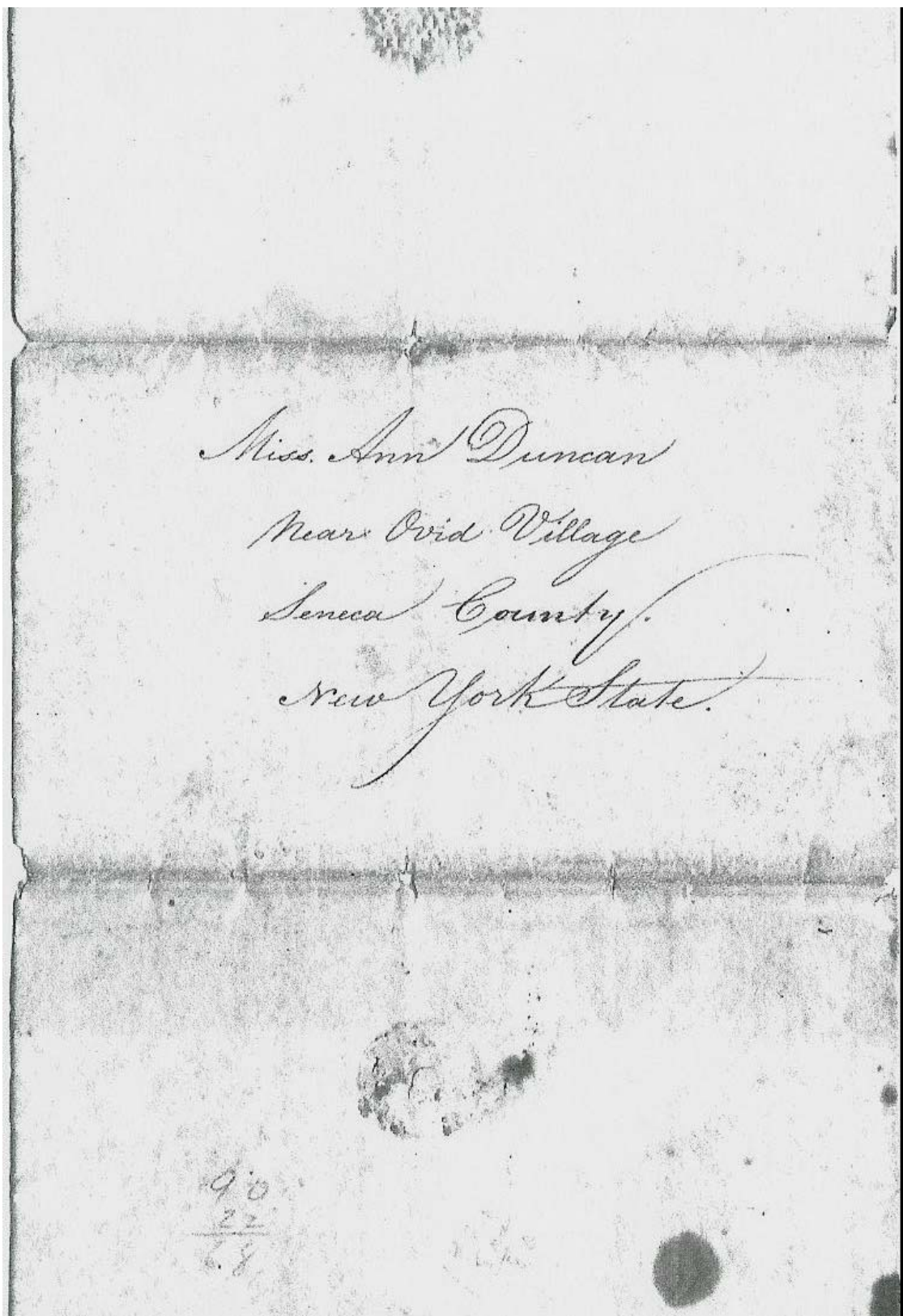


Below is the facsimile of a letter from William Duncan, Jr. to his youngest sister Ann Duncan. William was of some import due to the frequently recorded historical connection with his Uncle Alexander Wilson the Ornithologist of Philadelphia. A transcription of the original letter follows.



Miss Ann Duncan
Near Ovid Village
Seneca County.
New York State.

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Dear Sister,

I am very sorry to hear of your misfortune in getting your arm hurt so badly, if you can give me the correct information how, and in what manner it is hurt, I will consult Dr. Phycic who is the most skillful Doctor here, and send you up word what he says will be best to do.

