Checked with Alice Smith
H. M.

[From Rev. Matthew Dinsdale Papers.] (For Magazine, perhaps December.]

Winnebago Lake Saturday 17th Oct 1846

Our first quarterly meeting for the present year commenced to day. The Presiding Elder being absent, I had to transact the business in connection with the official members. We have two Local Preachers, three Leaders and four Stewards.

Sunday 18th. The duties of the sanctuary had to be performed by me and the Local Brethren as the Elder was still absant, and we were disappointed of a substitute he expected would come--The Lord was with us.

Monday 19th. Wrote to Bar and Jane and M. Wasley. In the afternoon came across the River on the ferry boat. Two horses and my own and a yoke of oxen were on which made quite a load. But we all got over safe. On going to the Post Office met an Indian who was drunk. Such a sight I do not wish to see again. He could hardly stand, and appeared to have a bag of potatoes on his back. His long hair shook about with his staggering, which with his blackened and stupid looking face made him a frightful object. On coming up to him he put out a long red tongue and made his face still more ugly by distorting it. On returning I again met him when he tried to whistle. There are several Indians about here at this time. They are on their way to receive their annual payment from the government.

Thursday 22nd A cold clear morning, we had a hard frost during the night. The sun shining warm about 11 oclock I bathed in the Lake.

Since I came here I have frequently practiced this & believe it has been of great benefit to me in the afternoon I rode about eight miles and visited a few families.

Friday 23rd-- There are indications that our Indian Summer is going to visit us. I have noticed about the end of Autumn in this country that we shall have a few days of warm smoky weather and after them a ~~week~~ or ten days of weather when frost and cold prevail and not infrequently ~~severe~~ severe storms. This year we have had 3 or 4 weeks of unsettled weather--rain, cold, and frost intermixed. After that comes the Indian summer as it is called which lasts two three or four weeks. And then our winter sets in and reigns, in strength and beauty, giving health to the body and vigor to the mind.

Saturday 24th-- This day I sent to the Post Office at Oshkosh hoping to receive letters or papers from home, forwarded from Potosi. Is it possible there is nothing for me at Potosi? I have received nothing from home since Mr. Barrett letter telling me of the death of grandfather and that was wrote in June, over four months ago. If my friends knew my feelings when I expect letters and papers they would try to take care I should have no disappointment. But it may be that there is something for me at the office at Potosi. I hope so. Hasten hither welcome messengers.'

Sunday 25th-- On my way to my afternoon appointment heard the awful growling of distant thunder, which gradually drew nearer, when about 6 o'clock it burst out in a loud storm. The electric fluid was very vivid for a moment giving to the world noonday glare, and then allowing the darkness to envelop it again. Four fires were to be seen

thro the trees at a little distance which added interest to the scene. The rain soon extinguished them.

Monday morning October 26th. In consequence of rain I have not been able to return home I am now writing in a log cabin about 1/2 a mile from the house where I preached and remained all night. Outside the day is dark, the rain falling fast, my pony is tied to a log with a blanket over him, there being no stable for him to creep into. The family abode is open to the roof, and from the roof in places to the sky allowing the breeze to fan you and the rain to sprinkle you now and then. For a floor the half is solid earth, the other half where the beds are, solid plank. There are several children and one stranger besides myself and the host and hostess. So our room is in turns or all at once used for every purpose. Nursery, eating room, study, &c, &c. The goodwife is baking upon the table where I now write, so if you cannot read you will see the need of being lenient. This is a sample of our

Tuesday 26th. I am now at the house I call my home I had wrote so far when I had to give up my right to the table, that it might be employed for a better use, viz. dinner. I was going to say the above is a sample of the way some get along in this newly settled country. But I wish you to understand the family I have introduced you to are content and have plenty of provisions. This is the way people move along at first. Tho' most of the families are better <u>fixed</u> than the above named.

On my way home I called in the afternoon at a friends, & saw a family which had just arrived from Illinois; father and mother and seven children, the oldest appeared to be 9 or 10 years of age. They

had travelled three hundred miles in a covered waggon drawn by oxen and had been two weeks on the road. I enquired if the father had been out before to see the country. His wife said No! But he had talked with several persons who had seen it. And from their statements, he had come to find a new home. He was then out searching for a location. Is this not faith and works? For about two miles I rode in a shower, the first rain I have been exposed to since last spring.

