

Panama Feb 13. 1851

Dear Father & Mother

I have arrived safe at Panama in good health and in good spirits. I left Havana Sunday the 1<sup>st</sup> of January and I seen some hard times coming from thare here we left New Orleans on the Empire City with 500 passengers when we arrived at Havana the Georgia was in with 700 and 250 more waiting at Havana to go maid in all 1450 we all left Havana in the Georgia they say here it was largest load of passengers that was ever brought here, As luck would have it I was aquainted with some of the cooks and I faried tolerable well. There is from four to Five Thousand people waiting to go through. Tickets is selling in the Steamers for \$200 dollars and in the Sailors for \$122 I have a Ticket in Sailor called the Rowena which is advertised to leave on the 20<sup>th</sup> I think I will go through like a Knife. Board in the City is two dollars a day we are Camped out about a mile from the city where it costs but little to live I expect there is Two Thousand camping were I am The Boys that left before us are here and will leave in a day or two in the steamer Orleans we are camping with them It is a curiosity to see the people here every thing looks odd nothing is hawled here every thing is packed on mules, the houses is maid of \_\_\_ and with pan roofs, the houses \_\_\_ the city is maid of stone and brick they look like they have been built since the year one. I wrote from New Orleans I sent it up by Wm. Pulem on the Chancellor when you receive this write to me direct it where J. Mitchell is I believe this is \_\_\_\_\_ we are all well I feel as well as I ever did in my life Give my best Respects to Mrs and Mr Mitchell, when you write to Uncle Holmes tell him to write give my love to Sarah Ann and her William tell her to write I will write to her when I get settled give my love to all and believe me to remain

Your Affectionate Son  
Simkins Love

Tuolumne River Sep 13/'52

Dear Brother

It has been a long time since I received a letter from you I expected you would write at least once a month it is has now been near four months since I had a letter from home. Jo Mitchell sent me a letter down from Sonora a few days ago that he recieved from you and I perused it with the greatest of pleasure I would like for you to write often and tell me all that is afloat I have also wrote to Mitchell and Uncle Holmes and have not received any awnser. I have now been on the river about a month I am only making \$6.00 a day and glad to make that. Times is very dull here at present- there is nothing to do only on the rivers and there is plenty here to do it I have not seen Jo Mitchell for a month he is up in Columbia about 18 miles from here

So soon as the rainy season sets in I will make tracks for the dry diggins and if I have any kind of luck there you may expect home in time to spend my next Fourth of July I am in better health now than I was ever befor in my life I weigh levin pounds more than I did when I left home. Tell Father Andy Scholars is here he is working up in Sonora there is no news here at present you must excuse this short letter give Jo Huncilman my best respects and all inquiring friend give my respects to Mr. & Mrs. Mitchell don't forget to write give my love to all and recieve the same from

Your Affectionate Brother  
Simkins Love

PS direct your letters the same as you directed Jo Mitchell – SL

Sonora Dec. 25/'52

Dear Brother

After eating a Christmas dinner at Mrs Colenridges I went up to Sonora to see if I could get a letter I received two from you one of the \_\_\_ of Nov and the other the 8<sup>th</sup> and I can assure you I was not long getting them open I can hardly tell you how I feel when I get a letter from home some nights before I go to bed I get my letters out and read them over and over again. I am glad to hear that Father is on the mend I thought this letter would also tell me that Sarah Ann was Tell her though she ought not to devil me about the cobelers I have not eat a green apple this twelve months I would of liked to have been with you to day and been back here to morrow for I have better prospects ahead then I have ever had since I have been in California You say that Sarah Ann has wrote several letters to me Tell her that I have not received any of them tell her to write often I intended to write to her where you directed me to but I thought as she was home my letters there would be the same tell her that if she can brag on her apple cobbler you have not the rain that we have for it has been raining for three weeks and it is raining now and it looks about as much like clearing up as it did the day it commenced. You want to know if James Glass and me have seperated when I first came over from Volcano I left Jim at Columbia to work with Jo and I went to the Tuolumne River to work and as Tom Owen had a sore foot we left him at Volcano at work by the day as his foot was to bad to walk. Tom is now with me. Jim at Columbia with Jo I see them almost every week he is well Jo is well also You want to know what I am doing I have not had a chance to do much yet I will tell you the reason I am at work in what is called the dry diggings on a flat the watter is brought dow from a creek on this flat by a Watter Company they have had the watter on the flat about five weeks but we have not been able to do much for the last three on account of the rainy season but so far it has paid tolerable well if it continues so, I will not complain You was telling me not to come home until I got enough to justify me in coming here if I stoped here that long I would stop here untill I was grey headed they people in the States has a curious idea about Califfornia you must not think because a person is here is bound to make money for I can hire here at this time hundreds of men at three Dollars a day and some glad to get there board board at this time is twelve and sixteen Dollars a week we board ourselves we laid in some provisions before the rain set in I can tell you Noah that there is a great many here thinks they have no business here there not like the gal in the Ice cream Saloon there not glad they come I will tell you one thing sure I intend to stop here as long as I can make money that is what I come for. I weighed to day when I was in Sonora I weighed a hundred & fifty-

