

RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Babbit DB37A-4H
Letters from the West

Scanned May 2015

Coloma June 16 1858

Dear Brother

I received yours & Zeruahes and Georges letter of Apr 16 about three weeks ago And was glad to hear from you And to hear that you got Along so well withe the wood pile you have A little esier time than we used to have with the old Crosscut well I am glad of it I have pulled the Crosscut Considerable in California for About A month Me & my partner we Bought us A New saw & gave \$14 for it it did not go much like the saw at Home you bet [I] can saw of[f] A log 13 feet through to 4 feet through in no time & not stop We have not yet finished our Flooming yet I[t] will take us next week we cant get hardly any Body to help us they are Afraid or dast not or something Some dast not walk on the floom Some dast not go down the Hill where we slide lumber we hired some men on Monday on Wendnesday Night we had not one of them left one come & worked half Day then he was sick one worked All one Day & then quit Because the floom was so high he could not Roll the Buggies one dast not cross A high place one come to the top of the Mountain where we slide Lumber looked down & dasnot go one I sent down with some Lumber just Ahead of me he got about half way down & then hid behind A rock or something untill I went past then He vanish vanished

I was very sorry to hear of the Death of Edgar you Boys have lost A good Companion & Friend But we must all go that way sooner or later

you wanted me to give you an Account of California well it is Composed of land & water like any other Country only the ground has been thrown up & disturbed considerable just imagine that Vt was A vast Country not A Fence Roads all running at large over hills & Mountains Covered with scattering pine & Oaks & then you have got him No we have no rain here we have had none of any account in six weeks grass is getting very dry & Hot weather

you Never felt in Vt yet

One thing it is hard to make money here that is so I never will come back to Vt untill I get some Any how unless something extreordinary happens I am in no mood for writing to day so I shall quit & give the rest A line Give my love to all the Boys think of me on the fourth! (weell I guess this will be on the Pacific then) so good By

Form your Brother

V M Babbet

Dear Mother

You wanted me to answer your question just as I fell well I am contented just as long as I can get grub to eat the washing that is not verry pleasant & thee sleeping thats all right. I just as leevs sleep out on the Ground as to sleep in the best Palace in London for there is no dewes at all now I am Contented as can be so dont worry abot me in the least Mother I will try and take care of No one that is all any Body looks out here in California so Good Bye give my love to all

V M Babbet To P. B

Letter 2

Garden Valley Oct. 31th. 1858

Dear Brother

Though in A distant land far from the scenes of my childhood far from Friends and all that life holds dear A stranger in A distant Land yet my Affections for those I left behind is none the less but they are rather strengthened by hardship for if sickness starvation and cold will make A man hate A comfortable Home with A good Mother to nurse him in sickness with a cheerful fire and A sumptuous table He is A queer mortal But to give some description of our journey though I cannot write half of it on this sheet I can give outline or sketch we started from NY the 20th of Sept

all well and happy till Tuesday morning when I crawled out of my bunk (or stable as you might call it wher we had been slancieled[?] up all Night I felt considerable rily about my the tater basket I reckon I did not Breed A famine eating on that ship but amused myself by feeding Porpoises with what I had all the week before we wer about Nine Dayes on this the ship before we reached Panama and all that I ate would not fat a hog for he would not eat it the sight of of the City of Aspinwall made me feel very _____ so I and another fellow just popped the question ([?] to the Negro Cooks and got A Pie for 50 cts which we devoured before we reached the City ill bet when we landed we got plenty of good Bread and ate our fill which took no little (small) quantity we took the Cars about 8 fo Panama reached there not far from noon stayed ther untill 6 and then went on board the SteamBoat She was A splendid Boat and we all expected A better time on this ride (we did have A little better grub) but it was about like changing Stable for BarnYard in a wet day I was very well the two days that we lay at Anchor waiting for the other Steamer from NY but as soon as we started I was sick again And went to heaving up Jonah With many others added to this my bearth was on the Hurricane deck with nothing but a mattress which I was deprived of half the time because ther was not enough for all some Nights we would get drownded out by rain and some Nights get Blowed of[f] some nights I slept below on the floor packed in like pickeled Herron Men Wimen and Children all together and the nice Agreeable smell that they stired up when they waked up and began to stir one old Hogpen is no comparrison it would make A well man sick in five minutes we had alive cattle on Board which they _____ when they got so poor that they could not stand they wer tied their Cattle on deck among the Stearage Passenger the deck was wet and muddy we had A head wind all the way on this side the three last days of the voyage it was so cold that we could not sleep nor keep warm any way when I got up off from the floor in the morning I was so chilled I could not hardly stir

