

The Duncombe House.

DAVID DAVIS, PROPRIETOR.

Fort Dodge, Iowa, Dec 30 1877

Jas J. Hill Esq
New York

My Dear Friend,

I am just up from a two weeks stay in the rain, mud and snow at Lehigh. On arrival here rec'd yours of 24th inst. - According to your wish I write you at N.Y. although I think it is late for me to do it in order to reach you.

I began work on Monday, 17th at two points - as shown by dots.



The dot #1 is 250 feet N.E. of the quarter sec post and therefore

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a few feet off from our land - this however does not matter & was not discovered until after work began - I then chained the Section and put marks at all the Sec corners - i.e. quarter & half sections - Dot #1 is back on a straight line on the level table land, ^{1/4} mile from the well (where the two veins show near the mines) and ought to satisfy any one as to the balance of the Sec - it is 180 feet from this level to creek at the Mines - We had a hard time owing to bad weather and delays of various sorts - broken tools & stones in the hole being main cause - and the days are so

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short that we made slow progress. On the 26th, having worked Christmas, we came to the gray flakey sandstone that overlies the slate - this was at a depth of 121½ feet and all through blue clay. We went 3 feet into the stone (it ought to be 5 to 8 feet thick) by noon of 28th when the great pressure on the clay caused the sides to close in so as to bind our tools. it was evident then that we had to get tubing for the 121 feet of clay or else we might lose the shale - I had hoped to avoid this but it has been so met that the hole was full of water & softened. I

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searched until yesterday noon
about C. Creek for tubing enough
to do but failed to get it. So
I walked up to Judd (no train)
last evening & came here -
At 5³⁰ in morning I go to
Coalville where I expect to
get it - if not there I shall
go to G, Junction and Boone
for it. I will find it and
guess that as soon as I get
tubing down to the hard
sandstone we can go on nicely.
The sandstone shows O.K. and
below it should be 10 feet of
slate and the coal. Never saw
a better showing for coal and
everyone says I am safe. I
have Willson's especial friend

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Went brouse working this hole. He says it is sure to lead to a good vein - and tells Willson the hole is unnecessary, that the } is all coal. (And so it is, worth now \$300.00 to \$500.00 an acre) well - I hope to be drilling again by the 2nd and go on fast and reach thick coal in 2 days.

Sat #2 shows where Stevens is drilling in a dry ravine that is the best to open a mine in - better than the one in which the shaft is. This hole is about 100 feet from our line. We were one full week getting a hole started in this Ravine - we moved our

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took five times on account of
surface sand and boulders -
finally on the 26th we hit a
good spot and at 12 feet
depth were in the slate - in
the five moves made we did
not go over 50 feet from first
starting - the slate is very hard
and after 6 feet we came to
sulphur balls frequently so
that when I left, yesterday
noon Stevens was only down
in the slate 9 feet - It was
growing black - oily and very
hard and I believe he came
to coal within an hour after
I left - hope so anyhow - this
hole, if coal is found, would
be about 22 feet deep which

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would be the right depth as
related to the vein worked
in the Ravine on Chapman
land and ~~the~~ Tyson & Bank
just opposite Lot #2. S is
to stop when he comes to coal
and await my return - He
feels badly about the shaft
and accounts for it as being
a bad spot, as he claimed
his drill hole - 7 feet north-
showed good coal - however I
am not going to go into that
shaft and drive an entry 7
feet north to see - S will act
in good faith to us I am sure
and try to make things even -
I am going to
let Crouse put a hole (it

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will not be over 50 feet deep)
down in the same Ravine
that the shaft is in - some
50 yards up the ravine from
the shaft - Lat #3 - My object
is to satisfy Willson that
the bad showing in the shaft
is owing to a "bad spot" only
in the vein - I am easy as
to how the drillings will
show up - From foregoing you
can see where I am in
the work - as to the outcome
I am sanguine and easy -
A few days will tell -
Judd is to
be here by 10th Jan - Willson
says that J & B will act on his
and Hadley's report - I have

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been cultivating H. as far
as discreet to do so.

Willson told
me^{on 27th} that they wanted to go on
with the scheme if we could
satisfy him & H. I enclose
telegram from Judd.

They have
\$25,000⁰⁰ arranged for from
Jno Burnham, for 3 years -
to buy land - cars &c with.
So W told me.

They bought
9 acres across River, near
town, for \$900⁰⁰ - Boney asked
them \$25,000⁰⁰ for his 80 acres -
They found prices high over the
River - Rolf sold his 23 acres
to Tourtellott on 28th for \$2000⁰⁰

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Cash - So you see how prices
range and you judge whether
our fee γ at $\$60.00$ is cheap.

I have filed
with Pa on fee 13 as follows,
if taken by 15th Jan, $\$1/2$ NW⁴ @
40⁰⁰ - NW⁴ SW⁴ @ 30⁰⁰ - $\$1/2$ NW⁴
@ 15⁰⁰ & NW⁴ NW⁴ @ 10⁰⁰ - average
price on 320 acres is $\$23.75$ an
acre - this I need not say is
low - I need money to pay
a compromise of $\$50,000.00$ to
Webster & Hamilton Counties
on "back taxes" - Terms $\gamma/3$ cash
+ 1 - 2 + 3 years - See 21 & 29
ought to be cared for - Especially
as to the deeds now on hand several
months for NW⁴ Dec 29 - Cash Pay^t $\$100.00$ I am
worried and anxious over the
condition of things - so much

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seems to depend on the "shoot"
things take with J & B. Yet we
are sacrificing our land in
selling at \$6.00. I wish I had
money to act with.

I shall do
my best to get things through
and let the sale go on. but
I don't care what the result
may be in these 2 or 3 bore
holes if we look enough we
can find a good vein of
coal on most any part of
see 7 - a drill hole is an
uncertain thing.

Smart is
still working in Humboldt Co.
N & Co say they will go to Neb
City and connect with Smart.

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next spring - I wish that they
would go to Mason City -
I drew
on you to-day for \$75.00 for
wages to men -

The revised
edition of Journal - Dec 26th -
will be on your desk when
your return -
long letter -

Excuse this

Yours &c

Hann

Judd telegram mislaid - He
said "when they were satisfied
of things according to former
representations they would act"



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