

Marshall Mo 3/23 1937

Dear Ross

You don't seem to think there is a lot of over head expense in living. For example groceries were as cheap or cheaper when you & Bessie were keeping house you ought to get all the groceries you could eat flour sugar coffee & potatoes of or not to exceed \$7.00 a month did you live on that expense. Now it is this way in the first place the first year 1880 I worked on the railroad till the middle of July don't remember how much money I had when I quit railroad I hired 5 acres broke on the harness load & 5 on the tree claim had to have that much to hold it. When I quit the Railroad I went down to Marshall Minn. to harvest 25 acres of wheat but was scarce so I changed works with a neighbor to cut & bind my wheat also to stack it & thrash it that is the way to thrash. I had to pay 6 cts a bushel for thrashing I got 14 bushels per acre it was 60 cts a bushel. I got 5 bushels ground into grain flour to use through the winter & changed 8 bushels into white flour and took 50 bushels to Dale for seed. That left 237 bu to sell but they always dock off some for dirt & weed seed so I got about \$200. by that time what I had left from Railroad work was

(over)

gan then I got a Emigrant car to Didmet oh yes  
I had in some oats I had the expence of harvest  
& thrashing them about 200 bushels put them in the  
car and got some lumber to build a shanty  
on my homestead that would do to live in  
and a small barn for my team you see the  
first shanty was just enough to make believe  
we staid there & one could have if he really had to  
You see in 1880 we just broke the 5 acres on each claim  
so in 1881 I only had 5 acres for wheat. Had to put  
trees out on the treclaim. I traded my horses for  
2 yolk of oxen so I could break more land and  
I backed and broke about 50 acres before it got  
to dry I broke 5 acres for Corn at 3 per acre to  
help out I had to hire my hay cut as I did not have  
a mowing machine I also hired my 5 acres wheat cut  
I got 175 bushels kept 80 bushels for see & sold the  
rest came to a little over 50 dollars to live on for  
another year in the spring of 1882 I had to buy  
a suder I dont remember the price I think about 60 dollars  
& a harrow for 20 on time at 10 per cent interest then  
when harvest came there was a binder to get at  
\$200 on time <sup>Binder</sup> twine to buy it cost 30 dollars it  
was rather dry & it haled once so the wheat went  
about 16 bushels had in 40 acres 640 bushels 75-  
10 acres oats

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for seed next year would leave 565<sup>g</sup> at about  
 58 cts after taking out the shrinkage would be \$ 219.2  
 for got to say I had to get a breaking plow at \$ 28.  
 & a turning plow to turn the sod after the sod was  
 broke in the spring & early summer we had to get a  
 turning plow <sup>\$ 18.</sup> and turn it in the fall that left  
 it rough so it would freeze & thaw so it would harrow  
 to pieces in the spring. Now in 1883 & 1884 both  
 seasons were poor crops just enough to pay the  
 expence of harvest & thrashing possibly a little more  
 & in all these years I paid from 18 to 40 dollars a  
 year, taxes. Personal tax

There was always repairs on machinery Horses to shoe  
 my self to shoe it cost a dime to get a shirt washed  
 2 churches built in town I had to chip in for  
 both. When I got tired of backing I Board in town  
 at 4 dollars a week. you see they built a school  
 House in every school distree & Taxed us enough  
 to pay for them & hire a teacher. if I did not  
 want to burn hay it was coal at 9 dollars a ton <sup>\$ 60 or 75 a ton</sup>  
 it is hard to tell where the money goes but it has  
 a way of getting away from a fellow if he has got it

ask some more Young Frank