I have enjoyed excellent health since I saw you last, and am as fat as a pig, not much to do, and an easy mind, and plenty to eat and drink, has been, and is my happy lot at present. I owe between 2 and 300 dollars to the land office at Bath, but I owe not a cent to any body else, and I have as much owing me in Philadelphia as will satisfy the office, which will be all settled I trust in the course of another year. My income is but small, but then if it is managed with prudence it will ^{be} more than supply my wants, and this is all we should be solicitous about with regard to pecuniary concerns.

Your sister Mary seems anxious that you would come &

ward to the times when we shall live together, and be a mutual support to each other, but if it will ever be realized, or take place, it is known only to God. Life is always uncertain, our hopes and desires also, are subject to change, and the best laid plans often miscarry, this should teach us to fix our hearts on objects of higher importance, which will remain unchanged, when this earth will be swept away with all its fleeting allurements.

Let me know soon, how you are, and if you stand in need of any help you have not a friend in the world, that loves you with more disinterestedness than your poor brother, who will not let you suffer while he has a dollar left to divide.

Give my best respects to Mr. and Mrs. Dunlop, and every son and daughter of this worthy family, also Brother James of family, and Father.

Your affectionate Brother

William Duncan.

Miss Ann Duncan.

Philad^a October 12, 1822

Dear Sister,

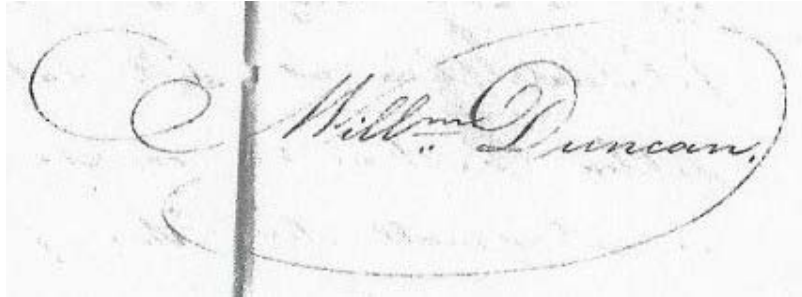
I am very sorry to hear of your misfortune in getting your arm hurt so badly, if you can give me the correct information how, and in what manner it is hurt, I will consult Dr. Physic who is the most skilful Doctor here, and send you up word what he says will be best to do.

I have enjoyed excellent health since I saw you last, and am as fat as a pig, not much to do, and an easy mind, and plenty to eat and drink, has been, and is my happy lot at present. I owe between 2 and 300 dollars to the land office at Bath, but I owe not a cent to any body else, and I have as much owing me in Philadelphia as will satisfy the office, which will be all settled I trust in the course of another year. My income is but small, but then if it is managed with prudence it will be more than supply my wants, and this is all we should be solicitous about with regard to pecuniary concerns.

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Let me know soon how you are, and if you stand in need of any help. You have not a friend in the world, that loves you with more disinterestedness than your poor brother, who will not let you suffer while he has a dollar left to divide.

Give my best respects to Mr.
and Mrs. Dunlap, and every son and daughter of this
worthy family, also Brother James & family, and Father.
Your affectionate Brother

A photograph of a handwritten signature in cursive script, enclosed in an oval. The signature reads "William Duncan, Jr." and is written in dark ink on a light-colored, slightly textured paper.

Miss Ann Duncan

{End of letter}

{Envelope addressed to}

Miss Ann Duncan
Near Ovid Village
Seneca County
New York State

This letter written by William Duncan, Jr. to his sister was transcribed by Charles W. Paige in March 2009 from scans of the fragmented, disintegrating, nearly 190-year-old original. The scans were provided by a descendant of Ann (Duncan) Sturdevant's who recently became the letter's custodian.

The letter's historical value is proof positive that William and Ann's father William Duncan, Sr., long accused by Alexander Wilson's biographers of having abandoned his family when it immigrated to America, did in fact join them, probably earlier than 1810. In that year's census and in 1820 a "William Dunkin" is recorded as living in Ovid. The name appears again in 1830 at Pulteney, Steuben County, New York. By absence of mention in its closing, the letter also establishes that William and Ann's mother had already died.

NOTE: The first sentence in the third paragraph reads as it appears in the letter, with no apparent missing text other than the awkwardness of the wording.