three pounds that's twelve pounds more than I ever weighed. The last I heard of Andy Scholars he went to Murphy's diggings about twenty miles from here. We thought about getting a turkey for Christmas they only ask ten dollars a piece for them we thought we could stand eight but it was no go Tell Lydia now she is married I suppose I will never hear from her it is a wonder she did not give me a lick about the cobblers. You say in one of your letters that that Harriet is waiting for me to come back is she as good looking as ever Tell her she neve got that minature tell her to send it out I would like to take a peep at it tell her I will pay the postage. Tell Jo Huncilman I have wrote to him also Scyrus Harlin you say Jo Huncilman is going to start a shop where in New Albany Tell Mr. Mitchell I would like to hear from him I have only received one letter from him. It would amuse you to see me wrighting this letter I have my pipe by my side I smoke a while I then I write Sigars to expensive here You thought Portland was muddy Portland is nothing to this place a man has to be carefull or he will go out of site. I am glad to hear Aunt Sally is well and doing well. Uncle Holmes is gone I often think of him none new him but to love him. Give my love to Billy Woods Tell him if he gets the fever to come out here to rool himself up in a Blanket and lay out some cold rainy night that will break it. I wrote to you last Sunday I want you to write often give my love to all and receive the same yourself

From Your Affectionate Brother  
Simkins Love

PS I wish you all a happy Christmas tell Billy I send him that Dime if I could send it in a letter Give my respects James. Mrs. \_\_ Write Soon – S L

Sonora Jan 18<sup>th</sup> /'53

Dear Cousin

After washing the dishes I thought the best thing I could do was to answer your letter. I received it on last Sunday I have been looking for one from you for some time I also expected Pop would write. Tell her I am going to write to her soon I heard of Uncle Holmes death some two months ago I heard it soon after I wrote that last letter I was at that time on the Tuolumne River I left there and went to a place called Columbia to see Jo Mitchell and he had a letter from his Father which spoke of his death. I would of liked to of seen him before he died Poor Fellow he is gone, none new him but to love him You say in your letter you would like to be here if you was not making a cent now to tell you the truth about the matter about one half that is here is not making any thing I was here three months before I made a dollar but it was my own fault I was not in Sacramento City more than a hour before a man wanted me to go to work on a farm he offered me \$80.00 a month and board and as I knowed nothing about farming I would not go and at the same time I had not a dollar in my pocket the way I would give advice is to stop at home. Coming out here is not going to Louisville to work there is hundreds out here that thinks California has no business with them. There is four of us in company we have a Devil of a big claim it covers about two acres of ground and it is about as much as I want to dig on here You say you expect I have made my fortune yes I have but it is darn small so small if I get home even I will think my self well off. Now as for Mrs Love I would like to have her here about this time if she would travel through thick and thin I expect there will be a sight to get her when I get back I can not make out what you mean by Miss Green but you can Oh! As much as you please I give Pierce & King a vote and that is not the beauty of it I won a hat on it Give my love to Mary George tell her I live in hope of seeing them all one of those days the man you speak of that come out here and stoped a month and 18 days if he comes back here again I wish he may starve Death not wishing him any harm. You say Bill wrote to me I have not received his letter I seen Jo Mitchell last Sunday he is as fat as a buck he sends his best respects to you

I want you to write often and tell me the news if you see my Gal enquiring after me Give her a dollar and charge it to my account write soon give my love to all and receive the same

From Your Affectionate Cousin  
Simkins Love

PS when you write tell me what Ann is a doing give my love to her S L

Henry Bowman  
(Written in a circle around a rubbing of dollar coin)

One dolrz commonly called slugs oh! I wish I had a thousand

I wish those tarnal scoundrels who wrote home about the Gold were in the  
place the Scripture says gets never very cold They wrote about the heaps  
and the lumps so mighty big But never said a tarnal word how hard they  
were to dig

New Orleans Sunday April 20<sup>th</sup> 1856

Dear Parents

I wrote to you some time ago telling you how I was getting along I still continue to work for Brewster and will as long as they treat me well. but they have got but very little to do at present they eather have plenty or none I heard a few days ago that Mother had been sick but was better. I heard it through Noah I see some body almost every day from New Albany I saw Charles Churchill here last Sunday he is on the Steam John M. Stockwell he was very friendly. The Steam Boat S. F. J. Trabue Burnt & Sunk here yesterday She was in Calaboose the paper states for about forty Thousand this is the Boat that Capt Tucker eat is white Bread or she was inshured for Twenty-Five Thousand. I Guess they wanted to seller and wanted no body to have her. The Eclipse arrived here yesterday with Seventeen Thousand sacks of corn on Board The largest ?? that was ever brought here by one Boat Last Saturday was a grand day here they laid the corner stone of Henry Clay Monument all the different assoations turned out I seen them as I was going to dinner it was a splendid site I came devlish near loosing my dinner standing on a corner waiting until they went by

No more at present write soon and direct to the care of Waldo & Hughes give my love to William Wood Sarah Ann Billy Lizzie & Nannie & Harriet and recieve the same

From Your Affectionate Son  
Simkins Love