

**ISABELLA MILLER fonds
70-1001**

Transcriptions

Letter No. 1

Arrived in Glasgow March 1843

Ontonabee Uc.
Mr. Claud Brownlee
Parish of Camberland Lanark Shere
Scotland
Care of Robt Dick
Farmer

Der Brother,

I take the oportuity of sending you a few lines letting you know that I am in good heath at preaent hoping this will find in the same. I could not write no sooner to none of you knowing where to sent butt as William Struthers was so kind as to come to my sister Jennet and ask about you all and sending out word in his letter to me. I take this as a great kindnefs of him in so doing. I was very hapy to hear that you were married. I am still stopping with William Christie and has been since I came ta the country. I like this country well and as always been in good heath since I came to it. I have always been looking for you or some of my sisters out since ever I came hear my father promised faithfully to come out and bring you with him but as he thought he was doing better I will leave it to God and his conceince to judge. I hope I will see you out hear this spring as you will find a great many coming out. This is a good counry for all young people both men and women as wages are very high mens wages is from twenty five to thirty pounds a yeare womens wages is from three to four dollars a month. I hope you will not be so long in writing to me as I have been to you if you do not come out hear. Send out word how Ane is getting her living give my compliments to Mis Elisabeth and tell her if she is not married to look smart or else I will get mairied before her give my compliments to William Struthers and tell him I am much obliged to him for his kindness also you will be so good as to yell my fathar and all my sisters these few lines no more at present.

Der Sir: (written by William Christie)

As Isabella has left me a little room in her letter I will lett you know how I am getting along. I am in good heath at praseant and stil lives unmairied. I have one hundred acres of land. I have one mare which Isabella is very foand about her as she has learned to be a good rider the are both very handsome. I am afraid to let them go away my plaice for fear that some young man might run away them both. I have yock of oxen eight cows thirteen head of young catle, 16 seep markets are very low this yeare wheat is 12 shilling low 3 shillings per bushel oats is from eight pence ta once shilling potatoes 1 shilling per bushel barley 1 shilling and pr bushel my mother is in good health at present she desires you to take the trouble on going to her sister in Glasgow and let her know that she wishes to send out a few lines how the area all she hears that her sister in mielwall was dead and her man there was a young man came out from the loyouch his name is thomos weer here came out last year he told us a great deal of news about the country let William Struthers know that John Cameron will send out the artickels that he mentioned in his letter and if he could send his ant and cousins out for twenty pounds as he sent a letter himself. I only mention for fear it would not go. Isabella insists gratly that you should come out in the spring if not you will write as soon as this come to hand no more at present but remains your affectionat sister

Isabella Brownlie

Where you write direct to William Christie, Ontanabee District of Colborne Canada, America

Letter No. 2

Otonabee 25th september 1843

Dear brother

I received your letter on the 28 of June. I took the ague at the beginning of harvest and I am not quite well yet. I was very happy to here that you and my sisters were all well. I think my father is very unaturel I sent a letter to him and he has never sent no answer. I wish him well as I can live without him now

You need not bring no cource shoes at they do not answer this country you may being some cotton for shirts you need not bring many cource clothes as we can furnish you with them you may bring a sout of fine cloths as the are very dear heare you need not bring much lofage of no kind as it is very costly bringing hear.

If you have any mony to spare you will be so kind as to buy me as much silk as make a gown and I will pay you when you come out as the silk is very dear and not good in this country. I want you to bring a small you may bring a few very small parcal of all kinds of wheat and oats and peas and also a few kinds of turnips and cabage and grenn beat seeds and one good spade without a handle and a shovel.

But let none of these things hinder you from coming out to this country as they can all be got here but not so good give my best respects to my father and all my sisters and tell Jenet I am sorry to hear she has lost her husband. If my sister Jean is not married I think she will never do better than to come out with you as William Christy is getting a new house and she might fill the corner of it.

We had a very long winter and was very severe one cattle as many a lost nearly his whole cattle we have had a very fine summer and a very good crop of all kinds of spring grain but the wheat was a little inferior it has been very unhealthy

Our markets are looking a little better this year wheat from 4 and 6 to 5 shillings per bushel butter from 6 to 7 pence per pound cheese from 5 to 6 pence per pound eggs 6 pence per dozen. If you have time you may call on all our old acquaintances and let them know that we are all well and doing well. You call on Mrs. Broom and let her know that her sister is in good health and would be very happy to hear from her I am desired to write a few lines to you from John Robeson carpenter who has a brother in law in Hamatun by the name of Basel Reed and another in Strathairn by the name of Robert More Jesse Smith he wishes you to call upon them if you have time and to see if he has any word to him.

