

This is an ABLE book

INSTRUCTIONS

If you work in an office, you work in a print shop! Seize the means of production, Friend, and make a book of your own!

First, you'll want to print this file back and front (duplex, or double-sided, depending on how your printer describes it.)

If you want the cover to be nice, print this first sheet on a heavier card stock.

Next, take the two body sheets (with the text of the book on them), and make the flowers in the center kiss. This is a 16 page quarto booklet! With the sheets standing tall, fold the sheets in half so that the upside down text top front becomes the back, right side up (pew, does this make sense?)

Now, you have page 1 on the right, with a

large initial Capital, and page 16 on the left. Fold this in half again to make a booklet.

Cut the cover free from the lower half of this sheet, and fold it in half.

Trim the top of the text block so that the pages are free. (You can use a paper cutter, scissors, or a pen knife).

Staple or sew the pages and the cover together, to make a book. You can also insert another half-sheet of paper between the text block and the cover to have a fly-leaf.

You are now a printer and book-maker.

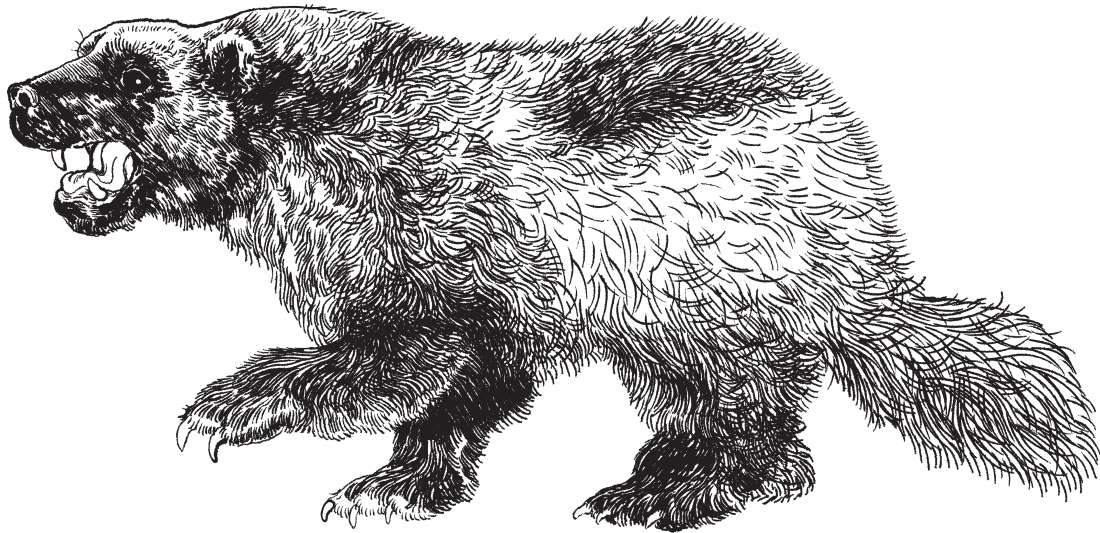
Post the Wolverine mini-poster (otherside of these instructions) proudly at your desk. Tell people that fine books can be acquired "At the Sign of the Wolverine".

WP

Christmas in Detroit 1841

by Emily Virginia Mason

WP
an ABLE book



Official
Wolverine Press
Design & Production Environment

About the Type

The body text for this edition is Century Schoolbook, designed by Morris Fuller Benton in 1918. The titles are set in Futura, designed by Paul Renner in 1927. Both are well-established in American utilitarian design, with Schoolbook both a popular educational face, and the mandated typeface of all US Supreme Court opinions, and Futura widely used in aeronautics, most famously in the plaque placed by NASA on the moon during Apollo 11.

