

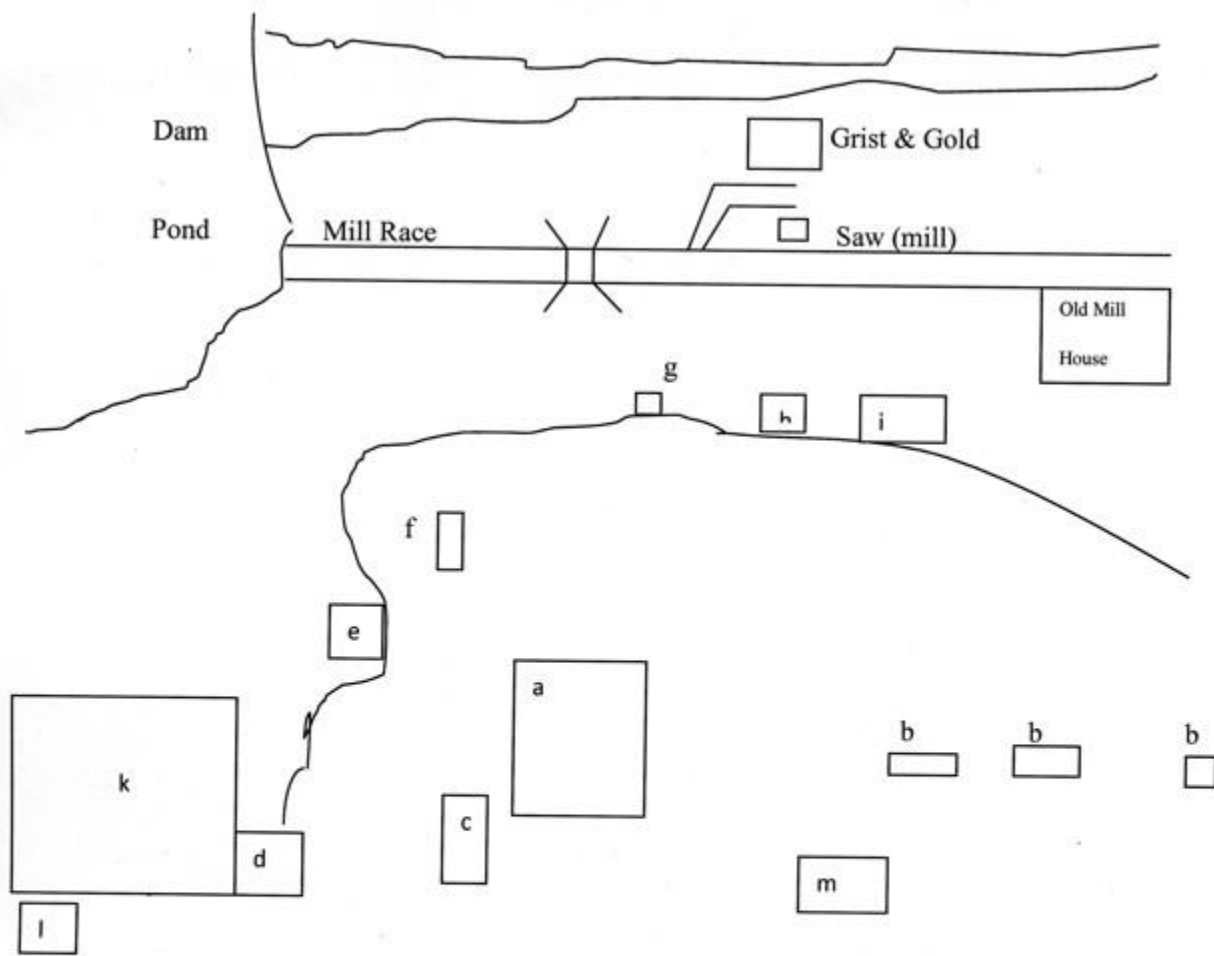
St. Catherine's Mills Feby 26th 1854

My dearest Jeanie,

Sunday has again come round but not a day of rest & quiet is it going to be for me. On waking up this morning at day light heard the wind whistling & rain pattering on the roof. First thought of my old mill house at which the masons have been at work for some days past & not being very permanently propped up feared that it might blow over. Pulling on my undershirt, pantaloons, (illegible) & over coat & started out. The first look told me I had something more to think of than the House. The creek being higher than I ever saw it & rushing over the dam like a young Niagara hurried down to the weak place in the forebay that I had already partly framed to (illegible) & found it gone. The water rushing out alongside of the wheel as if it never had gone any other way. No help for you I said to myself then to another soft spot, just in time having called the hands who love on the place made it secure & then to the dam which I found was going by the board had the pleasure of stopping a pretty little hole with straw etc. into which I rammed it as far as my legs would reach & then came up to breakfast, leaving the water rising very fast. Feeling that there was nothing more to be done & if the dam went why I could not stop it. Such a surprise I have not had for many a day last coming it had not risen at all though we had light rain during the day, when I went to bed I was raining but not very hard poured it must have after 12 o'clock imagine if you can the idea of six feet water in front of your house & you will have my feelings as I looked down upon the muddy flood that rushed along covering everything & putting 3 feet of water over the Mill House floor by 12 o'clock the creek began to subside slowly but it again looks like rain.

1 P.M. & I fear that the delay which the damage already done will make may be lengthened provoking truly when tomorrow morning I was going to begin washing. I could have told you in my next something positive but it is for some good I have no doubt & on looking round I cannot help thinking how fortunate that one place did start, had it not gone the whole forebay might have been carried off & as yet I do not see any greater damage than the undoing of nearly all my two last weeks work. (Illegible) gone, roads cut up etc. The bottom of a page is a good stopping point. So I went down to take a look round, regulated the gates so as to suit the slight fall & now again begin, but this freshet makes me anxious so much depends on the dam holding that I can hardly think of anything else. It struck me on my way up the lawn over the new road that I have been laying out & along which young trees have been planted that is all my former letters. I had given too much coulear de rose to my pictures of this place – beautiful the situation is but with dilapidated mill houses & houses for tenants in the same condition, topped by one house in no better plight. None of them have seen paint in nobody knows how many years. With the destroyed ice house & outbuildings it came to my mind that perhaps from the descriptions I had given that you might have pictured a Devasego, with everything in excellent order, if so Jeanie, blot out the ideas & be prepared to see a place that is broken down & now in that worse state of all repairs. There is a ground plan for you to study over & though not in a proper relative scale, the positions of the house is about correct the line going from e to b shows the bounds of the lawn towards the pond. The house is on the top of the first rise. The ground gradually sloping in all directions but behind it the hill again raises & is topped by the grove & the house which is in the possession of a person who claims the

