Box 1 Folder 14

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[*Addressed to*] Mr. Ebenezer Burr
Norfolk
Conn. [*Connecticut*]

Waukesha [*Wisconsin*], Nov. 3, '48.

My dear Parents, Sister, & Brother,

I intended to commence a letter before my confinement & had Daniel finish it & send it on soon after, but that took place the first day of Oct. & my letter was then untouched but we did intend you should hear before this will reach you, but time passes before we know it. D.'s [*Daniel*] time & mind have been variously & busily occupied, & I have been negligent I will admit.

We have a little son, a pretty child, plump & apparently healthy – he has thus far slept a great deal, but likes to be tended when awake. — his father has given to me the selection of his name & I am at quite a loss what to decide upon. Would like to name him after all of our friends, but our Parents & Grandparents gave to most of their sons names that sound rather graceless to my ear, have thought of the several names of our brothers with the letter E. for a middle name wh. [*which*] is an initial of the name of our Father, two of our brothers & other relatives but wh. [*which*] of the brothers names shd. [*should*] we take! I think John sounds the best. — I have always fancied the name of Edward, & have thought of the name Edward Burr or Ralph Edward. what say you to all this? — I got along very well indeed after confinement & at the time too had slight pains 16 hours or more but not [some?] more than 1 or 2 hours had some fever two or three days took a little cold I suppose the second week, but have had no trouble with caked breasts or sore nipples. I now feel quite well & strong – had good help – was with us between three & four weeks, & Daniel has since, as usual, been very kind & good to assist me. He has for several weeks past had some trouble with a weak & sour stomach – has & is taking some medicine — two or three weeks ago he sprained his left wrist & has not been able to use it much since — he has seemed to endure labor better this summer than for two years before & has earned a good many dollars. he is not yet decided what to do this winter, thinks <*te*?> of teaching school if he can.

Abby [*Abigail E. Grant Burr*] is healthy – is generally a very good & obedient little girl – as you always wish to know what she says & I often think when she makes remarks that I will recollect them & tell you, but <*all have*> none come to mind now except these – when her Pa was putting out pea brush last summer she said Papa was planting trees – we last summer asked her who made the stars. she says why they come right out from the sky. once as the clouds were passing over the <*sk*> moon she says, "Mama see the moon run." She uses such words as she hears us, as perhaps, probably, commenced, indeed &c. — We rec'd [*received*] the barrel about the middle of Oct. the things are all valuable & highly useful & we feel very grateful for them – the dried fruit we highly prize – have used the currants in the little <*dipper*> cup. Abby said they were very nice & we agree with her. Want Sister Nancy to receive as many thanks for those she sent as there are number of currants. the hankerchiefs & gloves I think a great deal of. there were two pair of india rubber,: one pr. [*pair*] had fur around them, were they yours or Martha's. I am glad of them — & all the other things too — You need not worry to get me any more stockings. Nov. 4. I did not get time to finish this to send by to days mail am sorry – baby is in my lap, Abby is playing around the room & Daniel has gone to preparatory lecture. this forenoon I made six pumpkin pies & by the way we have a very good supply of pumpkins – have also an abundance of cabbage, beets, turnips & onions & a few beans shall probably be obliged to buy some potatoes before Spring have some corn & expect to have enough soon for our winter's use — I have six gallons of cucumbers salted — the fore part of July got 5 hens – one died in about two weeks they have found their own living & laid 18 dozen eggs, but I suppose this winter will tell a different story – have 8 doz [*dozen*] in salt, sold 2 dozen Last summer we bought some berries – dried 6 or 8 quarts of blackberries – some while I think of say that I will have quite a curiosity to know what kind of dried fruit that is that was in a small bag in the large bag of apples – it has the appearance of sweet apples dried 2 & chopped 1. — From the first of Oct. last year to the same time this year we used about 50 lbs. sugar & 7 or 8 gallons molasses. so you see we had quite a

supply, though we should have used more if it had been convenient to have always just as much as we would like.
Nov. 5 Sab. [*Sabbath*] P. M. – babe is 5 weeks old this P. M. – feel that we have got reason for thankfulness that I am so well & smart as well as for other mercies that we are constantly receiving — There has been considerable sickness here this fall but not much that has proved fatal — in the summer the<*re*> summer complaint prevailed considerably among children & there were several deaths — I learn by your last letter (wh. [*which*] we rec'd five days after my confinement) & also from Abigail [*Abigail Cowles Grant*] that there are cases of dysentery around you & some of them fatal — think of you a great deal – dread to hear from there, but still I wish to — we cannot too much feel the importance of being at any time prepared to die — O that we all might make that our chief concern — heard a few days since of the severe sickness of Mother Grant [*Elizabeth Phelps Grant*] – feel anxious about her – hope she may be spared to us yet — I did intend to write this time to Erastus & Nancy but am so anxious to have this letter on its way to you that I will not this time — do believe I shall before long, hope they will receive my love & many thanks for the beautiful currants — kiss the baby for me & Abby — love to all relatives & friends — Mrs. Pendleton

Abigail says she hopes Mary will spend some time with them this winter. I should be glad if you could but dont suppose you can. O dear.

Yours very aff. [*affectionately*] Caroline.
[*Caroline Burr Grant*]

Mrs. Root returned two or three weeks since with her children & Mother — her Father expects to come in the Spring. I intend to go there while the plastering is being done & drying.

Nov. 6, Dear Sister Mary [*Mary Burr Hill*]

I am ver<*r*>y sorry I cannot pay you what I owe you now I know you ought to have it I shall make every effort to get it soon as possible think without doubt I shall be able to pay part in the spring if not the whole It appears to me I had not better make out a mortgage at present for it will be considerable expense and the probability is that you will get your pay in the spring and you are safe any how whether I live or not. But if I find that I am not likely to pay I will have the security attended to or if you really think it best I will attend to it at any time

Your affectionate brother D. [*Daniel*] Grant

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[*Addressed to*] Messrs. Eben. & Erastus Burr
Norfolk [*Connecticut*]

Sat. eve 9 o'clock March 3, 1849.

