

Greensburg Ind

Oct 3<sup>rd</sup> 1881

My dear Brother Thomas

I recd your welcome letter of date 26<sup>th</sup> Sept on yesterday. I am so glad to once more hear from you and learn that you were well, my dear Brother I can sympathise with

you in regard to the conduct of your Daughter Annie, I had the same trial to undergo, it was the hardest trial of my life up to that time, and I thought that I never would get over it and never could forgive her - and I could forgive it god, but time and circumstances will change our feelings, so you must try and make matters as pleasant as you can and do as near right as you possibly can, two wrongs dont make a right, and this matter may ultimately turn out bitter than you may imagine, but you have my heart felt sympathy - and I hope you will bear it with fortitude and do nothing that you will have to regret. I am still sorry to learn of your misfortune in your last marriage, I was fearful from the tenour of your last letters that something was wrong although you did not allude

2<sup>nd</sup>

to or hint at anything about my trouble in any way,  
but I told your Sister Hannah that I feared  
all was not right, but sutch is fate and you  
must bear up under this trouble and act the  
man in evry respect, do right in evry particular  
and your Charactur will not be assailed and  
your friends will Justify you, I want you  
to wright me a long letter in answer to this and give  
me all particulars in regard to both of these Cases,

you speak of getting a letter from Cal Sedley, have  
you evn got anything from Mariah De Bells estate,  
Well Brother you ask of me to tell you all about  
my children and family affairs generally,

I suppose you have herd of the death of Johns  
wife, she died the 14<sup>th</sup> of last April leaving three  
children all boys the youngest six years old last  
May, John sent you a paper announcing her  
death with an obituary, did you get it, I also  
send you ~~sent you~~ a paper announcing the death  
of our Grand daughter Mary Henry Beck, Mary  
Julys only child, she has been dead over a year  
she left three children all girls, her last child was  
a boy but did not live after its birth, Mary Henry  
was as handsome a woman as you evn saw and  
very sprightly and intelligent, Mary Jully keeps

house for her Son-in-law and keeps the children with her - they are very sprightly children the two oldest are going to school, their Father is a practicing attorney at Indianapolis and is a steady sober clever gentleman, Marys health is now very good she looks as old as her mother did before her attack of Paralysis, your Sister Hannah has never fully recovered from her attack, but is much better than I thought she would ever be, and she still improves gradually, it has now been over two years since she was stricken and aside from that affliction her general health is better than formerly, Alice and family are all well, her husband is a farmer owns a pretty good farm is industrious and makes a good living, Alicias oldest son is married and lives in Texas not far from Sherman, I dont think he will ever do any good, her second son John is married he married in this County and moved to Texas but came back in 8 or 9 months and is living in the neighbourhood of his mother, I dont think there is much good in him, Alicias only daughter by Watkins is grown rather a handsome girl, but is a cripple in one hip causes her to walk badly, Alice has two children by her last husband

4<sup>th</sup>/<sub>11</sub>

a boy and girl both sprightly children, Eliza Jones made us a visit this fall she came alone and Charles came after her, they returned home week before last, Charles's Father is still living, My son Wm is living about 4 miles from here on a small farm of 75 acres I bought and moved him on, with my assistance he can make a living on it he has 4 children living one dead, Fannie is still single and with us, we are all living with John, Fannie is keeping house for him and Hannah and myself are boarding, John first hired a house keeper and that dident last but a few weeks then he tried boarding with a family near him that lasted one week, then they all come and boarded with me until he could build an addition to his house, one room for his mother and me, and one for Fannie, so on the first day of Sept we moved here, we were compelled to make this move for his accommodation as he could not get along without his mother or Fannie to watch over his children and take charge of his house, it seems very strange to me after keeping house for 46 years to break up go to boarding, I rented out my house for \$20.00 per month for one year so I have a place to fall back on if I am not satisfied, I think you are getting your board very cheap if you

5<sup>th</sup>  
11

are getting a good supply to eat \$10.00 per month is very reasonable, does Tommy board at the same place, I am paying \$10.00 per week for Hannah and my board and I furnish my own room complete, I pay nothing for Fannie's board as her services would be worth twice her board if any charge was made I furnish her room also, all we get is the use of the rooms and board, John furnishes the coal and gas light, and we hire our washing done out, Hannah does all the mending and darning for John and the children and old man Foster John's - Father-in-law who lives with John, John's wife was Mr Foster's last child living he is now left without wife or child and only one grand child except John's children, the other grand child is a growing man and lately married lives in Pennsylvania, he is a nice old gentleman lost every thing he had and John has to take care of him which he does cheerfully, our poor Brother Lewis has fallen back to his old habits again, he had sobered up for a year or two and was doing well he wrote to me several times and I always answered his letters but finally he quit, and I soon learned -

