

Newfield. Apr 25<sup>th</sup>. 1851.

Mr Briggs.

Sir.

Yours of 7<sup>th</sup> instant was received in due time and with pleasure. The letter which you wrote some years since was answered, since then, until now we had heard nothing from you or your friends. There has been no death in Grand Father's family since he visited you on his way to the west - he and Grand Mother are both well - yet keep about and do considerable for people of their ages - they still live on their farm two or three miles distant from Newfield village - their daughter Armenia Todd lives with them - <sup>Newfield, he had come back on a visit they</sup> her husband died in Indiana some three years ago - she <sup>still own their farm in Indiana</sup> has three children two of whom are here with her - her oldest son is in Clydes. They were in Indiana three years - and were sick a great deal of the time - Uncle Samuel lives about a mile from here - he has a farm and works it well - he has a very pleasant family - consisting of a wife and three children - Uncles Nathaniel and Solomon live near Grand father also - they are both farmers - Nathaniel is now living with his third wife - Aunt Jane Curtis lives about half a mile from here - she has middling health - has five children - two of her daughters are very agreeable young ladies - the others are younger - Aunt Mary



Gilles you have seen - Uncle Gillless family is the same  
as when you see them - they are well - they have sold  
out in Newfield and bought in Sandy - their eldest  
son - Nathaniel started for Ohio some two weeks since -  
his health has never been very good - and he thinks trav-  
elling will benefit him. I have another Aunt - Aunt  
Lydia Ann Todd - she is the youngest daughter living -  
for years she has been quite out of health - still we  
all feel in hopes that she is gaining - and will yet enjoy  
good health - My father (Grand-father's eldest son) and  
his family live in Huron Co Ohio - I have a brother prac-  
tising Law in Norwalk, O. My second brother is a Cadet  
at the Military Academy at West-Point - I have seven  
brothers and two sisters - I like Ohio very much - father  
thinks it is as healthy there as it is here - as he is a Phy-  
sician we think that he ought to know - I came out  
on a visit last fall - I shall return soon - Grand-father's  
brother Sylvanus is still living and is well - his daughters  
are married and living in Sweden - his son Miles is in  
Mobile Daguerrotyping - Grand-father is quite anxious  
to see you all - and wishes that you would make  
it convenient to visit him - he wishes you would  
write on the receipt of this family letter so that he  
will know whether that you receive it. Please excuse  
the familiarity of a stranger - for it has been taken  
at the request of Grand-father.

Yours &c

Nancy C. Kellogg

Wm. F. Briggs.

Dear Sir  
Write a  
My arm  
bad work  
Grand  
I would  
I must  
Of may I  
goodness  
my friend  
of a noth  
and his  
our friend  
William







East Greenwich March 2<sup>nd</sup> 1851  
Dear Cousin I received your letter dated Feb 11  
Was pleased to hear from you and to hear you  
was all well my wife health is very poor  
and our Maryann Reynolds health is very poor  
the rest of our connection is as well as usual  
a few words about potatoes I sold my potatoes  
this week for one dollar per bush we think  
they must be still higher & our country corn  
will at 80 cts.  
now about your Anns estate as for my part I  
am not able to buy it Nicholas Fog has bought  
3/4 of one half and uncle Ambrose right own  
the other half he says he bought right  
for 40 dollars and the other he has bought  
at the rate of two thousand dollars and wont  
at that rate for any more  
there is another man would like to have it and  
has been to the rest of the ass and got the  
refusal of their rights and would like to have  
your name all favourable to this man  
his name is Hendrick live on it and is a very  
good man

James A Briggs



Natick

March the 16<sup>th</sup> 1851

William

I received your kind letter and was happy to hear from you once more And now I seat myself to pen you a few hasty lines it is Sabbath and it rains very hard so that I cannot attend church the people have just entered the Baptist church it is but a few steps from our door but I generally attend the Methodist when I go but the weather prevented me this morning but if you were here to go with me I think I should go, you write that you are a going home with your sister I hope you will not tarry long up there nor do I want you too go to New Orleans no William expose yourself to none of the diseases that rage there in the summer but come down here as soon as possible if you do not come this season I shall begin to think you do not mean to come at all You spoke of those young Ladies wanting to know who you are writing to I will tell of a little incident that happened not long since I had company a few evenings back and there was one young man that opened a draw that I keep my letters in that I left unlocked by accident and he took out one of your letters but he found I did not like it very well and he put it back but he is trying to find out who it is that is writing to me from up there I told him it was my cousin but he will not believe it he told a young lady that he did not believe but it was some bear I expect that a great many think so down this way. Aunt Elizabeth is quite sick and Aunt Mary Ann is very low the Doctors say she cannot live but a short time. I am asked out



too spend the evening this evening I suppose I shall have to go but I shall not enjoy myself as I should if you were here to go with me if you were here I should be the happiest being on earth I think, but when I am in company I enjoy myself very well but there is one lacking in the company to make me happy and William it is no other than you but I must say no more for I am afraid that I have said too much already.