Dear Children

This P. M. your Father [*Ebenezer Burr*] went to town to Meet Mr. Hill [*William Hill*] they reached home about candle light bringing your letter mailed Feb. 11. So as soon as we have told 'bout things here will say what we wish to D. [*Daniel*] & try to send that to Dea. [*Deacon Elijah*] Grants tomorrow. The house was in order Mary Dressed & tea nearly ready when <*Mr.*> they arrived now near 10 o'clock they <*are*> Mary [*Mary Burr Hill*] & Mr Hill are in the South room made very warm by a box stove which we borrow for a few weeks your pa & Ralph are in bed I am by our cook stove in the kitchen burning some coffee while writing. Suppose <...> that bed was worth 50 cts. [*cents*] a lb. [*pound*] here but I would not sell it unless you are coming here to live & never intend to go back there <...> to live Dont sell it <u>with</u> without cash down — & do not sell it at <u>all</u> it seems very strange that you should even <u>think</u> of selling the only good bed you have every family wants a bed & you would not be likely to buy a good feathers again why do you wish to sell it? It is late & I have a great deal on my my mind & cannot write well & have a poor pen so good night hope you will do what is best we are all well don't sell any thing for less than it is worth

Pamela [*Benton*] Burr

& we do not wish to advise <u>very strongly</u> in regard to D [*Daniel*]'s, going to California because we do not <u>know</u> what is <...> best The prospect of Caroline's coming home to stay with us 2 years is

a strong inducement to us to consent to Daniel's going — <...>but I had much rather he would come here with you & about here a company talked of going from this town Levi Phelps Levi Gaylord Frederick Porter Charles Mills & others were going & Ralph was anxious to go & at one time we half consented but upon further reflection thought it not best & one after one they all gave it up <*after*> in the course of a few weeks & as far as I know <*e*> <*any*?> every one thinks they acted wisely in doing so If Daniel goes I am afraid his health will be <*poorer*> worse instead of better & <*poorer*?> <*insisted*> that he would be poorer instead of richer The outfit & 2 years time will be a great deal for him to lose

Dear sister & brother

It is now Sabbath morning – but am obliged to write now in order to get this off to Dea. [*Deacon Elijah*] Grants — I think the same as Caroline about D.'s [*Daniel*] going to California & know not how to advise — I should dearly love to have Caroline here – but I should be anxious & fearful that all would not end well with Daniel — Dont know exactly when or where we shall be married – this [P?] probably Tuesday evening at home – some wish us to go to church & have the ceremony performed just before starting — If you do not come on will write you a long letter soon — So good bye now <...> how I have wished you here with me dear sister all these long months kiss the darling children for me – love to Daniel & Caroline from their affection sister

Mary Burr

Dear Sister & Brother

<*want advice*?> I would by all means advise Daniel to go to California I think it would be beneficial to his health & that he would get some money too, & more than that I want Caroline & Abby [*Abigail E. Grant Burr*] & Eddy [*Edward Grant*]
to come out here to stay. Yours affectionately

Ralph E. Burr

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[*Addressed to*]

Mr. Ebenezer Burr
Norfolk
Litchfield Co.
Conn. [*Connecticut*]

[*Note at the left side of address leaf*]

Caroline Grant
Apr […] 1849.
I think my children & Grant children may
like to read this.

Waukesha [*Wisconsin*], Apr. 2, '49.

My dear Parents,

My dear husband has this day taken his departure for California, & you will of course know that I do not feel much like writing – but I wish to ask some questions & have you write back before I wish to start for Ct. [*Connecticut*] do not now know just when that will be – probably sometime in May, perhaps the fore part of it. I will not now rehearse the reasons wh. [*which*] led D. [*Daniel*] to <*the conclusion*> decide to go, but he felt that it was best to go — Joel wrote us a letter approving of it – but, O dear – Father & Mother Grant are very decidedly opposed to it & D. [*Daniel*] says you all are. R. [*Ralph*] excepted – rece'd [*received*] her letter & yours a few days since & had two or three days previously recd one from her – poor Mother I am sorry she feels so badly & Daniel was, but he had all his a[rrange]ments made had put in some money, & it was di[ffi]cult to "back out." The company were not willing he should and he did not know as it was best – though he said if he could get his pay back he did not [know?] but he would stay on account of her feelings*

* he is afraid it will wear upon her & shorten her life.

— he has good company – in the wagon with him is a physician & wife from this place, one of our <...> best ones, & a conscientious Christian man.

Should we live we know not whether we shall wish to live in Wis. [*Wisconsin*] & we have concluded that I had better take with me one or two boxes at least of the best of our things. I shall probably go on the canal though I now feel that should the cholera rage much I shall wish to take the railroad — Should I <...> take the cars (& I dont know but if I should not) my box ought to be directed Daniel only to the care of the owner of the depot at Canaan I think. I do not know his name, probably R. Battell or Wm Lawrence & others [etc.] & will you ascertain soon as possibly convenient & write to me — I shall not sell the bed – dont know whether it is best to take it – can leave it with a neat nice woman who will take good care of it & use it for a spare bed, & has but little company, & we could send for it <*if*> when we wish<*ed*> to – if there is any thing in particular that you wish me to take please make it known – shall I take the seive & that little 2 qt [*quart*] brass bottle? — We are going to let our stove go but have reserved the copper tea kettle – shall I take it? Shall box up nearly all of the things that I leave – shall take the good bed clothes. What shall I do with the blue crockery? suppose I could sell it if best. I know not the price of it – could you send me the bill? have sold the largest rocking chair for $2.25 cash – intend to take the other along – do not intend to sell things at much sacrifice – how much is the table that we have worth?

Mother Grant requested us to write to her immediately on receiving her letter I have had no time until now, & I do not feel as if I could write to her but she will probably receive one within two or three weeks after you receive this, as Daniel said he would partly fill a sheet & send to me to fill it & send on — I expect to suffer a great deal from loneliness I suppose Mary is now in New Jersey – hope I shall receive letter from her before I leave Wis. [*Wisconsin*] – hope you will have some tomatoes growing – children are both well Abby [*Abigail E. Grant Burr*] talks a great deal about going to Neticut It has been a job to get Daniel ready – have been obliged to hire considerable sewing done.

Love to Erastus, Nancy & little May Ellen, Ralph and all — You must not reckon too much on seeing us you know some or all of us may be taken away before we meet —

Yours aff. [*affectionately*]
Caroline

I hope it will not be too much trouble for you to write within two or three days after receiving this, for perhaps I may find company or for some other reason be very anxious to go —

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Flemington, [*New Jersey*.] Apr. 26, 1849.