6<sup>th</sup>  
11

The Cause, poor fellow how I feel for him,  
I have not had from Sulina for a long  
time, the last news of her she was in Missouri,  
your sister Hannah says give you her best love  
she is sitting by me at this time she says to tell  
you to forgive your young erring child and try  
and treat our, being as a child, she says tell  
you that her hair is getting very white.

give our best love to your children, I should  
like to see them all and sometimes think I  
would like to take a trip out in Texas one  
more, but I am now an old man 70 years  
old last June, but if an excursion should  
be gotten up I might take notion and  
make you a visit, what stops you from

Coming to see us, as you talked something  
like making us a visit, now dear Brother  
I shall expect a long answer to this without  
fail and give me a full answer to all my  
requests, and believe me dear brother as

ever your affectionate brother

Hiram Wallingford

Greensburg Ind  
Oct 3rd 1881

My der Brother Thomas

I recd your welcome letter of date 26th Sept on yesterday. I am so glad to once more hear from you and learn that you are well, my dear Brother I can sympathise with you in regard to the conduct of your Daughter Annie, I had the same trial to undergo, it was the hardest trial of my life up to that time, and I thought that I never would get over it and never could forgive her - and I cant forget it yet, but time and circumstances will change our feelings, so you must try and make matters as pleasant as you can and do as near right as you possibly can, two rongs don't make a right, and this matter may ultimately turn out better than you may imagine, but you have my heart felt sympathy - and I hope you will bear it with fortitude and do nothing that you will have to regret. I am still sorry to learn of your misfortune in your last marriage, I was fearful from the tenour of your last letters that something was rong although you did not allude to or hint at anything about any trouble in any way but I told your Sister Hannah that I feared all was not right, but sutch is fate and you must bear up under this trouble and act the man in every respect, do right in every particular and your character will not be assailed and your friends will justify you. I want you to wright me a long letter in answer to both of these cases.

You speak of getting a letter from Col Sedley, have you ever got anything from Mariah DeBells estate.

Well Brother you ask of me to tell you all about my children and family affairs generally.

I suppose you have herd of the death of Johns wife, she died the 14th of last April leaving three children all boys the youngest six years old last May. John sent you a paper announcing her death with an obituary, did you get it. I also sent you a paper announcing the death of our Granddaughter Mary Henry Beck, Mary Tullys only child. She has been dead over a year. She left three children all girls, her last child was a boy but did not live after its birth. Mary Henry was as handsome a woman as you ever saw and verry sprightly and inteligent. Mary Tully keeps house for her soninlaw and keeps the children with her - they are verry sprightly children the two oldest are going to school, their Father is a practicing attorney at Indianapolis and is a strong sober clever gentleman, Marys health is not verry good she looks as old as her mother did before her attack of Paralysis, your sister Hannah has never fully recovered from her attack, but is mutch better than I thought she would ever be, and she still improves gradually, it has now been over two years since she was stricken and aside from that affliction her general health is better than formerly. Alice and family are all well, her husband is a farmer owns a pretty good farm is industrious and makes a

