

CALIFORNIA LETTERS OF THE
GOLD RUSH PERIOD

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF JOHN INGALLS, 1849-1851

EDITED BY R. W. G. VAIL

JOHAN INGALLS, son of the well-known American portrait painter Walter Ingalls and his first wife Hannah M. (Woodman) Ingalls, was born, probably at Sanbornton, N. H., Feb. 28, 1829. About 1846, the year of his mother's death, he went to live with the family of Mr. Normand Smith of Hartford, Conn., founder of a large and once famous firm which manufactured and dealt in saddlery, harness, farm and plantation supplies, with branch offices in New York and New Orleans and a large trade with the southern planters.

In spite of the fact that Normand Smith had fifteen children of his own, he welcomed the motherless artist's son, adopted him into his own family and found him a job in the dry goods store of William S. Thomson and Company of Hartford. Normand Smith's youngest son, Jonathan Trumbull Smith, became the most intimate friend of his foster brother John Ingalls who was his own age and had exactly similar tastes. Though Normand Smith and two of his older sons were extremely religious, "Trum," as the youngest boy was called, and his new brother John were a lively pair, warm hearted, fun loving and popular among the young people of the best Hartford families.

About 1846 Trumbull went to New York to work in the family's office there and from that year until 1851, at least, he received frequent sprightly letters from John who remained at Hartford until 1849. In 1848, however, the discovery of gold in California became the

principal topic of conversation among the young men of Hartford, and we find John writing to "Trum" on December tenth of that year as follows:

Did you know I was going to California? I did not, but I thought perhaps you did. I should like to go first rate and I wish you could go too. I have written a long letter to my Father this morning on the subject and have tried to persuade him to go. If he thinks favorably of it I will let you know when I get an answer. People are talking a great deal about it here and every one thinks it is the best place in the world to make money. A dozen young fellows are going to start from New-Haven and I presume several will go from here. Dont you think I had better go than to drag along here with Thomson [William S. Thomson, manager of William S. Thomson & Co.'s store]? I suppose you hear a great deal said about [it] in Gotham. Tell me what you think of the prospect of [a] young man like John Ingalls (you know him) that goes out there.

The postscript of this letter, signed "Anne," brings a new and interesting person into the family picture, for nineteen days after the letter was written, John Ingalls, on the eve of his departure for California, had married Anne Smith, a charming girl of their social group. Anne's postscript reads:

You can most plainly perceive that John has actually caught the California Fever. It's raging in this city to a frightful extent. I shall be obliged to give the young man some cooling restoratives. I beg of you not to say anything which may add to the virulence of his distemper. I hope it will pass off without any serious consequences. Anne.

John was not, however, to be dissuaded, and so we find him, less than a month after his wedding, sailing out of New York harbor on a ship bound around the Horn for California and the fortune which he was *not* to find in the land of gold.

Beginning with two letters from Anne to "Trum," we will let John tell his own story in the following seventeen letters to his foster brother, all carefully kept by their recipient until his death, after which they came, in the Summer of 1937, into the possession of the American Antiquarian Society, together with other interesting but less historically important family letters.

After his "Forty-Niner" adventure, John Ingalls managed a ranch in Texas for a time and he and Anne became the parents of a daughter and two sons; but the year 1868 found him working as a clerk for one of his other foster brothers, Morris W. Smith, who was in charge of the family's branch office in New Orleans. Here John Ingalls remained at least until 1878, when his name disappears from the New Orleans directory and we hear of him no more.

Hartford, May 5, 1849

MON AMI,

Have you heard from John? "If you haven't, I have" as the old song says—Yes, indeed! I received yesterday a dear, good letter of three and a half crowded sheets. You can guess how happy it made me,—I did not know whether to cry or laugh, so I compromised the matter by doing each alternately. Mr. Thomson met me as I was going out of the Office with my prize, and I really almost overthrew the poor man. He stopped me to know if 'twas from John, and what I said to the man I am sure I don't know,—I have a faint recollection of his wonder-struck phiz—and fear I was not over-ceremonious.

John says he sent you a letter (8th March) by a whaler bound to N. Y.—have you yet received it?—if not, you will be glad to know that he is well and happy. He says that more than one half the passengers are already sick of the enterprise, but he must frankly say that he is not sorry and that what he has undertaken, that, he is determined to finish. So I thought—I find I have not overrated his energy and firmness. If his health and life be spared, he will become a wealthy, prosperous man—everything else of good, he is already. I am more proud of my husband's strong energetic mind and noble, affectionate disposition than I shall ever be of aught else the world contains. I should be happy & contented with him, if our home was as poor & homely as I hope it will some day be rich & luxurious. There are but few such as he, is it not so?

The Pacific arrived at Rio on 9th March and it has been reported there 25th March. Can you tell the reason of such a protracted stay? He said the Ship would sail in a few days as

no repairs were wanted. I should extremely like to know what detained them if you hear any thing about it, will you please let me know? They will not reach California before July if they lose so much time at Valparaiso. I feel so much relieved by hearing that John was safe and well so far on his voyage, & I dont think I shall fret any more till it's time to hear from Valparaiso. After you went away I had a villainous fit of the dolefuls, out of which there was no deliverance until the letter came. I did not express to you, Trum, my gratitude for the delightful ride I enjoyed with you—it was not because I did not appreciate your kind attention, for my thanks were on my lips twenty times & were stopped by some question from you. I felt right lonesome after you returned to N. Y. It seemed something like catching a glimpse of my darling husband, to see you—because my last sight of him was yours also—perhaps that is it? If you have not yet received your letter from John you will get it very soon, and as it will probably contain all you would like to hear I will make no extracts from mine—so you will enjoy it better if new. He says he might write pages of the many exciting scenes he has witnessed but gives only a few incidents saying he hopes to tell me the rest with his own lips in less than a year, yet I must not place too much dependence upon the expectation of going to him. Whatever he says I shall obey, felling sure that whatever he does, is right & “all for the best.” Am I not a pattern wife? No! it's not I—the excellence lies in him.

Strange revelations in these days, Trum! Never in my life was I so taken aback, as when Maria told me that she had been married nearly a year! Truly, “strange things are curius” but this distances all. How John will laugh! I can not get over it—she is a sly one, for all that demure face of hers. Now, nobody that ever saw my wicked physiognomy would be surprised at my “cutting such a caper”, but Maria is surely the last one for a private marriage. Well, I only wonder—but no matter—all her troubles have ended, I hope. Mrs. Prior! How queer it sounds!

In about a fortnight, I start for New Hampshire and if you can possibly send it I will trouble you for that miniature of John. They will wish to see it, I suppose in Sanbornton. His friends

will remember him when he resembled that. If you do travel, during the Summer, anywhere in the vicinity of Father, I should be very glad to see you & I think I can vouch for the rest. Take care of yourself, Trum, and dont give your heart to "Anna" (you dont suppose I've forgotten that tress of hair?). I predict sorrow if you do. Now, dont hate me.

With all good wishes,
I am yours, truly,
ANNE INGALLS

Hartford, May 15, 1849

MON AMI [Trumbull Smith]

. . . I suppose you have by this time received your letter from Rio? Since the first one came, I have received two more very interesting letters, the latest date was March 27th. He wrote all concerning their difficulties—about the same as reported through the newspapers (Accept my thanks for the extracts). He said nothing of the threat of setting fire to the powder-magazine. He probably thought it would make me rave 'old style.' He says he has seen in Rio many things he had never dreamed of & gives glowing accounts of the amusements they all enjoy. I will not repeat what he wrote for perhaps you too have had more letters from him. Did he tell you he had gained fifteen pounds? Thats because his wife is not there to bother him. . . .

ANNE

Ship Pacific Feb 26th 1849 Lat. 12 South,
Long 31.20' west.