Dear parents brothers & sisters

I suppose you imagine us nicely settled in our own home ere this — But we are not there yet — House painting & preparations for house—keeping occupy time & we shall not be thoroughly fixed probably before the last of next week or the first of week after — Father, Hetty & myself went to New York last week for furniture, going Tuesday – returning Friday — It was thought best for father to go rather than William [*Hill*] because he is better acquainted with New York & more accustomed to shopping — The goods are all in Somerville & most of them here — A woman has been here this week helping make the carpets – Carpet for parlor 28 yds. [*yards*] at 81 cts. [*cents*] the best of ingrain. Colors – the various shades of blue & buff — It is considered handsome & is quite showy — Carpets for dining room & spare room are alike – colors various – quality good price 62 ½ cts. Mother gives <*me*> a carpet for my room – not a new one but one suitable for the place — Mother also gives chairs & wash stand for our room – so you see that she furnishes the room completely – all except my <...> <*rear*> bureau — William takes his own case of drawers – pretty ones of black walnut — <...> Friends of the family a lawyer & wife – have just left Flem [*Flemington, New Jersey*] – going a considerable distance they sold their furniture. I took a handsome mahogany bureau with mirror affixed at 14 dollars — Mrs. Clark paid 18 dollars in New York about three years since — I also took her own mahogany bureau an old one for five dollars – am getting it dressed over for three dollars — Have got a high post bedstead for 6 ½ dollars — Beside the double bed in spare room there will

be room for a single one – shall get it when convenient — Have a cot for the woman – whom we have engaged – an Irish – stout & strong — Mother seems to take the same interest & care in getting me ready that she would in her own daughters — & so do they all — I received from every member of the family the utmost attention & kindness — I feel perfectly at home & shall be sorry to leave — Have attended 4 tea parties & one large party since writing — Have written Laura Kennard – but received no answer — Want to hear from Carrie exceedingly — It will take all my money — & more too to set us up – beside all that mother has given us — Dont know exactly how much William will have to do – but a good many dollars worth — The whole interior of the house is being painted — We have a nice closet in our room beside a small one under the garret stairs — William gets in this [town?] a set of pretty maple cane seats for dining room – also a sewing chair — In New York – got a secretary for 29 dollars – the style you wished – an enclosed wash stand mahogany for 4.50, hair seat chairs for 2.50 – hair seat rocking chair 10. Cane seat & back maple rocking chair 4. Card table 12.50 table cover 3. Sofa 22. Mirror for sitting room 4. for our room 1. Counterpane 3. 1 doz. tea knives & forks 5.50. 1 doz. best dining knives & forks 3.75 9 common knives & forks – price I have forgotten — Block tin tea pot 1.12. Block tin coffee pot 1.12. — Lamp 4. — Bill for china including tea set, dinner set & chamber set & two waiters & 1 doz. tumblers 30.72, tea set white porcelain – dinner set white stone china — Oil cloth for [entry?] 5. Stair carpet 3.19 —

Mother has given me a nice calico comforter beside what they wrote about & will lend some covers for the boys. My comforters both quilted & one bonnet made &c.
For three weeks or more I was obliged to dress every day for receiving calls. But they <...> have all <*through*> been I believe & my return calls are nearly finished My comforters are liked & quilts too, & every thing else too I believe — I often think of you & want to see you all – the darling little Mary I want to kiss — Love to all — Dont fail to write soon — Remember me to Kendleton & Canfield families & all friends & relations.

Your aff [*affectionate*] daughter & sister
Mary B. [*Burr*] Hill

Please don't scold us for not writing sooner have put it off from time to time, until such & such things were accomplished and here it is six weeks since we have written home. I have been very busy indeed this spring have had my house & garden to see to beside the farm and the business part of the shop. Could get no help to dig garden except for one half day have peas up, potatoes, onions, bunch beans, Radishes, beets, carrots, & parsnips planted. On the Farm have sowed 22 acres of oats, ploughed 6 acres, for corn 18 acres to plough yet made ¼ mile of fence, put down 300 ft [*foot*] blind drain. I shall be very glad when we get once settled & glad to hear from or see any of you whenever we may have that pleasure find much more work getting ready than expected, but am still in a good humour with my wife and the trouble too. please write soon, once to our once, yet awhile

Truly as Ever
William H. [*William Hill*]

P.S. I would have written while Mary was in the City but she thought best, to wait until her return
W. H.

Hope ma has not been sick yet. How do pa & Ralph get along breaking colt — Has Nancy commenced cheese making? Miss Allen has given us two silver butter knives. My health is perfectly good.

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Flemington [*New* Jersey] May 26, 1849
Saturday P.M.

Dear parents brothers & sisters

We are in our own home now & have been here just two weeks to day — I am writing by our nice pretty Secretary in our nice little sitting room — But before going into description, I will answer all interrogations. The money came in. My pocket perfectly safe <*every cent of it*> — The box of goods came perfectly safe from home — The box came near bursting in one or two places – but nothing was lost out. All goods came from New York without damage. Should like

Mr. Wolcott to get me three plated silver & 4 German silver table spoons & 6 German silver tea spoons — Have got no new spoons except three iron ones — Shall endeavor to get along with those & what I brought until I go home — Did not like to purchase them in the city fearing I should be deceived. William tells me not to ask for more money — I do not remember to have shown or read to Marianne a single letter Am quite sure that I never did. She & Ralph were in the school room with me the day you allude to when I received a letter — From Ralph's manner she knew from whom it came — I do not remember to have been at all communicative to M. respecting my own affairs — Am confident that I never said any thing of them to Marianne that I would not just as soon have said to Elizabeth — Should like some of that maple sugar. I feel exceedingly pleased with Ralph's good success — Remember me to Mrs Byrrell & family especially Elizabeth Am glad to hear that Ralph has joined Dea. [*Deacon*] Phelps class. Love to M. [*Maria?*] Phelps & Elisa When Ralph wishes to use Erastus in the possessive case – he must not write Erastus'es but Erastus' — Am very much pleased with my letters from home — Ma & Ralph both do charmingly — I am now writing with William's gold pen – but I think it must serve him better than me — Catharine my girl has just been washing the kitchen floor. I hear her churning now — We have one cow from which we make as much or more butter than we Shall use Catharine is a widow woman — <*hardly*> middle aged I should think – she is neat – rather slow – but does her work well, — seems to expect to do it about all — If she stays with me – think I shall not have to work hard at all this summer — She washes & does up fine clothes beautifully — She has been here two weeks next Monday – does all the washing & ironing – there goes the door bell —

