



**[Letter #1: 18960219]**

Biddle and Ellsworth, LT'D  
Merchant Millers,  
Full Roller Process,  
Flour, Feed, Meal and Grain,  
Flour Brands:  
Gold Dust, Royal  
Ivory, Watauga,  
Magnetic, Extra Biscuit

Johnson City, Tenn., Feb. 19<sup>th</sup>, 1896

Mr. Harry Oellig

Dear Sir and Mrs.,

It has been sometime since I heard from you. We are all well at this writing. Charles and Summer are going to school. We have fine schools in our young city. They are graded high. We are running our mill every day since the first of January. (Unintelligible) We had a good trade (?) last year. Wheat is worth 75 cents, corn 35 cents, oats 20 cents. I was on the road all last week. Two of our furnaces in the (unintelligible) are running. There was a large lumber company moved from Michigan to this place some time ago and are now at work. Well Harry, I think we did well to come South. Of course I had a hard pull, but if H. Brown had did what was fair I would have been in better shape. But with all that. If we have no bad luck I will come up all right. We did well last year. Our milling year ends on the first of July. I wish you could come down to see for us.

Mamie ask me to write you in regard to selling the real estate at home. I think you can do better by selling at private sale and I think "\$2500" a fair price for home property. In good times it should bring \$3500. The farm situated as it is should bring at least \$180.00 per acre, probably you can get more. Have you had any buyers yet? How was your crops last year? Harry I don't understand how your father got the note of \$160.00 against me. I gave him a note of \$120.00 the price I was to pay for the horse. Maybe you can give me some information. I had payed father \$125.00 on the note. He said he would give me credit on same. The horse proved to have bone shavin (?). he was lame when I took him out of your father's stable, and your father thought it was only (Unintelligible). He said he would only charge me \$75.00 for him, but I refused to take him at that, but wanted him to take back the horse and give me the note when concluded to have sale. Your father agreed I should pay him what the horse brought at sale. The horse sold for \$61.00 and if had not been for Father and Jake Riddle he would not brought that. But they run him up. Father then told me to charge him with the difference. You remember father took my sale notes on to the amount (?) of \$318.00 and only gave me \$300.00. But with the understanding if he collected them all he would pay me the balance "\$18.00." So I have an account against Father on the estate of \$102.00 or near that. I have not my account here "I am writing in this mill office." When he was he promised in the presence of Mamie he would send me the note and I should send him the difference. Of course I expect credit for same (?). I don't know why the note is \$160.00. You remember you and I was talking about the note and horse over on the other side of the dam. I spoke to Father at that time but he put me off and said he would fix it before I left. But we did not get it done. I don't know why he put us in the will (?) against Mamie as Father had a note against (unintelligible) Keagy \$300.00 or more. Why was that note not put in the will. I only speak of this Harry. I know you can't help it, But I want you to see that I get credit for my



*[transcriptions of three letters written by Andrew Biddle of Johnson City, Tennessee to his brother-in-law Harry Oellig in Pennsylvania]*

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account that I must have. Some one influenced Father to put the note in will. The horse never was worth \$40.00 when I got him. The horse never was worth ½ the feed it took to keep him and I don't think any of your folks want me to pay the price of a sound horse, but as it was put in the will, it looks as though (?) someone wants me to pay \$120.00 which I will not nor I don't think there is a court that will force me to do so. I will hold its account as a set off against the note. The \$600.00 note is all right. Harry write me soon and let me know about 2 (?). if you want me to send you the account I will do so. And certify to Mamie and I may come up home this summer. I would like to see your boys. I expect they are all most young men. Do you even get to see Mother? Do you go to (Unintelligible) any? Give me all the news, everything is news to us that is from Woodbury or Layby (?). what has become of Nan Johnson is she still in town? Mamie and I was talking of her last night. Oh I wish you could come down. I would like to see you and Mrs. O. I will close.

Yours as Ever,

A. Biddle

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**[Letter #2: 18961016]**

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Johnson City, TN, October 16, 1896

Mr. Harry Oellig

Dear Bro,

Your letter received. Contents noted. I had not the least idea you could sell any property at this time. The depression in prices of every thing has a wonderful influence on all kinds of property and especially on farming lands, and it will continue so as long as we have the agitation of money matters. There is no prospect of better prices till we have restored protection to our manufacturer and American products. That is our only relief, and I hope Harry you can see it in that light and cast your vote for sound money and high tariff. Harry the south is the country where politics run high. We have speaking in Johnson City nearly every night on both sides. I am vice president of a club McKinley of four hundred. I take more interest in this paragraph than any one of my life. I think there is more at stake for an American citizen. Harry I know your politics and don't wish to offend you in the least, but wish you to express your convictions freely and I would be only glad to know how you stand and I will (unintelligible) you as a brother. I shall not be offended.