This morning a little snow fell, the first we have had this fall. This evening I went about three miles to Preach at a new settlement. The people who were present were very attentive.

Wednesday 28th. At the house where I held the meeting last night Tho' the family are not Methodists they are very kind. For breakfast had grouse, no great rarity in this country. A young man took his rifle out just after breakfast and in about half an hour brought in a brace. He said he was going out every morning to kill as many as would serve for the day, and that would not take him long. A good marksman need purchase very little meat. But it is not well to hunt much as other duties are thereby neglected.

Tuesday 3rd. Nov.

I have this morning been thinking, as I often do, about home. I looked over some of the letters I have from time to time received. Last Saturday I thought I should surely have either letters or papers from Askrigg. But none came. I did not fret or feel impatient as I sometimes have done. I hope I am learning to live more upon God, and not expect or desire enjoyment from any earthly source. Or rather I would say, having the fountain of living waters to go to, when I apply

to an earthly cistern and find it empty, I do not feel troubled, tho I do desire the pleasure of communing with absent friends.

Tuesday Nov 17th. For about a week we have had dull cloudy weather and some rain. I have been reminded of an English November. This kind of weather is not common here, being mostly bright and clear. But upon the whole we have had a very pleasant fall. Fresh emigrants are coming very fast, family after family, team after team. Still there is room; if the people only flocked to Christ to find a resting place for the soul as anxiously as they press into a new county to find rest for the body how delightful the spectacle would be.

On Thursday the 29th of last month, I travelled twenty miles north to see the tribe of Menominee Indians as they were collected together for the purpose of receiving their annual payment from the United States government. This payment is made to them for land they have sold to government. It is to be made every year till they are paid up. This year they would receive about twenty five thousand Dollars in cash and a few hundred Dollars in provisions. After having sold a very extensive and beautiful tract of country, they still possess an immense quantity of very valuable land the north east point of which is about twelve miles from Winnebago Lake. Would they only cultivate it there is enough to make every one of them wealthy. I was told that some of the best pine to be seen in America grows on their land. The tribe now consists of about twenty five hundred persons, and is I am informed decreasing fast every year. It appears to me that the Indian race is doomed to utter extirpation. This I think is a judgment from God in consequence

of their thriftless idle habits and the debasing and demoralizing influence of their indolence. The Almighty designed the Earth to be cultivated, the Indians as a general thing will not do this, consequently they are removed by Heaven, that another race may occupy. In this God is righteous, as it cannot matter what race of mankind inhabits the Earth so long as the Divine purposes are accomplished. But the Indian tribes ought to have,(and must have, if we do our duty) our sympathies & prayers, and Christian labors. I feel for them in kind tho not in the same degree as Christ felt for the Jews when he lamented and wept over their city.

You may be sure I felt some interest in the prospect of seeing the Menominee's on this interesting occasion as the whole tribe is only together once a year. And as I thought I should probably not have another opportunity I took the trouble to go. The payment ground is on their own land quite at a distance from any white settlers, and well suited to such an occasion. It is on the shore of a Lake several miles long and three or four wide, having a very pleasant sandy beach. I started from Oshkosh in a waggon about 10 o'clock A. M. travelled that way 13 miles till we came to Wolf River which had to be crossed in a canoe the rest of the distance I walked along an Indian trail thro' tall timber in company with a Doctor, a Brothertown Indian a member of our church, and another person. We reached the ground about 7 P.M. I took supper at a provision tent kept by the aforementioned Brothertown and allow me to say that a better table than he set I have seldom sat down to. As I could not see much that night and not liking to sleep on the ground in a tent, I went to a steam boat which was anchored at a short distance,

and had a comfortable sleeping place. I must tell you that I went to the boat in a canoe made out of a pine tree, which was paddled there by a Yorkshireman from Leeds. I expected every moment to be turned into the water as my countryman was a little raw at using a paddle to move and guide a canoe. However we reached our lodging place without having to pass thro fire and water. Next morning I returned on shore after breakfast. I went to the concil room first thing where I was informed the chiefs of the tribe were to meet the government agent. About 9 oclock the chiefs one after another assembled, tho they appeared in no hurry. On entering each one shook hands with the agent and then took his seat on the floor. Oshkosh (brave man) the head chief sat first. I noticed they all appeared in good humor during the conference that took place and frequently smoked using their tomahawks as pipes, which are made to answer a double and opposite purpose to kill and make alive. The Agent had to bring before them some complaints made by some of the white settlers, and ask for damages for property stolen or injured by some of the tribe. He did not say they were to pay the claimants but brought each case with its testimony before them for their own decision. Some claims they allowed and some they did not. The agent cannot compel them to act against their wish, but if he thinks they wish to be unjust in any matter he can sent particulars to Washington for the President's adjudication. The Agent also heard their complaints against the whites. The headchief was the speaker. He had a few complaints to make. One of their blacksmiths had not attended to his duties. Some Mormons had erected several saw mills on their land and some white people were cutting some of their timber. These were the principal complaints the

