

Hooper Feb 26-76

My affectionate sister imagine if you came
by surprise on examining Mail Mails of
Wednesday evening last to find a letter written by
your own hand, My memory has been severely taxed
to ascertain wherein my Department looked after
your pleasant home. It was such as to warrant
this long delay. One year has now elapsed since
my departure from your abiding place. Shortly after my
arrival home I sent to sister Fiebe my likeness and that
of my wife and then the published account of my misfortune
and unexpected partial recovery with the hope ^{that} I should
receive in return a like family relic. But a line
or note has broken the long silence. But thanks to the
good spirit that prompted the operation of the mind
with the action of the hand and the organs of sight to
to trace the line on your paper. Three of the most beautiful
qualifications of our nature. That short letters of yours
will be held by me as a relic worthy of its producer
and the harbinger of a more extended exchange of
thought. On the 16th of November last with my wife
and three little daughters we took our leave of home for
the south and on our downward trip spent five days with
my Brother Thomas at Camp Cameron Beaver County
Utah and two days on our return and arrived at home
on the third of last month well worn out with the
hardship incident to a land travel of seven hundred miles

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There is a peculiarity in the operations of my affliction
at times the skin covering my left side seems to thicken
up when those feelings prevail the blood has a much
slower circulation the extremities of the body a less active
movement the breath short suppressed at the same time
the organs of sight become dim as also the spirit or inner
man is depressed and the whole structure without power
to awaken in me an exertion to arouse myself
tis then that aid comes to my relief by associations
formed in early youth the watchful care of a wife
the strong arm of a son and the aid of stimulents
creates within me new life when if left alone
suspended animation would continue its silent work
untilt secretly locked in the embrace of death

Hence you see what even of a romantic nature I may
have possessed the stern realities of an abiding affliction
forbids a far off ramble from to associations of home
therefore you need not look for me the coming summer
Let not the severity of my rebuke deter you from
further attempt at correspondence hoping that our effort
in the continuation and renewal of our acquaintance by letters
may be more agreeable than our long silence in the
past or in my short visit at Honesville

My Family are in the enjoyment of good health
except our uncles and aunts love

My family all give in their kind regards to all
write not only one but all a letter addressed to
John Betnap 119 Deerpark Street Chesapeake
Virginia