Just received a call from two of the elite one – a new house keeper like myself Have been receiving calls nearly every day since I have been here – sometimes four or five a day. Miss Clarke made a small party for us (William & self) last Wednesday. The men have not come yet – presume they will do so on Monday. Catharine sews neatly – though she has found little time as yet — Forgot to mention in last the present from Miss Elisa Hill – very pretty work stand which stands in the sitting room under glass – received it soon after coming to Flemington [*New Jersey*]. Shall be anxious to hear all about Carrie immediately upon her arrival — Mother father & sister are kind as possible — I have hitherto said nothing of William in my letters because new wives I believe are always thought to talk so silly — Will just say now however that he is all that I had thought & hoped & I am very happy — I like the house & it is "decently furnished" just as Ma always "meant" it should be. My silver spoons are considered beautiful Catharine usually rises a little past 4 AM. – makes the fire – milks – then puts the coffee boiling — The clock striking 5 is the signal for me to rise — We are generally through breakfast by 6 or before — Am sorry Ma has been sick — Mother feared that the girl would grumble at only a hush bed & so made a new hen's feather single bed & gave me – got a cot for her room – thought it better than to get a double bed stead — <*William's bed*> The tick & feathers of William's bed are new – 40 lbs. in bed, bolster & pillows — Mother gave me a tin cake box which is a large tin pan with handles like my dish pan & a tin cover to it — In the pan I found nearly half a large loaf of fruit cake – it was made last Christmas for our wedding party — & will probably keep nice a year from this time – there was also in the pan a loaf of beautiful sponge cake – sister Hetty make — Mother gave us bread & pies to last a week & a boiled shoulder which is not gone yet & will continue good for two or three weeks to come — Mother, father Kate & Miss Allen drank tea with us the first night. Soon as we find it convenient – Shall get a Single bed & bed stead for the Spare room Expect a man that owes William to make our cherry tables — Have a pine table in kitchen — Mrs. Emery (merchant's wife) sent us a stone jar of <*preserved*> dried and sugar plums. Mrs. Wirts (lawyer's wife) a jar of preserved carnation cherries. Mrs. Clark (lawyer's wife) preserved raspberries. — Your aff [*affectionate*] daughter & sister – kiss little Mary. I want to see her —

Dear Ralph,

Mary has written to so many of you, such a jumble & so many blots that I am afraid if I write to the same address, I would do likewise, so write to you. Expect that by this time you are very busy farming. We finished planting our corn last Saturday week it is nearly all up thought it did not come as well as usual. This spring has been very cool, have hardly had a week of warm weather yet. Fine season for grass, have 25 acres mowing that looks very fine all timothy except five acres, & that is very fine clover (small red) today I cut 3 spears not taking the very longest,

two of them measured ½ a yard long & the other 21 inches, fear that it will all fall down before it is fit to cut. Oats are growing finely, — wish that you could come on and see us this summer before your mowing commences.
The fly is in the wheat, — whether they will injure it much or not remains to be seen. They generally show their work before this time of the year, wheat is just now coming into head. How "the time flies in about three weeks we will be mowing our clover crops. Mary has an industrious fit and is sewing by candle light, 15 minutes of 9 oclock. That'll please Ma" Wont it? Fanny Prevost was married last Thursday morn and started immediately for Boston; on her return goes to her own house & housekeeping without delay. We received a little box of wedding cake and card, on Sunday last from the happy pair. Laura Kennard is not coming this spring. Remember me to all, joy along through life with some end in view and be happy as possible all the time, save one cake of that maple sugar for me and believe me as ever

W [*William*] Hill

Love to uncle, aunts & cousins — Will endeavor to write Aunt Eunice & family soon – as I promised to do — How is Matilda? When the beautiful boxes of cake arrived William said "this is aunt Norton like is it not"? We have radishes fit to pull and peas in blossom also potato tops six inches high in our own garden, and plenty of weeds. Have an acre of potatoes in the field just coming up and ½ an acre of pumpkins planted a week ago. Today have been white washing over house inside. Converted the top of Box (Yankee) into a table to wash dishes on under piazza the other day.

the same W. H. [*William Hill*]

Date 29 ''
Good Night

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[*Addressed to*]

Mr Ebenezer Burr
Norfolk
Litchfield County
Connecticut

Flemington, [*New Jersey*] Nov. 1, 1849.

Dear all of you

Before sending my last Mother could not tell me whether to send for yarn. She has now decided & I thought that the sooner you knew the better. She would like two lbs. of the white – wishes it three threaded, soft wool & not much coarser than this sample – would prefer it not any coarser — She would like 1 lb. of the colored – no finer than the sample & no lighter color – is not particular whether black or blue mixed – but wishes it dark – what I gave her washed lighter than this. Mother thinks that 1.$ per lb. was very reasonable (& cheap I believe) for the other & expects to give more for the white.

Beside my regular weeks mending – have mended the night cap I took home – a pair of drawers that were washed there – the chemise I brought from there – my trunk cover (quite a job of it) & two bits of old carpet. Mother & sisters are doing considerable sewing for me. Miss Dorotha Exton dined & spent the afternoon & evening with us yesterday — She set up some socks for William out of the yarn you gave me — My health continues good William is almost worn out with hard work – he has some chores in which Ralph could be of considerable assistance – such as feeding the beeves – milking a kicking heifer &c. However think the hurry will be over in two weeks – perhaps in less time — When orders for lead pots come they must execute them quickly or be in danger of loosing the custom[*er*]. Immediately on getting home I got Catharine a calico dress at 10 cts. [*cents*] yard – which softened her for a while — The effect is beginning to wear off – but I do not at all mind her occasional ill humor – would not like to attempt a change of help — Have given up the boy's room to her charge — The flannel is not thought right — & I intend it home excepting shawls — Why is not borax as good as white oak bark? I think it would be pleasanter & mother says it would be better — I want to hear about

little Abby [*Abigail E. Grant Burr*] – tell when Eddy [*Edward Grant*] takes the first step & how Nancy succeeds with Mary — Do not fail to apologise for my not calling at Uncle Norton's & Mr. Eldridge's. All are anxious that I do not exert myself too much & I do not. Am glad Ma had been no sicker before the last – fear she has been since – please be careful in diet &c. William thinks that a porter would not carry a trunk so far as from depot to the "Merchant's" – thinks perhaps the bill at the Merchant's will be only a dollar – they did not charge him but a dollar a piece for us – though they charged me alone 1 ¼ doll. William is so very fond of the maple sugar I wish Ralph would bring him three or four cakes more if you can spare them. I want to hear from you all — Kiss the children a thousand times – how plainly I see little Eddy reaching up his hands to be taken –

Affectionately your daughter & sister
Mary B. Hill

It is now between 8 & 9 in the evening — William has been writing his books until this moment & feels too tired to write in this – besides he has to take this to post tonight & wishes to be off & back again & to bed — So you will please excuse him this once. He s[ends?] love with myself.

