

## Letter to Rufus North, June 15 1828

Alexander June 15<sup>th</sup> 1828

Honored parents

We received your letter the 1<sup>st</sup> June with 50 dollars in money. I expect I can get along well enough with it if anything grows here this year. It has rained almost every day for six weeks. Some days it rained hard all day. The roads are very bad, with some places almost impassable. The weather is now very hot and we have had two days that the sun has shined a part of the time and has not rained. It now looks very likely for showers. It is probable the rain is about over as we always have our rain here in the spring – enough to last all summer. We do not expect much more before next Oct. or Nov.

Wheat, it is said, is not very promising [although] my wheat looks tolerable well in spots where it is out of the water. Grass looks well generally, corn rather backward. Some pieces are big enough to hoe, though not many. I have got the outside of my barn covered and calculate to have it done off inside in two or 3 weeks. It is 32 feet by 42 with a grainery in one end of the stable and calculation for a thresher in one end of the bay. I gave 40 dollars and a yoke of 3 year old steers, which we call 30 dollars for the work. The work is not done well. I did not put in much spring crops on account of building and so much rain. Sowed 1½ acres of oats. Let out the knoll and the land around it – about 8 acres to be planted to corn. I calculate to plough about 10 acres for wheat. We were some disappointed that somebody did not come here from the cart this spring, but on account of the traveling, you did well enough in staying at home. I calculated if you had come here to have this lot divided, it ought to have been divided before any clearing was done on it. I have not sent the papers very regular lately as I do not get them in time. I have not had any for two weeks. We get one now and then from you. I should rather have you send an anti-Masonic paper than the ones you have sent.

Lucy has a daughter one day old. It appears to be in good health & weighs 7 pounds. She is well herself as can be expected. It is generally healthy here at present. The girl that was sick when Maria was here died in two or 3 days after she left here. I do not think Eben is owing much now nor do I think he was ever any worse off than he represented.

As to the widow North's business, I know but little about. I understood she was calculating to pay up the old debt last spring, but I expect it is not done. I expect they are doing well as common. They have saved considerable this last winter and spring and spoiled a good deal of stuff I shall have to pay extra for putting off doing my barn on account of the stuff being sawed so crooked. Some of the boards were so crooked that they had to cut off more than 3 inches in order to straighten them. My plank I expect will be worse than all the rest, as some of them are almost crooked enough for stone boat plank; some spots thick and some thin.

June 22<sup>nd</sup> I calculated to have sent this last week, but did not get a chance to send it. We had a number of very heavy showers on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. Since that time we have had very hot weather. It now looks very likely for rain. Lucy and her young one appear to be getting along very well. The Meeting house at Alexander Village is [ ? ] and a Presbyterian minister hired to preach half of the time, the other half it belongs to the Methodists. I have got one paper today & shall send it with this letter. It is the only one I

have had in 3 weeks. I shall stop them unless they come more regular. I know nothing of William Miner and have not had much chance for inquiry.

R. North

L. North

I must trouble you with another letter. We received a letter from Lester in June and I wrote in September, but have not heard anything since Lester wrote that the cause of you not writing is but known to yourselves. We regret very much that our correspondence should cease. Have we not watched over you and taken care of you in your infant days and have had many a sleepless night on your account? We cannot but look back to those days when our minds were big with expectation, but now the tune has changed; you are away from us and we are old and infirm and I fear almost forgotten. I should write sooner, but have not been able. Was taken with the slow typhus from the middle of October. The fever run some over forty days and it brought me low and weak, but I have every day worked my way from the bed to the fire and back, and now can walk out when it is pleasant and have rode out a number of times in the sleigh.

We had a great snow about the middle of December. It came on the mud and cleared up cold and made some good sleighing for a few days, but it is all gone now and is all mud and unseasonably warm for this time of year.

But the refirmation [?] in my side and hip increases with my strength and the cough that I took on the canal left me at the commencement of the fever begins to come again, but is not so bad yet as it was before. Mother's health is about the same as usual; she has taken the whole care of me since I have been sick, except nights. She had some assistance, as I had to take medicine every four hours and wine once in awhile. All the rest here are in good health.

Joel's family is well except one of the twins, six years old, has the Saint Vitas Dance. She is all in motion – legs and arms all agoing and entirely helpless. She can bear no weight on her feet, nor hold up her head, nor to speak loud so as to be understood. Very often she will say 'Yes' and 'no' in whispers so as to be understood. It is a tedious task to take care of her. She has been sick about two months. The Doctors say she will get well of it, but we fear she will not. She has been a healthy, active child, more so than the other.

Joel has built him a good mill – has been running some time when he can tend it. The shingle mill is not quite done yet. This year we have put up about three hundred of pork and one quarter of beef and other necessaries as common and the cows yield us 82.50, which I think will be sufficient to pay our expenses for the year, but I have not been able as yet to settle up my \$70 doctor's bill must be considerable. Doct. Phelps, after he returned from the west, went and bought at Hitchcocksville the three houses and store, one a new brick and farm of William Moore at 3,800. Moore has failed and the property must be sold and he is agoing into trade.

There has been a number of cases of fever here the last fall and some have died: Old Miss Howel, Capt. Austin, Rev. Mr. Clark and a son of R. Seymour of 14, Mr. Arthur Howel's wife died with cancer, Uncle Eben North with old age. He has been the first year the most of the time he was lost and would run away every time he could, wanting to go home.

*This, the last portion of the letter, is not signed. The letter is addressed to: Rufus North, Colebrook, Litchfield County, Connecticut. 13 cents postage.*