You may go to the west quarter and call on Mrs Jackson Mrs. Robeson's mother and see if she is coming out. As you wanted to know where to sail to you may come by the way of New York then to Albany then to Rochester then Coburg then to Otonabee no more at present I remain your dear and affectionate sister

Write if you change
Your place

Isabella Brownlie

Letter No. 3

Otonabee 24th March 1845

Dear Brother

I take the opportunity of writing to you to let you know that I am in good health at present thank God for it and I hope this will find you all the same William Christie and his mother is in good health and has kind respects to you all he is doing well he has one yoke of oxen and one pair of horses and one colt and 11 cows besides young cattle and sheep his farm is all cleared only what he wants for firewood we have had a very mild winter and the spring seems to be fine I received your letter on the 12 of February and was sorry to hear that you had not made up your mind to come out the markets is about the same as the were I wrote you before I am sorry to hear that my father has lost the sight of one of his eyes but it was told to me that he has lost the sight of them both I would like to know

how he makes his living and if it is true that he is married again I am sorry to hear of Anns bad conduct but I hope that she will see the error of her ways and turn from them or where does she think she will go to at the latter end but she is following the example that was set before her in her youth I would like to know the mans name that Genet is married to and the names of her children and the names of Marys and where Jean is living and what she thinks about coming to this country as you said in your letter that you intend changing your way of living I hope it will be for the better I would have you think well before you tie the knot with your hand that you cant loose with your teeth the wages is good as ever in this place and the work not so heavy as it is in Scotland if you intend to come out in the spring I would like you to write as soon as you can for I think every day a year from I write till get an answer. Many a time do I remember my stepmothers words when we were quarling she said that perhaps we would be glad to see one another yet as for my part I think it would be the greatest pleasure in this world to see you the farming is different here to what it is in Scotland there is great difficulty in ploughing the new land on account of the roots the ploughs is all cast in the foundry but the beam and the stiles the harrows is all three corner when we plant our potatoes we make a small hole with a hoe and put three or four sets in it and cover it up like a hillock the farmers here raise all their own sugar and tea and tobacco and make all their own soap and everyone keeps a good flock of sheep which supplies them clothing there is a great many wolves in this place and the great many sheep there is some bears and the sometimes destroy the oats before they are cut and sometimes help themselves to a fat pig the farming is mostly done with oxen they are very light but smart you will scarce ever see a horse but they are on the trot there are a good many deers but they are most killed off by the native who is a very cunning but civil sort of people who live entirely on hunting and fishing I have left William Christie and do not know if ever I will go back again I am going to school at present it is nothing strange for grown up people to go to school here I am with Mistress Colquhoun wife of the minister who fell out with his congregation and his wife has a school to support her family I am boarding with an elder if I am not good it is not for want of a good example I am nine miles from home if I may call it home I am all alone on the house top like Davids sparrow we have plenty of preachers here there is church of England presbyterians and baptists and methodists and millerites or the end of the world men who have done a great deal of harm in this place for was a great many believed in the doctrine they are at an end with good money and we do not know how soon it will be at an end with us but I do not believe that the world is to be burnt but I will tire you with my talk for I think I am talking to you but I doubt I will never have the pleasure to do but if we never meet in this world I hope we will in a happier one if you will take the trouble to send out my age in your letter for I would like to know how old I am and there is no one here can tell me when you write to me direct it to myself and to the care of William Christie Otanabee