Ther was a sharp pain in the bone of my legs caused by the cold
 I caught cold in my head and shoulders my head acked about [a]
 week After all the time we landed at S F Saturday Night Oct 16th
 after being 30 days from Home we ate a little supper Ill bet you
 and then went to bed and slept till about ten oclock when I waked up
 A shaking like an aspen leaf I had a regular Chill Feaver I thought
 I should have to have A Doctor but I finally sweat it off and felt
 very well in the morning it being Sunday John wanted me to write
 Home so I undertook it but I was in no mood to write and did not
 make out very well I was ashamed to send that letter but I thought
 It would be some consolation to our folks to know that we were here
 all safe. Monday at 4 oclock we started for Sacramento there was
 An opostion[?] line of Boats that day And the Fare fell from \$7.00
 to 50 cts we rode all Night till 4 in the Morning when we reached
 Sac John and the rest of our company took the Stage at six for the
 Mountains and I thought I would look around the City for work at
 last I herd of A Public Road they was building away in the Mountains
 so I started for It they told me there that it was about 50 miles
 when I got 50 miles it was 30 farther in the Mountains in snow 3
 feet deep I stoped at A place called George Town and there I herd
 of McConnells Saw Mill about 5 miles off in Garden Valley So I came
 here but they did not want hireing one as they have got most done
 Sawing for this Season but finaly he said he would give me A Dollar
 A Day and Board so I stoped and have been here A week tomorrow The
 understanding was that I should leave when I got A better chance
 which I think I cannot find at present Times are verry hard here
 wages are from 25. to 50 Dollars when they are any thing but it is
 very difficult to hire out at any wage we Board about 1/4 of A
 mile from the Mill Now but sleep in A ----- Cabin close by the mill
 we had A lot of Provisions come up from the City to Day Now we
 shall have to go to cooking courselvs Sleeping on hard Boards cov-
 ered with hoss Blankets we will live like Hermits without A woman
 to mar our Happiness by scolding about tobacco spit or A dirty floor
 without our Eavning rest being disturbed by Discordent Music and
 Melody of Squalling Urchins

It is now half past ten I must retire to my plank Bed so good
Bye give my Respects to all that inquire

From V M Babbet
to his Brother Amos

Letter 3

Garden Valley Nov 29, 1858

Dear Sis

I sit down this Eavning in in our small cabin by our rough table Not to converse with you through the Medium of Spirits and the table But through the Medium of the Pen You need not find fault if it is not wrote quite so Gramatically we aint popular Vermonsters but California Aristocracy we I mean me and my Chums here Sam and George and Remmington and Rhodes we live here in the Sawmill like Hermits Cook our own Grub and eat it after it is Cooked I am Chief Cook now Rhodes is gone and I just think that I can clean out all you Vermont Wimmen in that line of Buisness I have A two Bit roll before me of my own make that stayed in the hot regions til it got A 1st degree of African color but enough of this California is A first-rate Country the wether is fine here now we have had hardly any rain yet the Nights are cool but the days are as warm as Spring Almost I can imagine the snow squalls the grozen ground and the cold Fingers of Vermont urchins the leaves are as green as ever on some of the Peach Trees and the Ranchmen are Busy Ploughing and getting in their winter Crops the Miners are Preparing sluices for rain The Mountains here are covered with scattering Pines while 30 miles North they are covered with Perpetual Snow It would be A Curiosity to some vermonsters to see some of thee logs that that we have sawed we have two Circular Saws one running above the other almost like Cog wheels and then we have to Chop off a slab sometimes in order to run it through. the largest one that we have sawed since I have been her wea six feet 3 inches through there is Larger Beer and whiskey plenty and more than is good for the Community but wimmen and Gold is pretty scarce there

is all kind of Country people every Nation on Earth Represented here from China to France The Steam Engine is a greate Curiosity to the Chinese and Indians they are around here every day the umbres and Squaws will lay around her on logs and Boards A half of A Day to A time watching the Saw tak them Altoghether and they are An interesting set I am one of the supertendons her you may know for I am Senator from Sacremento County to the Legislator which meets at Garden Vally on friday Eavning of each week Good By to be continued

V M Babbit

Letter 4

Todds Valley Oct 13, 59

Dear Sister

I am still Alive or as Webster

said I haint dead yet though I expect you thought I was because I have not wrote Before the reason why I have not was because I have Been on the River since last July and have had no Acomodations I have worked hard two months over wheeling the Buggy on the River and have lost my wages over A 100 Dollars And I am now at Todds Valley with Martin Driscol Not A cent dead Broke and no how to get work untill water comes or rather Rain which Will be two Months yet then I can get work for 7 or 8 months at 80 Dollars

