Eau Claire, Mar 25th, 1863

Dear Brother

We read yours in due season & were glad to hear that you are comfortable. As I am laid up with a lame knee, I thought I would help Lucy write a little. My health has been good this winter untill about 10 days ago. I had been at work for some weeks about 1½ mile from home & the long walk & going with wet feet some brot on my lameness, but it is recovering & I hope in a few days to be able to work again.

We have got the old machine worked over & renovated so that I guess it will run quite well awhile. I still work at the Carpenter & Joiner work, but I hardly know how business is going to be the coming season. But the prospect looks quite favorable for a plenty of work; money is more plenty here, & every thing lively. But our national affairs are in such an unsettled state, & still some fears of more trouble from the Indians that we cant make safe calculations for the future.

I expect wages here this season will be $1.75 to 2.00 per day and Board ourselves (last season 1.50). I may possibly sell our house here in the Village, & build on my land & go to farming. I have 40 acres 1½ miles out, ½ improved but have no team & shall not go to farming until I have one of my own. Farming will be good business certainly as long as the war lasts. We have had a wonderful mild, pleasant winter, but little snow & that is about all gone now & I think the frost will soon be out of the ground.

War is a terible scourge to any people, however well it may be conducted & by whatever party. Every war has had it opposers, we cannot all see alike and I hope & pray this war
may soon cease.

Yours truly,    D. S. Hastings

Dear Brother & Sister.

I think that my excuse for not writing sooner is a very good one so I will give it. We have been having a very sickly time here, and I have spent nearly every leisure moment in visiting, and trying to do something for the sick. There has been more sickness and deaths in the last six months in this place than in all the time we have been here before. Fevers, measles and dipthera have prevailed, one may lost all of his children (three in number) within ten days, another man lost his wife and two children in less than two weeks. Some days there were two funerals a day. I never saw such a time. The sickness is now abating considerable, I do not know of but two now who are very sick, both children. One of them probably will not live untill morning, the other they have some hopes of yet.

March 28    The other day while writing to you I had company come in. Of course this sheet had to be laid by, and have not untill now found time to finish it up. Smead is some better but gains slowly. My health continues quite good for me.

You say Charlotte E and Charles are teaching school. I cannot realize that they have grown up and become teachers. Oh how strange the past seems almost like a dream. I sometimes get almost lost when thinking of the home of my childhood, and the loved ones that were there, and of the changes that have taken place since I left. Brother I often think of you left there in old Mass as you are, the last one of our family. You
must feel sad and lonely. I know but there is one comfort for you yet, you can visit the graves of both Father, Mother, two brother and two sisters. None the rest of us can do so much as visit the grave of one. I often think it would be pleasant to go back and make a visit, but oh how sad it would seem to meet so few of those whom I have known. Probably I shall never do it. Well my sheet is full, but I have not said one half I would like too, but this must suffice for this time. My love to all. You do not how it makes our mouths water for some of your apples when you write about them. Perhaps we will send for some next fall. Write often. Lucy A H