remembrance. You will see by the papers what a terrible fire we have had, the whole square of the finest brick buildings in the City. It commenced at the "New York & Ohio House" on Woodward Avenue towards the river, burned up to the corner Jefferson, & took all the block from Hallock's clothing store to the bank of Michigan, Bagg's book store, & all his printing presses, nothing saved, that nice crockery store, Newbold's Hardware store, Your friend Mr. Warren's Candy Shop, Bingham's, John Palmer's, Garrison's & Then the custom House & all the offices in the museum buildings. Our friend "Old Saxe" barely saved his life by jumping from his room in the second story where he was busily engaged trying to save a pair of embroidered slippers, & after all jumped without slippers. It is a sad beginning of the New Year & to many. The loss is estimated at \$150,000, and it has so spoiled the looks of the town. We have heard nothing from Ky. for some time. I told them not to expect us till they heard we were actually off. My friend Miss Williams wrote me lately

you do not write because you are unwilling to pain us by saying that you will not be here before the spring. Pray Heaven it be not so. My most earnest prayers are always for your safety for your success in all your undertakings & for your speedy return. I have concluded to send this letter by Mr. Henry Sibley (a son of the old Judge) who lives at St. Peter's. He has left his Indian home to look out for a wife & I have promised him letters to Maria Phelps, Miss Chew & the Misses Magruder. I wish you would recommend him especially to Mrs. Phelps. She would direct him I dare say. He is a fine fellow. You know in what esteem his family are held here & he is considered the flower of the flock. He has promised to find you out wherever you may be (N.Y. or Washington) & deliver this personally with a thousand messages which I cannot crowd into this letter. I am so sorry & so ashamed that I have not written to Mrs. Jackson since Julia wrote me of her having another baby! I shall make my excuses to her in a few days, in the mean while I hope you will assure her of my most grateful & affectionate

IN 1842, Michigan had only been a state for 5 years. The state had been brought into the union by Stevens T. Mason, our first governor, who was at the time of statehood only 26 years old (he had assumed the office of Territorial Secretary at the age of 19). In his short term in office, Mason fought a war with Ohio, established the territory as a state, helped write the state constitution, established the University of Michigan and built its core campus, established the nation's first statewide free public school system, and embarked on an extensive set of infrastructure projects. By 1840, he had lost the governorship and left the state. But he left behind his matron sister Emily Virginia, who lived near the capital at Detroit until the years before the Civil War.

There are few accounts of Christmas time at that early date, but this letter is one of the most famous.

This letter, written by Emily following the

Duffields Lectures? I do so wish every time that you could be here. I've been tonight to hear his fourth lecture. He compared and explained the two systems of Literal & Spiritual interpretation, but I do not think his exposition of the Literal system was quite as clear as it might have been. Instead of going step by step & telling us the order in which these great events are to occur he hurried in his enthusiasm to the grand climax, to Christ coming in glory & wound up with such a burst of fervid eloquence that I could almost have risen up & shouted with him "Come Lord Jesus!" How much I wish you were here, every day, every day! I would have given any thing to have had your opinion about his lecture to night (as I told Mr. Cass) He thinks Mr. Duffield a perfect enthusiast & that he is too ultra in his notions. How I wish you were here! When will you come? I fancy sometimes that your not writing is proof positive that you are on the way, or that you are only waiting to fix the precise time when you set off. I would not for the world suffer myself to think that

from Bethany where she was on a visit to Mr. Campbell. Her letter is filled with an account of the College recently established there in which Mr. C. is one of the most eminent Professors. I will show you the letter when you come. Of course you will see the Magruiders as you go through Baltimore, dear kind people! how I wish we could be with you then. We hear from them constantly. If you have time there to go & see Mrs. Canfield I know Lewis Cass would feel so obliged if you could tell him you had seen her, and you will see Stevens at Washington! We never hear from him now. What can he be about. Kate has written to you lately & directed to Washington. She & Laura are quite sick with colds. I have escaped this winter & they (who never had colds & coughs before) are constantly complaining. The children are so much grown & improved, so fat & rosy & begin to talk so prettily. Though they have learned so many words since they have not forgotten the first word they spoke "Grand-papa". I wish you could hear them sing & dance. They are so funny. You have no idea how we all long to



Christmas of 1841, was addressed to her wayward and wandering father John T. Mason (who had abandoned his post as territorial governor, leaving his son to handle his affairs.) Like many of her letters, she is pining for her father's return. But, amidst the pining, she describes a charming frontier Christmas as it was celebrated by the territorial elite. At Mason's Christmas party (celebrated in a Detroit with a population of just 9,000), Emily entertained Senator John Norvell (namesake of Norvell township), and the eldest son of General Lewis Cass, as well as her sister's family, the Rowlands, and several other established citizens from the territorial days.