property he is gradually being got out & there is the place I want to build a new house altogether if the business is found to be lucrative & permanent.



- a. Our house
- b.b.b. Workmen's houses
- c. Our Kitchen
- d. "Smokehouse"
- e. "Chicken & cow horse - log"
- f. Old Ice house
- g. coal house
- h. Blacksmith Shop
- i. Carpenter's shop
- k. Our kitchen garden
- l. Stable
- m. Store house

I go, however, it is one of my principal amusements to build castles in air at present at very useless

occupation I know but your little head & sweet smile always assists me so that another pastime more pleasant could hardly be found. Will you be able to understand all my drawing now? If not take a thin piece of paper & trace them off, I cannot let so much paper go empty. Thanks my own Jeanie for you letter of the 17th which I have just got & hardly read. It cause me much surprise as the freshet this morning. Know that I did not look for it & nearly knew that it was in the P.O., but that I no more expected to any one from town than to see a man with wings. It was brought by our cook's husband who is a waiter at one of the hotels in town & when he reached here was wet from top to toe having attempted to cross below. Was obliged to swim in a place where there is not a foot of water usually – consequence the book is a little wet but nothing hurt. I regret to hear of the death of Capt. Beckman's child. It must be a severe loss, but Jeanie, do not think me hard hearted in saying that I do not think such trials are "doubly barbed" to one of his disposition. My opinion of him is entirely at variance with yours. I judge him from his letters altogether, letters which to be sure are very painful ones to see but ones that I have covered [sic] & thought of more than ever before. He is a very vain main, a very passionate man. Who wo never allows himself to have committed a fault as others understand it. The fault must be discovered by himself – that for his bad side. His good are strong attachments at first sight or where he finds himself a favorite, generous to a fault, a warm friend, hearty hater [sic – as far as the difficulty between giving him trouble I cannot think it does, his letters on the contrary show a continued determination on his part to place upon you a confession of love which it did not exist. He would never have continued to give the pain he must have soon shown in your letters. No Jeanie, do not be sorry that your letter went. It was due to yourself & to me that such as he wrote to you should not be recd & as your letters contain inference to the subject they ought to be destroyed by you. Deeply do I feel for him in his grief, but not one iota the less do I think that it palliates his fault; my very heart jumps into my throat when I think of those insulting letters written in reply to yours. Oh, Jeanie do not speak of the break with sorrow. Regret you may feel & do, but sorrow no, oh no – as for lame to you, if any blame is to be attached it is for not acting sooner. The trial would have been sooner over, well, very well do I know the trial it has been, but as you say in yours before think of the blessing without price it has both of us given. Your confidence in me I always knew, mine in you, you did too – thank God for all His blessings. I could go on for an hour about this but will stop if I can.