I was asked to a party last evening but I did not go it was about three miles from this village but in a few minutes after the young man left the house that was sent after me, I received an invitation too spend a social evening with an elderly lady and her three girls at the next door and the young lady that boards here and myself went and spent a very agreeable evening I expect the young man will be mad enough when he hears of it William I went to a party the other evening and I heard a young man make this remark to her I was laughing and talking with all, no particular one received my attention (but you was not there) He said that he thought that I was a heartless girl or at least I had every appearance of one he did not believe that I was capable of loving any one, but William they cannot see within nor do I want them too let them think so as long as they please but they will find out to the contrary you know better already but I must soon close for my thoughts are so confused that I cannot write today but you must excuse this and I will do better next time, I went too a Panorama of the Drumhard a week ago last night I cannot begin to tell my thoughts while following that young man from his first setting out in the world to his grave a poor degraded drumhard it was enough

too melt the heart of any person but I must now close or I shall tire your patience and I have company so I must now close with the hope of seeing you soon or of hearing from you but you must not go South for I do not want you to write before you get west I shall expect to see you soon give my love to all tell Nancy that I have looked for a letter from her but have received none yet our family join in sending their love to you and your family & remember me to your Father and Mother

A good afternoon dear William I remain  
yours in sincerity and truth  
Elizabeth Spencer



The  
Phenix Warwick June 17, 1851

Dear uncle

I write for the purpose of informing you that we are again afflicted Grandfather died the 17 of may he has had been sick with a fever about 4 weeks and when his fever left him he continued to grow weaker intill he died

my mother was very feeble at the time of his death she failed rapidly ~~rapidly~~ after the funeral and died the 28 of may they both manifested acumfortable hop in the saviour

she has not been well since December 1848 Consumption was the final result of her death

The west of us are well as common the Nichols property ~~is~~ lays in the same shape as before it rents for \$75.00 a year Orlando was here last spring and we were very much pleased with his visit I received a letter from him ~~some~~ after after he left R.I but did not get it until it had been rose several weeks so I did not know where to write to <sup>him</sup> ~~so~~ ~~waited~~ from the fact



That he rose that he was gone  
further soon I write in a great  
hurry if you can reach this I shall  
be glad I want you to write to me  
soon and write where Orlander is  
so I can write to him my wife  
joines in sending <sup>our</sup> ~~my~~ love to you  
all

From your nephew  
and friend

Benjamin Briggs





Saturday Natick Warwick August 2<sup>nd</sup>  
1851

Ever Dear though Absent Cousin

I seat myself once more to write to you as I have not heard from you since last March it seems longer than it really is to me but I thought I must write for I have given up of seeing you down this way this summer I am at work in the Factory this summer I am out to day with the sick headache I wish you were here with me I am alone in my chamber and have been all day and I thought writing would draw my attention from the violent pain in my head but my hand trembles so I can hardly write. Our Family are all well as usual there has been quite a change since <sup>I wrote</sup> you last Aunt Elizabeth Briggs is dead she died last May her Father in law was buried 10 day before she died I went to see her ~~then~~ about a week before her death she was so low she could but just speak out so any one could hear and when she did talk it made her cough so that we would not allow her to talk but little O William could you of seen that woman wearing away and she was so patient through the whole of her sickness not one murmuring word on my last visit to her when I left she bid me farewell for the last time she said I should never see her again while living she did not think for said she Tybil when I am gone do not forget me but prepare to meet me in Heaven for I trust that I am a going to Heaven she died a happy saint tell Uncle she left her dying farewell for him and his family she told me that while she lived she had hoped to see him once more on earth but she <sup>w</sup>ould not but she hoped to meet him above she told me that when you came down I must take good care of you visit her grave with you as to taking care of you she need not of charged me for when I do see