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Flemington [*New Jersey*] Apr. 8, 1852

Dear all of you

We received your letter Tuesday which was the first we had heard of the delay of the Northern Light but went immediately to searching the papers & found it was so. Have not had any letter from Aretus Suppose you told him you had written. I came through all safe Carried the tin trunk to [Gust's?] Store in my hand & sent the other to the Western", [Gust?] went with me to see the Northern Light but it was so late we could not examine it that night. So we went up to the Western where I got a room had my trunk carried to it & eat Supper. [Gust?] staid with me till about eight when John came & we took a walk in the city going nowhere in particular because it was too late John & [Gust?] were both very kind to me both went home that night But there is no use in my writing all this for I expect to start for home next Monday. Am having a very pleasant time here have had my teeth filled which cost eight dollars Dr Dedrich would not have done more than one or two dollars worth without pay & I think I should rather have Dr Carroll do them for pay than Dr Dedrich without. Sam is fat & hearty the first thing that struck me when I first saw him was that he looked just like Eddy his eyes are so much like Eddy's you know & he is fatter than Eddy now. I have all my money changed into gold excepting five dollars There is no use in my writing any more I am going home so soon

Ralph E. Burr

Ralph intends to stay a day in New York & attend to your requests — His teeth were all fixed before receiving your letter — Am much obliged for all you sent us – it was very nice & acceptable — I will endeavor to write by Ralph

Good bye
Mary

I like my girl very well & think I had better keep her than to get Margaretha. I pay Ann 1.00.

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Flemington [*New Jersey*] Apr 28, 1852.

Dear all of you

Received a letter from you & one from Levi [*Levi Grant*] last night. Never was so disappointed or so glad as when I read Levi's letter, because from what you had written, I had made up my mind that he would probably stay at home & that I should have to go alone which I had decided to do if he staid. I cant feel afraid to go & if I was to stay it would be on your account & entirely against my wishes & unless I could feel differently from what I do now I should be in perfect misery all the time. Suppose you have got the letter Mary wrote when I was gone to

Trenton [*New Jersey*] stating she thought I would give up going if Levi did. We got the letter <*before*> the night before we started for Trenton [*New Jersey*] & I went out in the evening <*to*> & called on Lizzie Bonnell according to agreement & started for Trenton [*New Jersey*] early next morning so I had not much time to think of it before going, & did not say positive I would go alone, but after thinking of it I made up my mind I could not stay & so had better go, when I got home was sorry Mary had written such a letter to you fearing you might use it to influence Levi to stay, but when I read your letter it seemed to me you was trying to get him to stay before you got that letter. If you are not trying to make him stay why does Pa go about town & pick up all the discourageing news he can find from Elizur Dowd & Peter Curtiss & then go & tell Levi & send him to talk with them. I should think that among such a state of feeling as you represent Norfolk [*Connectictu*] as being in he would hear enough without any help. However I dont believe Levi can be kept unless you use that letter & make him believe that I will stay if he does, which is not the case, unless I change my mind greatly from what it is now. I had made up my mind to be contented & go alone if Levi does not. Will & I went up country about 30 miles Monday & back yesterday with horse & waggon It is time this was at the office & I can write but little more. It has been so rainy & wet that I have been able to do but little work still I have been busy about something. Never enjoyed myself better for the same length of time than I have since I have been here. You may think it strange just after leaving home & with so much to discourage me from going to Cal. [*California*] but it is like being in a new home here where they are all so kind to me. Shall go to N. York [*New York*] Monday, expecting to meet Levi there.

Ralph E. Burr

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[*Addressed to*]

Mr. Ebenezer Burr
Norfolk
Litchfield County
Connecticut

Sunday San Juan Del Sur [*Nicaragua*] June 13

Dear all of you

Believe my diareah [*diarrhea*] or Alim passages commenced about the time we were at Castillo. Did not have but one passage a day but that was very thin it caused me no pain or trouble only as I gradually grew weaker I paid no attention to it for a day or two as Dr Welch told me [exactly?] to live very plain which was all we wer doing at that time all we were eating was a little piece of the bread which came from Greytown & a little dried Beet, At Castillo my appetite had been & was then so poor & I had had so little change for so long a time & was getting so weak with a regular daily cangee of the bowels that I began to think that if I could have a meal of victuals it might do me good the price was one dollar a meal & I had just paid out 20 cts for two junk bottles of rice coffee. the fellow charged me 20 cts for one bottle but it was very strong & I got some more hot water & filled the two, & I had not paid out but 1.20 before since leaving N.Y. I thought of the drummer & the dollar & finally concluded that if a [dinner?] would do me any good I had better get it & so did dont know as it did me any good & I have been sorry that I spent that dollar. When the Director got Toro rapids I did not feel like travelling 3 miles & so went up in the [baggae?] boat Suppose I could have walked it but had rather ride at Virgins Bay I sucked the the juice of an orange with some of the ginger crackers & started for here on a mule was pretty tired & glad to lie on a bed, <*c*>found that Dr Pollard a Dr which Dr's Cockey & Rockwell advised us to employ if we needed any. He told me perhaps had better use the pills Dr Welch gave me which I did for a time but did not get better every thing that passed me was as thin as water. The Dr finally gave me something & I am better He has not given me any thing for sometime I have taken some of my pills & think the diareah [*diarrhea*] is checked, have not been very sick have been round every day & have been into the ocean to bathe almost morning when it did not rain. Have had a little rheumatism in my knees & a little in my shoulder the Dr's told me it would do me good to go in bathing & then rub myself until I got warm havent hardly any rheumatism today, Sunday 8 o clock The S.S. Lewis just arrived dont know when she will start probably in a day or