No more at present I remain your loving sister

Isabelle Brownlie

Letter No. 4

Otonabee, September 25, 1845

Dear brother

I take the opportunity of acquainting you of the good health I enjoy at present but about the middle of May I was very bad with a sore throat but I am better long since thank God give my respects to my father and all my sisters I receive your letter on the 31 of August but I thought you have forgotten me when you were so long in William Christie and his mother was bad with the fever and ague for six weeks but she is now better we have had it very dry summer and a total failure of the hay crop and the pasture is very bad but all other crops is middling fair. A great many people has suffered for want of water for the ground has been little or no rain all summer. I can give you little or no account of the markets at present for I am going about spinning to people these three months I get four dollars a month and never was happier in my life and if I could do three women's work I could find employment but on thanks to some of my friends for it but I will tell you no more at these time you wanted to know the names of some of our towns which I let you know with pleasure we are placed in the middle of four Peterboro is 10 miles to west of us it is situated on the side of a large hill and is divided by a large river called the Otonabee it empties in the Rice Lake which is about 20 miles long and four wide and empties into the river Trent which is 8 miles to the south and contains 1 grist mill 1 saw mill 1 carding mill 4 stores 3 taverns 1 tanery and two churches there is a small river run past it call the Soockney by the native and I never heard it get any other name from the whites Norewood is 11 miles to the east Warsaw is 8 miles to the north and is on the same river that Trent is on Coburg is 30 miles to the south on the side of Lake Ontario but we have to cross Rice Lake either in a boat or on the ice in winter we can round the townships it is divided into concessions by lines running north and south and the breadth of a hundred acres apart I think that is all the particulars about that. As you said something about me coming back to Scotland once more there is nothing that would give me more pleasure in this world and I do not know how to express my thanks to you and my dear sister Jean for your kind offer but it would pierce my heart to think I would be the means of spending one copper of your hard earned money for I know what it is to work hard as well as if I have been in Scotland the place that I never see more for were I to come to Scotland I could not content myself and it would be spending money to no purpose for the joy that we would have at our meeting would be drowned in grief at our parting and there is nothing that would tempt me to come but to see my dear brother and sisters although some of them do not deserve the name I would like to know you are like for I can never think you any other but the same little round faced boy you were when I last seen you and I would like to know what height you are and send me a lock of your hair for a keepsake for I think it will be all that I will ever see of you and I hope you will not refuse me that

request. You never said whether my father bore any remembrance of me or not the tell that I like my mother I think some times that it would been good for me if I had died along with her but I have been ordained for another purpouse an not my will O lord but thine be done. I have gowen middling tall I am 5 feet 6 inches and three quarters in lnth but I can brag but little of my breadth and my hair is brown I am not mrried yet for I allways thought you would come out an see what you thought of him but I shall have to judge for myfelf give my respets to William Struthers and toll I am happy to hear he is well and let him know that David Fife had called on James fife and tolde him Robert Malcoms request and he said he would write to him soon.

You wanted to know the reason I left William Christies and I will tell you I went to Peterboro to spin some wool for a friend and the day that I came home wave verrey stormey and the road verrey slippy and there wase a young man came home with me with his gorses and some one told William that I was going to be married to him and he was an Irishman and of a bad name and when I saw them so foolish as believe it and the way the used me I would not give them the satisfaction to tell them it was a lie I tolde them I was going to service for a while and William was so good as a (letter is damaged here) over the place tell that I was of the vielefsest devils that God Almighty breathed the breath of life into but he is no better like for it an he is sorrey for it now but it is late I know that that I am doing bad but fear not dear brother I will disgrace you but I have not room but don't let no one see theis for the will think me simple will write before long but not let it hinder you from answering thies will send a newspaper to you. No more At Preasent I remains absent sister

Isebella Brownlie

Letter No. 5

Otonabee, December 20, 1845

Dear Brother

I take the opportunity to inform you of the good health I enjoy at prasant hopping this will find you and all my friends in same. In your last letter you was wishing me to come home but before reciving your letter I was engaged to a young man to whom I am now married and have every reason to believe that I have Done better then if I had gone home we were married on the 1 day of this month my husbands name is James Miller he is from Perth Shire in Scotland and I am sure that I will never have to cause to regrete the stepe that I have taken as he has a good character and his circumstances is such as with industry we will be able to live happy his Property when I was married to him was 150 acres of land in the best of this Township within ½ mile from the steam boat landing on the Ontonabee river where there is a boat calls every day in the summer season so if ever you come out you will not have far to travel to my house after leaving the boat he has one