you I think I shall take care that you do not run off as quick as cousin Willard when he was down last summer but I do not think I shall see you this summer unless I come ~~up~~ there but if you do not mean to come please send that Miniature I have had an invitation to go to Buffalo this fall on an excursion with a gentleman that has friends that live there but I have not give my consent to go yet but it will be just what I like to go that way. I went on an Whortleberry excursion last Saturday and returned Sunday there was several Ladies dressed in Bloomers but I have not got one nor do I think I shall have for I do not fancy them a great deal I am aging down close to the shore next week to spend the week to recruit up for my health has not been very good this summer O William how I do wish you were here to go with me you were often spoken of by me last Saturday in our excursion on land and the company said they wish they could see my Cousin that I thought so much of I told them they did not want to see him any worse than I did O Sunday Morning I arose very early as soon as daylight peeped up in sight and awoke the lady that slept with me and we started with a small fall apiece and took a long stroll in the woods and O how pleasant to hear the little Birds carolling their morning songs we walked around until we were tired and then we filled our pails with berries and returned to the house and the rest of the folks were just a dropping or else just a waking up but they all got routed by us when we got to the house you had better believe they did not sleep much where I was and at 12 o'clock we all went to meeting we had a first rate meeting and after tea I teased them until I got them started for a walk I had a first rate walk and then we started for home we arrived here at half past 9 o'clock in the evening the 4<sup>th</sup> passed off quite pleasant according to the weather I stayed at home all day or untill 6 o'clock and then I went to Providence in the evening I did not enjoy myself very well for I do not like to be in a

noisy bustling city I must soon close as you will be tired of my foolish nonsense give my best respects to all my friends up that way tell your sister Nancy that I have been looking for a few lines from her for some time tell her that I wrote last I belong to the ~~Methodist~~ Methodist Bible Class I love to go to the Sabbath school and we have one of the most interesting schools that I ever attended people from the age of 50 down to 3 years attend and they feel such an interest in it the minister teaches our Bible Class there is 8 or 10 in the class I attend singing school every Sabbath afternoon at 5 o'clock our family join in sending their love to all mine I send to none but you if you think it worthy of accepting I want you to answer this as soon as you receive it I shall send it to Shelden not knowing where you are come down as soon as possible answer immediately if I do not hear from you soon I shall call you a naughty cousin and likely when I do see you I shall whip your face or do something dreadful to you do good by William for the present

Forever Yours

Sybil Spencer

You will see by my signature that I am not married yet nor do I intend to right away I have not forgot my promise yet

So no more



Natick

Tuesday evening August the 12<sup>th</sup> 1851

Dear William I received your letter in good season and it was a welcome visiter I can assure you for I had given up all hopes of hearing from you again for I deemed myself forgotten entirely It found me in middling good health but none of the best but I will not complain for it is better than I deserve I was away when your letter arrived my mother took care of the letter untill I arrived at home one of the girls that I am acquainted with said to her, I would open it if I was you for she will not be at home in a week, to which mother made this reply The letter is hers and it is not my business to open her letters and she would not like it if I did so she said no more

You spoke of these young ladies scuffling over your letter I think the ladies up there are very much interested about your correspondence with me but I cannot blame them as I know of, I hope I am not standing in any of the girls way up there or my letters at least I cannot think of much news to write I guess I will tell you what a visit I had I started Monday afternoon in company with my sister Mary and another lady of our acquaintance from this village we had a first rate time & if you could of been there with me, your name was mentioned more than



one by me I can tell you it was a very pleasant  
place for a farm the railroad runs about 3 rods from  
the house and such a time as we had going out to see the  
cars go along and we went a whortleberrying and I returned  
home Saturday night I got here about half past ten o'clock  
in the evening it was a splendid evening the moon shone  
very bright and we did not hurry much for O how I love  
to look upon the works of nature by moonlight when the moon  
with her soft and mellow light reflects upon every object at  
this time it is pleasant to be upon the water how often  
have I sat by a rippling brook and with the mellow light  
of the moon shining full upon me lost myself in thought  
how often I do then call up the past <sup>and</sup> of friends that are clasped  
in the cold and icy arms of death and often it causes the  
silent tear to flow yes they deem ~~me~~ a gay and happy  
being, but ~~how~~ could they see me when alone they would  
know better how often have I <sup>and</sup> amidst the gay and dazzling  
happy beings at a party or <sup>in the</sup> Bull room have I retired by  
myself and wept yet I knew not for why I often  
wait untill I get home and then you can guess what  
follows I have resolved to attend no more parties or ~~balls~~  
for I cannot enjoy them and what is the use to go contrary  
to my mind but enough of this you will think I am  
a foolish being if I write such stuff if you do not think  
so already if any one asks who this letter is from tell them  
that it is from me you think that is not half granted  
I do not know of much more to write I have had  
another letter from my absent brother he was in good

health when he wrote and expected to be with us in  
February or March next he said if I was not married I  
must not untill he came home it if I wait untill he gets  
home and untill you come down I think I shall not  
marry very soon at the shortest, but I am not in a hurry  
at all, for I begin to think that all of the young men use  
a good share of deceit as well as the ladies, ~~so~~ I must soon  
close as I begin to grow sleepy I thought when I commenced  
that I should not write but a few lines just to let you  
know that I had received your most welcome letter  
I have given up seeing you down here I hardly think  
that you mean to come forgive the liberty I use in  
writing and use the same liberty in yours write as  
often as possible remember me to your Fathers family  
my love to you alone