two, Monday 1/2 past 3 I went in bathing this morning & came to breakfast I never eat any thing but a little boiled rice & sugar & some plain wheat bread & drink clear green tea after breakfast [S.?] & I took our dirty clothes & started for where there had been a spring of water but it was dried. we found [salt] water in an old canoe in which [S.?] washed out the cracker [...] which I brought from Flemington & the handkerchief which was wrapped round the dried beef The S.S. Lewis is going tomorrow. I washed out my flannel shirt & towel & [S.?] washed his things we had some tubs & drew the water out of the well it is pretty warm though I would rather had some heat on a stove for my greasy woolen shirt had plenty of soap got it very clean. I have had but one passage today in fact I dont any day & it is not watery although it is just probably not as thick as it would be if I lived on heartier food. Shall have a change of food & air tomorrow when we get on boat. Shall have to pay 25 cts to put this into the express Dr Pollard gave me seven [papers?] of [powders?] to be taken one <...> hours & two messes of of liquid to be taken <...> half table spoonsful once in 4 hours he kept me in <...> 4 or 5 days & has given me all the advice I have asked <...> has charged me 1.50.
Tuesday morn Suppose the Lewis is going today I have been at this hotel two weeks & five days they charge 10 dol a week when you stay a whole week & 2 dol a day if you stay only part of a week. I paid 20 dol at the end of the 2 weeks & now expect to have to pay 10 dol more for the five days & the passengers all have to pay 2 dol to get carried on board the steamer After paying all this I shall have about 97 dol I have been so weak I could not write until I have & now my hand trembles so I can hardly write remember me to all friends Kate in particular. tell her I have not forgotten her but that I hope to have better health & a better place to write t[o] her I have had kiss all the little children for me a dozen times apiece, wish I was in Cal [*California*] with good health & plenty to do think I shall soon be there Dont know as I can tell you where to direct a letter to me in Cal [*California*] unless you send a word to me through Daniel we expect to go to him now Should be very glad to hear from you

Your aff [*affectionate*] Son & Brother
R. E. Burr [*Ralph E. Burr*]

Flemington [*New Jersey*] Friday Morn July 9, '52

Dear parents brother & sisters

We are all well as usual. Mon. evening – I wrote Thurs for Friday when I felt that I could not send the letter away that day — I wanted to read it more — Ralph dear brother is almost constantly in my thoughts — I hope for the best but try to be reconciled to whatever shall happen. Sam does not walk yet, though he seems strong enough to do so, he is a plump solid little thing — If you have good opportunity wish you would ask Dr. Welch how he ought fed now that he is a year old — whether water should be added to his milk & whether he should eat bread with it. I think of going home this summer or fall – go alone from New York & William come for me — visit from 3 to 4 weeks long — When would you prefer me to come. I may not go at all — it is not decided — business is very dull. Ralph took the money for the stocking yarn. Kiss the children for me — Is Eddy [*Edward Grant*] in pants yet.

aff. [*affectionately*] Mary B. Hill.

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Corte Maderia [*California*], Jan 8. 1854.

Dear Friends

You see I am in a new place. Ethan went up to the Point forepart Dec. for the purpose of coaxing me down here to farm it, & as I had been thinking of going to farming the first chance that presented itself he had no very hard work to get me started although I was as well situated as I should ever expect to be working for wages, & could have had the place long as I pleased. They hated to have me leave & said that if was not suited down here to come back & I should have my place again no matter who they had hired But I am thinking it will be more pleasant to work for myself, have my Sundays to myself & feel that I am a free man, than to be tied from 4 in the morning till eight & nine at night year in & year out for other people, even if I dont make quite as much money which depends upon circumstances. I am in hopes of course that I shall do as well if not better. Ethan & I have taken a place of Capt. Van [Armon?] the man Al Hart is building a

steamer in company with & of whom Al took his log job last year. The place consists of about two hundred acres well fenced & a snug little house which we occupy, about thirty acres have been ploughed & there is probably as much more that will do to plough. the remainder is covered with wild oats which makes the best of hay of which we can mow much as we please. Hay is now worth 50 dols. in the city a ton. it costs ten dollars to get it over from here. 4 weeks ago it was worth but twenty dollars a ton however. what twill be next year I know not. We do the work on the place & have half. Capt. finds team & seed & keeps the team. We commenced planting potatoes last Monday & ploughed & planted 5 acres & cut the seed last week the way we plant here is to drop a row in every third furrow & turn the next one on to it. we drop the pieces along about a foot apart. after the potatoes are all planted we take a drag & drag <*it*> the ground over to make it level & then let the potatoes grow till time to dig then take a plow & plough them out. Never touch a hoe to them. when it rains they say 'tis too [moldy] to hoe them & when it dont rain the grou[nd] will retain the moisture longer to have it perfectly level. We shall probably get in ten or twelve acres potatoes this year, & as much wheat as we can. There is a twelve acre lot ploughed ready for wheat which we intend to sow this week. The Capt had it ploughed before we came & it cost us nothing. We have bought 4 sows 12 hens & a rooster for $2 00 [&?] all the sows 45 each. the hens are worth two dollars each. are going to raise what pigs & chickens we can. got the hens home yesterday & they have laid 4 eggs ready <*dont*> It is about 12 miles across the bay to San Frisco. [*San Francisco, California*] Ethan went over week before last and bought some provisions & a cook stove paid 18 dols for a nice little stove & furniture, $16 for a barrel of as good flour as I ever saw $12 for 100 lbs butter, very good, 8 cts for beans $25 for a barrel pork &c &c &c. They seem mighty cheap to me after being in the mountains. but not to you I suppose except the butter. The pork & butter were bought at auction where part of a ships cargo has to be sold to pay freight round the horn.
Miles Hart arrived at San Frisco [*San Francisco, California*] the 20th Dec & gave me your letter of which I was very glad it being the first I had recd [*received*] from home since March [last?] I can get my letters now right from the Post Office in San Francisco as many as you will have the goodness to send. Am glad you farmers are having such a good time at home Am also glad that Pa has got a horse that suits him at last. If Erastus wants to kill himself why dont he take some easier way for doing it than by hard work I should think it would be the hardest way in the world. You tell about Mary & Eddies going to school but I always think of them just as they were when I left & cant for my life make them look any different, although I know there is & will be still more before I see them again. There has been scarcely no rain here this winter expect it will come in March. So there is another little play thing for me at home is there. wish I could see her.
15th Meant to have finished this last Sunday but Miles Hart & others came in, & I have neglected & forgotten it since So it will not go till next mail.

