

Bellevue, June 7, 1889

Dear Sister,

I received your letter two weeks ago, but I didn't know anything to write so I laid it away to wait for something to turn up. Well yesterday at half past three a fire broke out on the southwest corner of Front and Madison streets in Baxley store, it soon spread over the entire block, it then caught onto the Commercial mill and Frye's opera house. By five o'clock it reached the Occidental, it was not 30 minutes from this time until the whole southern part of town was in flames. We seen the smoke from our place when it first started and we thought it was a clearing fire. at eight o'clock three men from a tic camp on our place come up and said they were going over to see what it was. Al, the hired man, and I went over with them. We pulled across the lake in 44 minutes and when we reached the top of the hill we seen what it was. It was reported that 2 fire men were killed by the wall of the opera house falling in and that 2 men were caught stealing in a jewelry store and the people took them away from the police and lynched them near the "old hanging ground" on Yeslers corner. A Police man was shot dead by a thief on Front st. Every other person was drunk or nearly so on free whiskey. I think that the city is under martial law, but I am not certain. The Militia was all out and two or three companies [illegible] picked up from town; they were armed with rifles, shotguns and ax handles and pretty near everything was used for arming them in the hurry so as to prevent stealing. Every building south of the skating rink and west of second st. is burnt down. The Boston block was saved with every pane of glass in it broke. The house next to it was burned down.

John Collins residence was burned. It don't seem hardly possible that all those nice buildings and all the mills and factories are in ruins but they are. I am not sure whether Bigelow was burned out or not. We got home this morning at half past two, and Papa, Charlie, Frank, Timie, Flora, and [illegible] went over at eight they have not got back yet. I don't know whether we will lose what is in banks as they are all gone. If we do it is pretty hard. Charlie has considerable in them Papa had about 350 in one I had some and so did Frank. But I don't think we will lose it.

We have our garden all in and $\frac{1}{4}$ acre of strawberries in all the [illegible].

Your Brother

Selden.