Good evening William  
excuse bad writing and all mistakes pleasant dreams  
to you

Yours  
Lyle Pierce



Lapeer August 16<sup>th</sup> 1857

Dear William

It is raining very gentle this afternoon; and I am somewhat sleepy, which makes it rather dull. Last evening I attended a ball at B. Sherry's it is the first time I have danced since I left there. I went with George\* he is boarding at our house; (his occupation is miller, he is tending the Steamgristmill) our company was small but quite pleasant; several from Oxford were there. It is very sickly in & around Oxford, there is more sick there now, than all I have known in 4 years before. R. H. Davis has lost his youngest the only girl, several other deaths about there. It is also very sickly in Orono, S. has been very sick since my return; I have not seen him but by the by I have heard from him Hannah Peas is married to Graham, Sarah Rusk, I heard was married since it has been contradicted but most in Cannandagus think it she is. Ureah Noel was married about the fourth of July to Miss Cady, he was left a widower in about four weeks after his marriage Orono Bell is in Oxford, he has been quite miserable all summer have the ague now and then. Harriet Hovey is in Pontiac learning the Milomers trade. there is no use of my ever thinking learning a trade for one reason, I shall never have ances to clothe myself a year so I can afford to give my time; but as for doing house work for a living I cannot I wrote to Sister Mary about the salterhume on my hands it is not salterhume, but much worse, it is iricplis; you cannot imagin how much I have suffered; and am like to much.

\* Georg Farmer Not B. H. C.



more I have not been so I could work since my return, but have been obliged to some, for Aunt has been quite miserable but a great deal of the time I could not sew, nor any thing but politics my hands, it has broke out on my feet some but not bad, so that I could walk around the house and go to wait on myself: I am better now but cannot tell how long it may last, give yourself no uneasiness, for in Providence I trust the future.

I must tell you about Lucius; he is a colt for you on the fourth of July last he and two other chaps about his age; invited each a girl, to take a ride; they went to the procery, bought each a half pound candy a pound almonds; some raisons some oranges; and all unbearance to their parents, Lucius with the other two came home went to the barn, harniced our team; put them before our little wagon put in the three seats, and got in Aunt & myself kept watch of them when they started Aunt stepped to the door and asquied where they were going; Lucius got out came in and told the hole story as proud as you please then he went away, got three ladies which were all dressed in white rode around the square which eight miles, eat their nicnaes carried their ladies home; and said they thought they had spent their money to a good advantage much better than to buy tircrackers &c; I think it was a good idea myself; but we cannot plague I he is proud to hear us laugh at him; he was not bashful about the matter for he invited his lady for the presence of her mother, she consented; and also her mother; I will leave him now as he is, a pitiful boy.

Sunday August 17<sup>th</sup> 1779

Uncle wishes me to write and assure you if you will come here bring your kit and lasts, he says he will give you work, he wishes you to write soon and let him know so he can prepare for you; William do just as wish about coming; I should like to have you, but cannot urge you in the least; assure me not why, for I cannot tell you, you must guess the reason: you know Uncle slack and easy way of uncle as well as myself, but write soon; and tell him say nothing which I have written;

I must bring my letter to a close, by asking you to excuse the spelling, as well as poor writing, for my hand is so stiff and sore it seems almost impossible to write: do write immediately that I may hear from home: give my compliments to all enquiring friends. Yours forever

To his brother

From a lonely Sister  
M. Briggs

M. Briggs



Lapeer

Sept 21<sup>th</sup> 1857

Dear Sister

I received yours dated Aug-19<sup>th</sup> in due time, it found all well, save myself; I had been sick about a week; but <sup>had</sup> kept around; till the day I received your letter. I was confined to the bed a week; had a few fits of the ague and are better now yes I am as well as common; I was first attracted with the chill fever; but threw it into the ague, and soon regained my health. as to the iricplous on my hands it is better, but I fear it is in my blood and <sup>will</sup> make its appearance, again. I am sorry to hear <sup>so</sup> many of you have the whooping cough, and Elizabeth, I fear will loose those fat cheeks, and look so well. Mary it begins to seem more like home here, for there has hardly been a day in six weeks, but what some Oxford people have been hear some came and stayed three days to go black-barrying, there was an immense site of barries; there is in one place over one hundred acres of clear briers. I went but twice; and was taken sick. I have not been to Oxford yet and cannot tell when I shall go, I have made several promises to go but broke them; I have so much sewing to do, that it seems almost impossible to leave, and the house work is more than Aunt can get along with alone, when she washes I do the work, and mornings I help get breakfast and do the chamber work, the rest of the time I sew we have seven in the family all the time, besides the comers and goers; I tell Aunt we had better put up a sine but she think we have custom plenty; there is some teamsters