Indians had to make. I was very much interested with this interview between the government and the Indians. I became better acquainted with the mode of dealing of one and the character and state of the other. Imagine to yourself a temporary house made of boards nailed to posts with a roof of the same kind, dimensions about 18 feet by 22. In the centre was a stove In one corner against the only window sits at a table covered with paper &c. the Agent and his Secretary, beneath the table stood several kegs filled with money (silver) facing the stove forming a half circle sat the chiefs on the floor cross legged in turns smoking, talking, and laughing behind them stood or sat other Indians as lookers on. Along with others who felt some interest in "Indian affairs" you might have seen your humble servant stretched in Western as well as Eastern fashion upon a mat spread over bed clothes, listening, looking, and thinking. The head chief appears to be about 45 years old, he is a little below the middle size, spare of flesh, but with a good frame and is evidently an active man. He appears to be a good and fluent speaker. He always looks grave and thoughtful, I do not remember to have seen a smile play over his broad and strong featured face. The Indians' dress as to the fashion of it is similar to that of the Scotch soldier the material being different, the upper garment is generally made of printed callico the lower of buck skin, and a blanket is always worn over all. In the article of dress I discovered no difference between the chiefs and others. Some wear ornaments on ther head's & person's but they are not distinctive of rank. But frequently of wealth, for an Indian--if he is vain--and who is not? will carry all his treasure on his body. Some of the women wear very expensive and highly ornamented apparel. I took the pains to go thro this temporary town which I

suppose is over a mile from one end to the other, and made an attempt to count the wigwams, but from their irregularity and grouping it was a work of considerable difficulty, however I got an idea of the number and suppose there was about two hundred. The scene altogether reminded me of Capt.ⁿ Cooks visit to the islands of the Pacific. Groups of half naked brown children, crying infants, growling lank dogs, wild looking Indians, standing in bands, or walking and riding about, & laboring squaws reminded me that I was in a simple world, and far, far, from the place I once called my home.

I must not omit the canoes the Indians use. As they are much upon the water I expect every family has one. There was a great number drawn upon the shore and I assure you they gave quite an interest to the scene. They are of two kinds; one is made of the bark of beech and are beuatiful in shape & appearance; the other is made out of trees, and all of one piece.--- --- The weather being cold fires were made in the street of the village, and were quite in keeping with every other object; about half a doz large trees were drawn together and a fire started in the centre; after dark from 6 to 12 persons--mostly Indians--would gather round these fires to talk and smoke. While walking about I noticed one group very much in character--on one side there was the dark forrest on the other the open lake above the dark and threatening sky and around the cold wind was blowing and <u>there</u> was the picture before me--a huge blazing fire at the extreme end of one of the logs just facing me stood a Menominee covered with trinkets as ornaments, and there he exhibited himself or rather his finery--has he had a lesson from some one, or is he a brother in vanity? And on each side of the fire stood several others with their blankets drawn close round them

typical of their forelorn moral and social state. I may at some future time state a little more about this interesting race of people, but at present I fear I have already said too much of the kind.

Monday eve Nov 30th. 1846. I have been going on much as usual since the last date. I try to live to God and labor for him. I am seeking for more religion, as I feel to need it. I preach twice every Sabbath and but seldom during the week. My circuit I think shortly will take me four weeks to go to all the appointments. It is about 15 miles long and 15 broad. My health is good; my enjoyments many and great; my trials (for I have them) good for me. God is good, Christ is precious. What can I need more but heavens I am a long way from home & relatives but believing it to be the divine will that I should be here I do not wish to be anywhere else. Pray for me that I may be faithful.

