

Austin Family Letters

West Winsted

Jan. 9 1872

Brother Hiram

I hope to be pardoned for my long delay in writing to you. The kindness you have manifested to me I must acknowledge [you] deserved better treatment, but I will try to be a better brother hereafter. Since I was sick last winter I have had just about all I could do to live & pay for what it cost me while sick. I have worked very hard all summer so that when I had a leisure moment I did not feel like writing to anyone. There is considerable I wish to inform you of, so I will be brief on each subject.

The oranges you shipped to me I have received today, the most of them in fine order. There was some few of them a little decayed. They are certainly delicious. We had no fruit in this section; there have been some apples brought in here from Michigan, which sold for \$5.00 per barrel. I intended to have caned some small fruit last fall & sent to you, but [..?..] did not seem to be as plenty as usual, so I was disappointed in that.

I have not seen sister Aurelia for more than a year and I am pretty sure that I have not had a letter from her in three times that length of time. Juliet was in Hartford a few days since & went to see her. She has got a new home in Hartford.

I should judge by the account that she has a very good one. She does not work at her trade and I am glad of it, for she has done hard day's work enough at that. She is living with a rich old maid formerly from the South. She came to Hartford and bought her a nice place and in some way became acquainted with & also very much attached to Aurelia & offered her as much as she could earn in the shop with her board & spending money beside. She makes her some nice presents in the clothing line. She does not have to work hard & only sees to the servant girls and takes charge of the house. Generally Aurelia likes her place very much.

Elizabeth is not at home this winter; she has gone to Essex to stay with Delia. Caroline lives in Plainville Ct., and Oliver in Waterbury, Ct. Ellen lives in Colebrook on the old place. The Phelps girls are all dead with the exception of Catherine. The General is living, but quite broke down. He looks older than the old Captain did when you went South. It is said that the girls were worth 40 thousand each when they died. The most of their money they gave to Edward's two boys. The Griswold family is all dead except Uncle Sam & one of the girls.

Colebrook begins to look pretty desolate. Winsted is somewhat improving. We now have another R.R. running through this place; it runs direct from Hartford to Millerton in York State. I think you now are in a quandary how they built a R. Road from Winsted to Norfolk & Salisbury, but never-the-less the cars get up Norfolk hills in some way.

I wish you would come & make us another visit. I do not think of anything I would enjoy more than to come and make you a visit and nothing but means [money] prevent me. If we get that money from England before I get too old, I shall make a trip to that place, but my faith on that point is very weak.

I would now like to have you write & give me a description of your farming and orange trees and whether the frost damaged them last winter. I recalled that you wrote that you picked the last of them when there was ice on the trees. What do you sell them for in mobile? Could you ship them here and not have them cost over \$5.00 per hundred & get as much yourself as you get in mobile?

I will now close for this time. My health is very good thus far this winter. Juliet & John's family are enjoying good health. They all send their love to Uncle Hiram.

I thank you a thousand times over for the box of oranges. I accept them as a New year's present. Give my love to your family.

Respectfully yours.

S. W. Austin