to the one you favored me with  
now will seize a few moments and commune  
with you I will follow imagination and let it  
soften me to you, and will review some of the  
times in which we have been happy in each  
other's society. Wishing for nothing else or to be  
more like than we were. So it seems that  
we are so far apart that we cannot see one another  
when we so much wish too. It seems to me  
as if I cannot stand it much longer without

coming to see you but these thoughts are vain and  
I must not indulge in them, but will dismiss  
the subject. By hoping Providence will allow  
us to meet before many days. You write that you  
were enjoying yourself excellently. It was very glad to  
hear it and hope Life will always glide as  
smoothly with you. as at the present. it must be  
pleasant to have as lively a companion as Miss Weston  
(A wise head keeps a close mouth. May you do  
well in not telling me who it was that ~~is~~ is  
~~your~~ your secret for remember your cousin is aware  
who the favored one is as well as the one secret  
herself.) No 18

No 18 It is again evening and I will  
take my pen to finish this line to you  
I am so busy dear Mary that I hardly have  
time to sleep I put 4 letters into the Office  
this <sup>last</sup> Mail and meant to go but could not  
finish it in time. so you must not be angry

with me but - be with me or become a true  
friend I have thought of you often and some-  
thing seemed to whisper in my ear and say  
Mary is getting tired of waiting. I received 3  
Letters from Dobruvberg lately and it  
seemed like old times. I have been inclined  
to be penive to day sadness has been my  
Companion this afternoon and my mind  
turned to you for sympathy and I thought  
it would dispell these gloomy thoughts to  
write to you. How are you getting along. I  
am gliding my "Bony Bark" quite smoothly  
upon the Sea of Life save at intervals there  
is a ruffle of its waves. I like my new Home  
very much I am going into my School very  
soon it is pleasant where I am a going to teach  
I shall board at Home. Rebekah I  
is going to teach here in "Viola" Derry and  
she are very intimate and things bid fair

Miss Mary S. Briggs  
Strykerville

Wyoming Co  
N.Y.

Viola Briggs  
Nov 24 }