DEAR BRO. TRUM,

I wish I had the power to bring you on board the Ship Pacific by an effort of the will. I know you would enjoy it here. I am sure we could enjoy ourselves together most anywhere. Well Trum, here we are twelves degrees south of the equator going along at the rate of nine knots an hour and expecting to be in Rio this week Friday or Saturday. O! Moses!! wasn't it hot on the equator, you had better believe it was—there we lay for eight days some of the time not going a half a mile an hour, with not a breath of wind, and the sun coming right straight

down. There wont be any head or tail to this letter if I go on in this way so I may as well begin at the beginning. I suppose you know how lucky we were in slipping out of New York so I wont try to give you an account of that, suffice it to say that the Pacific left pier twenty seven at two o'clock in the afternoon of the 22nd of Jan and going down about twenty miles came to anchor. We started at nine oclock that evening from pier No 1 North river in the Steamer James Fairlie to go down on board. We accomplished that a little after midnight & weighed anchor the next morning at eight oclock. Many had a weakness that day for putting their heads over the side of the ship and I among the rest, but the next day I felt pretty well & continued so to do for a week when I began to feel badly again—one day I was quite sick and that ended my seasickness. Since that time my health has been first rate & I think I have gained about ten pounds. From the 27th to the 6th of February when we struck the North-East trades we had some very rough weather. Our ship was nearly upside down some of the time. We had one squall strike us that frightened some of the passengers very much. When it struck us we shipped a tremendous sea—several hogsheads of water came over the side down the main hatch into our cabin and we were all afloat for a few minutes. Those persons that were on deck went from one side to the other—rather quicker than suited their ideas of motion—some few on their feet but most of them on the other end—fortunately no bones were broken and we had a good laugh over it afterwards. There have been only one half a dozen fish caught since we started—one shark and five albigores. We had great fun drawing the shark up out of the water for he hung back like a good one. He measured eight feet long and had quite a large mouth of his own. The most beautiful thing I ever saw in the way of fish was a diamond-fish I discovered the other morning just under our stern. He resembled a large bat and would measure six feet from the extremity of one side to the other. His color was dark green. There were two suckers lying on his back about eighteen inches long, perfectly white. They looked precisely like bull-heads wrong side up. There was also a pilot-fish swimming about that seemed to conduct the party. He was a beautiful

little fellow about a foot long—dark brown with red stripes going entirely round him from his head to his tail. Captain Tibbotts succeeded in striking the diamond-fish with a harpoon but after struggling a short time and bending the harpoon nearly double he broke away and departed with his tail behind him. I suppose you never saw a thunder shower at sea—it is a glorious sight and we have had one. At eight o'clock in the evening when it was beginning to clear up, there were two compositants on the ship—one on the very top of the main-mast and the other on the top of the fore-mast. They looked like very brilliant stars from the deck. Packard climbed up the main-mast to see what it looked like but the pole at the top was so slippery he could get only within two feet of the top. He said it was a very bright substance about as large as his head. Several particles fell down on his vest but they left no mark. One morning when we were becalmed on the equator two boats were lowered and a party of seven got into one and thirteen persons besides myself in the other. We rowed about for two or three hours and had some great fun—the ship presented a beautiful appearance when [we] were two hundred yards distant. She sets on the water beautifully and there were a hundred persons looking over her sides dressed in all sorts of ways—I don't believe there were two shirts alike in the whole lot. A bird flew on deck the other night and was caught by one of the passengers. He was of the gull species and one of the doctors on board stuffed him the next day. I suppose if you go in to Barnum's three years hence you will see the little fellow with a label on him "Caught on board Ship Pacific on her way to California in 1849." If you see it you may be sure it is the same one. There are 126 souls on board and so far it has been very healthy. One of the sailors has been troubled with fits but is getting along pretty well now. Our party are all well and in good spirits. Mr. Griffing has got a very pretty little girl three and one half years old. She and I are first rate friends and she will leave any person in the ship when she sees me coming. She told her mother the other day she was going to marry me, you must not tell Anne, she might be jealous. Our Company all succeeded in getting good state-rooms. Cyp and myself have got as good a one as there is in the Ship. I wish you could

take a look into it, I guess you [would] burst out a smiling. I have not been home-sick a bit yet, though there are some on board that would give all their old boots to get back. My time is taken up in reading, writing, studying Spanish, playing whist and chess, & running about the rigging.

I have been up to the truck at the very extremity of the main-mast and that is what not more than three or four have done. I have slept on deck several warm clear nights and have found it very comfortable. You know some folks pretend to say that if you sleep in the moon you will get your face drawn down on one side, the morning after I first slept on deck I overheard some passengers talking of the danger of it and mentioning cases where persons had been moon-struck. I thought I would play a joke on them so drawing my left eye down as you have seen me do when imitating a drunken man I pretended it was affected by the moon. The news spread like wildfire that a person had been moon-struck and I had a great crowd around me in less than no time. There are five doctors on board and they all wanted to take a look at the eye. I found it rather difficult to keep it down for so long a time but I managed to get through it. Some advised one thing and some another. Mrs. Griffing felt very badly about it and said if there was anything she could do for me she would do it with pleasure. I told her one of the doctors had advised me to bathe it in a little weak brandy and water which I thought I should do. I staid round on deck for an hour or two and then came down and pretended to bathe it. I then put a handkerchief over it and went on deck. I told them it was better and the next morning it was as well as ever and not a person, with the exception of one or two that were in the secret, suspected that I was gamoning them. I know of several that have got full accounts of it in their journals.

Wednesday 28th. This is my birth-day and if I was in New York we would have a little time. By the way, I wish you would send along one of your good cigars. I have not seen a decent one since I came aboard. Those that were decent when we started are miserable now, the salt air has a very bad effect on them. Whenever you go to Hartford if you find Anne feeling badly you must encourage her all you can & make her feel if

possible that there is no danger. I feel just as safe as I should in going from New Haven to Hartford in the cars. I shall expect to find a very long letter in California from you telling all the news since I left and I hope telling me I may expect to see you out there next Spring. I dont know whether to think Napoleon [His brother, Napoleon Bonaparte Ingalls] is in Hartford or New York. I hope he is with you and that you will take good care of him. I have not seen land for thirty six days. It seems a long time to look a head but a short time to look back, nevertheless I shall not be sorry to step on land once more, but there is a good deal of doubt about our being able to go ashore at Rio. It remains to be seen but if there is any such thing I am bound to go ashore. We have seen a great many vessels since we started but none have come within hailing distance. One came within two miles of us yesterday. Our signal was shown and very likely you will have seen us reported in New-York before you get this letter. We saw a water-spout before dinner and I assure you it was a magnificent sight. It seemed to extend up thirty or forty feet and was as large as a hogshead some of the way. It was about three miles from us.

Now Trum I must bid you good bye for a long time but dont think I shall cease to think of you because I can neither see or hear from you. I look on you as the best friend I have in the world with perhaps one exception and I know you wont blame me for excepting her—you cant think or begin to [know] how much I love my wife—my dear Anne. Now dont fail to let me find at least twenty pages from you when I get to San Francisco. Tell me about everything that has transpired since I left. Cyp¹ is well, enjoys the voyage and send[s] his love to you. Give my love to your Father & Mother when you see them and remember me to all friends.

Your affectionate brother

J. INGALLS

P.S. Monday March 5th. We are in sight of land this morning—the only land we have seen for forty one days. The wind did not hold out as we expected and we have now got a head wind so it is doubtful when we shall get into the harbor.

¹Cyprian N. Humphrey, b. Hartford, d. Ogdensburg, N. Y. 1859–1860, son of Lemuel and Mary (Martin) Humphrey.

We are ten miles from cape Frio and seventy miles from Rio. Yesterday as we had a calm two boats were lowered to go on board a vessel that was lying about six miles on our larboard side. We discovered her to be the Pedro Grande forty two days out of Oporto. She was a brig and mounted eight guns. The Captain treated them with great politeness and invited them into the cabin where they found the table loaded with wines, apples, nuts of all kinds, warm bread, figs, cakes &c then they made quite a feast. She had forty men on board and only one could speak a word of English—he was an Englishman & the others were all Portuguese. There were a variety of opinions as to what she was—some thought she was a pirate, others that she was a slaver & some that she was a smuggler. She had evidently too many men on board for a merchantman. Tuesday 6th, We are now about fifty miles from Rio & there is a prospect of our getting in to day. If we do I will eat an orange for you. Good Bye Brother Trum—dont forget me—Cyp sends respects,

Yours

JOHN I.

There is no man by the name of Falkner on board.

