

JO. H. SIMONDS & CO.

Agents for the Purchase & Sale of Real Estate

Franklin, Pa. Nov. 3, 1864

Dear John,

Yours of the 29th rec'd with deeds etc. which I have left for record. You forget the great number of instruments which have to be recorded and it is not probable that they will be finished to send you June's before you leave. Baltimore for three months is the time it usually takes for recording deeds, but then they hope to have done in six weeks. I was at Cleveland last Sunday and saw John Ellsler and Tom. They both want to be remembered to you. Tom is doing nothing except drinking whiskey and burning money, but I can have no pity for him. We are fearfully busy and you must excuse hurry. Let me hear from you when you get a chance to write.

Yours,

Jo. H. Simonds

From:

Jo. H. Simonds & Co.
Agents for the purchase &
Sale of Petroleum Lands, leases
interests in Oil Wells, ec.
Franklin, Benango Co., P a.

J. Wilkes Booth, Esq.

Baltimore

Barnums Hotel

Md.

Postmarked: Franklin, Pa. Nov. 4, 1864

JO. H. SIMONDS & CO.

FRANKLIN, PA.

Dec. 7, 1864

My Dear John,

Yours of the 2nd rec'd with bill of performance for which many thanks. I had been wondering where you were for some time past and should have written sometime since but for two reasons, 1st I did not know in what part of the country you were wandering and 2nd so busy have I been that I have not had time even to breathe. I have not changed at all except in one particular and that is in writing letters and that is a matter of necessity. We are driven all but to death and do not have time to eat, drink or sleep. We get into the office at 7 o'clock in the morning and never leave it until between 12 and 1 o'clock at night. As I am the head of the whole concern the responsibility and anxiety of the business falls upon me and it keeps me constantly busy. It is one constant stream of talk both for me and self. We have the office very nicely fitted up and have been obliged to take in the upper room throwing them both into one by a staircase. Business has been brisk and our profits reasonable. I have not yet made my fortune my dear boy, but think we shall by careful management and attention to business build up a profitable trade. It is hard work, long hours, constant application and great anxiety but then it is for myself and I am much happier than when in the bank. Don't for a moment think I have forgotten you my dear John, for not a day passes that I don't think and speak of you but you can realize that I am busy when I say that I don't write home oftener than once a month and then very hurried notes. I had no idea what being busy meant before but now I realize it.

Poor Tom from bad to worse his misfortunes will kill him-- what he is living on I can't imagine--he is borrowing a little here and there, has pawned his watch or rather the one you and John Ellsler paid for--is drinking more than ever--has been a fearful nuisance to us in our business having ruined two or three profitable sales we had almost perfected, has called Mr. Stevens and self all the villainous names you can imagine--injured our reputation by representing himself as being at the head of the firm until we have been obliged to publish a card in the paper a copy of which you will receive.

John Ellsler has never settled up on his share of the balances and I shall write him shortly if I don't hear from him. I was in Cleveland four or five weeks since and I saw him there, but he did not offer to settle. The whole thing stands now quietly and I shall not be in favor of doing anything as long as Tom is in it. I am in hopes that he will be ready to sell his interest

at something like its real value at some time when I may feel inclined to buy. He is living in Cleveland but comes down here occasionally. He was here last week for two days made \$20,000 (in his imagination) and went back to C. to spend it. I have lost all pity for him.

You can hardly imagine what a disappointment it was my not being able to attend the performance of Julius Caesar. I had no idea when it was coming off until the day it occurred. But I could not have left here had I known it. I fear you must be getting blue not acting any. I thought you had engagements commencing about this time, and I hoped you would increase your list. Am sorry too at your being sick--you must be careful of yourself.

If you have nothing else to do and get hard up just come out here and stop with us. We will guarantee to support you.

Let me assure you I shall never forget all your kindness to me.

I was at the Recorder's Office yesterday and those deeds were not entered but as soon as they are I shall forward you June's.

Let me hear from you when you can get a chance to write for I am as much interested in your welfare as ever. I see that June is acting in Boston. I should like to be there to see him.

I had a letter from Lin Shends the other night--from his a/c I judge things are mixed at the Museum although they are doing a good business.

Lin thinks of trying Staning next season. Mo. and Murphy are well and desire to be remembered to you. Things are prospering well at Pithole. One well is down 470 feet though the second sand rock where they struck a fine show of oil. This is a long letter for me to get a chance to write but the mail has just come in and I must turn to that.

Yours as ever

Jo. H. Simonds

11 P. M.

Envelope

Postmarked Franklin, Pa. Dec. 7, 1864

John W. Booth, Esq.
Ford's Theatre
Washington, D. C.

JO. H. SIMONDS & CO.