On Wednesday last I received a letter from Ann and one from Mr. Munden. They are well in health tho' Ann had been sick for a few days with the Ague. She had recd four letters from you a few days before she wrote. She sent me a "watchman" which I got last Saturday, it contained the appointts of the Preachers. On Wednesday I also recd a "Leeds Mercury" which left Askrigg on the 28th -- July! I have not heard from Bary since I came here tho' I hope to have a letter in a few days. I had a letter lately from Mr. Wasly he informed me that a letter came for B--about the beginning of Oct which he sent to him. We have very pleasant weather, very little snow has fallen, and that remained but a few hours, and not much frost. Tho' we have had two or three cold days. To give you an evidence of the cold I will state a little matter. My Circuit is divided in two by Fox River, it is a deep but not rapid stream and perhaps half as wide again as the Ure at Middleham Bridge, on Wednesday

last I crossed in the ferry boat, when it was quite rough in consequence of a strong wind, not a particle of ice was on it. On Friday I walked over it on the ice! And some persons went over on Thursday, so much for frost in one night in Wisconsin.--I am hoping to pay Ann a visit in the spring if I can find time. As Preachers think little of taking long journeys in this country. During the winter I think of going to the Oneida Indian Mission about 60 miles north east, as the Missionary invited me to do so.

In conclusion Monday Dec. 14th-- 1846. I am now going to close this and send it off. I have waited two or three weeks expecting a letter from home and one from Bary but not one has arrived.

Yesterday as usual I preached twice and had a comfortable day. My health continues good. And still I look to God for grace and strength, for wisdom and righteousness.

We have had very little snow, the weather is cold and cloudy. Let me hear from you all often as convenient. Remember me in love to all.

M

Address	Barzilla's address	Sealed
Oshkosh	Linden	Monday Dec.
Winnebago Co	Iowa Co	14th-- 46 1/2
Wisconsin	Wis Terr	past 2 P M
North America	N. America	

A happy New Year to you

[Written crosswise, across the first few pages:]

My Dear Mother & Brothers & Sisters. By this futile attempt to write a journal you will see that I still think about you every day. I am inclined to think you will frequently be receiving letters from me as I often write. But I must inform you I do not have as many from home as I desire. Cannot some of you adopt this plan and write a little every few days, or when anything occurs you think would interest or benefit me, or cannot you make a journal and all write by turns. I want to know how you are and how you are always getting along. Be sure I feel much interested in your welfare, both for this world and the next. And pray for you every day. I am now expecting a letter, or rather letters, from you, as I have not had once since last July. And this is the first day of December. I wrote to George Metcalfe in June. Did my Mother receive what I call my annual letter which I mailed on the 26th September?

Ann tells me you are all well. But she gives me no particulars. I wrote to Mr. Barrett just after Conference, and gave him my address that I judge you have known some time where to send to me. The letters I receive from Ann and her husband do not contain anything of importance. They are merely interchanges of kindness and friendship. Mr. M talks about his House & Farm &c and tells me he is very sorry I have not been to see them. He also enquires about Barz & Jane. Ann has had no letter from Jane yet and wonders at it. Tho I suppose at Chapmans they have no time to write. I fear his friends in England will think he is too negligent. However you may tell them that he does not forget them; and I think to some extent he is excusable as he has been kept doing

from morning till night. And indeed has always had too much work on his hands. Besides you have all heard thro' me, about them and this they know & perhaps practice upon.

Last Saturday the 29th of Nov. I mailed a paper (the Western Christian Advocate) for Edward and one for Mr. Barrett. Tell George Metcalfe I am expecting a letter from him and expect it to be both large and full.

December 4th Evening 1/2 past 6 o'Clock. This has been a beautiful day. All the forenoon I was writing. In the afternoon I walked out three or four miles. The Lake (Winnebago which I told you about in a former letter) was frozen over last night tho it is not yet so strong as to bear a man, but if the frost should continue for a day or two people will travel upon it. Often did I think when looking at it (for it was always in motion and very often greatly agitated) is it possible that winter will have power to still you, but it is so, he has bound it with a coat of ice so that it cannot stir. I feel as tho it was angry at its confinement, but it is obliged to submit, for the present, its keeper is strong and he has well secured it.

I have wrote this at different times and under various circumstances. Sometimes favorable ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ for writing, at other times not so. There are many defects, and faults, but I thought you would rather hear from me in this way than not at all.

[Written crosswise over back page:]

Will you tell me about John. Where is he living and what is he doing? I hope he will give himself to God and live to him. My Mother will not forget to write to me. I love at all times to hear from her. I pray for her, at all times, that God may sustain her. We must cast all our care upon him, would we be comfortable and happy.