San Francisco Aug 24th 1849

DEAR BRO. TRUM,

I expect you think it is about time that you heard from your brother John. So do I but the fates have ordered that you should not hear before. We got in here on the 5th of Aug just in time to be too late for the steamer & now I suppose this will start on the 1st of Sept. I recd your very kind letter on my arrival here & I am very much obliged for it. It contained all the news that I have heard from Hartford. It is true I got a nice long letter from my dear Anne but she has too much to write about to tell the news. The Steamer Panama arrived here on the 18th but not a word from you. The only letter I recd was from my wife who was well & in as good spirits as could be expected under the circumstances. I hope you will call on her whenever you are in Hartford . . . Cyp & all the rest of our party except Pettis & myself went up to Sacramento City on the 9th & I expect before this time some of them are at

the mines. Cyp will not go at present as we are going to establish a store at S. City & Cyp & I shall probably have to be there all the time. We have got nearly all our freight out of the Ship & most of it I have sent up. Part of the boat materials I have sold here for 200\$ which pays very well. I have sold three of Colts pistols, two for 75\$ each & one small one for 50\$.

The accounts from the mines are so contradictory that we hardly know what to believe. Some say a man cannot average more than half an ounce a day, others say they can make from one to two ounces a day & some that have been to the mines & are too lazy to work say that nothing can be made. There is no doubt but that there is plenty of gold & nothing but hard work will get it out. Rents here are enormous & there is a great chance for speculators that have capital. Stores here ten by fifteen covered with canvas rent for 200\$ a month & a block that sold here a year or two since for 1500\$ brings in a rent now of 500 000\$ a year. One Hotel in it rents for 160 000\$. Lots that sold here in April for 20000\$ cannot be bought now for 100000\$. The Lord only knows where all this will end. Tin pans sell here for 5\$ each, Pickles in quart jars for 4\$. Saleratus for 1 25/100 a pound, Butter 1 25/100, Cheese 50c, Dried apples 40c &c &c. All these things are said to bring a much higher price in Sacramento City. Lumber is worth \$350 a M., Horse carts 300\$, harnesses 75\$. Saddles are cheap, saddle bags a common article bring 5\$. Beef can be bought here in any quantities for 5\$ a barrel. Framed houses sell very well here. I saw one sold for 2250\$ that cost 81\$ in New York. There will continue to be a great demand for buildings as most of the people here live in tents. Laboring men get from ten to sixteen dollars a day for work & men with a horse & cart can make 25\$ a day. Mr. Granger has been in that business & has made money I guess.

Every one here is on a level, it is nothing unusual to see a New York dandy rolling barrels. They make a regular business here of gambling & do it as openly as you would sell a bill of Saddlery. The first Hotels have gambling tables in their front rooms some of which rent for 200\$ a day. Men think nothing of winning or losing 50 000\$ in one day—what would your father say to see anything of that kind. The people here are very

peacable much more so than one would suppose where there are twenty five different nations mixt up. A Frenchman was murdered two miles back of the town a day or two since which is the only thing of the kind that has happened since I have been here. There is no danger of having anything stolen here—we leave our tent sometimes for hours together with the trunks inside unlocked & always find things just as we left them. We live in a tent but a short distance from the landing & sleep on the ground but we have plenty of blankets so that we are very comfortable. We turn in all standing. I have not had my clothes of[f] but once since we came ashore. A little darkee that came out with us from Rio does our cooking so we get along very well at the cost of 1\$ a day. It is very warm here till noon when the wind commences blowing a perfect gale & the way the dust flies is a caution. The evenings are very cold & one is not comfortable without an overcoat.

Sat. 25th. Yesterday afternoon the wind blew as strong as usual & I went out for a sail with Douglas—a mate of the Pacific. We were going along finely at the rate of about eight knots when the first we knew the mast snapped off & dropped overboard. Luckily we had two oars with us & we had the pleasure of pulling back. We had the same boat that carried 11 of us to Juan Fernandes. I suppose Anne has told you about that scrape. A man came down from the mines today that was formerly a porter in a Dry Goods house in New-York. He had 5000\$ in gold dust with him that he had dug alone since the 1st of June—that's encouraging isn't it. Yesterday I recd your letter by Mr. Tracy through the Post Office. I have not seen him but if I do I shall introduce myself to him. I tell you what there is nothing like California to give a man brass as well as gold. A brother of Clinton Preston is here keeping a lunch & doing well I guess. Ten of our party went in there the first morning ashore before we got a tent up & took a very fair breakfast—the bill was 15\$—What!!! A man by the name of Hunt that formerly worked for a man in Hartford is teaming here. He gave 600\$ for a mule & common horse cart & now makes some days 50\$. You must not think every one is doing as well. A great many that have come here are sick enough of the place & would give all their old boots to get back. Water is

worth a dollar a barrel & is poor at that. Nearly every one that comes ashore here has the diarrhea. I have had a touch of it but am in first rate health now & hope with care to continue so. You must look out Trum that you dont get the cholera. I see by the papers that it is raging in New-York. I am disappointed not to get a letter from you by this steamer. You promised to write by every one & if you do not get a letter from me by each steamer you may know that it is the fault of the mails. In my next I can tell you more about the mines for in the mean time I shall have been there if it is only to look around. Remember me to your Father & Mother, Mr. Fulton¹ and all friends.

from your brother JOHN

[P.S.] Pettis² sends respects & Cyp was particular to tell me to remember him to you when I wrote. We spoke of you very often on the voyage & I find he thinks almost as much of you as I do—you know how much that is.

Sunday 26th. The schooner Genl Morgan arrived here on the 6th. All well aboard. Crowell has been to the mines & returned. He thinks the prospect is good. The Genl Morgan will run between here and Sacramento C.

Direct your letters to John Ingalls Care Bluxome, Denison, & Dinando [Bluxom & Co.] San-Francisco Cal. & they will be forwarded to me.

Remember me to your lady-love when you see her again which I suppose will be soon—judging you by myself.

San Francisco Sep 24th 1849

DEAR TRUM

I am in the greatest hurry in the world but I thought I must write you if it was only a few words. We have got a store in Sacramento City & I have been down here a week buying goods. I shall go up this afternoon. We have done very well selling goods but as all our party have been sick except Pettis, Primus & myself they have not accomplished much. They were all doing very well when I left but I have heard since that Humphrey was sick coming down on the Genl Morgan. Four of

¹N. Goodrich Fulton, manager of the New York office of T. Smith & Co., 101 Maiden Lane.

²Probably John Pettis, Jr., who appears as a clerk in the 1847 Hartford directory.

our party were at the mines & Humphrey went up to carry some provisions to them. He was taken sick there & had to be brought down in a cart but before I left he had got quite well again. All of Wheaton's men have been sick—Butler & Cushing very sick. The general complaint is Dysentary & Fever & Ague. I have been very lucky so far as I have not been sick a day. The accounts from the mines are about the same. Some people have made fortunes & others have not paid expenses. We think of putting up a log house in the dry diggings & get all the goods into it we can before the rainy season commences. A great many persons are getting dissatisfied with this country & are going home as fast as possible. The steamer tickets sell here for a large premium. Mr. Rowley, the gentleman that takes this letter has seen sufficient of the elephant & is going home in the next steamer. He can give you any information you want about the country. Be kind enough to forward the enclosed letter to my wife by mail & she will be much obliged to you as well as myself. My next letter Trum shall be a longer one but you must excuse me this time. I hope you will not fail to write by every steamer.

Your Affec^t bro

J. INGALLS

P. S. Remember me to Mr. Fulton, your Father & Mother & all friends

Sacramento River, On board Steamer
Senator for S. Francisco Dec 13th 1849.

DEAR BRO TRUM,

I this morning rec^d a first rate letter from you dated Oct. 15, the first one I have rec^d from you in answer to one from me since I have been here. It gives me great pleasure to learn that you continue in good health & have not forgotten your brother far off in California. You ask me what I think of your coming to Cal. & I tell you honestly that I should not like to advise you to come though I have not the least doubt but that you would make money here if you had your health. There are thousands of persons here that hardly ever saw a sick day in the States that are completely broken down & many of them, if they live, never will fully recover their health. You might be perfectly

well here but there is nothing certain about it & if you should come here on my recommendation & lose your health I never should forgive myself. You are just the man to make money here but these dull sleepy fellows that cant turn around once a week had better stay at home. A man to make money here wants to stir about & keep his eyes peeled.

