

Letter from E. Jane Osborn (Miss E. Osborn) to Emeline Osborn Stevens

Fredonia – March 21, 1839 – to Blenheim, Schoharie, NY

[Transcribed with Punctuation & spelling corrected – Virginia D. Hansen August 22, 2018]

My Dear Cousin,

We received a letter from your mother a few days since and were much grieved to hear of your dear father's illness, but we were glad she wrote us all about her troubles. We hardly know what to say, in regard to them, not knowing his mind and what would be the best course to adopt with him. It seems he has been troubled in his mind concerning his future state & been led to see himself a sinner in the sight of God, and by looking to himself, sees no way of escape. We are all indeed sinners, vile condemned sinners. We have disobeyed the righteous law of God, in every hour, & every action of our life. But when we have such views of our sins, and of our inability to save ourselves, and are led to say "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, & bow myself before the high God," how shall I, a sinner, approach the eyes of that God which cannot look upon sin without abhorrence, how can I please God. I am not sufficient of myself to think one good thought or do one good act. When we have such thoughts as these, we ought not to despair, but ought to see that it is the motion of the divine Spirit upon the heart, to lead us from ourselves, to Christ our Savior, who died for the ungodly. We ought to accept of his righteousness, & come unto him just as we are, poor & needy & sinful, and not try to make ourselves better. Oh what a blessed thing it is, to put our trust in Jesus, that when our earthly pilgrimage is ended, "when this earthly tabernacle is dissolved, we shall have a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens." We feel to sympathize deeply with you & your dear mother. Pa says he wishes you to speak often to his afflicted Brother, about the Saviour that he may look to him, for peace, & comfort, & joy, for he has said "in me ye shall have peace." I have thought much about you, dear Cousin since you wrote to me. I hardly knew I had such a Cousin. I wish you would write to me often, and tell me all about yourself, & your employments, and how you spend your time. Do you see Cousin Phebe often? I wish you would ask her if she remembers me, and the pleasant walks and times we had on old Long Island. I never shall forget her and how she used to look, with her red cheeks, and bright laughing, black eyes – we have not heard from our friends on the Island this great while.

We are pleasantly situated here, in a fine growing village, about 3 miles from the beautiful Lake Erie. We have a good society of pious intelligent people. Good Academy & schools, and Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, Episcopalian, Christian, Universalist & Mormon meetings every Sabbath. Our family consists of Father, Mother, a young man who does the work on the farm, my niece Elizabeth, & myself. We enjoy ourselves most of the time well. We have but few troubles to complain about yet we feel to mourn with those who mourn, and we sincerely hope our dear Aunt & Sister, will not be discouraged on account of her afflictions for "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." Afflictions warns us to depart from these inferior delights, because here is not our rest ---- & lasting joys are not here to be found. Sickness & sorrow, pain & death, teach us to long for those happy mansions where all tears will be wiped away from the eyes, where we shall through Christ have fullness of joy & pleasures forevermore.

My brothers, C--- and Clinton, live at Van Buren Harbor. They are well. Albert lives at Mayville and is Judge of the County. He lost his wife about a year and a half ago. He is not married again. We are all pretty well, & join in sending love to you all, especially to your Dear Father & Mother. We wish to see you much & hope you, Emmeline, at least, will come out here & visit us. Write often as we feel very anxious to hear as often as possible. Accept the love & well wishes of your Courin,

Miss E. Osborne

E. Jane Osborne