good living. Alicias oldest son is married and lives in Texas not far from Sherman, I dont think he will ever do any good, her second son John is married he married in this county and moved to Texas but came back in 8 or 9 months and is living in the neighbourhood of his Mother, I dont think there is mutch good in him, Alicias only daughter by Watkins is grown rather a handsome girl, but is a cripple in one hip causes her to walke badly. Alicia has two children by her last Husband a boy and girl both sprightly children. Eliza Jones made us a visit this fall she came alone and Charly came after here, they returned home week before last. Charleys Father is still living. My son Wm is living about 4 miles from here on a small farm of 75 acres I bought and moved him on, with my assistance he can make a living on it he has 4 children living one dead. Fannie is still single and with us, we are all living with John. Fannie is keeping house for him and Hannah and myself are boarding. John first hired a housekeeper and that didnt last but a few weeks then he tried boarding with a family near him that lasted one week, then they all came and boarded with me until he could build an addition to his house, one room for his Mother and me, and one for Fannie. So on the first day of Sept we moved here, we were compelled to make this moove for his accommodation as he could not get along without his Mother or Fannie to watch over his children and take charge of his house, it seems very strange to me after keeping house for 46 years to break up go to boarding. I rented out my house for \$20.00 per month for one year so I have a place to fall back on if I am not satisfied. I think you are getting your board verry cheap if you are getting a good supply to eat \$10.00 per month is verry reasonable, does Tommy board at the same place. I am paying \$10.00 per week for Hannah and my board and I furnish my own room complete. I pay nothing for Fannies board as her servises would b worth twice her board if any charge was made. I furnish her room also, all we get is the use of the rooms and board. John furnishes the coal and gass light, and we hire our washing done out. Hannah does all the mending and darning for John and the children and old man Foster Johns - Fatherinlaw who lives with John. John's wife was Mr Fosters last child living he is now left without wife or child and only one grandchild except Johns children, the other grandchild is a grown young man and lately married lives in Pensylvania, he is a nice old gentleman lost every thing he had and John has to take care of him which he does cherfully. Our poor Brother Lewis has fallen back to his old habits again, he had sobered up for a year or two and was doing well he wrote to me several times and I always answered his letters but finally he quit, and I soon learned the cause, poor fellow how I feel for him. I have not herd from Julina for a long time, the last news of her she was in Missouri, your Sister Hannah says give you her best love. She is sitting by me at this time she says to tell you to forgive your young erring child and try and treat her kindly as a child. She says tell you that her hair is getting verry white.

Give our best love to your children. I should like to see them

all sometimes think I would like to take a trip out in Texas once more, but I am now an old man 70 years old last June, but if an excursion should be gotten up I might take notion and make you a visit. What stoped you from coming to see us as you talked something like making us a visit. Now der Brother I shall expect a long answer to all my requests, and believe me dear brother as ever your affectionate brother.

Hiram Wallingford

Commentary on the letter by Nick Wallingford, 30 July 2008:

This is my transcription of a letter from Hiram Wallingford, to his brother Thomas Ginn Wallingford in Texas. Hiram and T.G. were both sons of Nicholas Wallingford and Mary Ginn/Guinn, born in Mason County, Kentucky. T.G. and his wife Evaline Debell had moved down to Texas in late 1855.

T.G.'s wife Evaline Debelle had died some 12 years earlier, leaving him with children aged 3 months, 2, 7, 9, 12, 13 (the youngest died at aged 4, several years later).

The reference in the letter to T.G.'s misfortune in his last marriage was to his marriage to Fannie Suggitt. They married on 15 March 1879 (he was 51, she was 26) - and by 11 April 1881 they were formally divorced! Family stories have it that she "ran away with a sewing machine salesman" - no further mention was much ever made of her in the Wallingford families that I know of. According to T.G.'s third wife Annie, it was never spoken of in the family...

The 'daughter Annie' (who from my reading between the lines has maybe gotten 'with child'?) is Annie Debelle, who would have been about 14 1/2 at the time of this letter. If Annie was indeed pregnant and remained with the father of that child, that father would have been Reuben Boulware - who was 29 at the time! The youngest of Annie and Reuben's children, however, was not born until September 1882. It could be that this refers to an earlier child of whom we know nothing, or I may be mistaken about the nature of the 'trial' that is referred to!

A later reference to whether Tommy is boarding with him is to T.G.'s son Robert Thomas (19 years old) - he was, in fact, living with his sister Mattie and her husband Robert F. Day, not far from where T.G. was boarding, along with Annie Debelle mentioned above, in June 1880.

T.G. was probably still boarding with J.L. and M.L. Boulware (he was in June 1880). This would be James L. and Maria - James was Reuben Boulware's older brother.

Most of the names mentioned by Hiram are his children: John, Mary, Alice/Alicia and her twin sister Eliza, William, Fannie. References to 'your sister Hannah' are in fact to Hiram's wife - that way of referring to her continues through most correspondence.

The disparaging references to the sons of Hiram's daughter Alicia repeat into future letters from Hiram to T.G. Another ongoing theme is his daughter Fannie who he later says will never leave them, implying that her size would keep her from getting a husband!

Finally, Hiram makes a reference that implies he has visited T.G. In Texas at some point. Nothing is known of this visit...