

came on before us had their houses to build and land to chop and clear off, so that but few crops could be got in seasonably. Provisions were high for this country last winter money scarce, and teams poor for want of keeping and tanning very expensive, so that our prospect of getting *any thing* to eat sometimes seemed dark. But Providence has provided thus far. I never knew before what my real wants are—but by being made conscious of them I can better prize the blessings which I now enjoy than I could otherwise do. I think I feel something like gratitude.

The face of the country is far from being level. There is however nothing like mountains. But gradual swells and little hills are interspersed all over the "timbered lands." There are many small streams of water; some of them large enough to carry mills.

We have no grist-mill nearer than 30 miles—but one is expected to be soon in operation within about 19. The nearest saw-mill, 7 miles distant and not much road to it. And we expect a man with his family from Vt. here forthwith, who is calculating to erect mills within 1 mile of the village.—The want of mills is the greatest obstacle to our progress with which we have to encounter. You can hardly conceive of the inconvenience. What should you think of going to Concord every time you wanted a bag of meal, with an ox-team. And then it would not be half so bad because you would have a good road whereas we have a most intolerable one. It always takes [manuscript torn] days and sometimes 5 or 6 besides half killing the team. They charge about 60 cents for carrying one bushel and cheap enough too—Why you never saw such "*gro-fur*" roads in your life! You may imagin to yourself the very worst of which your inventive powers are capable and then I will venture to say that it will not half come up to the reality. Mud and mire and holes so deep [deep?] that oxen frequently get in all over "head and ears." Our road through the village is somewhat improved since last fall so that now we are not obliged to clamber over logs and through tree-tops in passing as at that time yet now one meets with stumps and grubs at every step. But it indicates that when the trees are so cleared away that the sun can shine on the ground the mud will not be so abundant. The forests are the greatest curiosity of the country—

they are grand. You cannot conceive the *majesty* (if I may use the word) of the trees, some of which seem "old, as Time." They are large straight exceeding tall before any limbs appear. I often contemplate them with wonder and admiration—and am sometimes led to exclaim:

"These are thy glorious works! Parent of good!" I am persuaded that if one of these noble *structures* could be transplanted into the centre of "Hancock Common" it would draw arround it as many admiring spectators as your Dandy-Jack did perched high as he was on the top of the liberty pole.

There is some excellent oak timber found here. Sylvester walked over one of his farm lots of 10 acres and he saw not less than 30 white oak trees from 2 to 4 feet in diameter—very straight and nice. Bass-wood is beautiful here. White wood and black-walnut are used in finishing work.—There is not much in the Colony purchase but it is somewhat plenty in the vicinity. The houses at Marshall are all covered with white wood and they look very nice so perfectly clear of knots.—This wood has to be painted immediately or it warps badly. I think we shall not want for suitable materials for building whenever we get mills.

When the canal which is to cross the state is in operation our timber will be worth money. That on the Oak—Opening is all *oak* and much of it very poor and—it is also spare and is all that can be had for fuel. Our canal which passes within one mile of us, is already commenced. Perhaps you saw an account in [manuscript torn] paper of the Celebration of its commencement. The Governor of the state took out the first shovel full of dirt.

Now I wish that I could give you an idea of our situation just as it is. You may if you please imagin an inclosure of 10 acres which is the size of our village-lots with 7 acres chopped over and 4 or 5 mostly cleared off except here and there a huge tree left standing—a fence of rails, logs, trees and polls—a garden fenced with [manuscript torn] and one rail instead of 5. A cow-house, a hog-house a pig-house and a corn crib all made of polls and *cradled* [?] together as they call it here. At the east and within 5 or 6 rods of the house is a deep forest—at the west is a prospect of the street and 9 or 10 cottages all of