Martin found me about 3 weeks ago on the River he has got A Claim that he gave \$900 for But he cant get water to work it now we have had no Rain at all Since last May I am verry well now But I worked myself down to 153 lbs on the river So poor that the folks hardly knew me at G..V... an got no pay for it but my grub I dont know which way to turn now I Sometimes think that I will get A Home Ticket and leave the Country But no danger I guess I suppose you have done with your School School Marm and going to the Sem I dont know de ye know I supose George is A.M. by this time Success to him I suppose Bill Shows of[f] like A Peacock with his twenty Dollar Watch dont he I will show him One of these Days that A twenty is no whare Beside A three hundred All though I am Broke now I aint discouraged by no means Martin says give his love to all the folks Martin is liked by all he is A good Boy the town of Todds Valley was Burnt up A week or two ago the City of Auburn was Burnt last Sunday All set on fire By Gamblers cut throats & thieves which infest the whole County Georgetown was Burnt & Diamond Spr & Forest Hill was set on fire every paper has A case of

Murder or Robbery the public take no notice of it hardly it has no more effect than the Killing of A squirrel at Home But these Barberities are giving way in some degree to Civilization and California Bids fair to Be one of the Best Countryes in the known World But I forgot to tell you that our Senetor to Washington David C Broderich was killed in A Duel last month By one Judge Terry Chief Justice of the State the Bloody code has ruled to some extent the last few months several Duels have been fought Between the Most Honorables of this state Tell Luthera that I shant be quite Able to get her Melodeon this fall so she must wait for I have not got A cent to my Name

Give my Respects to all the Boys & my love to all the Girls I have not said anything to Mother But my Regard to her is all the same So good Bye

From V M Babbet

Letter 5

Todds Valley Nov 28 59

Dear Brother

I cant write any News to you this time I am well at present and at work in the same place in the tunnell I am at work night I have worked three weeks of nights and am on my fourth and we shall finish it in about A Month more there will soon be water as it has been raining the last three weeks the miners will make A strike this winter I guess for water at 2 Bits an inch it was forty cts last winter may be you dont no how to measure water by the inch what water will run through A hole 3 in wide & 4 in long with one inch pressure is 12 in of water it takes from 30 to 60 in to run A Hydraulic according to the fall 30 in of water with 40 ft fall with inch 1/4 pipe would knock A man end wise it would surprise you to see the hills that have been washed away in that style By Hydraulics. Tell Mother I want A piece of Pie & Cheese on Christmas, some Aples and A pitcher of Cider on New years and A clean Shirt on Monday as this one is getting dirty after a months wear without washing tell Net & Aine[?] & Hugh that I wrote them last and if you see any Girls ther that wants to get

Married just send them out here But just tell them to beware of the example of Sweet Betsy tell all the Boys that they must think of me on New Years and I will drink A glass of Oregon Cider to their Health Will you go to school this winter I would like to (you bet) If Providence permits I shall Cross the Plains in 62 Not with (Sweet Betsy) Well I dont thing of any more to write now I have got to go to work to night so i will quit and get some supper give my best Respects to all the Boys & Girls Tell Lu she will have to wait A spell for that Melodian as she took me by Surprise about learning to sing So good Bye

From your Brother

V M Babbet

To Oscar Babbet

Letter 6

Todds Valley Feb 11 1860

Dear Sister

I received your And Oscars letter of Dec 21 (via overland) a few Days ago glad to Hear that you was so nigh through Arithmatic and studying Algebra all I can say is (go it) while you can I am well & so is Martin I am out of work now Day before yesterday I had 7 \$20 Gold pieces But now I have but one or tow it has gone to pay the grub Bill there is no water here now it is verry Dry so I can get no work I am lying on my oars Some times I have A Mind to come home any way But I think that I shall try it 2 or 3 more years yet Before I give up I think that I shall go to Carson Valley Silver Mines next Spring I dont know I had my teeth filled yesterday wich cost me \$20 Oscar said that he went up to Hydes to hire out I think that He had better come out here this is A first rate Country for his health well there I have got sick of writing & of evry thing els I dont care which way thee world goes I have worked hard pick shoveled lifted rock wet & dry Night & day rain or shine and now all I can show would not board me A Month But unless Sickness drives me Back I shall stay there untill I do have something I would like to be there in good society A Man lives more like A Heathern

here than any thing else I would like to have A good drink of cider tho Apples I can get here for 25 cts A pound

Yank or Martin has gone to Forest Hill to day there was A Ball in town last Night all the old Maried wimmin & Babies was there that there is within 5 or 6 Miles Pa may take care of the Baby while ma dances with mustashed Gentleman if perchance Baby dont have an invitation to dance wich she most certinly will if she can reach the skirt of Gentlemans coat this is A fast Country aint it sis Father says he has got the colts Broke does He and has been up to the Pond with them it makes me shiver when I think of the Pond there has not been But A few Days Here this winter But what I could go in my shirt sleeves not be cold no snow At all hardly give my love to all that sent theirs to numerous to mention Father Mother Sister Brother &c

