My Dear Mother

I feel great pleasure in again attempting to write to you. I received your last letter dated the 20th January along with those from my brothers and sisters, the day before yesterday. You will therefore see that I do not lose much time in framing a reply. I find it the best to answer your letters at once; for till I do so I am always writing in my mind. I wrote to John and Edward yesterday, and you will no doubt be expecting a letter from me yourself; however I am going to let you have one and shall send them all together next Tuesday as that is as early as they can leave here. I received the letter you sent by Ann, she sent it thro' the Post Office, and I expect I got all the articles you sent me. They were brought out by Jane. There was 2 prs Drawers 2 prs Cotton Sox, 4 Silk Hdkfs 1 stock and a vest, & 2 flannel wastcoates. I do not remember that there was anything besides. For all these things I am truly grateful to you, they have all been very useful. I shall soon begin to think about receiving my parcel by Mr Waller. You must not hurt yourselves in any way by thinking about me, as while I have health I have no fear but I shall get along in one way or another. I am never oppressed by thinking that I shall come to want, but I am always glad to receive your presents when I think they do not cost you much. I had a letter about two weeks ago from Barz, but it was written in November. I judge it had been in the state of New York as the address was not very plain. How particular people ought to be in directing a letter; what trouble and pain it may save. I thought very hard of him, because I concluded he had not wrote to me, and he probably thought the same of me. I have not heard from Ann very lately, I have been expecting a letter for
some weeks I shall probably write to her this week. I do not know that I shall be able to go and see her till I go to Conference as I shall have to go that way. I intended to go this spring but now think I shall not be able. I purpose going to Jane's sometime in June. When I received their letter I-intended [sic] I thought I would go at once, but on second thought considered it would hardly be prudent to take such a journey at this season. It is not much short of four hundred miles there and back, and much of the way across cold and bleak prairies, with little or no track the snow drifiting very much on them. In winter an English moor gives you a very good idea of these extensive tracts of land; but in summer they are bright and beautiful as perpetual spring. I want to see both Jane and Ann, and as I go thro' Geneva to Chicago where Conference sits, it will be best for me to go into Grat [sic] county first. Three or four months soon pass away, it appears to me that time never flew more rapidly, than it has for the last two years. We shall soon be to judgment brought by it. O our God help us to live for that important day! You say you hope Jane and B attend some place of worship. They did when I left and I expect do yet. There is preaching every other Sabbath about half a mile from their house, or it may be a mile, it is the nearest house to theirs. If I had not come out here I believe I should have been on that circuit, but I trust I am in my proper place. I should rather have been nearer to them for this year at least, but I do not repine. I have been very comfortable here so far. I was some astonished when I heard of the kind of will both my Grandfather and Uncle made. I am inclined to think they have both been influenced to act so unjustly. For unjust the conduct does appear to me to be. It may be said that a man has a right to do as he will with his own. Allowing this to be true, we will ask if his relatives have not the first claim to his property,
this must be granted. And those who stand in the same relation have an equal claim and an equal right. Your children stand in the same relation to both that my Uncle Franks' do, and are equally entitled to notice. If I should claim, or desire, or receive more of your property than each of my Sisters, I should be so far unjust. Perhaps because my name is Dinsdale I am not entitled to anything, be it so, I shall not be sorry to think that those who have received are more worthy of it than I am. But I am willing for my fathers sake to retain the name and be as I am. I desire it may be a talent in the hands of those who have been favored that shall be rewarded at the Lords coming. I shall have one less to answer for and so will you. We will however let their ashes rest in peace and continue to put our trust in God who is after all our best friend. Is it possible that my coming to America could cause my uncle to forget you, if so he wanted an excuse and would be glad of it. But why should this prevent him leaving you something to be received annually during your life and then to revert to his heirs. And why should it cause him to neglect my Aunt Barritt. And did he not know that most of my cousins talked about and wished to come here? Would it have been right for me to have remained at Askrigg for fear of giving offence? No man will find me crouching to him for anything he has, however much he I may need it. I am willing to abase myself before God but not before any man. I am thankful to feel that I do not covet one atom of the property that has been left. Tho I must say I should have been better satisfied if your claims and those of my Aunt had been respected. I should have liked you to have received what you are entitled to as relations but no more. When the wills were made was there no one to suggest the injustice of the course? My Grandfathers has been greatly altered since I left. If there is blame I should not attach it to the dead but the living; and
if so hope they will repent and obtain mercy. I think if there had only been twenty shillings left there ought to have been a just and equal distribution. It is not the sum but the principle I find fault with. I think however you will enjoy your minds as well as the rest. Let me desire you and my brothers and sisters not to quarrel with or think hard of any one. Be determined not to allow your tempers to be unruffled; or even say a word to or about any one that would pain you on reflection. Do not let us act wrong because others have. I should be exceedingly pained to learn that there is war in the family and that you have in any way caused it. But I am pleased to learn that you avoid contention. Continue to do so. Pray much and watch thereunto. When you want help or consolation and peace of mind go to God who will bless you abundantly; and his blessing is worth a ten thousand worlds.

