

Willow Springs, Mo.

Nov 9th 1913.

My dear Lois & Hubert,

Just a little note this Sunday night to tell you we are thinking of you in love. Have been away all day visiting a neighbor a couple of miles away, Mama & I rode horseback & the boys walked, am afraid if I considered myself only I would not be very sociable, for it seems a waste of time to me, almost, to spend it in conversation that does not improve ones mind in some way or other, but I try to consider it my opportunity to improve some one elses mind and fulfil the "Law of Compensation" as laid down in "The Great Work" and try and even up my balance by giving something to others for the great measure I have received and then, Mama enjoys visiting and as she says "tasting someone elses cooking, and they sure cook. - I wish you could have been with us last night you would have enjoyed an American country experience which would have been novel & amusing. believe I will describe it and let you enjoy that much knowledge of our ways. - The School House for this District is located near one corner of our farm. The District is 4 miles long by 3 miles wide, making 12 Square miles for one School House. & we

Have 8 or 9 scholars on good days & when the weather is stormy, none, & on those days the young lady teacher comes to spend the day with Maama. - our present teacher conceived the idea we ought to have a larger bell to call the children to school. so she decided to have a "Pie Supper" last night, nothing original in this for it is one of the standard ways of raising money for churches & schools in the country, but you won't know what a Pie Supper is so I'll "put you next". - first she had about an hours programme of Dialogs recitations & songs by the scholars & herself after which came the main attraction the selling of the pies which had been donated for the occasion, each had a ticket attached bearing one of the ladies names, usually the donors, but Maama made $\frac{1}{2}$ doz & put her name on one & then added to the others any young ladies name who came without a pie, for the men buy the pies without knowing the name attached and eat them in company of the lady whose name it bears. Thus some young man who desires to have a particular young lady for partner will probably buy 3 or 4 pies before he gets the right one and generally returns the pies he does not want to be sold again. I was auctioneer last night and I sold pies 3 or 4 times over thus reaping more money for the cause. They bore the names of some old ladies whom

The young fellows didn't care to have as partners, & finally I had to buy them myself and eat with a bunch of nice old ladies & tell them how lucky I was. Ha! — but do you know what an American pie is? not baked in a dish, but in a "pie plate" This is made of tin and when turned out the pie just fits a dinner plate and is usually cut in four quarters to be served. So they are more like Tarts that Mother used to make — Mince, Peach, Apple, Cherry, Plum, Raisin, & such have an upper & lower crust, while Pumpkin, Lemon, Custard, Chocolate & such have just a lower crust. — The boys bid them up to 25 or 30 cents each usually but once in awhile the girl will give him a pointer when her pie is put up, then it is up to the auctioneer to "catch on" and make him pay for it, for to show his loyalty to the girl he will get that pie if it costs him a Dollar well! after the pies are auctioned off comes the tug of war, for Mama donated a Cake with icing & decorations to be voted to the "prettiest girl" present, and another lady made one for the "houseliest man", so we announce one cent per vote the voting to close at a certain time (10 or 15 minutes) & vote on the prettiest girl first, a bunch of young men from a certain settlement, probably

4 or 5 miles East will nominate one of the girls they escorted, same with another bunch from the West, sometimes 3 or 4 girls are nominated, but only two last night. Their names are written on the black board and the voting begins, 10 for Miss Black, 15 for Miss White each paying to the treasurer as many cents as he votes, first they tie, then one is ahead, then the other and as the time approaches to close the polls it grows exciting Auctioneer calling 3 minutes only, two minutes, one minute. Then it is disclosed that one bunch has been secretly making up a purse to be plunked down the last minute to overrule the other crowd who become reckless as they each desire to honor their girl, and as the figures are changed on the blackboard announcing each girls standing. Hurrahs from one side then the other, finally the Auctioneer takes in hand calls "closed" & the Cake is handed to the fortunate girl who cuts it later when eating begins and passes it around to all. - Then comes the "Homeliest Man" contest, never so exciting but if you can start a Rivalry it becomes interesting, the side that got the other cake may decide to win them both, the other fellows won't allow any such thing and so the votes & cents pour in to the benefit of the School. Ladies may take a hand in this.

I don't know if you have anything of this kind over there, but if not you might try something of the sort for a novelty, its a sure money maker here - we vary it with a "Boy Supper" the ladies put up a nice lunch in a card board box all decorated up with tissue paper + ribbons, they each have enough for two persons. Fried chicken, pie, cake, biscuits each trying to be the daintiest cook and caterer, these are donated + sold same as the pies and the man who buys them eats the lunch with the girl whose card is in the box, —

But Mama says "bed time", we were late getting home and so have had a short evening, could chat for another hour but have a hard day before me tomorrow we have to brand cattle we completed our "round up" off the range ^{yesterday} x finding all except 3 head and heard of them so tomorrow we de-horn + mark all that needs it. I hate it for it is the only cruel thing we ever do to dumb animals but it seems necessary, and the pain is soon over we cannot well ship in car load lots with horns on for they injure each other, we endeavor to brand the horns off as much as possible and I suppose more than half my calves are born without horns + never have any, but the rest have to be cut off.

The Circuit letter passed a few days ago and all the girls report favorably on their health & happiness. Hope your cold has left you near to return. Everything lovely on the farm. we got a good scare a few weeks ago. for when we awoke on the 19th of October there lay 6 or 8 inches of snow on the ground. the forest trees were all in full leaf and green and the weight of the snow on their branches made sad havoc with them it was not safe to go in the woods. Large branches & whole trees breaking off & falling our Telephone line was put out of service & the boys & I had to be out repairing it as soon as snow ceased falling another case where the oldest inhabitant never experienced the like. I had 20 acres of hay down & buried under the snow. but it was gone in a couple of days & then turned warm & my hay is now in the stack & never seemed hurt a bit. I make most of my hay in November. everything grows good after fall rains begin.

But must kiss you & say Good Bye
Sondest love my darling & "Happy Days"
Hello! Hubert old man dont work too hard
& dont worry at all. Lovingly Bes Dau