The markets are so changeable here that if you were to ship goods for this place around the Horn, that now are paying five or six hundred per ct profit, perhaps by the time they arrived here might have to be sold for less than the cost & fgt. Single cart harness when we first arrived here were worth 75\$ & I have since seen a full set of harness for four mules sell for 20\$.

We have closed up our store in Sac. City & our party are all in mines except myself & I expect to get there by a week from this time. I am going to San Francisco for the last time this season to stop only one day & then I am bound for the diggings to spend the winter. We have a good log house at Hangtown, Weavers-Creek & a good stove so I think we can manage to live comfortably this winter & I hope make some money. We had to pay 1000\$ a ton to get some of our goods up which would be considered rather a high price in the States for Carting freight 50 miles.

What goods we had left I sold out at Auction. Wouldnt you laugh to see me selling goods as Auctioneer, but a man dont know what he can do till he tries. I bought a mule one day of a man at private sale & jumped on his back & rode him to the Stock Auction where there is always a great crowd & sold him in five minuits for 50\$ advance. I suppose you heard long ago that Cyp had gone home by the way of Canton. He enjoyed miserable health while here though I hope it will be fully restored before he reaches home. I think I wrote you that Packard had left the Co. He is now working at the Parker House San Francisco where I suppose he gets good living & dont hurt himself with work. Matthewson has also left since he went to the mines, he was sick for the first two months after he got here & didnt earn the Co. a cent & as soon as he got to the mines & thought there was a prospect of his making something, he stept out. That shows how much honor some people have in California. We are now reduced to eight in number & I hear

they have been doing very well lately. The other day Jones made fifty dollars in a few hours with a pan.

The rainy season commenced much earlier than usual this year & goods have been very high in the mines. Flour & Pork two dollars a pound, ie 400\$ per barrel & other provisions in proportion & common thick boots have been sold in Sac City for four ounces a pair.

Next Spring I shall probably be in trade again either in S. Francisco or Sac City & I just wish you was here to be with me for there are chances every day to make money in a perfectly safe operation. I sold a little lot of goods the other day from a sample before I bought them & made 160\$ which I thought paid pretty well for ten minuits work.

My health is first rate never better & I grow fat every day. If I go on in this way the first I know I shall weigh 180 lbs. I guess that will rather beat you. A month or six weeks since we had considerable rain but for the last two weeks till night before last we have had beautiful weather. The day before yesterday I sold our tent as it stood for 150\$ cost 30\$ in New York. That night we had a hard storm & yesterday morning it was flat as a pancake. Several buildings were blown down & take it all around considerable damage was done. I made up my mind that I sold the tent at just about the right time. Trum if you do make up your mind to come out here the first thing you do must be to find me for you have no idea how much I want to see you. Come across the isthmus & bring your money rather than ship goods around the Horn—though I have no doubt but that a great many goods would pay a large profit over New York prices next year. Shovels, Spades, Saddles & most kinds of Hard-ware are a great drug here. Heavy Clothing, Boots, Flannels, Woolen Hose &c are in great demand. You can see from San Francisco Papers how provisions &c are selling.

Your affect brother

J. INGALLS

[P.S.] Remember me to your Father & Mother, Mr. Fulton and all friends. You say you are not engaged to that girl over in Brooklyn but from what I can learn I wouldnt think strange if it was a fact—Young men will do such things. Dont fail to

write by every Steamer for it does me "a right smart chance" of good to hear from you, tis the next thing to seeing you face to face.

Hangtown [Placerville] Jan 16th 18[50]

DEAR BRO TRUM,

You will certainly be expecting a letter from me when you receive this & as today is not favorable for mining the best thing I can do is to write you, at least a short letter. I arrived in this beautiful town on the 22nd of last month after a pretty hard siege from Sacramento City up. We started on the 18th three of us in Company & came on the way ten miles. It was so muddy that we were obliged to come very slow with our packed mules. The next day it commenced raining at about noon but we succeeded in getting 18 miles farther on our journey & stopped for the night at Mormon tavern. O how it rained that night. if we had had a tight roof I should have cared nothing for it but truly a respectable rail fence would have made a splendid roof compared to the one we had. We bought barley for our mules for the low price of one dollar a quart & a little cold tea for ourselves for two dollars each & then as we could not get within a rod of the fire we made up our minds to turn in & get warm. There was such a crowd in the house, the berths were all taken up so we had to spread our blankets on the ground, I should say in the mud for the mud was nearly ankle deep on the ground. We were obliged to cover up our heads as well as our bodies for the rain came down in torrents. I had just got into house when a man stepped square on to my head in getting into his berth. I should have thought that rather rough treatment at home but we dont mind such little things in California. We got our shins stepped on several times with remarkably heavy boots containing a pr of feet not very light but aside from these little inconveniences we got through the night very well. The next morning it rained equally hard but at about nine A. M. we packed up for I was determined not to pass another night in that house. Such mud as we had to go through, Trum you can have no idea of it till you come to California & see for yourself. We could hardly go three rods without going in to our waists. The mules got

mired frequently & then the packs had to come off & we got out the best way we could. Sometimes by pulling them & sometimes by rolling them over. You may think it strange but I enjoyed all this & never felt better in my life than I did this same rainy day. After crossing the streams we were obliged to pull our boots off & ring our stockings. After we had gone four miles we came to a stream larger than any we had crossed & I volunteered to go ahead to see how deep it was. While we were hesitating a man came out of a log house nearby and advised us not to try to ford it for he said it was so swift no man could stand against it so we concluded to stop there that night. Just after we had finished unpacking a man tried to swim the stream from the other side on a horse but he had not proceeded five feet in the water before the horses feet were taken from under him & the man very naturally rolled off, the horse swam across & the man went down stream as though the d— was after him. He managed to catch hold of a tree & exercised his lungs hollering murder &c. We threw him a rope & managed to draw him ashore though he was pretty well frightened & somewhat wet. We stopped at this place two nights & on the following day went?] twenty miles—the ballance of the distance to Hangtown. I found our party very pleasantly situated in a valley between two very high hills & all glad of course to see me. We have a very good log house much better in fact than I expected to find. There are a great many log houses in this valley. I should think between three & four hundred & probably inhabited by three thousand persons. In our cabin we have eleven persons eight remaining in the Company & three persons boarding with [us]—Clark & Grimes who came up with me & a young man named Durgin an old crony of mine from New Hampshire. Primus does the cooking & we get along nicely, I enjoy this kind of life very much & find I can do as much work at mining as the best of them. In mining we have done very well since I have been here—Clark & Pettis have had the richest hole. One afternoon they took out of eight pan fulls of dirt 163 dollars. For two days we have been unable to work on account of the weather but the last two days we worked we made about 300 dollars, six working one day & seven the other. Some are doing first rate here and some are

doing very little. I see Jim Hamilton once in a while but I dont think he has made much money. My health is first rate though Clark & Grimes [have been?] sick since we arrived here.

Now my dear Trum, I have covered the four pages of this sheet & have in fact said nothing I presume that will be of the least interest to you except that I am well & doing very well at present. I feel confident judging you by myself that it will always give you joy to hear that of me. I suppose you have seen by the papers that Sacramento City is completely overflowed. A man that arrived from there last night says the water is up to the second story of many buildings & that barrels & provisions of all sorts were floating about the streets in great abundance. The city is completely deserted & no business is carried on except at some of the vessels lying along the side of the river. The water came up so fast that a great many sick persons are said to have been drowned. Dont you think we were lucky in getting out of that place just as we did. I expect we shall stay in this city of Hangtown¹ about two months longer & then vamose for some othe rancho.

There are quite a number of young ladies here who came over the plains & some of them are very good looking. Dont tell Anne I have had anything to do with them for she might feel badly over it. They had a ball here on New Years. Primus superintended the table arrangements. I [?]. After they got seated at the tables they looked [?] than anything I ever expected to see in the mines of California. Trum, how does that girl in Brooklyn come on. I suppose you are not married yet though I should not be surprised to hear at any moment that you were. I should like to be with you in New York tonight. I think we could find enough to talk about to keep us awake till three oclock tomorrow morning but I wouldnt promise to stay more than one night for there is a certain young lady in Hartford that I shouldnt at all object to seeing. I am very glad to learn that your sister Mary has recovered her health & if she wants to keep well I should advise her to get married. Please remember me to your Father & Mother. I shall remember them all ways with grattitude for they have always treated me more like a son than anything else. Remember me to your brother

¹Hangtown was the first important town at the California end of the overland trail.