V M Babbet esq

Letter 7

Greenwood May 3d 60

Dear folks at Home

I am verry well at present and dont expect to be sick right away I am A lumbering every Day we have bought 3 yoke of Oxen and we gave four Hundred Dollars for them it is raining to Day I think for the last time this winter thee weather is verry fine & hot the most of the time I think that we shall make fifteen Hundred Dollars in that Job I suppose that you are ploughing and planting now Days I have not got any news to write I only write to let you know that I am alive and well and I am in something of A hurry as I awlways am I hope that you are all well to It has commenced to rain so I shant have to go to sawing and I will begin to write some how we have got about four Hundred Thousand feet of lumber cut alredy and we have commenced Heunding[?] we have got the best looking Team in the Mountains we are driving A good Business now most of the people are gone to Carson Valley work is 4 a Day and 3 for board flour is 46 Dollars hundred in carson I think that good many of then people that have gone there will be glad to get back

again people are going to pikes peak from here there is an excitement every day I positively cant think of any more to write so good Bye give my love to all

V M Babbet
Garden vally
Call

Letter 8

Greenwood July 8th 1860

Dear Brother

I received A letter from you and George some time ago I have answered Georges and now I will Answer your part I am still in Greenwood Valley We have got in some over 300 Thousand feet we have got to get in nearly 400 more Net wanted to know how far we had to haul them we have some of then to haul over half Mile and some but A short ways And if we had him or Father out here or Aim we might easily save more than 200 or if I even had the controll wholley I could do better than the three My partner here wants the whole controll and has it pretty much May be you think that I would have some objections to that Well I tell him to go it I can stand it if he can rather than to quarrel with him one of my partners is first rate fellow my new one L K Bivens. I drove the team yesterday. thats fun, you bet, in the dust so thick that you cant breathe you look like A Negro (whew) I draw the crosscut generally now days We done nothing the fourth Our pay day come the first of this month and we expected about four Hundred \$ But Davis Euchred us out of it so the boys had no money to go any where if Davis is responsible for all the cursing that our hired man did he will have A heavy load and there was A Circus in town last eavning and still we got no money we could not by a ticket we had to borrow one but we went to the Circus any how Bob our cook is stuck after A Girl in Greenwood and she is stuck too and they have gone off on A spludge to day he is about my age You say that the Oxen ran away from you I guess that I could cool them down hich them to one of these Logging Trucks and drive through the dust & heat I must quit you and write to some of the rest Write

soon for I dont get much time to write except Sundays

V.M. Babbitt
to G. Babbitt
Castleton, Vt

Dear Mother

You awlways have something [to] say so I will say A little but have not got much to say you wish that you could see me well I am no pretty sight just now rough sort of A fellow any how Tanned covered with Tar pitch dirt dust and every thing that is Agreeable I have never had on A as the Georgians call it A biled Shirt for Nearly A Year. untill I got one for the Fourth and then I never wore it on the fourth. I got me A costly Suit for thee fourth and the only one that I have had since I have been here it cost 25 Dollars hewy [?] want it but I would like to get in the Butry with Aim and get some of that good pie that used to be there it is verry seldom that I eat any pie, or any thing sweet Whoe is Mr Grant that has started a new church there I never have been to church since i have been here but once or twice and then the preacher went out and said he didnt care whether he saved the people or not as long as he saved his own soul the most of the preachers here are unlerned Georgians Some stutter so that the congregation cant help laugh And so I keep away from where they carry on so. I like good preaching as well as any body but I dont think like Mockery It is generally the case that we send mishionery to the heathen but it is .Visa.Versa here as a general thing here. I must close and give the girls A thow [?] for I am going to write a pubuity [?] Letter now kind of [?] give my love to all good Bye

V.M. Babbet
To Polly Babbet

Dear Sister

Seems to me that I hear that Melodian to day but I suppose you are all at church Well I supposed that you would be Teaching School this summer but I suppose you got full enough last summer did not you. But I suppose that you can play the music to perfection by the time that I get there again

Well go in thats all you will get to be Aristocracy by & by wont you if you keep on. I am now or I guess you would think so if you should see me last night. besmeared with pitch and dust You may know that Bob is stuck after Addie by the looks of this paper it has been lying on his Table all greese. She has got more than forty Beaux. well pitch in and learn all you can. give my love to all who may inquire and if there is any one there that wants to marry tell them that I am am it good By

from Squire Babbet
to Z J Babbett

Dear Sister

If you was out here you could have more than fifty Beaux. I have seen lots of little girls promenade with some gentleman. Music is all the go aint it I suppose that you are perfectly Sienced on the Melodian and well I have not got much to say this time so good By

