Letter from Emma Hoyt, circa 1889

Emma Hoyt

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I thought — I surely would see poor Sister before she was put under the ground; but no, she was too decomposed for us to have one look on her face. Oh my Sister — my Sister — who could have thought that I never should have had a word with her again, nor even an her face after that morning. The dear child.

It seems so strange that we shall never see her again, only a few days ago she was here and now so far away. Her hand instead of healing got worse, and her husband, being young and inexperienced, kept her at home that week instead of taking her to a Dr. at once. The Friday of that week the town Dr. pronounced it Blood Poisoning and that her finger must come off. Any way that the best thing to do was to go to Dr. to the Hospital. George stayed with her as long as he could, but before the cars left she was completely crazed, had to be forced into the cars — and all the way up there she had to held by strong men.
At she went home, they came to and on to take the cars for Mrs. W. By a mere accident my husband went to town that day, and on his return and surprise, when he found dear sister there in such a state. She was then delirious, half the time she did not know him, and her hand was turned black and the other hand was all swelled and turning black.

so that she lived only a few hours after arriving. So that she was alone and away from us all when she died. Her shroud, coffin and every thing was done off there, so that she and husband came down on the day to be have her buried at Cleveland. You see what a shock to her condition and death, all together, did alone and among strangers it seems to us all, though her husband was with her. She was buried by the side of another, so that in little over a year three loved ones have gone above.

We have no picture of Grace, and much regret that.
Next Tuesday would have been her birthday—9th Oct. being 21 yrs old. This letter will start to you on that day.

Grace's husband bought one of all the pictures of onthers, among them yours and sisters and her husband and baby—also Frank and wife and their babies.

Have you been teaching school yet and is your health good. Winter will soon be here—when look out for your blizzards and cyclones! I wish you could spend the winter with one you would see the difference between the two climates. Could not you take a vacation and jump on the car and come out this winter?

I think I will send you a copy of one of our Portland Magazine as you can see some of the pictures of the homes found in the western land.

I see I have written a large letter already but I could write just as much once I think. Though, I'd better wait—till next time if you have forgiven my long silence and will answer this. I'll write it well—
letter. You must—please write how your sister—who was at College—is getting along, perhaps she is at home now—tell me how cousin Frank and wife are— and do you hear from Uncle Henry? Aunt Brany, have you a picture of yourself that you would send me? I should like to have one as much as I have you one of my mother? if you have not I'll send one she had taken when she was about 43 yes old—she only one she ever had one taken.

In conclusion I will begin to close my long letter hoping you have forgiven my long silence—please write to me soon— for I am the only one of dear mother's children who will keep you in remembrance and correspondence.

Our health is good and things are well with us—for which I thank my mother God—daily and always.

Your loving Cousin,

Emma Boyl
From content and outside sources, letter can be dated back to October, 1889

(mentions in letter “next Tuesday would have been her birthday – 9 of Oct, being 21 ys old.” Grace, from census found on ancestry.com, was born 1868)

1st page:

...to me. When I went up to Cleveland I thought – I surely would see poor sister before she was put under the ground but no, she was too far decomposed for us to have one look on her face. Oh my sister – my sister – who could have thought that I never should have a word with her again, nor ever see her face after that morning. The dear girl.

Oh it seems so strange that we shall never see her again, only a few days ago she was here and now so far away. Her hand instead of healing got worse, and her husband, being young and inexperienced, kept her at home that week instead of taking her to a Dr. at once. The Friday of that week

The town Dr. pronounced it Blood Poisoning and that her finger must come off any way. That the best thing to be done was to go to W-W- to the Hospital. George stayed with her as long as he could but before the cars left she was completely crazed, had to be forced into the cars and all the way up there she had to be held by strong men.

2nd page:

...[unclear] she went home, they came to [unclear] to take the cars for W-W-. By a mere accident my husband went to town that day, and oh his sorrow and surprise when he found dear sister there in such a state. She was there delirious, half the time she did not know him, and her hand was turned black and the other hand was all swollen and turning black.

so that she lived only a few hours after arriving – so that she was alone and away from us all when she died. Her shroud coffin and everything was done up there, so that she and husband came down next day to have her buried at Cleveland. You see what a shock to me her condition and death, all together, died alone and among strangers it seems to us all, though her husband was with her. She was buried by the side of mother, so that in little over a year three loved ones have gone above. We have no picture of Grace, and much regret that.