The energy and fun of Christmas is colored by Emily's loneliness. Her mother had died two years earlier in 1839, her father had been gone since 1831. Her brother had left the state, and she was left to manage the household with her two younger sisters. What she could not know was that almost exactly one year later, her brother, our first Governor, would be dead from pneumonia.

she mentions that you go to Washington the very "next day". Ah I'm afraid New York will see more of you than ever now that Brother T. is there, & Tommy! I don't know which of the two Tom's I'm most inclined to be jealous of. I dare say you have all been very merry & very happy, & (I hope) thought as often of us as we have of you. I intended to have written to wish you all a "Happy Christmas" but Miss McKinsty has been (& is still) with us & all my time has been occupied with her. In the five weeks she has been here we have not passed a day or even a week without going out or having company, the town has been so gay that we have often had several invitations for the same evening. She has been delighted with her visit, every body has been so attentive & we are happy that she is so pleased. Laura is going out to see her next week it will be an agreeable variety for her & they are such king nice people. As soon as they are gone I shall go back with more zeal than ever to Spanish, Italian, Chemistry & so as to be en traine & ready to set Laura to work when she comes back. Did Julia tell you about Mr.

She would see her father only sporadically over the years. He died of cholera in Galveston, in the spring of 1850.

This letter was republished by the Detroit Public Library in 1942. In transcribing it, I've preserved Ms. Mason's quaint spellings.



see Tommy, & poor little Dora. Laura is writing a letter to Tom to send with his old whip he left behind. I'm curious to know if he will recognize his old friend & favorite plaything. I have no room but to add my love to all my kind friends & my best prayers for your happiness & safety

Ever Your Most Aff.

Emily V. Mason

You will laugh when I say in my P. S. "Please bring me a pr. shoes" (slippers) Those I sent for last fall were too small & I had to give them to Laura, the walking shoes fit but I have no others for evening tea drinkings. I wear No. 4

I hope you went to see our good friends at Brooklyn, the Chev's.

Harbaugh & Mr. & Mrs. Norvell to dinner, a very quiet party, & in the evening with a dozen or so of our special friends & plenty of egg nog we were very merry. We had some Tableaux which were pronounced vastly pretty, Laura & I with Mr. Cass being the actors & after they were concluded we finished the events with Blind Man's buff, Puss in the corner & various other noisy games suitable to the sea-son. Just fancy the Hon. Ex Senator Norvell playing Puss in the corner, and Maj. Forsyth too! and they entered into it with such spirit! We have kept it up every evening since 'till we are quite worn out with Christmas frolick-ing & shall be right glad to return to dignity again after twelfth night 'till when we are to keep it up. I wish you could have seen our Tableaux. I'm sure you would have thought it a pretty amusement. We represented dif-ferent picture & having a large frame with a thin gauze before it (to aid the illusion) with no idea how pretty the effect is. And how have you spent your Christmas? In New York I'm sure you are still, though in Julia's last letter

Detroit Jan. 2d 1842

My Dear Father

Christmas & New Year have come & gone & you are not yet with us, & stranger still we have not yet heard from you. I thought we should surely have a letter from you for our Christmas gift. We only wanted that to complete our happiness, for we had long before made up our minds to give up all hope of seeing you on that occasion & to be happy or rather to try to be so without you. But it was a grievous disappointment that you did not come & I could not help thinking all the morn'g that we might have had a letter. Our dinner was not so merry. I can never help recalling other & happier Christmas dinners in our younger days. My thoughts reverted to the times when we used to run by your side to the stores to get our "Christmas boxes"—when we used to jump up at daylight to say "Christmas gift" to everybody in the house & when Christmas was the day of all others in the year to us. We had the Rowlands, Mr.



A Note on the Games:

Tableaux is a game where participants re-enact famous paintings. It's a bit like charades. A life-sized picture frame is erected in the room. A thin scrim is hung in front, and lights are placed in the rear, illuminating the players. They pose. (I'm sure the "Wreck of the Medusa" was a popular subject.)

Puss in the corner is a child's game, something like musical chairs (which is why Emily is so amused that the elderly Norvell played it). Four players take positions in the corners of a room. A fifth player is the Puss. When action is called, all the players try to exchange corners. If the Puss manages to capture an unoccupied corner, the losing player becomes the new Puss.

Blind man's buff is tag where "it" wears a blindfold. "Buff" in this case refers to the original sense of the word, "to push". Today we call it "Blind man's bluff", but that is a linguistic corruption.