V M Babbitt
Luthera Babbet

Greenwood Valley

Letter 9

Greenwood Valley Aug 18. 60

Dear Brother

It has been A long time since I herd from home and I wrote the last letter for but I cannot wait for an Answer so I shall write I am still in Greenwood cutting Logs I have sold out to my partner but am to work untill the Job is finished the weather is very warm for sawing now but we have it to do I suppose that you are to haying now. I calculate to mine this winter in or about Greenwood and if I make enough to come home I am coming me and our cook is comming to go to medical school and no Jokeing we have been nocking around long enough and spending our best days here in this half Civalized land we are going to cross the plains next fall A year Robert Maxfield is our cooks name his father and mother are here in Garden Valley he is going to get them settled down some where before he leaves. Robert has gone to Camp Meeting to Day with his Girl Miss Addie Dickerson

on Horse back her Sister wanted me to go with her to camp Meeting but I declined the invitation for several reasons Where is Mary Field now. I have not heard from her or any one else in a long time where is all the Boys and what are they doing I cant write much to day some how I dont feel like it. I cant think of any thing write. so you will have to take a short letter so good bye

P.S. Some of you had better write soon or I shall quit writing at all I have been looking for A letter this long time

Cant write

V M Babbet

Letter 10

Greenwood Valley Feb 14th 1861

Dear Brother & Sister

Does the star spangled banner yet wave
Ore the home of the free and the land
of the brave

I received A Letter from you last Eavning and and was glad to hear that you are all as well as usual and enjoying your share of domestic peace undisturbed with none to molest or make afraid. But what a contrast between this picture of harmony. and the Civil and Political state of Our beloved Country once the great and powerful and glorious United States of America. But now is being shattered to the very foundations by A set of Ignorent hotheaded vile Traitors! to which Benedict Arnold is no comparison In which if they succeed will prove Conclusively that Man is not fit for self Government. But perhaps I am fast you must excuse my abrupt beginning. I am well as usual pecuniary affairs the same as my last letter stated but I feel mad. sorry. and ashamed. if statements are true which I have just read and heard from our southern Brethrens yes from our hospitable Chivilrous Southerners. Southern Chivalry! believe no more in it. I have seen it in all its glory which consists in low cuning Ignorenets vile low baseness and cowardice. I could relate some of these eve[n]ts of Chivalry but will defer till another time. I am mad at our Exexutive James Buchannon though not of

southern Birth most redily partook of the infection of his Suespious[?] constituents and also of their Chivalry wich is cowardice. Would to God we had in his stead one of his political predesesfors A man for the emergency Andrew Jackson but I hope and trust that we have one who will prove himself A man for the time A man capeable of his election whose strong mind and iron will will help to sustain him under A responsible burden which it has not been the lot of any before him to fall. you know who I mean the man whose Election to the highest office in the gift of the People has caused all this turmoil & Civil disorder Oh! ye Freemen of the North! why did you not take warning by their timely threats and avert the blow which is falling with appalling weight upon us and threatening to overthrow the Union and is now plunging us in inextricable chaos. Why did you not Surrender your Constitutional rights and fall down and worship at the shrine of Democracy the goddess of Slavery & Session And why do you not now surrender your Republican principles and all that you deem just and right and sue for peace and reconciliation. On no other terms than those that Traitors may require of you.

May be that I am fast, as I have not heard by you that there was anything wrong but what I have read before of the ship Star of the West (by the by the ship what brought me over) being fired into, US ports being siezed and also arsenels & Hospitals And what I have read to Night caps the present China that is the blockade of the Mississippi River. We all drew a sigh of regret and said to one another as the old Revolutionary father said to his Sons . . the time has come! It wrought the feelings of my partner up to such a pitch that It would not have done for any South Carolinan to come in and declared his allegiance to the Palmetto flag and after the the momentary fit of madness passed and while reading the greate speech of John Sherman so elequent and Logical me thought I Spied A tear or unmistakeable signs of comming tears in his voice thus bringing into practicable effect what Seward told the Old and Young Men to do in the Senate He says to the Old Man Weep no more but rather rejoice for you have seen the nation in

its glory! But Young Man weep you with all the bitterness of your heart for you have seen the premature fall of all that was good greate and glorious in form of Government (or words to that effect)

I hope that the Patriotism and Loyalty of all Freemen of the North will encourage them to assist the President in bringing these Traitors & conspirators to a speedy justice. And may the Lord forgive them for they know not what they do.

And if asked

When I d rend the scroll
Our fathers names are written on
When I would see our flag unroll
Its mingled stars and stripes no more
When with worse than fellons hands
Or fellons counsils I would sever
The Union of this glorious land
I answer never! never! never!