Thomas, Mr. Fulton & all enquiring friends & write me by every opportunity. You have no idea how well it makes one feel in this wild country to hear from dear friends at home.

Your affect brother

JOHN.

Sacramento City Jan 31st /50

DEAR BRO TRUM,

Your long looked for letter arrived last week, dated Nov 24th. It was the first word I have received from you in a long time, it must have been two months at least. I do not blame you at all for of course there was no use in your writing when you was expecting me home but now that it is finally decided that I am to remain here for the present I hope you will not fail to write at least every month.

When you write, Trum, about having such nice times in New York going to hear Jenny Lind &c I think I was very foolish not to go home this Winter for here it has been as dull as Sunday all the time. We have not made our salt for the last two months but hope for better times in the Spring. There has been a great excitement here lately about Gold Bluff and thousands have left our part of the Country for that place. It is on the coast between San Francisco & Oregon. The first story was got up by a lot of Speculators & they probably made a good deal of money out of it. They said there was one man up there that had got 50 000 [lbs.?] or 50 000 tons of gold dust they had forgotten which. It has proved to be one grand Humbug and I expect those that have been sucked in will be sneaking back with their tails between their legs. Anne says in her Nov letter that she shall come as quick as possible & if Mrs. Johnson is not ready to start she shall come without her. I hope she will not start alone on any account for it is bad enough when there are two or three ladies together crossing the isthmus & I would rather she would wait another month as much as I want to see her that [than] to have her start without some lady with which she is acquainted. I expect she will have started before you receive this but if she has not please advise her on the subject. I have thought till today that I should not be able to write you by this mail. I have had an ague in my face

for the last week which has been any thing but pleasant. On last Sunday I had a large tooth pulled & this morning I am nearly all right again. When you wrote you were expecting to have great times on New Years. I hope you was not disappointed & trust you and Kate M. frolicked to your hearts content.

I am in about the same fix you was when you finished your letter, I have but little more than time to take this to the office.

Morris [Trum's brother] you say is in New Orleans with his wife. I should like to see them both very much. I am not particularly acquainted with Julia but I have a curiosity to see her. When you get married Trum you must give me a full description of your wife from head to foot. You say in your letter that you wish you could come out here but not a word about coming. Wont she consent to it? Tell her you wont be gone more than a year at most. If you dont come out here it is uncertain when we can see each other for if Anne is not homesick we shall probably stay as long as we can make it pay.

Remember me to all friends & dont fail to write. I take more pleasure in reading your letters than any letters I receive, except those from my dear wife. You cannot imagine Trum how happy I am in the anticipation of soon seeing her. When you have been absent from your wife for more than two years you will know something about it.

Your affect Brother

JOHN

P.S. Many thanks for the Courant, I receive it regularly.

Hangtown Feb 20th 1850

DEAR BROTHER TRUM,

Here I am Trum writing you another letter & I hardly think I ought to do it for I have not heard from you since the 16th of October. I wont say tis your fault for I presume your kind letters are waiting for me either at Sacramento City or San Francisco. I suppose you have got the letter I sent you last month. Well nothing new or strange has hapened since. Things have gone on in the same old way & the gold has turned out about so-so. For the last two weeks I have been selling off our goods & three or four days since I had an auction & besides

that I had considerable fun—I sold the goods for another man & made sixty dollars commission 15 per ct. That is a fair California commission isnt it. There are some grizzly bears about here but I have not been fortunate enough to see a live one yet since I left San Francisco. We heard of one the other day & Primus & I went out to find him but we didnt see Mr. Grizzly though if we had I should have given him a little cold lead. I have got to be “some pumpkins” on a rifle. I have hit the size of a half dollar four times in succession eighty yards & have killed a crow three hundred yards. How I wish you could have been here with me this Winter. I think you would have enjoyed it first rate. I never enjoyed myself better in my life. With the exception perhaps of a part of last Winter—I have enjoyed perfect health all the time & mining in pleasant weather & gunning in unpleasant, I can assure you the time has passed right pleasantly. You know we always had a faculty of enjoying ourselves when together & I dont know why we could not do so as well in California as in any other place.

Thursday 21st. I expected to leave this place today for Sacramento City but we have got quite a snow-storm so I shall probably wait till tomorrow. I should have thought it quite an undertaking in the States to start off on a fifty miles tramp but tis nothing here. I shall probably stop in Sac City through the Summer and very likely shall have a store but I cannot tell positively till I go down. I suppose every thing is lovely between you & that girl over in Brooklyn. Tell me in [if] any thing strange has happened since you last wrote me.

San-Francisco Feb 26th. You see I have got down the river, Dear Trum, & what is better I have been quite lucky today in getting letters. The postage on my own letters was something over five dollars. I had three from you—it is very kind of you to write so often & when the California mail comes in without receiving a letter from me you must not blame me but the mails. I have written you by every steamer since I have been here but one & presume ere this you have rec^d all my letters. I shall return to Sac City on Thursday the 28th & after a flying visit to the mines shall probably remain there through the Summer. I shall go into business there & if with untiring perseverance I can make money I shall be satisfied. I feel but

perhaps tis foolish that now or never is the time for me to make money. You shall hear from me as often as possible & I sincerely hope, dear bro Trum, you wont fail to write for I read no letters with more interest than I do yours & I am anxiously looking forward to the time when we shall have some happy frolics together. I must now bid you good bye for the present. Remember me to your Farther, Mother, Brothers & sister, Mr. Fulton &c. Tell me if anything new has happened up in fourteenth St.

Your Affect brother

JOHN INGALLS

[P.S.] DEAR TRUM

Messrs. Henricks & Brother will pay you 100 dollars in favor of Mrs Delia Hall of Wallingford Conn. Be kind enough if tis not paid in within a few days from the rec^t of this to Call for it. The Order was written by C. A. Gentry.

Sacramento City 20th March 1850

DEAR BRO TRUM,

Here I am at last settled in Sac. City I hope for the season. The Company is broken up. Only Pettis & myself are together. We are going into business with a man named Caswell who came out in the Pacific with us. A New Store is building for us Corner of J. & 6th Sts (you know where that is) & we expect to open in four or five days. I have been up to Hangtown since I last wrote you & returned here on Thursday last. While up there & coming down we had some very severe weather—snow rain & hail in abundance. One day when it was snowing very hard I saw an Indian Squaw with nothing on but a white shirt—you can imagine how comical she looked. I wish you could see some of the Indians here—they beat Horace Greeley all hollow. You would see some with a shirt & monkey jacket on without pants or boots others with nothing on their legs but a boot on one foot & a shoe on the other—others entirely naked except the figleaf arrangement. Dont you think it would make some of the New-York Belles blush to see them. I came down in a covered waggon & though it rained nearly all the time, I was quite dry—outside I mean. Pettis is still in Hangtown closing out what few goods we have on hand there but he

will probably return in two weeks. I sent him a letter today by Bob Watkinson who has gone up there to prospect a little. You will receive a package of gold if you have not by Adams & Co's Express. The largest piece with a ring in it I send to you & think twill be very pretty for a seal if you fancy it. The balance, if it will not trouble you too much I wish you to send to the mint & forward the coin as soon as convenient to my wife. It will weigh I suppose after your piece is taken out about 13 oz but that you can ascertain very easily. If you will do this favor for me you will oblige me very much & I shall be happy when I get back to have a chance to repay your kindness. I now think you may look for me a little next Dec. I want to go home and spend the Winter even if I should make up my mind to stay longer in California. Dont you think Trum you will want to see me by that time. I want to see you now very much & it seems sometimes as though I could not wait another week before I start for the States. Anne intimates in her last letter that she has no objection to my returning so now you see there is nothing to keep me here. Tell her this the next time you see her, & tell me what she says.