You enquire about Mr Robinsons son. I do not know that I have ever seen him, and since I mentioned him before I have not heard of him. I was told he was residing near Galena, I asked different persons who live there and in the neighbourhood but could not learn anything about him. I have never resided very near to that place and have not had a very good opportunity to make him out. Did he not send his address when he wrote? I may at Conference have an opportunity to learn something about him. I will try to bear him in mind. Edwd tells me you are knitting for me. When shall I repay you? The Lord help me to be thankful. It strikes me if you have time you might knit me 2 or 3 shirts of fine wool with long sleeves, and a little longer than the flannel ones I wear. In winter I need warm clothing as you know. And if you had them ready you might have a chance in a year or two to send them. But do not send them by any one. Know who the person is and what part of America he is coming to. But I only make this request in case you
can readily procure the Lbs wool and have time. 

This is a beautiful day. 
I have not given up the hope of seeing you once more on earth. In a year or two I may pay you a visit. I am so used to travel that journeying about is no trouble to me. You will not fail to write to me whenever you have opportunity. Give my love to Uncle and Aunt Barritt. 
I am looking for a letter from them. 
My love to all. Affy yours ever M.D. 

I sometimes think my health will be apt to give way, at times I feel my chest to be sore; if I take cold I have a cough in a morning; and at times after the labors of the Sabbath I am unable to sleep except a little during the night. But my health is and has been very good, I am I think about as well as ever I have been, my appetite is very good. Tho' there has been very much sickness all thro' the country I have been well. I fancy I have been specially favored in this respect, for I appear to suffer less than other people. 
Dorothy thinks I enjoy myself amongst the wild Indians. I am never with them except when I choose to go. But I am very glad I have had the opportunity of seeing them both in their wild and civilized state. I trust it has been of benefit to me in different respects. They are now making sugar in this neighbourhood from the Maple tree. I shall probably go and see them in their sweet employment. The sugar they make very much resembles the darkest colored East India. Molasses made from the maple tree is the best I have ever tasted. 
I sometimes think my letters will tire you all out. But when I begin to write there appears to be no limit except the bounds of my paper. For my part I should not care if your letters took me a month to read, the longer they are the better I like them. My thoughts are often at
Askrigg I should much like to see it once again, it will ever be dear to me, more so than any other place on the earth. I should like you to write to me at least once a month, or as often as convenient. Tell me about the meetings and preachers.

Henry Waistell I should think has now paid you for the goods he had in his time of need. I cannot but think the Lord has especially blessed & supported us as a family or we must have been crushed by the treatment we have at different times met with, from different persons. I cannot but adore him for his kindness in this respect. He has given us to see that we have him to depend upon and him only. I am satisfied that dishonesty of every kind is one of the basest of crimes. God detests it and will reward it.

Monday 22nd March 1847

I am now going to mail this letter. Yesterday I preached three times, with comfort to myself and I trust profit to the people. For three days the snow has been going pleasantly and gently; in several places the ground is bare. The nights are frosty. Last friday night we had slight rain.