Think ye that I could brook to see
The banner I have loved so long
Be borne piecemeal ore the distant sea
Torn trampled by A frenzied throng
Divided measured parceled out
Tamely surrenderd up forever
To gratify a soulless rout
O Traitors never! never! never!

I have mearly written the thoughts and impulses of the moment for the want of other things to occupy my mind these long lonesome Eavnings. Not very Gramatical of course (which you must excuse in me) I dont posture but which are adequate to convey some share of my feelings and thoughts to you. May be you dont like such letters if you dont I cant help it now excuse this and I will soon again A good old fashioned chit chat Social Letter god by.

from

Give my love to all and wriet soon
V.M. Babbitt
Greenwood Valley To
All whom it may concern

Letter 11

Silver City Apr 27 1861

Dear Brother

I have wrote Several Letters to you Since I have heard anything from Home I am as well as usual and at work on the Carson River on A Mill Site I get about 60 and Board I have just received a deed of a Claim a Quartz Lode. My deed is for 175 feet My partner gave me half of one he had give to Him He is going back to California this week I think the Claim will Sell this Summer for 5 or 10 Dollars a foot and maybe more. I have no news to write to Day and nothing to answer from Home. I may receive some Letters from California from you to Night. The Pony Express has arrived Last night the News is most exciteing the Latest News is Virgini Secceeded Sumpture Surrendered to the Traitors after a Battle I am happy to say. My worst apprehensions are fulfilled the Reed is broken the Plains of the Once free America will soon be the scene of Carnage and Blood for a paralell we shall have to imagine the field of Waterloo & Momticillo & Inkerman & c. Two years ago I would have thought it impossible that our Country Standing as it did the Towering National Greatness of the World Should have come to this. But we shall have to be content. as the allwise Being the ruler of the Universe and of all Nations doeth all things for the best. No doubt but He has ment it to work out some good in His way. But I care not to Live when the Stars & Stripes cease to wave over my Native Country. I would rush on foot across the Plains to mingle in the scene of carnage and destruction. that must inevitably ensue If I thought that the Star Spangled Banner would cease to wave when the contest was ended. Where is the Patriot that could bear the disgrace. The North must be victorious. By the eternal Principle of Justice and right might and rong Sometimes prevail. we have the right And God Almighty will give us the might It must be so. If the contest continues I shall come home this fall or early next Spring And you my Brother if you have nothing elst to do and are in want of excitement get a Sharp Rifle. And go to Washington get Mother to run Her pewter

Spoons into Bullets before you go. there are Some Leaving here misteriously Southerners of course, expecting Some rank of distinction such as Captain, Col. Major General or some such thing there are a good many Secesionest her and it wants a good many Union Men to make the balance of Power. With the best wishes for our Countrys welfare as well as your own and all my Friends I am Your Brother & c

V. M Babbett
Silver City
Nevada
Teritory

ps give my love to all who may enquire

VMB

Letter 12

Powder River, Mines July 31, 1862

Dear Father and Mother

It is with the gravest aprehen-
sions that I once more take an oppertunity to write to you again after some ten months intermission in our communications. When I think of the changes that have been wræt wrought in the world and especially in the United States by the devastating influences of War. The homes that have been desolated and the hearts made sad by the loss of some dear one. A Father A Brother or A lover perhapse I cannot but dread to write or hear from Home. The last Letter that I had was when I was in Wash or Nevada Teritory and it stated that Oscar had just gone to Poultny to join the company there and Charly also had gone. Through the Newspapers I have kept track of the Vermont Boys as near as possible they were at Yorktown the last I knew and had a fight there and did their duty to Bravely ther has been inumerable fights since and with destruction and who knows but the Boys are this day Lying under the sod of old Virgini. these thoughts furnish food for serious apprehensions And who knows but those that I am now addressing are no more on this earth. I dread to think I dare not hardly. these are my worst apprehensions. I came to Oregon in November last and staid in the Willamett Valley and wrote to you but never received an answer from but it was in