yok of oxen 2 cows 5 sheep and 230 pounds in mune he is going to build a house in the spring. I believe William Struthers knows him he will be able to give you aney information about him. William Christie and his mother is in good health at parent and has there respects to you all I was at their house when I was married and the behaved well to me the funished me with every thing needful an is to give me a cow and 2 sheep in the spring. Ann wishes you to call on her sister and rite her all the particulars about her famley and any other news she has t o send. I am sorrey to learn that there is likey to be a scarceity of Provision on account of the failour of the crops in your country it will be hard for poor people to live the crops in Canada was rather light on account of the season being verey dry but wheat is good in general we thrashed our yesterday with a thrashing machine we have about 140 bushels it is very good the machine we had is one of the moveable ones is drawn by 4 horses in to sleays or waggons according to the season of the year the go among the farmers the fix it in such a maner as they can take it aney where the please and that it in about an hour the can thrash about 250 bushels a day but the require 6 or 7 horses to it and 13 to 14 men to attend it. the owners of the machine charges 4 dollers per day for 2 men and 4 houses this place is improveing verey fast it soon be as pleasant as Scotland ther is to be a sacrament in the new church on the sabbath first have give a call to a Mr Reed minister of the free church. the free church is making rapid speed in canada and likley to take the leed. Dear Brothr I would be verey happy to see you come to this country I think would do better than you can in scotland as long as you are single you may do well their but litle as I know about home I think it is verey hard for a poor man to bring up a famley my husband made all that he has by industrey he came to this countrey verey young he has been out 16 years and have been 8 in one place and has 40 pounds a year his board and washing as he is leaving to settle on his farm if you wer here you would belikley to get his place you would not get so much wages the first year or so but I will not urge you to come for fear of reflections after but I will leave a few lines for James to write to your. I wish you to rite soon. I remain your loving sister

Isabella Brownlie

James Miller to Claude Brownlie

Dear Sir

it is with great plasure that I take my pen to address you these few lines to inform you of the happy union which I have made with you sisster Isabella which entitles me to you by the name of brother although some strunger to you, I feel and intrest in your welfare on account of the relationship now between us you sister think you would do well to come to this country. I ame of the same opinnion if you are a single man of industre & sober habits which I beleave you are. I think you are wrong in staying in countrey when labour is so low unlefts your circumstances is beter than comon you can not expect to ever get much beter than are at preasent were you here by industrey you could soon be able to have a farm of your own & be your own master. A farmer in Canada never will make a fortune but can make a verey comfortable living which is all we need care for in this

worold as rishes never brings happinnis. I will not advize you to come but should you come I will be most happy to see you. I will use you as a brother. I have no more to say at present but remains dear Sir your affectionate Brother

James Miller

Letter No. 6
(written by James)

Otonabee January 23 1847

Dear Brother

Wee received your later Dated october 11th -46 & would have returned you an answer sooner but as we expected and addition to our famley wee Delayed writing untill that should take place as wee know that you would be ghlade to here and we are happy to tell that wee have a fine boy cine home to us on the 29 December & he is thriving well. Isabella is doing very well she is in as good health as even she was when wee wrote to you last wee was not on the farm but wee are sttled on it now an likes it verey well we have a verey good grop of potatoes & oats this season altho the root is begun in the potato crop in this country, but it is not general yet. I have built a new house this sumer & it is nearley finished it will be compleat in spring we have got part of it finished & is living in it this winter & as we have got a large cooking stove wee feel no cold as the frost altho severe never reaches us. I will hive you a scheche of the plan & size first a seller under the 24 x 30 x 6 ½ feet deep build by a maison with stone & lime the house is called a frame in this countrey 25 x 36 feet is divided this a kiching, 3 bedrooms a pantry & parlour 12 windowes 20 lights or pans, 8 x 10. wee can have as maney bedrooms upstiar as we plase but as our famley is smale we have room plenty. it is a good a house for a farmer as in Otonabee it will cost when finish 600 dolers or £150. I intende to build a barn in the spring 36 x 50 feet it will cost about 50£ but it will be verey convenent for holding hay & grains we have sown 12 acres of new land fall wheat & intend to sow some more in spring & is going to clear 14 more acres more this sason. I am at present lumbering on my own land. I have sold it to a merchant who takes it to Quebec I will have about 100 worth the merchant manafacures it & I Draw it to the Otonabee river. I have at present 2 pair of horses 2 yoke of oxen & 3 men working at it. it is very fine timber consisting of oak & white pine & 9 masts for ships perhaps it may reach Glasgow. Cropes heare was very good in this countrey this year wheat sels at from 3/6 to 4/ per bushel of 60 lbs oats 1/1/ Potatoes 1/ to 1/3 per bush Pork per 100 lbs 12/6 to 17/6 beef nearly the same and everything in property there is plenty for man & beast in this country. this year our stock consists of 3 cows one cold a yook of oxen, pigs and so on. wee will be looking for you to pay us a veset this season. Isabella would be glad to see you & would use you sister if you intend coming the sooner the beter. I think there is a poor prospect for a for a poor man in your country where there is maney in want & musery you may do very well as long as you are single but if you marry & have a famley