Franklin, Pa. Jany. 6, 1865

My dear John,

I have been to the Recorder's Office today and he tells me that June's Deed will probably be recorded by next week. As soon as it is done I shall send it to you. Tom has been round today bothering me about the place and had a paper from John Ellsler giving his sanction to Tom's leaving the place. I wonder at his being so injudicious as he is liable to bother me with his dammed nonsense.

I wish that you would write June to send me a Power of Attorney to act for him in the matter as I may in that way be enabled to show a semblance of authority and power in the matter. Tom was quite struck up today when I reminded him during his blowing that if the land was sold for \$10,000 according to the agreement he had signed that he would receive nothing from it as the money invested was to be repaid before anything was to be divided. He raved and stormed that no such agreement would stand, that it should be adjusted and that it should be null and void. I quietly told him that I knew nothing about that, but that such was the agreement signed, sealed and stamped and I did not see how it could be got rid of as he had signed it and he could be held to it. Am very busy and have not time to write more. God bless you old boy, and give you good luck.

Yours,

JO. H. SIMONDS

Mo sends his love and laughs at Tom.

Envelope

Postmarked Franklin, Pa.
Jan. 6, 1865

J. Wilkes Booth, Esq.
Ford's Theatre
Washington, D. C.

JO. H. SIMONDS & CO.

Franklin, Pa. Jany. 24th, 1865

My Dear John,

Yours of the 4th of Jany. rec'd (acknowledging draft) and 19th just handed me, and I do this time answer by return mail, laying aside for the moment all other business with which I am all but crazy. My head is in a whirl all the time. Just now Mo is away at home on a visit and I have two entirely green hands in the office to attend to business and what with Pithole and everything else on my hands I am almost wild and sometimes hardly know what I am about. The same day that I rec'd your first I had an answer from John Ellsler begging more time upon the balance due from him. As it has been so long since it was due and as the money now belongs to me I do not feel particularly pleasant with regard to his complaints that nothing is being done there. Who does he expect to furnish the money to go on and do the work especially with Tom Mears to spend it. Tom is here in town but does not come into the office often as I generally take him down a peg or two when he does. June's deed I have just rec'd from the Recorder's Office and enclose to you that you can make such disposition of it as you think best. I trust it may prove valuable to him and think it may sometime for if I can make satisfactory arrangements with Tom Mears and John Ellsler I would like to put a man at work at the lower end of the property and bore a new hole, for I have a good deal of faith in the property but I have no idea of advancing all the money without getting a proportionate share of the benefit. I should work it in the shape of a lease if at all. Neither John nor Tom have any idea that I own an interest and should it turn out valuable I shall not feel like taking it from you upon the terms which I rec'd it last fall.

Pithole promises fair to be a good thing and a fine arrangement for Rosa. You ought not to have given her more than half of that share John for it now looks as though it would prove a fine income. I presume you have heard before this of the striking of a 300 bl. well on the adjoining farm to me and the tremendous excitement it has caused here. Shep and I have been offered \$15,000 each for our shares.

Our well is bored and will probably be tested this week in which we have as good as ~~show~~ as they had. Should we have a larger well it will be a big thing all around. I am sorry for your poor success. Are you not going to play at all this season. I should think it must be expensive for you living in Washington without doing anything.

If you have nothing on hand come out here and stay with us, where we will take good care of you and supply you with every comfort except women.

I had news from Boston advising me not to sell Tremont stock as the market has been flat ever since the purchase was made so I preferred to send you the \$500 which you need not worry about at all until you get to making money again.

Pithole has already turned out well so that all are satisfied with it and are thinking of starting another company upon very much the same plan only on a larger scale. We have with other parties with whom we have joined 350 acres of what I consider good territory not far from our own property upon which we propose forming a company, dividing it into 350 shares @ \$1000 each, to be managed by a board of three trustees, Taylor of the McHenry House, Meadville, Jocelyn of Louisville, a fine man, and myself trustees; the property then to be surveyed, cut into acre lots and and every other acre leased for half the oil so that there will be no need of a working capital and some fifty or one hundred wells will in this way be started right off and in six months I feel almost confident that the stock would be like ours worth \$10,000 or \$15,000. I have thought that perhaps you could dispose of some of the stock among your friends and do something for yourself as I know of nothing more worthy of confidence and shall offer it to my own friends myself with great inducement to invest.

You can talk it around among such as you want and as soon as arrangements are made I will send you full particulars, descriptions, etc.

To you personally we can give you eleven shares for every \$10,000 in cash or 10% commissions, although we don't propose to pay commissions as a general thing as it is good enough to work itself through. It is a rare chance for people to go into a square thing and make either a large or small investment with good prospects of a large return. Let me hear from you often, John, for it shows me that I am not forgotten here in my exile, and come down if you can.

Believe me ever yours truly,

JO. H. SIMONDS