Dont say anything, Trum to a single person about our Company's breaking up for particular reasons which I will explain hereafter. You dont say anything about the girl in Brooklyn so I take it for granted it is all right. I should like very much to hear from you again before I close this but I cannot as the mail closes here on the 25th & the Steamer has not arrived at San Francisco yet though she is expected every day. Remember me to all the old friends, Mr. Fulton, John Fago, Your Father & Mother &c &c. I suppose Thomson is taking lots of comfort with his wife—ask him, for me, the next time you see him how he enjoys married life. If you can in any way put it off you must not get married till I get back for I want to go to your wedding—wont we have a high time? I suppose you will say after you have read this “I wonder if he calls this a letter—I have read it through & there aint a word of news in it” Well never mind—we will have the more to talk about when we get together once more. There is not much doing here now for the roads are so bad that but very few of the miners have come down. Lumber is flat—it dont sell for enough

to pay the fgt. Potatoes sell here for about fifteen cts a pound but things are different in the mines. I sold a single potato there for three dollars. I think twould make your father smack to get such a price as that. I must bid you good bye for the present.

Your affect Bro

JOHN.

[P.S.] Send your letters hereafter directed to me—Sacramento City

San Francisco Apl 25th /50

DEAR BRO TRUM,

I rec^d your kind letter of March 15th yesterday. You thought when it was written I should receive it on the 4th or 5th of May so you see the mails are improving fast. I assure you Trum that I am delighted with the idea of your coming out here & when I see men so far beneath you in business capacity making money here, I feel as though you ought to come here without hesitation but I still cannot advise you to come for reasons I gave you in a previous letter. If you should come on my advise & be taken sick your friends would never forgive me. Business here has been very good in Sacramento City lately much better than I expected twould so early in the season. I came down a week ago today & have in the mean time bought about six thousand dollars worth of goods. I bought last week 15000 lbs flour at 4 1/4 cts & now it cannot be bought for less than 6 1/2 cts & tis going up every day. Barley I bought for 3 3/4 cts & it is now held by heavy merchants at 5 cts. If nothing happens we shall make our salt on these two purchases.

I am now waiting for the Senator to come down the river—she was due here last night at eleven oclock & had not yet arrived, now five P. M. It is feared some accident has befallen her. I shall go up on her the next trip she makes & shall probably come down again the last of next week after more goods. I think very likely I shall spend most of my time in this place buying goods—i.e. if we can make it pay. Charley Griswold has just arrived here from China in Ship Garolinta with a cargo which is mostly sold & a friend of mine who sold him goods says the cargo will pay a net profit of \$50000. That will do

wont it? Now Trum if you make up your mind to come here, dont send anything around the horn but bring a few things across the isthmus & the ballance in hard cash. Gold scales pay now as well as anything that can be brought. A friend of mine that came in the last steamer made enough on a few things he brought to pay all his expenses. Small gold scales that cost from one to twenty dollars with troy weights are the kind. There are now a great many things that would pay if we had them here at New York prices with the fgt added—but before they could be got here around the Horn they might be the greatest drug in the market & when anything is a drug here it is of no use to try and sell it at any price. Last fall tobacco was sold here by the ship load for 4 cts now tis worth 50 cts. for a good article in small packages. I suppose Trum you have sent that gold to the mint & will for^d the coin to my Anne for which favor she will be much obliged as well as myself. The idea of your being proof against the shafts of cupid is really laughable. I would not trust you one night alone with a bewitching Senorita—I know you too well. You say Morris is about getting married—well I wish him joy—tis the only way to be happy after all. Remember me to Mr. Fulton, Your Father & Mother & all friends. Write me a good long letter when you write again—you are the only one I have to depend on for news. My health is first rate through I dont weigh quite as much as I did when I came down from the mines.

In haste

Your affect bro

JOHN.

Direct to Sacramento City

San Francisco, May 12th /50

DEAR BRO TRUM,

I suppose this letter will come to you rather unexpectedly & the fact is I have nothing to write about the time is so short since I last wrote but the bearer Mr. Bingham, an old shipmate of mine, who starts for New-York on the 15th kindly offered to take a letter for me so I thought it would be a first rate chance to send. Mr. Bingham has been pretty lucky in the mines & thinks of returning here with his family. To tell you the truth

Trum I dont like him very much & I doubt very much whether you will but he can tell you a great many things about me & about California in general all of which will interest you—especially the former. I have been up to Sac City for a week since I last wrote & returned here three or four days since. I am now engaged in receiving freight buying goods &c &c. This going up & down the river is a heavy tax on us—it costs \$25 for a ticket & \$4 more for supper & berth—what would you think to pay that price to go to Albany? I suppose you are flying about just as you [used] to be sometimes when I was in New York & taking a cigar once in a while i.e. pretty often. Well I smoke about all the time when I am not chewing—dont tell Anne anything about it for I am going to leave off the chewing when I get on the other side of the isthmus. Business continues prosperous and Pet is the same old covey he used to be only he is a little fatter—he weighs I believe about 185 lbs. I have been expecting George Smith, a brother in law, out here for some time. He left New York in the Empire City about the 14th of February. He is concerned in a Steamer & if he had it here now it would make money fast but by the time the Steamer gets here the business may be overdone like a great many other things in this country. You will doubtless have seen an account of the great fire here last week before you receive this. About 1/3 of the entire city was destroyed. There is nothing like Yankee enterprise—before the fire was done burning at one side they were hauling timbers on at the other to put up new buildings. That is the way things are done in this country. Remember me to all the good friends—you know who they are—your friends are generally mine. You must consider this letter as an extra & on that account excuse its brevity. Please forward the enclosed letter to my wife & much oblige

Your affect Brother
JOHN INGALLS

Sacramento City June 26th 1850.

DEAR BRO TRUM,

Your kind letter mailed 13th May was rec^d this morning & I assure you its persual gave me great pleasure. I am very glad

you like the seal. I did not know as you would think much of such a rough looking thing though it is quite a curiosity. I was rather surprised that Anne did not take the money for the dust in preference to sending it to the mint as I supposed she wanted it but of course she knew best. I am very much obliged to you for the trouble you have had in the matter. So Kate Morris is about to be married—well that seems rather funny but I suppose such things are bound to happen in the natural course of events. Give her my love & tell her I wish her joy—she is a nice girl. Frank B. is also going to taste the joys of connubial felicity—I dont think a bit strange of that for all she told us she was going to live & die an old maid. I hope she will make her husband as happy as I think she is capable of doing. . . . Morris is about to take to himself a spouse. I really believe the folks in the States are getting crazy & you are enquiring about Fanny Talcott. That looks rather onimbus. Fanny is a fine girl & we are first rate friends. For that reason if for no other it would be very pleasant to see you united in the holy bonds of wedlock, but I would not dare to advise you on a subject of such weighty importance—be influenced by your own feelings & judgment & I will answer for the result. Dick Wilcox told me the other day that she was engaged to George Wright but I dare say, like a great many of his statements it has no foundation. Perhaps you was not aware that he was in this Country. He left New-York on the 13th April & arrived here last week. He was in good health & spirits & started yesterday for the Yuba. Jim Packard's story about my being taller & larger than you are, is all gammon. I have fallen away twenty two lbs since I first came down from the mines & now only weigh 147 though my health is first rate—never better. Business has been very good so far—we have sold since we opened on the first of April twenty two thousand dollars worth of goods. That is a fair commencement but how it will turn out the future must determine. This city is growing about as fast as the pumpkin vine Morris used to tell about—buildings are going up all around us by dozens. If it goes on in this way a short time longer this place will leave San Francisco entirely in the shade. There are some drinking houses in this city almost as handsome as Florence's & the way they gamble is a "caution to snakes"—

they think nothing of betting 200 ounces on a single card. Ike Bates wouldnt be nowhere out here. Hen Hale has gone into business with the Crowell's & the firm is now Crowell Hale & Co. They are not doing anything like the business they did last fall. Ed Crowell told me he was getting a cane made to send to Gov. Seymour by the Steamer that leaves the first of July. It will probably have more or less California gold about it & will undoubtedly be very handsome. It is first rate to have my letters come up here direct. I was on hand when the Office opened & was the second man that got letters though there was some old swearing at the way I pushed through the crowd. Your letter & Mr. Warburton's were the only ones Inc. I must answer his early in the morning—I was disappointed not to get Anne's letter as I know she must have written. If I dont get it before the mail closes I think I shall not write her this time. I sent her a letter by private hand on the 15th inst. Trum you must make up your mind to get married next Winter & return to this Country with Anne & me next Spring—then we will settle down here & have nice times together. I dont think I shall ever be contented to live anywhere else. By next Spring people can live just as well here as in New York City. It is now 9 oclock P. M. & I have been busy as a bee all day. Pettis has gone to Marysville to deliver some buildings we sold to go up there. His health is first rate & he speaks of you very often. Now Dear Bro Trum I must bid you good night. You may expect to hear from me again about this time next month. Remember me to all friends, I cannot enumerate them, your friends are mine as a general thing. Tell Hat Green the next time you see her that the greatest curiosity there is in California is the penny she gave me a long time ago—tis the only one I have seen since I have been here. Dont tell Anne anything about it as she might be jealous & that would make a terrible muss.

