

Blue Earth City Minn Sept 18th 64.

Dear Father.

I am in receipt of a Letter from home, containing a letter from you. In accordance with your special request I proceed to give you something of an Idea of our Circumstances. Not however without some hesitation; as it might well be supposed we would have plenty of everything by this time. Indeed I had no Idea but what we would be quite forward in 3 years time when we first came on to our Homestead. Instead of that, the present year has been the most difficult for us to get a living since we have been west. One not initiated in frontier life might think it an easy matter to get a living off a quarter section of as rich Land as ever laid out doors. But as the fellow said, - It is an easy matter to talk & calculate, but it takes Money to buy Whiskey - Without Capital to cultivate. - Team, Tools, - seed grain, & means to live on first year, a whole Township of raw Prairie would not support a Family. I hired 5 ac, broke next week after I took my Claim, next Spring sowed $\frac{1}{2}$ of it to Wheat the rest to Corn, Potatoes, Sorghum, Garden &c, had about a middling crop for a seed crop. Next Spring put in about the same kind of a crop, which did not amount to much. Last Spring I had not the means to buy seed Wheat, or hire the ground plowed. Consequently have raised nothing this year except $\frac{1}{2}$ an acre of

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- A year ago last June I worked out
enough to come to \$200. Last year I earned
\$440, but Boarding at \$4 took a good share of
it. The first ^{year} lost about \$25 with poor pay-
masters. Last year Endeavour, ^{Adverse} that by not
working much in advance of pay. Worked
in Owatonna for a Hotel Keeper for the
amount of \$¹⁰⁰, declined to work any more
until paid up was going to quit, which
irritated him. Abusive Language & striking
his fist in my face, resulted in his getting
a pretty bloody head & my being fined \$4
& cost of the scrape costing me \$2.

By the middle of last winter had my earnings used up, & not being
able to get work here on credit running up a Store & Grocery
Bill to the amount of \$50. Expecting early to pay up by
the middle of summer. Commenced Chopping of Cord
wood latter part of Winter near Mantato & worked
in Mantato until first of July. A great deal
of rainy weather, more hands than work, low wages
& earned but little more than to pay Board. Early in
Spring Flour took a rise. Run in debt to one of my
neighbors for Flour at \$9 per hundred to the amount of
\$30, by the first of June finally got entirely out of
Flour, & none to be had in the neighborhood.

Wife & Children lived on boiled Wheat, & what
they could grind in a Coffinmill for several weeks,
roads being so bad that no one could get to Mill.

They had any Wheat to take. Wife & Children
would cry occasionally in consequence of poor
fare. Wife said she would be willing to work
out for her Board if she could have enough to
eat. After Garden stuff got fit to use which
was very late this season, of course we got along
better. Have been working at Blue Earth
City since first of July. Have been able to
reduce the Inlow debt to \$15. & put the Store &
Grocery Bill into a Note which has been drawing
interest since Spring & is still \$50. Owe Luther
\$10, borrowed money to be paid this fall. My 1/4
Section deeded Land is sold for \$18, tax & will
be paid redemption first of next June. Our House
is a Cabin 13 by 16 feet, boarded up & down
& banked up nearly to the shingles with soil
from the Prairie. Furniture & Clothing to
Correspond with the House. My work will
be more profitable for the balance of the fall -
Plastering. I think I can just about make out
to pay what I owe by the time Winter sets in
& expect to depend on cutting Cordwood to
get through the winter. Do you have a
description of our circumstances. - Am half a
mind to put the Letter in the Store instead
of sending it, after having got it written.

Your Son &
J. J. Warren

E. Warren.

Warrens Corners

Niagara Co,

N. Y.