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Point Defiance. Cal. [*California*] Jan 2, 1853.

Dear Friends,

How long it has been since I have written I know not, when I have no letters to answer & no one to push me up to write you will not wonder that I do not write often. We have not received a letter yet since we started from home excepting those I got from Daniel & Ethan in San Francisco [*California*]. I do not know where Daniel & Marcus are or any one else that I ever [knew?] before I came here, excepting Levi & he is on the other side of the table writing home. Le [*Levi*]] has had a hard time of it lately he has had the diarrhea for six weeks so that he has not been able to earn any thing & has been paying 12 dollars a week for board, he has boarded here at the house. I am at work at. Don't know as I have ever told you what kind of a family I am living with. Am working for the firm of Wood & Clark. Mr Wood is about 48 or 50 has a wife & three daughters & one son here two of the daughters are married the other one is about ten years old & a very pretty little girl. David the son is 20. Mr Clark is about 30 not married. They were all from Virginia formerly & moved from there to Missouri & from there here they are none of them very highly educated, but are moneymakers & I expect have made a good deal here. They have between 20 & 30 horses & mules hauling flour & provisions from Sac. City [*Sacramento, California*] here. Flour is 22cts in Sac. City [*Sacramento, California*] & they sell here for 50 cts

but the roads are very muddy now in the summer when the roads are good they charge 5 cts a pound for hauling. We have had more rain this far this winter than was ever known before. Last Friday the rivers were higher than they have been seen before, they were all of 30 feet above low water mark. [Some?] of a bridge was washed away about a mile up the river and an abutment to one which Wood & Clark are building was carried off. The abutment did not cost less than 2000 dollars Le [*Levi*] was over the river at the time the bridge went off & did not get back until today. They fixed up an old canoe to cross people in it eight men got into it & attempted to cross this morning but there were so many in the boat & the current was so swift that before they got across it ended the boat round in spite of all they could do & carried it down stream, two of the men jumped out soon as they saw the boat was going & got ashore, the rest staid in the canoe which went down about 60 rods turned over three of them hung to the canoe & floated down stream about half a mile when one caught some bushes & was got out alive by Mr Wood & Levi & two or three others the other five are in the river yet. Le [*Levi*] ran with all his might to get into the boat to cross but a minute too late & probably saved his life by it. There were twenty or thirty men who saw the whole affair but could not save them. The river runs very swiftly. Le [*Levi*] is giving an account of the small pox which has been here so I will say nothing about it excepting that I have not had the varioloid yet & don't expect to have it very hard if at all, for I have been vaccinated three times with good matter which took on others but has not taken on me, & if that wont take on me the small pox wont be apt to. I have 4 or 5 good scars on my arms. Le [*Levi*] & I sent to the City by David to get some bills of exchange to send home which he brought home tonight, & is going back to the City in the morning so we are writing tonight expecting to send one of the bills in this tomorrow & shall keep one. Le [*Levi*] has two bills & I have two & they keep one of each at the exchange office & in case both these are lost we can get the other. My bill is to the amount 250 dollars payable to Pa at the American Exchange Bank, New York. Le [*Levi*] is going to send one hundred & fifty I believe. I might send another hundred now if I had the bills, but guess I shant send any more till I hear from this or from you in some way. Believe the note which I gave Pa was for 240 dollars – think this $250 will pay that. You may burn that note or do as you please with it, so as I never see or heard from it again. I have more money now that I had when I started from home, & if I can make as much between this & the first of April as I could have made in a year at home I shant have lost anything this year, & don't know any reason now why I shant live here all winter. I think just as much of that — Life Insurance business as I did when at home & no more you can do as you please about keeping up that policy I never expect to pay any insurance on it till I am making money faster than I am now.
Never had better health in my life than I have for the past three months, never was so heavy as at present. Was advised by a man the other day to use tobacco to keep me from being so fleshy. I told him that so long as I had good health enough to keep fleshy I did not think I should take poison to get thin
We have to pay three percent on the money to get bills of exchange besides 1 ½ percent to David for getting them. So you see this 250 costs me 261,25

Hope I shall get a letter from you before long

R. E. Burr [*Ralph E. Burr*]

Will you please write soon as you receive this Direct to Marysville [*Callifornia*] as usual,

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Point Defiance [*California*], July 24, 1853,

Dear Pa & Ma

Have not written home before in a long time for I have no time to write excepting after nine or ten at night & you know I am too fond of sleeping to stay up often after that time especially when I am obliged to be up at four in the morning. I have a bill of exchange or two rather, one of which I am going to send home in this, & should like to have you put it to drawing interest somewhere where it will be safe I have something of an idea the savings bank would be a

good place but don't know as it is the best. Le [*Levi Grant*] is going to send the same amount two hundred to his Father
Suppose you all think at home we ought to get rich faster than this.
Every 26 days I earn 80 dollars this summer & have not lost a day since I commenced a little over nine months ago, you can judge whether I have had good health or not. Never have been better that length of time in my life, believe I have felt a little bit of the rheumatism once or twice but not enough so I should have thought anything about it if I had not known what it was. Have not rec'd [*received*] any letters from the states since yours dated Feb 20. just after you rec'd my other bill, recd one from Ethan some time since mailed March 23, & one from Daniel about a week ago mailed at Parks Bar [*California*] about 16 miles from there Apr 20. There was nothing in it that he was well & had been into the mountains prospecting for timber to make shingles & not finding it as promising as he expected was hesitating whether to go back or not, did not think they would do anything with their river claims this summer Marcus was at Ousleys Bar unwell with chills. Don't know where either of them are now
There is a young fellow [tell?] Mary by the name of William Webster from Maryland who corresponds with Kate Kennard Sister of Laura the one Mary corresponds with says she has heard Laura speak of Mary & has seen some of her letters. His Father is one of the riches men in Md. [*Maryland*] he has a great deal to say about his family, was telling me one day about his sprees at home, & spoke of going over to Dr. Kennards to see Kate & upon [embarking?] found she was Laura's sister. Billy is a real smart fellow is mining here don't think he has made much. Pa needn't keep Jim on my account don't suppose I should care any more about him than any other horse now. Suppose Eddie is quite a boy by this time & Mary is toddling up to Warren's to school. How do Uncle Cressey's people manage their concerns who lives up town & who over west? Le [*Levi*] says he is going home next spring. If I have my health think I shant go with him 'twould be too small potatoes to work on a farm by the month at 12 dollars a month, although I sometimes think I would like to be at home if I did not make any more in a year than I do here in a month, for I could see my friends there & not feel as though I was losing five dollars every day I did not work. Will try to write sooner next time

R. [*Ralph*] E. Burr

[*in pencil*:] Note given March 29, 1852
Paid $20 May 26 '52
Jan. 28 paid 26 dolls. 1853.