3rd page:

Next Tuesday would have been her birth day – 9 of Oct. being 21 ys old. This letter will start to you on that day. Grace’s husband brought me all the pictures of mothers, among them your and sisters and her husband and baby – also Frank and wife and their babies. Have you been teaching school yet and

is your health good. Winter will soon be here. Then look out for your blizzards and cyclones! I wish you could spend the winter with me you would see the difference between the two climates. Couldn’t you take a vacation and jump on the cars and come out this winter? I think I will send you a copy or two
of our Portland magazine, so you can see some of the pictures of the homes found in this western land. I see I have written a large letter already but I could write just as much more. Think, though, I’d better wait till next time, if you have forgiven my long silence and will answer this, I’ll write it next –

4th page:

letter. You must please write how your sister, who was at College, is getting along, perhaps she is at home now – tell me how cousin Frank and wife are – and do you hear from Uncle Henry? Aunt Mary, have you a picture of yourself that you would send me? I should like to have one so much –

[and] have you one of my mother? If you have not I’ll send one she had taken when she was about 43 ys old. The only time she ever had one taken. Well cousins, I will begin to close my long letter hoping you have forgiven my long silence. Please write to me soon – for I am the only one of dear mother’s children who will keep you in remembrance and correspondence. Our health is good and things are well with us – for which I thank my mother’s God – daily and always –

your loving cousin

Emma Hoyt
Oh, it seems so strange that we shall never see her again, only a few days ago she was here and now so far away. Her hand instead of healing got worse, and her husband, being young and inexperienced, kept her at home that week instead of taking her to a Dr. at once. The Friday of that week she went home, they came to try to take the cars for her. By a mere accident my husband went to town that day and the next morning he found dear sister there in such a state. She was quite delirious, half the time she did not know what she was doing. Her hand was turned black and the other hand was all swollen and turning black.

The town Dr. pronounced it Blood Poisoning and that her finger must come off. Any way that was the best thing to be done. When we got to the Hospital, George stayed with her as long as he could, but before the cars left she was completely crazed, had to be fed with the tea, and all she wanted then she had to hold by strong arm.
so that she lived only a few hours after
arriving—so that she was alone and
away from us all when she died. Her
shroud, coffin and every thing was done
by there, so that she and husband came
down next day to be have her buried at
(Cleveland). You see what a shock to her condition and death, all together
so to one. When I went off to Cleveland
I thought Fanny would die presently
before she was put under the ground
but no. She was too far decomposed for
us to have one look on her face—Oh the
only sight—only sight—whom could have
thought—that I never should have
a word with her again, nor ever see her
face after that morning. The dear girl
died alone and among strangers—it
does not recall, though her husband
was with her. She was buried by the
side of another—so that ni little over
a year three loved ones have gone
above—
We have no picture of Grace, and much
regret that.
I have been working on the "stove" for our Portland Home. I have been trying to make it work properly. I think we need to adjust the temperature. The stove is not functioning as it should. I am hoping that with some adjustments, it will work better.

We have been spending a lot of time together as a family. The new baby is doing well and we are all enjoying each other's company. I hope you are doing well and that everything is going smoothly. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

With love,
[Signature]
letter. You must—please write—and
your sister— who was at college—is getting
along, perhaps she is at home now—
tell me how Cousin Frank and wife
are—and do you hear from Uncle
Henry? Aunt Mary, have you a picture
of your self that you would send me?
I should like to have one as much as
I have you one of my mother.
If you have not—I'll send one she had
taken when she was about 42 years old—
the only time she ever had one taken.
Well cousin, I will begin to close my
long letter hoping you have forgiven
my long silence—please write to me soon—for I am the only one of dear
mother's children who writes.
Keep you
in remembrance and correspondence.
Our health is good and things are
well with us—for which I thank my
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Your loving Cousin
Emma Hoyt
Oh it seems so strange that we shall never see her again, only a few days ago she was here and now so far away. Her hand instead of healing got worse, and her husband, being young and inexperienced, kept her at home that week instead of taking her to a Dr. at once. The Friday of that week that she went home, they came to [unclear] to take the cars for W-W-. By a mere accident my husband went to town that day, and oh his sorrow and surprise when he found dear sister there in such a state. She was there delirious, half the time she did not know him, and her hand was turned black and the other hand was all swollen and turning black.

The town Dr. pronounced it Blood Poisoning and that her finger must come off any way. That the best thing to be done was to go to W-W- to the Hospital. George stayed with her as long as he could but before the cars left she was completely crazed, had to be forced into the cars and all the way up there she had to be held by strong men.

so that she lived only a few hours after arriving – so that she was alone and away from us all when she died. Her shroud coffin and everything was done up there, so that she and husband came down next day to have her buried at Cleveland. You see what a shock to me her condition and death, all together, was to me. When I went up to Cleveland I thought – I surely would see poor sister before she was put under the ground but no, she was too far decomposed for us to have one look on her face. Oh my sister – my sister – who could have thought that I never should have a word with her again, nor ever see her face after that morning. The dear girl died alone and among strangers it seems to us all, though her husband was with her. She was buried by the side of mother, so that in little over a year three loved ones have gone above. We have no picture of Grace, and much regret that.

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Page 4:

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and have you one of my mother? If you have not I’ll send one she had taken when she was about 43 ys old. The only time she ever had one taken. Well cousins, I will begin to close my long letter hoping you have forgiven my long silence. Please write to me soon – for I am the only one of dear mother’s children who will keep you in remembrance and correspondence. Our health is good and things are well with us – for which I thank my mother’s God – daily and always –

     your loving cousin

          Emma Hoyt

Transcribed by Liesbeth ten Hoeve