that reside in Oxford who call and take dinner three times a week: they say they had rather pay us than to eat to tavern; and it is much handsomer for them, we live close to the mill and the inn is some distance. so you can see there is some work to be done: Uncle is butchering every week one and two beasts, this adds new work, to housework trying tallow and cleaning up all the time. but we do not complain at this if he can make something; and making a little at two trades he may possibly pay for his place. Mary do not forget to tell me all about the parties and paring bees this fall; also give my respects to those who enquire after me & HP in particular. you must tell me if they have got the house fixed and how all our friends are: I have neglected writing to Antoinette but think in the course of a week I shall write to her also to Lucy Cla, Lucy Be, Maria B. you've five letters in one week; this will occupy the evenings for a week, and my reading will have to lie idle. Mary can you tell why Willi does not write. he never was so negligent before, only think one letter is all I have received from him and it's over five months; I cannot refrain from feeling neglected: by him.

Tell Mother I got the new bonnet but not the shawl, my bonnet is white watered crape, a large white rose on the out side and white french flowers inside; white figured satin ribbon string; comprises the trimming. The strings are each a yard long, and over a finger wide; the price was \$5.00 but got it for four. Uncle got it in Detroit: quite a present; I have not soiled it yet. It has wound it a good many times; you would say it is the most innocent thing you

Tell me how your school prospers; and if the winter teacher is hired, who it is. I hardly know what to do about going to School, this winter, but guess I shall not go. how is the fruit there this fall? there is plenty of fruit in and around Oxford but here, there is but little people have not taken much pains; with fruit: there are but few orchards large enough to bear: there will be apples brought to sell in fall, but not so plenty as at Oxford. which will make apple-cake rather sour here: I must bring this unconnected letter to a close by requesting you not to delay writing, but write immediately from your beloved sister

Thy O. Briggs.

Nancy Briggs



Lapier. Nov. 25<sup>th</sup> 1851

Affectionate Sister

I received your last letter Oct 22<sup>nd</sup> and was much pleased to hear from you. I dare say you have looked for an answer; but in vain; for I have not written; since, I have been so busy this fall that my leisure moments are but few and far between. I presume you will be like another neglected correspondent of mine: who says write on Sunday; but I will say to you, as I did to that one; when I have laboured hard all the week; and Sabbath comes: I have no ambition to write nor cannot collect my thoughts anew to put them on paper. Another reason why I have not written to you: was I expected to hear from Mr. W. D. Briggs but now I will think no more about it; many think for a moment how you should feel, if you were as far from friends as I am; and had a brother who had corresponded with you for years, and then drop off; and for reasons unknown to you. Think of this: did I say think of it; well you may think; but cannot realize it for you never had the trial; this is not all: but another. I received his letter August 2<sup>nd</sup> (the only letter) and answered it the 17<sup>th</sup> so I am sure he cannot complain, since that time I have received two from you; many do continue to write; and not like Billy ~~for~~ <sup>one</sup>, for if you do I shall hear from home but seldom.

Abunt enjoys very poor health. we are much concerned about her: She was taken sick Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup> the day after I sent your<sup>my</sup> last letter. since that time, she has been very miserable, she had the ague a while; and finally got over it so she was around but could not work any: on Tuesday last she was taken very sudden, about 9 o'clock in the morning; with a distress in the stomach; I was alone with her, for about a half hour, when I sent (a young man that works in the Navy) after the doctor, and called to one of the neighbour women who came; uncle was somewhere in the village I knew not where Lucius was with his father and I sent a little boy who was in the street, to find them; in fifteen minutes they were all here; from that time till one o'clock we could hardly keep life; several times we thought she was gone but would revive again she has had no spell as hard since that day. I think she can live three but few: she can walk around the house now but frequently has a distress<sup>ful</sup> spell: she is very thin in flesh; almost a skeleton. our family consists of 7 and I have done all the work since that time, with the exception of one week: were you must know I have to work. but my health is good and work agrees with me first rate. Give my love to all; and written in particular

Yours immediately and without delay

Yours, in haste, from your affectionate sister

Mary D. Briggs

Fancy Briggs