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Letter from Sarah M[uir] Galloway to John Muir, 1891 Feb 10.

Sarah Muir Galloway

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Portage, Wis.
Feb 10. / 91

Dear Brother John

Yours of Jan 13.
was gladly received, a letter
from your hand always
brings pleasure with it,
but you have been so exceed-
ingly busy these last years
they have come few, and
far between. I am sorry
that business drives you
so unmercifully that you
find it necessary to work
in the night, as well as
the day. I hope that in
some way matters may be
so arranged that you
will be able to take things
more moderately

01489

In both of your last letters you have requested me to let you know if I was in need of some ready money for household expenses, while my means were so tied up, now John I thank you most heartily for your kind thought of me, and I feel that it is only right that I should let you know how I have been getting along. Well to begin with, all belonging to the estate now, is invested in that Kansas land, and I have not received one cent from it for more than three years. There was two notes due us in Fort Winnebago that was not paid up, when John

01489

Reed got into trouble, at first I think they amounted to about two hundred and fifty or sixty dollars, from that source I have received some money, my wood for fire, also the greater part, of ^{the} butter, ^{and} eggs, I have needed, and potatoes for winter use &c then I have raised some potatoes, and all the vegetables I could, in the garden. Anne and Celia have helped me when it was necessary, Anna more especially as I have also had to borrow a little from her when I could was in need. Then a year ago past last summer Joanne and the children came and took rooms that I could

space and boarded with me.
 under the circumstances
 I have been obliged to put it in
 that way, though at first I
 had to force myself to do it,
 things had always been so
 different, and then was always
 so much of everything in the
 shape of food when we were all
 together on the farm; well she
 staid the next winter, and
 when she found she would
 have to be in Portage last
 summer she thought she
 would like rooms on the
 ground floor and enough of
 them so that she would be more
 comfortable during the warm
 weather, then July and August
 she spent in the Country, in
 Sept Anna who had been teaching

01489

one of the City schools and
 staying, or boarding at home
 was married, (Louie would
 tell you all about it when
 you came home from Alaska
 as I told her about it at the
 time) she always insisted on
 paying her way as she called it
 even her marriage expenses,
 when she was gone, I did not
 know which way to turn,
 David said I need not worry,
 but it seemed terrible to be
 dependant, even for a time, I
 carried the matter to the Lord,
 as before and sooner then it
 seemed possible done in the
 most natural way, things
 seemed to be arranged so that
 it was possible for me to go
 on comfortably again.

01489

Miss Darts came to board with me and attend school. Then Joanne came back from the country telling us that Walter had been at Kansas City and had sent on her goods, he seemed to think it probable that she might have to be in Portage for some time yet and she spoke of looking for rooms or renting a house, so I told her that she might have my parlor and what rooms she needed up stairs if she thought she could be accommodated in that way and that Grace and I would do our best and get the meals for all, we have always done so for Mother and Aunt Annie as well, so every thing was

01391

arranged, she came in Sept. and has been here ever since, she seems to think it possible she may be with us for some time yet, perhaps all summer, and as long as things continue as they are now, we get along by being very careful, we all live comfortably, the only running debt I have is my rent, and ~~Harriet~~ is willing to wait for it until something can be got out of the land. As things are now it is possible for Grace to be at home, she is only seventeen yet, is too young to teach school and it is a comfort for me to have one girl at home, she is good help and together we can manage to keep things going, Aunt Annie helps about

01489

the dishes generally if she is well enough. You ask how Mother and Annie also Joanna are off for Monday. It seems rather queer to have given you such a long string about myself and house affairs first, which I fear you will be tired of before you get through, but you put it that way and I commenced at the beginning. Well David knows better about what Mother has, than I do, but she always looks nice, and comfortable and well dressed, her rooms are cosy and comfortable and no matter what stir or hurry may be going on in other parts of the house nothing of the kind enters there. She reads her papers

and looks and receives her company, if she wishes the children a while, she enjoys them (she just loves the baby) and if she gets tired, she has quiet again, she keeps her rooms in order with help from Annie sometimes, if anything extra is required she gets other help, then her expenses for living are small, so if there is no great income neither is there any great outlay. I think Mother enjoys unusually good health for a person of her age, she has a little of her old trouble once in a while, but her simple remedy always helps her, I am so glad that she can go out and enjoy her friends, if

just cheers her up and does her good. From what I know about Anne's affairs, without asking, I should think that the money she had saved was not far from being gone. Mother helps her about getting things, she has paid me five dollars per month for board since she came home. Mother has paid me the same amount for the past few months, but for the years back of that much less. Walter sends Joannee plenty to keep her and the children comfortable and nice.

Walter has been having a hard pull, but seems to be working hard and hopefully and aiming at great results. I had a letter from John Reid

Last month in which he said that he had had to make great efforts to keep the land contract from being made null and void, but in the end he was told that if he would pay the taxes, they would extend the time of payment on the land one year. He has had a hard time of it on account of the failure of crops, but for some reason thinks this may be a better year and that he may be able to do something to help matters before the time of payment arrives. I am sure I hope it may be possible. I will send you the clipping you ask for. Catha sent it from Lomah. I do not know what paper she took it from. This is an awful long letter, you might almost as well

begin to read a newspaper,
I send love to all,

Very Affectionately

Sarah M. Galloway.

Do you remember a lady by
the name of Miss Kate North
who went to Alaska on the same
boat with you, she is a niece
of George Lindsay, who married
Walter Sanderson's daughter
Mrs Sanderson spoke of her, in
her last letter to me, she
enjoyed her trip so much,

L.H.S.