Your Bro

JOHN

[P.S.] Dont fail to write by every mail & write just such good long letters as you have written. You are my only dependence for news from Hartford & New York. Anne has to[o] many more pleasant things to write about to give me much news.

Sacramento City July 12th /50

DEAR BRO TRUM,

The bearer of this, Mr. John T. Durkin arrived in this country on the 6th inst & leaves on the 15th for New York. He is a partner of Mr. Caswell & has Stopped with us since he has been in Sacramento City. He can of course give you information about a great many little things that I should never think of telling you about in a letter. You wont expect to hear from me by this mail & in fact I have nothing in particular to write. Things go on in the same old way & it still continues rather dull but as the overland emigration has commenced coming it, we hope business will revive soon. You had better believe, that it has been somewhat warm here lately. Just think of having the thermometer at 110 in the shade, tis enough to make a person melt down into his boots. What did you do the fourth? I went five miles out of town to a public dinner & what a time we had. I wish you could have been along for I know you would have enjoyed it. Capt Sutter, Gov Burnett, the Hungarian Exiles & all the big bugs were present. They got as tight as bricks & such fun as we had. They came near getting into a fight several times but it all blew over & the glorious fourth passed off very pleasantly. In seven or eight days I shall look forward to another letter from you which of course will contain lots of news. You cant imagine Trum how anxiously I look forward for your letters. After I receive one I count up the days that will probably transpire before tis time to receive another. Mr. Durkin says every one complains in the States about the letters they get from this country, so Mr. Warburton is not alone. Please send the enclosed to my wife by first mail. I have no more time now as Mr. Durkin leaves for San Francisco in a short time. Please write often & tell me all the news.

Your Affect Bro

J. INGALLS

P.S. Mr. Durkin wants to buy something in the way of Saddlery & I told him you was the hombre that could sell it to him right.

Sacramento City Aug 12th /50

DEAR BRO TRUM,

You must excuse me for not writing to you per Steamer Aug 1st for the fact is I was so busy I could not find a minuits time. I wrote to Anne of course & then I had to write Mr. Warburton a long letter & that is a job I dread. I can set down & write you as though I was talking to you but with him of course I have to be more particular. Your letter was duly rec^d last month & it gave me great pleasure, as it always does, to hear that you were well & prospering. There you are in New York enjoying yourself & flirting with the girls to your hearts content while I am out here in this "God forsaken country" working like a slave, hardly ever seeing a petticoat & when I do it generally covers the vilest apology for a woman.

If Anne was only out here I never should want to see another woman & I'm afraid you wouldn't see my face till I had made my pile or bursted in the attempt. As it is Trum I think you may expect to see me about Christmas time. Then after spending two months in New-York, Connecticut & New Hampshire, I shall take Anne under my arm & turn my boots for California & Brother Trum cant you promise to come out with us or do you think it will be better for you to hang out in New York awhile longer. Use your own judgment—dont let me influence you in the least but you cant think how pleasant it [would be] could we be out here together. I think I could show you something in the way of horse back riding that would go far ahead of anything you ever saw.

This place is growing like an Irishman's family, by next year at this time if it keeps on at the present rate it will beat New York all hollow, Gambling is carried on here to an alarming extent. They have lately been building some magnificent buildings for that purpose, some of them contain four thousand square feet on the first floor. They are furnished beautifully & in the evening when they are lighted up the effect is truely imposing. Gambling is carried on here as openly as any mercantile business in New-York. Sunday is usually their best day. What would Dr. Hawes say could be look in on them some Sunday.

Business is on the increase & I think from now till the rainy season sets in we shall have all we can do. The emigrants are

coming in very fast across the plains most of them without money & long before winter is over many of them will curse the day they ever Started for California.

I told you in a previous letter that Dick Wilcox was out here. He went into the mines with great expectations but today he returned to this place. He was taken sick while in the mines & he said for a week he did not care whether he lived or died. Fred Green has been up here from San Francisco twice since his arrival, he is looking first rate. [Seems?] to think he can make money out here. Mr. Warburton wrote me that it was reported in Hartford that the C. M. & T. Co had made \$250,000. here. If you hear of any man's receiving \$5000. that invested \$1000. in that concern & sent a man out here on half profits, be kind enough to furnish me with his name, not that I doubt the fact at all, oh, no. This is the greatest letter Trum I ever wrote, there is no head or tail to it, but there is one thing about it, tis longer than the last one you wrote me. Dont put it off till the last minuit but commence a day or two beforehand & tell me all the news, you can say nothing about Hartford or New-York that will not interest me. I must tell you one thing but consider it between you & me—Sam Chaffee is cooking for a man named Morrison that was formerly a journeyman for Robbins & Winship—"What a fall was there my countrymen." It is getting late Trum & I must close this & retire to my virgn blankets—no such thing as sheets in this country. My health continues first rate & if I take care of myself I think I can keep it so till I start for home. How I want to have the time come to start & when I once more get me foot on "terra firma" on the Atlantic side I shall feel like giving three cheers that will astonish any one that has not been to California. Please remember me to your Father, Mother & all friends & dont fail to write a long letter by every mail. Cant you send me some Hartford papers.

Your affect Bro
J. INGALLS

Sacramento City Aug 31st/50

DEAR BRO TRUM

I am almost decided not to write you a word by this Steamer for I did not hear a word from you by the last mail & I wrote

you on the 15th of this month. It is too bad Trum for you are my only dependence for news. Mr. Warburton writes by every mail but tis all about business. I believe if the city should burn half down he would not say a word about it. I know you could find time to write if you felt so disposed & if you knew how anxiously I look for your letters you would write. We had a big time here a day or two after my last letter was written. You must of heard something of it by the last Steamer. Four or five persons were killed in the affray. The firing commenced two blocks from us & as soon as I heard it I made a rush & got on the ground just as the Squatter captain fell: It was the most horrible sight I ever saw, he had four shots through him & died instantly. The city was proclaimed under martial law & I joined Company A. Capt Sherwood & was kept on guard two nights in succession all night. The Squatters made no demonstration after the 14th inst & a week after the riot the city was a s quiet as ever.

Three days ago I went out on horse-back to bring in our mare that had been on a ranch three months. I had some difficulty in finding her & day before yesterday I rode seventy miles. Dont you think your other end would feel rather sore were you to ride that distance in a day. I suppose you have made up your mind to see me next Winter & I hope you will not be disappointed. I shall not be able to start before the first of Dec but I think by that time I can get home in 25 days. The mail closes in about half an hour & I must close this letter or it wont go. This is pretty short but where you get two letters from me in a month that I receive none from you, you ought to be satisfied. Anne says she had a nice ride with you through love lane! Look out or you will make me jealous & then Coffins & Pistols would be the result. Neverless I am very much obliged to you for showing my Anne a little attention when I am so far away. Remember me to all the boys & all the friends either masculine, feminine or newter. Write all the news you can scrape together.