the time of flood and the Mails were delayed nearly all winter here and in California and since then I have been A mooving planate but not very luminary one I guess. I have not been long enough in one place to write and recieve an answer but now I think that I shall be here long enough may be not but if you receive this you will know that I am now alive and in good health and in A healthy Country I have been mining some here but have not struck anything to justify me in mining And I am now going to haying for 50 Dollars A month The mines are some too miles from the settled part of Oregon in the Mountains Bordering our Powder River Valley A Beautiful Valley as ever I saw and some 30 miles across but looks not more than three And I presume that there is now 50 feet of snow in places not three miles from here in the Mountains and Last Night there was A heavy white frost here in the Valley. So you can judge Something of our Altitude When I came on with Biven we had no Notion of comeing to these or Salmon River Mines but we heard so favorable Reports from these that we concluded to try them once more and have been humbuged like ten thousand others though there are some good mines here and it bids fair to become A good country for some When I left Nevada Teritory my health had not been good for all Summer but began to improve from the very moment that I struck the Sierras Nevada Mountains and And we concluded to try Oregon as A Good country but found one of the hardest Countries I ever saw in my short travils Biven is in the Willamette Valley Now I expect waiting to hear from me before he comes I think that I shall write to him to stay and get Some Horses for a pack train in the spring to pack Grub to these Mines from the Dalles on the Columbia River this is my intention now but it may fail as all others has with me but I am imprevious to disapointment now I am used to them and dont never expect to have any more luck but bad luck (untill I get Married) and to an observer especially a close one things would seem to indicate that such was the intention if-I dont-get-my-regular-kiss-then-they-dont-any-ef-them-you-bet} you need not be surprised if you hear of my doubling teams one of these days for there is A Women in Camp. Ill quit gassing but never Was

in circunstances but I always relished a joke or little gass. Excuse me for it in these times will you Mother. this is all that I can think of now that is interesting and I want you to be shure and write as soon as you get this and let me know where the Boys all are Oscar Charlie Leeb & Enoch & Gid and all I somethimes think that I am neglecting my duty towards my country in not joining the Army distance from active service only prevented it Give My Love to all thay may Friends that may enquire of me and tell them that I dont never exspect to see old Vermont any more or any of my Friends from there unless by chance they come here or I get in hiyer luck than I think of now Lutherah and Zeruah must write all the news too You must excuse this poor letter for I am as I was in Wash or dirty living in A tent all Summer Sleeping on the ground rain or Shine no odds in this Country tell all the Boys and Girls to write to me and I will answer them and every letter that I send or receive costs 60 cts here we are out of the way of the U S Mails give my best respects to New and Aim and wives and Children Don, Mary, & Grenois ? & Emory & all

Good By

from

V M Babbitt

Direct to Walla Walla

Washington Teritery

B.M Babbitt

Walla Walla

W. T

I want you Zeruah to send me a lock of your hair and get some of all Fathers Mothers Lutheras Aims & Nets Oscars if he is not dead if he is in the Army tell me where to Direct a letter to him and all things concerning them. Comply with this request and it is all I ask I would like to have you send your likenesses all better or both. do Send something to put a more lasting impression of you in my mind for I do love you all now. I have made so many promises to come home and returning health brought returning Hope and I am bound to see more of this western world or make a fortune however

small. think not that I dont want to see you I have done nothing that makes me fear or dread any man I can look the world in the face and defy it all it is one of the greatest desires of my heart to see you all once more on this Earth I think of it every day of my life

there was A morman here last night and wanted some of to go to some New mines just discovered on Snake River he wanted a larger Company for fear the Snake Indians should troble them We are now in an Indian Country and there is some apprehensions of danger but I dont think there is much danger there is no setlers here but what come this Spring (I hope you will send some of these things Zeruah

Aug 1, 1862
V M Babbitt

Letter 13

Bute Creek Oregon Dec 25th, 1864

Dear Friends

Once more I have returned to the Land of the living, or Gods Country as commonly called by the Wel-foot tribe. I wish You all a Merry Christmas in every sence of the word or term. I have just returned from the Mines in Idaho Teritory and exspect to go back in the Spring. My health is poor and I am not able to work half of the time and therefore dont prosper as well as could be exspected. I dont know who I am talking to as I have not heard a word from Home since I was in Washoc Country nearly four years ago. I have heard that there was some letters at Pacific City but Cannot get them. I hav written to the P M and hav not heard from Him. I may get them this winter Some-time I hope that time and Civil Comotion have not mad sad havoc in the ranks of My Kindred and Friends. But I fear I suppose that you all will go to Church as usual in old Vermont an example that Thousands might follow in this Country. though two of the Daughters of mine Hosts just started the Church on Horseback onder Convoy of Sam Pallard. I also had the pleasure of attending an Oregon dance or Shindig Night before last the Music was delightful (in a Horn)

and the dancing exquisitly beautiful or would be to those that never saw any dancing. Room A Small farm Hous and One Hundred attendants and raining heavy Of Course I being born and raised A Puritin in moral Vermont could not participate in anything but the Supper which I must say that I enjoyed more than all else bsides. I have attended the Fandango of the Digger Indians and the Dutch Hurdy Gurdies and good sport. And I must say that the Hurdies defy all Competition in fancy dances generally. I have seen so much dancing that I am a good judge but what do you care for dancing and this is Sunday and Christmas to Excuse me I should not indulge in such Worldly affairs to day. I have not been inside of A Church but once in five years and have not heard but one or two Sermons preached in that time and one of them was in A bar room I do not say this boastingly for I have not been where there are Churches or preaching or Houses I might say the Month of Nov I never slept in A house or Cabin but one Night and five Night it rained and we had no tent Either