Your lists made me laugh heartily & as I read over the crockery, the India rubber house [sic] came before my house what a big & at the same time small list it appeared. Big when compared with my present array 5 plates, 2 soup plates, 2 dishes etc.; etc. in this case consists of 1 pitcher, 2 bowls & belonging to our set in Washington, a dozen tumblers & something else. Before this I suppose they have been forwarded & though a little larger than I would have written, it is none too larger, can be sold easier if we want to learn & will replace breakage if we stay. The wine glasses we want but it will do for them I come on, want for our friends, not for ourselves. As for the linen, we might as well wait till I come on. There is enough here to keep me comfortable & I hardly know what I have here & in Washington. The towels may certainly be scratched off. The other articles will some of them be wanted. The number of sheets on the lists appears small to me when compared with the other articles. I will tell Father in my next letter to send you some money so as to meet the bills, if the crockery has not gone do as you please about the plates, only get them to match in color as well as shape, there is generally a different to the

two kinds, though they can be found the same. The difference in price does not amount to much & I think should not be considered if the stoneware is awful heavy & the chine just as strong. You news about John Monroe did not surprise me much as I heard a short time since that he was making money fast. I hardly think though that Aunt Margaret would give up if head come home without spoons. She remembers the time when she had to shin it as Em would say & wants to keep Laura out of the same box. A year has nearly past, my own dear Jeanie, since you knew how deeply I loved you & I felt the kiss that told me it was returned even more from thy than mine own. How quickly it has flown when to have been told then that time would find us still separate would have appeared as ages, & even now when on the very brink, what may not arise to keep it off as much longer with two as cool advisors & ones who we both feel are deeply interested in our happiness tell us to be prudent, not to many till certainty is within our hands. At this time my own dearest Jeanie I cannot think that they are right. I am striving to attain to a position in a new world to me, striving hard & I trust successfully, but it is far away from all I love, detached from society & my heart droops at times. If success is to attend my efforts, how much more sweet would it be were you a participant. If failures are met with here, will we feel it less when far from another? Would not on the contrary, disappointment be more easy to have together. These thoughts are brought about by the knowledge that the Capps business will perhaps keep me here close again. That more months have I got to wait. Yet Jeanie, I will not attempt to break down your Mother's – until I can say to her I am successful. I remain where I am, impatient, oh how impatient I am. Hard to bear Jeanie this separation but bear it I must for your sake, for mine own. Yet in a moment, I may be ordered to sea & now could not refuse the warlike appearance of things makes me feel that those months here are so much happy time thrown away. Everything looks well here & I know not what has caused this sudden burst. I have felt it at times coming up for a month & now it has made its appearance. Perhaps the fact of telling you all may relieve my mind somewhat, but oh how lonely I am. The very sight of the face of one I can talk to on something else but machinery makes me glad. With all these feelings, I am truly content here & every day become more pleased with the prospect before that prospect however has you my own Jeanie in the picture, at the same time it is selfishness to hurry you here & this troubles me very much, but it is not for a life time.

The creek still going down so I will go to bed & with love to all am always,

Your own Jack

Thank you for the book. It contains some of the things I want, but is not exactly the one written for. It will (illegible) my purpose at present. Keep an account of all your spending for me & I will have some money sent to you. I want to write more but won't as it is too late & there will be lots of work tomorrow.

Your own

Jack

- A forebay is a reservoir or canal from which water is taken to run equipment.
- John Monroe married Jeanie and Jack's cousin, Laura Renwick in 1854.