Your affect Brother

JOHN INGALLS

P.S. My health is good & I hope you are enjoying the same blessing—Shakespear

Sacramento City Oct 13th /50

DEAR BROTHER TRUM,

Your kind letter of Aug. 25th was rec^d last week & right glad was I to get it for I had begun to think that I should not hear from you again while in California. I expect your evenings are nearly all taken up by the Senoritas of New York & you are so busy through the day at the Store that you have but very little time to write. Isnt this the case? Now Trum dont be disappointed when I tell you that I have almost given up the idea of seeing New-York this Winter. It cost me a hard struggle but I felt that twas better that I should not go till a year from this Winter, not because I was under any obligations to stay but in the first place Anne expressed herself delighted with the idea of coming out here should I send for her & in the second place it would cost me at least two thousand dollars to go home, stay two months & return. That is too much for a young married man like me to spend without thinking twice. Now Trum aside from your desire to see me wouldnt you advise me not to come. You speak of returning with me. I wish I was sure of your coming for then I would have Anne come with you but as it is rather doubtful I think I shall send for her to come with a family that will start from New York about the first of February. Tis not sure yet but one thing is certain, I shall not stay here another year without her & after she comes if she is contented & things go on prosperously we may stay some time in this country if not longer. You say Morris is at home with his wife, dont it look funny to see him married? I should think it would—I suppose you are delighted with your new sister. A. K. is also at home. Isnt it too bad the people out West are so “blamed healthy”—ha, ha, it is just like him to say that. So you are really glad you did not marry M. A. B. well if I did anything to prevent it I am glad for I think it much better that you should now feel thankful you did not marry her than to have done so & felt sorry afterwards. I should have thought John Smith would have had too much spunk to marry the girl that threatened to sue him. . . . I am very glad Kate Morris is going to marry well for I think a great deal of her. If I had an opportunity I would send her some California gold for a ring. Do you think Mr. Boardman would resent it? You

think there is a prospect of Frank Bigelow's making a permanent arrangement with Miss Hilyer which will probably conflict with her idea of keeping "old maids hall" . . . Today is Sunday & Messrs. Caswell & Pettis are going to church for a wonder. I shall be left alone & shall have a first rate time to write letters. I must improve it for I must write Anne, Father, & Mr. Warburton which I expect will take me nearly all day. You say you are going to be very punctual in future so I expect to get at least one letter a month from you. You have no idea how disappointed I am when a mail comes in without bringing a letter from you. After Anne's I look for your letters more anxiously than any others I get. Give my love to your Father, Mother, Brothers & all the family. Dont you think I would have been one of the family had I been in the States July 4th—I think the two hundred in East Haven would have been somewhat increased.

Good bye Trum, I expect to get another long letter from you next week according to promise.

Your affect Brother
JOHN INGALLS

Sacramento City Apl 14th/51

DEAR BRO TRUM,

You must not think hard things of me for neglecting to answer your kind letter, per Anne, so long. I feel confident Trum that under the circumstances you will excuse me. Anne arrived at San Francisco on the 4th of March¹ in excellent health & spirits having had a fine passage & enjoying it very much. The next day she left for Sacramento & I left this place for San Francisco to meet her there. You can judge of my feelings on my arrival there when I was told that Mrs Ingalls had gone up the river. You may bet your life I was on hand for the first boat bound for Sacramento where I arrived at two oclock in the morning—but I didnt sleep on board that night. The papers here had quite a pathetic article telling how a young married lady had just arrived from the east expecting to meet a loving husband & what must have been her feelings to find on her arrival here that her lord & master had vamosed. Of course it had not any reference to us.

¹She sailed from New York on Jan. 28, 1851.

We have got to keeping house & are as happy as possible, I can now realize what a fool I have been to live as I have for the last two years. What does a person live for if it is not to be happy.

We are living over our Store & have got things fixed pretty comfortably for California though of course it would be considered rather small potatoes in your part of the country. We have a great many calls, quite as many as it is pleasant to have. Yesterday we had an invitation from the Agent of a Steamboat to take a trip up to Marysville which we excepted & we had a delightful time. There are some most beautiful views on the river & everything looks delightful at this season of the year. I wish you could have been along Trum for I think you would have enjoyed it very much. Capt Sutter has a beautiful farm on the river. It is three miles Square & the buildings would be considered some even on the North River. It is 75 miles to Marysville. We left here at 9 in the morning & got back at 10 in the evening. Business is very dull here now but we are all looking for better times. Millions of dollars worth of goods have been sold here & at San at less than New York prices. I guess some of consignors will look blue when they get their account sales. The mail closes in a few minuits & I must finish this & bid you goodbye for the present. You must look out Trum for that young lady that you always find in the parlor at your boarding house, the first you know it will be all over with you. Anne sends her love & wants me to tell you that if her trunk had not been fixed up so nicely everything would have been ruined in crossing the isthmus as both her trunks went into the water all over. Pettis also wishes to be remembered.

Please write often & remember me to all friends.

Your affect Bro

J. INGALLS

Sacramento Aug 12th 1851

DEAR BRO TRUM,

Have you really forgotten your old friend or are you so much taken up with things more pleasant that you cannot write to him once in a while. It is now five months since Anne arrived & in all that time I have received but one letter from you tho I

have written you several. I cannot give up the idea of hearing from you again & I must write you if for nothing more than to implore you not to forget your Brother in this land of strangers. I have not heard a word from Hartford for more than five months (Anne arrived the 4th of Mch) except through the Courant you are so kind to send me. After telling me all about yourself tell me of your Father & Mother (she was a Mother to me while in Hartford & I always think of her with feelings of respect & love). Times have been rather hard here this season & goods have been sacrificed awfully. I guess the eyes of some of the Shippers at home will stick out when they get their account of sales. We have been holding most of our goods for better prices & we shall get them now I think as fall trade is just commencing a little. John Warburton has not written for a long, long time & he used to write by every mail. We have written til we are tired & have now concluded to wait till we hear from him. please tell me if you know anything of him, he may be sick. Anne is getting to like California better & better tho she dont think it quite equal to Hartford yet. We have frequent rides on horse back which she enjoys very much. Last week we spent a gadding about. We went to San Francisco & from there to Stockton & back with Bro George. We had a fine time but I was glad to get home again as I always am. San Francisco is the place & always will be on the Pacific side. Notwithstanding the whole town has been burned over three or four times they seem to go up by magic & there are finer buildings now in San Francisco than ever before. Stockton is a mean sort of a hole & always will be I think. It looks worse than it did when I was there in February. The burned district is covered with low one Story wood buildings that an irish family would hardly live in at home. I saw Fred Green in San Francisco. I believe you know him. He is looking first rate & I guess doing well. M. W. Chapin & Co own 15/18 of the Hartford now & she is a favorite boat for freight. The Jenny Lind which Fred built here is moving to Stockton & seems to have her share of the trade. Times have changed wonderfully since we arrived here. Then we had to pay twenty five dollars to go to San Fran in a Schooner & thought ourselves lucky if we got all the Salt Junk & hard bread we wanted to eat. Since that

time the fare has been down to one dollar & the tables would not disgrace a north-river boat.

I suppose you have given up all idea of ever coming to this country & certainly the season has held out no inducements. Much as I would like to see you here I cannot advise you to come for I presume you are doing first rate in New York now. I can see you in the same old Store-room, leaning back in one of those easy arm chairs enjoying your cigar. Your coat is thrown off but your hat is still on your head, bearing a little to one side. I would like very much to be with you Trum but when I shall is a decided case of "Quien Sabe." Anne gets a little lonely once in a while & says "lets go home" but there is no telling when we shall get started. We often speak of you, & Anne thinks almost as much of you as I do, if she did quite I should be jealous. she sends love to you & will write you soon.

Pettis has gone to San Francisco & customers are like angels in their visits today, so my letter will get drawn out longer than I expected. Morris I suppose is in New Orleans & Andrew, is he at home yet. Tell him to write us a letter & not be niggardly of the fun he puts in it. I suppose A. K. is the same old sixpence. How come on your fair nieces up town. I expect every time I get a New York Herald to see a notice of the marriage of one of them. I wonder if what she told us the last time we were up there together will prove true. Give my love to Maria when you see her & ask her to write to Anne. She has not rec^d but one letter since she has been in this country, she feels as though all her friends have forgotten her.

D. A. Shepard, Hen Hale, & Ed Crowell are in the liquor business in San-Francisco. Hen Crowell is there but I dont know what he is doing. Granger has gone into his old business, painting. If he makes any more money here I dont think he will invest it in the C. M. & T. Company.

I must close up—now dont fail to write me a good long letter by return mail and tell me all the news you can think of.

Your ever affect Bro

J. INGALLS

[P.S.] How is the young lady you always used to find in the parlor when you went to your boarding house. Tell me all if she is anything to you.

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