to bring up you will feel the truth of what I say, but are the best judge your self. I would not like (letter damaged here) you to come for fear of rejections the Church in this place is now finished & a minister settled in it & as he is a very clever man he likely to do some good he is in connection with Presbyterian Church of Canada of free Church he receives about 120 £ per annum. the Rev. Dr Burn of Ridley preached here about a month ago he is Minister & principle of the Colage of the city of Toronto & is well cut out for his place. I was at Wm. Christie a few weeks ago his mother is well & all the rest of your acquaintances are well when you write Direct as follows—

James Miller Township of Otonabee, Colborne District
Canada West North America as we have no more to say at present but
remains yours truly

James and Isabella Miller

Letter No. 7

Otonabee January 24th 1848

Dear Claud

I take this opportunity to let you know that we are all well at present than God for it hopping this will find you at the same we received yours of the 25 August and was glad to here that you was well. I was sorry to learn of misfortunes but if God spares your health and strength you will get over your misfortune. A young man is the better of getting a nip in the beginning of his life it makes him more careful and sharp afterwards but you will say that is a poor consolation for the loss of your money but such is the case as regards a single of double life being best adapted for this country it is a hard thing for me to answer but I will state both sides of the question and leave you for judge a married man coming this country if he has money enough to start him on a farm may do very well but it will require a considerable to commence 100 acres of land will cost in this township £150 if the land be good but land can be got in the back part of the township for less and in some parts for £50 and from 5 to 10 years to pay after the land is payed he will require 2 cows a yoke of oxen and 12 months provisions and several farming utensils and after he will find it hard enough for a few years. A single coming here is he is sober and healthy can get 30 pounds per annum and perhaps 35 to 40 in some places if once place does not suit him he can put on his hat and try another as places is easy got at least for Scotch men they are counted the best in general and when you were here you can save your money & when you see a farm for sale that will suit you you purchase and settle on it when it convenient. I think upon the whole a single man is the best for Canada for a few years but perhaps you will say what will I do with my intended you might leave you afterwards. Isabella thinks your sister Jean would do well in this country this is a fine country for women they can get £12 per annum and never need to work out doors. Scotch girls can get places here as soon as they land for there is a great demand for them

wee will be looking for you both in the spring. Come early and you will be here in time for the harvest. if your Father was here he could live with us we would keep him in his old age if he come he would be very usfull to us to attend the garden and assist Isabelle in any thing he wished himself as we have plenty of the necessaries of life. I think he would be better with us than at home if he would be content if you think he would be sober were he to come you might speak to him and fetch him out if he is willing on the above terms but if he is not sober it would suit to bring him but you will be able to judge yourself and act according We are just in the bustle of general Election here the Reformers has gained a large majority of members in this country after a hard struggle the Tories has been beaten in all quarters. The member for this county is James Hall a reformer a Scotchman free church man this has been a very mild winter so far very little snow the fall wheat is as green as in the month of October the crops last season was very good we had a good crop of wheat between 200 & 300 bushels & upwards of 200 of oats nearly 100 of peas 250 of potatoes the rot is in the potatoes in this country they are in general a scarce crop those planted on the land newly cleared was pretty good but on old land they failed. They sell at present from 1/9 to 2/ per bushel oats from 10 to 1/ wheat from 3/3 to 3/9 it was 4/4 & 4/6 but the pressure for money is so great that is very hard times at present the Banks is all closed they won't discount for some time as the commercial houses in the corn trade in Liverpool & Glasgow is failing its effects the merchants in this province but the farmers can live let the wind blow how or low. As for us we have no rents to pay and we can raise all the necessaries of life except the tea we make our own sugar we made upwards of 100 lb last spring and about 7 gallons of molasses far superior to the east Indian molasses & we make our own clothing out of our own wool. there is some large factories here that make broad cloth that Prince Albert might wear and (letter damaged here) as cheap as in Glasgow and everything else is getting cheap our stock at present is 3 cows 2 yoke of oxen 1 horse 2 calves 12 sheep 8 pig we killed 5 fatt ones this fall we put up a barn this spring worth 50 & a stable 15 our house is now finished William Christie & mother is well our little son William is running about thriving never had an hours sickness and his mother is as healthy give our respects to all friends and acquaintances.