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Point Defiance [*California*], Sept 11, 1853.

Dear Pa & all

As I came over to camp to go to bed found Le [*Levi*] writing a letter home to send a bill of Exchange in & I have spoken to Mr Wood who says he will get me one when he goes to the city tomorrow & put it in this & send home don't know whether for two to three hundred yet just as he has money to spare.

Le [*Levi*] & I both sent two hundred each about a month since. Have not had a letter from the states since early in the spring, hope you get mine more regular. Have not heard from Daniel or any of the boys this summer. Am still at the same work as ever day in & day out regular as they come & am well & hearty I would give almost any price for a letter from you, want to know what you think about my coming out here & making a <u>cook</u> of myself, suppose it sound mighty small to you, As I can't hear from you I imagine every thing goes on the same as ever, except Eddie wears pants like <u>any man</u> Mary goes to school Sam runs around a real pet of a plaything & Abbie [*Abigail E. Grant Burr*]
is a perfect little woman if she has staid with "Gramma Grant" Wouldn't I turn myself loose if I was among them all. Cant write much now will try & make out a letter of news before long, remember me to all friends if they complain that I do not write tell them I am at work, & it is mighty dry business writing when you can hardly expect to get an answer

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Corte Madeira [*California*], May 28, 1854.

Dear Parents

Have most joyfully recd. [*received*] some letters from home once more, Yours of March 25th & Will's mailed Apr 2nd, with one from [K?]ate, & one from Le [*Levi*] at his ranch near Sacramento reached me last Monday evening. Think I shall be able to get all the letters that come to San Francisco for me.

Am sorry to hear of Pa's poor health hope he will not be troubled with sick headache long, I sent a letter to Will last mail telling him all about our farming &c. don't expect to make much here every thing is cheap as you hear flour 12 dols barrel old potatoes 12 1/2 A bushel in town, costs three times that to get them there, new ones are worth 3 cts pound now, not many large enough to dig, ours are not

Can tell when we get through whether we make or lose not now. We have cut & sold about 40 cords wood pay 1.50 for it standing & sell it for 7,00 costs nearly .50 cts cord for team to haul it so we clear $5,00 cord have also burnt a pit of coal, have 378 sacks nearly 2 bushels in sack, expect to get six bit or a dollar sack next fall its only worth from 4 to 6 bits now, sell it in the city where they […] it to cook with &c. Levi Johnson was here & helped us a little about burning it, he is not dead nor likely to be though he might as well be for all the good he will ever do any one, he is a drunken worthless fellow, he came here first Feb. grunting & whining round pretending to be sick with only 6 1/4 ds telling over his hard luck (all of which was caused by his drinking) & tried to borrow money of Ethan to go home with but E. [*Ethan*] had none, he then wanted all of us fellows from that part to each lend him a little, but we knew 'twas the same as giving & did not feel disposed to do it, so he had to go to work lived here with us & burnt a little coal pit & chopped a little wood with our help & by the first of this month had about $75 clear & went to town to go home Ethan went with him to help him off, he could have bought a ticket the Nicanager route for $50 which would have left him 25 in N.Y. [*New York*] but he would not go, said he wanted more money, expect wanted Ethan to give him some more, but 25 is just as good as 2500 for him he would spree it away on the boat home, he has been over 200 dols expense & Eat. In this country now in one way & another, the last we heard of him he had started for Humbolts bay in Oregon & I hope it is the last we shall,

That piece of land of Mr Pendletons is just what I have thought a hundred times I would like to have added to ours but never expected there would be a chance to get it without the <u>lower meadow</u> too, if I was to have our farm I should take that by all means. I know it seems bad for me to be out here & leave Pa & Ma alone, if I had money enough to go home & take the farm would like to do it, & live with you, but I can never think of going there to work for 12, 15 or even 20 dollars a month to pay for it, nor would I want to buy it,& 80 to work on it to pay for it, & give any great price, if I can get money enough here to satisfy you for the farm before I get off the notion of going home, shall like to go & have the farm, & that of Mr Pendeltons with it, If you want to buy that land you can take what money I have sent home to pay with & give me your note, & when I get some more will send it along till 'tis paid for, & then if I ever have the farm you will have the use of the land for the interest of, the money & if I shouldn't have it should want the money & interest of course. We are on a creek about a mile from San Francisco Bay, there are a double of packet boats one of which goes from here to town each day & returns the next fare 2 dols each way Hart & Capt [Vandrum?] had a steamer running here to town this winter but it did not pay & Hart has sold out, must have lost considerable

Don't know how much on the boat. We have, been reckoning up to day how much Hart is probably worth & make out that he cant be worth anything in this country, if he has 8,000 at interest at home as he says he has, he is probably worth

That clear, we don't <u>know</u> for certain but have good reason to think so. we are in the village of Corte Madeira [*California*] there are two boarding [houses?] & [seven?] dwelling houses besides ours

Is my life insured yet?

I never had better health such a thing as cold or cough is not known here

There are some Indians around not but a few & plenty of Grizzlies though we can never get sight of one. The boys hunted for them considerable this winter but could see none although fresh tracks were plenty, they are harder to get near than [boxes?].
I have never seen one yet. There are five women in this village all married bloody Irish Hart has a river claim & is […] this summer
Levi has always been an honest, timid, true hearted friend to me & as good a fellow as I would wish to come here with.
Ethan is the same though a little inclined to take things [aisey?]. Tomorrow I shall be your 23 your old.

R. E. Burr [*Ralph E. Burr*]

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