

My dearest Cousin,

Many thanks to you for your last letter. It only took fifteen days for it to get from Norway to us here in Wisconsin. I am glad to hear that you and your family are so healthy. Johannes has been ill all this winter but is slowly recovering. Everyone else in the family are all thankfully in good health. With Johannes still recovering, not only do I help Mother with the household work, I must do his chores as well! I never realized how much work it is to farm. I gather the eggs, feed the chicks and the hens, feed the pigs and horses, and milk the cow. The cow kicked over the milk pail twice! Thankfully, Father instructed me on how to milk the cow without getting hurt or losing a whole pail of milk to the barn floor!

As in Norway, Sunday here is a day of rest. It is such a welcome relief after working so hard all week long! There are two paths, one behind our home and one on the other side of the creek. They both end up in the same place, a pond so beautiful and full of trout that it seems like heaven! If the weather is nice on Sunday, we will pack a lunch for the family and hike to the pond. I try to make an entry in my journal each time we go. We catch fish for lunch, add it to the vegetables from our garden, and have a feast in the shade of the trees, while we listen to the waterfall as it spills into the pond. Then we play *Kubb* or tag. Father said the newest rage for games in town is something called baseball, so he and Johannes will throw a ball back and forth to each other, sometimes trying to hit the ball with something they call a bat. These are wonderful afternoons with our Family! It makes us thankful for the many blessings we have enjoyed in this new country!

Although I hesitate to share such an indelicate subject, I must share that Father built an outhouse just past the summer kitchen. He built it large enough that Kari and I visit it together! I know it sounds silly, but it can be frightening to be there alone and have a raccoon suddenly pop its head in under the door! Johannes said he had visited the outhouse only to find a long green snake curled up in the corner. Father scolded him for scaring me, and he said he was just teasing, but nonetheless I am glad there is now room for two of us!

The nearest town to us is Coon Valley, as you know, however, we have heard of a new town a few miles farther away called Westby. That is far enough away that we will have to make a trip of several days to visit, but we have heard that this new town has many Norwegians moving there. It will be wonderful to hear of Norway and meet new friends, even though it will take us away from home for so long.

I must close now; Father is making the trip into Coon Valley tomorrow and he will post this letter to you when he is there. I wish you good health and happiness, my dear Cousin, and look for a reply from you soon.

Anne Engum