We remain yours

James & Isabella Miller

When you land at Campbellton leave your things at the wharf and the Captain will direct you to my place & I will bring you your luggage to my house with the cart.

J Miller

we here that Wm. Struthers is dead if you come before leaving call on Mrs Broom and bring word as Wm Christies mother is anxious to here come by New York for there is a great deal of the Irish fever by Quebec. from New York to Rochester from Rochester to Cobourg from Cobourg 12 miles to Rice Lake carriage by wagon on stage take the steam Boat to Campbellton 8 miles $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to our house.

Letter No. 8

Otonabee Sept. 16, 1849

Dear Friend

I embrace this opportunity of sending you these few lines to let you know that wee are all well at present thank god for it hopping will find you in the same how thankful ought wee to be to divine providence for his goodnefs to us in those days of troubles he has spared us in the land of the living & place of hope while maney are called away in the prime of life by that scourge the cholera it is been verely bad in the larg twons in North America there has not been aney cases in this District it is been a very healthy this season we received your leter of September 1848 the reason wee did no write you sooner wasnt from aney want of affection toward your or for aneything you write but week after week & mounth after mounth slipt past & then wee exected you be on the way to America as you are allwayes promising wee shall allwayes be glad to here from you in your last you mentioned that Jean was maried. Isabella would be glad to know his name and calling. William Christie & mother are well since I wrote you Isabella has had a daughter she was born Agust 5 1848 she is well her name is Isabelle Fulton our son Willie is well thriving this has been a verely dry sumer hay spring wheat oats peas & all spring crops are light but of good quality fall wheat is in general good the prices is low this year so far but as wee are all Lairds here and pays no rent wee can live well we grow on the farm all the nfsesares of life even our sugar we make. We made 216 lb of Maple Shugar last spring & from 14 to 20 gallons of molases the heaviest itom of out expences is tea for wee are great tea drinkers in America the girls here is verely fond of tea they think oat meal cakes & porage beneath them I find you are in the notion of bringing a wife out with when you come if you intend to settle on land you come it is the wisest plan as keeping Bachelors hall does not suit a Canadian farmer but if you intend to be a servant you would be as well single there is no danger of you having to return to Scotland for a wife as the girls is geting plenty here there like the potatoes you get good wages at home for these whard time the wages this last season was not so high here as the years prevous from 25 to 35L was the comon rate but I think America is the best Country for a man with a famley but I heave you to guge for your self for fear of reflections after coming we had a verely pleasant day Wedensday last seeing the regatta or Boat race on the rice Lake there was prises for sail boats oar Boats and indian canoes we started from Campbellton $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile fromour place in the morning in the Steam Boat and returend the same evening there was a camp miting last week two mile this near the indian vilage as there is no such meetings in Scotland I will give you a discription the meeting was chiefly got up for the revivil of relegen amongst the indians they erect camps in woods and cover them with bark of trees. Erect a temprarey stage for the preachers and build large fires in the night they from 6 to 10 days and preachs & prays nearly all the time the indians from defents parts of the countrey comes somtimes upwards of 100 miles there are fed by the indians where the meeting is held they killed 3 oxen for the ocaation the appear to be sincear they are verely quit tribe they are all methodests & Baptists hundreds of whites attends the meetis some to going the worship and others to scoff there is to be a

sacrament in the Prsbeterian Church on first Sabath. the countrey appears to going steadey improving schools is building all over the countrey and Sabath schools is well atended. I will send you some papers which give you all acounts of the countrey. Isabel sends her complements to all friends and aquantinces I have nothing more of importance to say. wee remain yours affectionatly

James & Isabella Miller

To Mr C Brownlie

wee got one news paper cutting