Eau Claire, Apr 9th/63

Dear Brother,

It seems a long time since I have heard from you, hope none of you are sick. My health has been good all winter. I think it has been better than it has before since we came west. I do feel truly thankful for it. Mr. Hastings has been well as usual except two weeks was laid up with inflammatory rheumatism, is now quite well.

There has been much sickness and a great many deaths, mostly children. I think there has been more sickness and deaths in this place the last six months than in all the time we have lived here before. Fevers, measles and diphthera have been the prevailing diseases. One man lost all his children (three in number) within ten days; another man lost his wife and two children within two weeks. Sometimes we have had two funerals in a day. The sickness is gradually abating and I trust will soon disappear. We have had a very mild open winter; our Physicians think that has been one cause of the sickness. Spring bids fair for farmers, the frost is nearly all out of the ground and they will soon commence work.

The first boat of the season came up the Chippewa river to this place the third of this month which is earlier than usual. We expect soon to have a railroad through this place to St. Paul. It would seem pleasant indeed to hear the whistle once more and see the cars come rushing on. It would be a great help to the place if we do get it, and I think there is not much doubt but what we shall.

The Indians near us are still very peaceable, but in Minnesota the people are expecting more trouble with them soon unless government prevents. We often think and speak of you and other friends, it would be gratifying indeed to see you, but I suppose you think it too much of a journey to come out here, so we must be contented with hearing from you. Carrie has not answered my last letter as yet. I suppose she is still in Philadelphia. Remember us to all your family and all others who may enquire.

Yours with affection       L A Hastings