*[transcriptions of three letters written by Andrew Biddle of Johnson City, Tennessee to his brother-in-law Harry Oellig in Pennsylvania]*

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The south is a great community but we need good protection. We have got the minerals fertal (fertile) lands abundance of fine timbers (?) here, water, and a grand climate. But only give us protection. Then northern capital will come south. Then again we need better laws here, but it will take the influence of northern people to get that. I wish you could come here but I don't see anything in the drug business in this town. I say for you to come for that business (?). I believe this climate would suit you. We are doing a good business now had a fine lot of wheat bought at 60 to 62 ½ cents have about 10,000 bushels. wheat is worth 70 cents here now and western wheat layed down at our will would cost 85 cents. We are getting from \$4.10 to \$4.50 per box for flour and 60 cents per crop (?) for mill feed. "This is Confidential" Ida Keagy spent 3 months with us this summer. We were glad to have her with us. Ida is a good girl and a fine lady. She had a good time while here and think she enjoyed it. Harry cant you pay us a visit? I don't know when I can come home. I may come up about the holidays. I would like to visit you all and I know it is my duty to come up to see mother. If McKinley is elected which will ensure better times and protection I know will give, "Then I will come home."

Harry put your self on record for voting for protections to American industries, or at least for sound money. Palmer and Brokeres (?). I expect Harry will Go to himself when he reads this letter. Andy is a Hell of a fellow on politics. Give me a good long letter. Anything is news from Woodbury or Laysbury(?). You said you had a bid on the Timber (?) land, what was it? I certainly(?) thought it should bring a good market price. Timber is good property.

Yours Truly,  
Andy

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**[Letter #3: 18961124]**

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Johnson City, Tenn. November 24, 1896

Mr. Harry Oellig,

Dear Bro,

Yours read (?) a few days ago. We are all well, just received a letter from Mrs. Allie Westfall. She wrote us an interesting letter, she seems to be happy. Everything looks bright to her in the future. I hope allie will have smooth sailing through life. There is but a few of us but what don't have to travel some rough and rocky hills through life. But I have learnt that it takes some rough water as well as a calm sea to make a good sailor. Well harry, the election is over and Billy McKinley will be our next president. If he makes me a good president, he also will be the same to you. All kind of trade seems to be starting up and I know our trade is better now at this time of year than any time since we are here. Well Harry, I don't do much hunting there is plenty small game here such as rabbits and

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squirrels. I saw two boys pass the mill the other day with 22 rabbits. There is a 100 here to one in Penn and a 1,000 squirrels to one there. I know many close neighbors of mine who has killed over 700 squirrels this season. There is no large game close here. About 20 miles from here there is plenty of Bare (bear) and turkey, but very few deer. They run the deer away with dogs. There was four of us went for turkeys last week. Started at 2 ok (?) at night, went about 20 miles. We killed 3 turkeys. Saw plenty of them but they are as wild here as in Penn and hard to get a shot. We got one large gobbler and 2 hens. There was a party went today wanted me to go but 2 could not get off. I must start on the road today. I want to go for rabbits shortly. I wish you was here to go (unintelligible). Wheat is worth 85 cents, corn 35. We have the mill full of wheat.

If I was in your place I would keep the man you have on the farm and he will keep the farm in repairs. If a farmer keeps his fence in good order It will insure him a good farmer. But if you see all the fences low and every going to sack (?) look out. He would do. But what I know and hear of the present man he is trying to do what is right. I think Mamie and I will come home sometime this winter. We will come together if we come. I want to see Mother and I know Mamie wants to see you all. We are having fine weather. We still have flowers in our yard and roses in full bloom. We had a few bitter frosts but none to hurt anything. I am writing in the mill office. Charley is second miller, Mr. Ellsworth is writing on the typewriter. We have 5 men in the mill. We have run our wheat every day since the first of last February. Stop only couple days for repairs. We turn out 50 bales (?) every day. Sun on wheat all the time. We don't have much demand for chop here, yet we run our choppers about 1/3 of the time. Who runs your mill at woodbury? You see your millers and let me know what the pay for wheat and what they get for straight flour at the mill or what the get for it on Broad Top Heavy (?). I wish you could come to Johnson City at least to visit us. I expect your boys are almost grown by this time. It is now near dinner and I must stop and get ready to take the train to North Carolina. So good by, Mamie told me she wrote you a day or two ago. Give my love to your family.

Kindly Yours,  
Andy BB