We boys could teach the Army of the Patomac Camp life and cooking but probably not fighting and some of us could show the Indian branch of that I have seen many an Indian Scalp in the upper Country. I would like to hear from home and all the folks I am pretty near Satisfied with Gold digging I was calculating to come home the last fall but could not make both ends meet and now I have not Money enough and dont know as ever I will again but I guess that I will get enough to buy a Horse and then I will cross the plains next fall. I hope that some one of you Aim or Nel Och or BT will get this letter and write to me at Placerville Boise County I. T. Zeruah you may give my love to some of the Girls for I dast not trust it to any in Oregon. They wont do to trust if there are any that on the Marry Thats handsom, Virtuous, Aimable plesant, Agreeable, modest, Neat and Understands Music Latin Greek playes the Piano Sings Sweetly Can mak Pies Caks Cheese butter wash sew tend the baby & c Send her to me for further Paticulars Give My best respects to all Living and all Honor to the Heroric dead who have died that

their Country might Live

Write one and all that will Ill
answer if received

V M Babbitt

Letter 14

Portland Oregon

Feb 28, 1865

Dear Friends All. I once more take the oppertunity to write to you before starting for the Mines in Idaho. I shall start day after tomorrow I have not much to Say not knowing anything about you folks at home not having heard for four years a single word from any of you therefore I am at a loss what to say I have nothing to say about myself only that I am alive and making a living and that is all and that is all I ever expect to make and all I ever want. there is one thing that I think is true that is the old Saying that A rolling Stone gathers no moss. if A Sitting hen never does get far they are contented apperantly and therefore I think that here after I shall imitate the Sitting hen (after this year) let the results of this year be what it will. And let me state here that it now my determination to come to the States next fall money or no money. My health will not permit me to nock around here any longer in this Mountain Region of light air and exposeure to all sorts of Weather. If my health would permit I would make something tremble yet and defy the Devil and all living obsticles but there is no use in kicking againnst the pricks. you cant surmont Mortality to follow the things of Mortality no mor than the faith of any one person of the present day will move Uncle Silas hill. So we might at well Shugar of[f] in the kittle of contentment and take the world as it comes. I dont want any of you to infer from this that I am not able to take Care of number one for I am yet awhile dont mourn nor worry about (dis chile) if any of you are so disposed and I dont suppose that there are many of you that is. There is no use in me dilating on my prospects for I have none but the Mississippi Valley The war has made an opening for the enterprizing for greater and more shure and en-

during welth and Happiness than this Coast ever affoded. and I am determined to visit that part of U S Dominion. I generally go where I please if I Take a notion and you need not be surprised if you next heare of me in the Western States of the Atlantic States. I would willingly have given my seven years of labor Jacob lost to have been with Sherman on his March through Georgia. I awlways desired to die on the field of battle So that I would have pleanty Company I suppose to the other world. But I should hate to die with the appearances of A coward and my Constitution and Nearvous System wont stand the Excitement of battle. I dont believe that I am a Coward though I dont know. I have been among the most desparate Men in the world the last 4 or 5 years and have often heard the click of Revolvers and seen the glimmer of Bowie Knives. And never run yet I am sticking to my former intentions of not saying Much about Myself. Yes in A Horn Greate (?) I must come out. I suppose that You would like to hear Something about Oregon but I have not time nor the abilito to do justice to Such A Country. I wish that I had the pen of Abbot, Everett, Bennett or Brown Taylor that I might amuse the people of the East with a description of the Country and the manners of the People their costumes & c. But I might as well dry up. My pen has no power not half as much as Grants Sword Notwithstanding the assertions of many able writers that the pen is mightier than the Sword. All that I have to say of the people here is They are called the Webfoot Tribe on account of the Mud and rain in the winter which is in abundance you bet. And they are the most ignorant Set that I ever got among. The Girls all talk love and beaux from 8 to 14 when most of them get married. the Women are not over chaste they say although I always found it like pulling teeth to get even A Kiss. Though may bee that I am a stranger and dont (take) guess not. The Men are the most Brutal to their families I ever Saw and there is more divrces here than any where els according to the population. One durst not quote Proverbs without fear of offending I will leave the rest to tell verbally when I arrive in Pike or home I would like to hear from some of you Boys and Girls.

But I dont think that you had better write to me until I get to the States and if any of you write dont for Gods Sake and mine write any bad news while I am in the Mountains. I cant stand it I have enough to contend her besides bad news if you do write to Placerville Boise County Idaho Territory. Good Bye

I only write to let you know that

I am well and alive

V M Babbitt

UM Babbitt
Caselton, Ut

37A-4H