
Sunday morning December 18, 1853

My Dear Child,

I was over on Friday to see little Edward who has been some week confined to his bed of fever, seems not to suffer a great deal but has to take medicine all the time. I was therefore there when your dear letter was received. I was so glad to hear from you. I got a letter from Roger 10 days ago, he said he would be at home by this time. I hope he may now be with you. Oh we are wanting him so much but he will have a close uncomfortable time in the management of this large, badly managed family. But I hope he may be able to keep all things right. I have been much at home this fall and not very well. Those annoying pains follow me all the time. I have got through all the winter sewing and now shall next week get ready for the Holydays, and after that, work on until time carries me to see my dear daughter (should I live). I have not been up to see my dear Father since the last of Sept. but as soon as my son gets home I will go up. Your Aunt Henny was down two weeks since and we went to Lexington and stayed all night. She gave me a pleasant account of her trip. Sally was well but Mr. L not yet at home. I have not heard from Collette (*her brother*) for some two months. I shall expect him up this winter, he is very much desired here and I hope he may be able to comply with all his liabilities.

Now I must tell you all the news of the neighborhood, Mrs. Polliet was married last Sunday in Winchester to a young man named Elkin, a lawyer (so called). She is not respectable, I learned they had dinner at her father's the same day. I do not know who composed the company. You recollect little Inda, she died a few days since, just dwindled away and a few days since, Doct F [*Frazer*] foreman shot a hand of Mrs. Kelly's, called Wash, who died in a few days. I am told the young man is not blamably. I was up last Friday week at Mr. Didlake's sale and I bought a few things. A nest of dishes at \$1 a jar of ginger, half out at .50, a small jar of honey at .50 a oven and lid at \$2.5, a good saddle at 3.50 and last week I packed up one keg of butter and two large jars holding some 35 lbs and 33 pound rolls, printed with the cow, which I want to carry to Lexington this week and get some nice things for Christmas and get some other things for myself. And I have the body of a dress at Mrs. Longs, the milliner and Mouton maker.

Now my dear child if you could but all step in with the dear little children and take some of my earnings, how I would enjoy it. I dreamed of dear little Antonie and Judy's baby last night. Oh I feel like March is so long off but I am so much confined and I have so little health and not a comfortable way of going. I shall expect to go to Church on New Year's Day and then I shall have to keep close all winter and I shall make quilts and knit some little stockings. I have a pretty pair for one of my dear sons, striped blue, red and white and M knit in the top. I was so glad to hear Emma [*Silas Gex's wife*] was confined and well. Poor little thing, she has no mother to be thoughtful of her. I am glad to hear you go to see her often and be kind to her. I intend to write to Virginia in a few days. I have felt so little like writing of late and I feel so sorry I have not it in my power to go for Molly and Laura. I would certainly go if I had the control of what I have, but

I pray you all may so have the respect and confidence of you husband that you all may enjoy what you now have and what you may hereafter.

I was up to see Polly Long one day this week. She was well and cheerful and comfortable. Buck is still marketing and does well. He gets 60 cents for turkeys, 18 for butter, 15 for eggs. Now tell my dear little sons to send me a mess of Partridges and a rabbit. I wish I had a good apple to roast every night. I have been making some good pickles, nice mango and onions and green pickles. I have a large cheese your Father got in Lexington last Monday and he will kill a beef this week and I must make some mince pies. I do not know that I shall have anyone to take dinner with me unless Mr. Spencer and Rebecca, and I shall ask Sally up. Laura does not get out often. Laura got a letter from Sally a few days since, they are well and I hope doing well. Judith is daily expecting to be confined.

I am sorry to tell you Mr. Sam Jackson died a few days ago of pneumonia. He had been in ill health for some time, a disease of the kidneys and bladder. Poor fellow, I saw him two weeks ago in Lexington, he was driving a buggy but looked like a shadow. It is said in this neighborhood, where he bought up his hogs, that his money matters are very much tangled. He lost the hams and shoulders of 500 hogs this winter.

I have put up all my lard and sausage and bacon in good order. We only killed 45 hogs this fall but I have old bacon yet and 23 turkeys, no cabbage and but few potatoes. We have good hominy [*grits*] and no dried fruit and not one apple.

Rebecca was at Lexington last Sunday and Monday. At least she went to Mr. Estills on Sunday and took dinner at Mrs. Fergusons. Tom Covins was up last week to see your Father on some unsettled business of poor Bobbs. I felt so sorry to look at him. He said he would go up after Bob's remains this winter. I want to go to see the girls soon, if I can.

All the negroes are well and doing pretty well but not managed at all. I have to warm up Kitty and Cynthia sometimes. Caroline keeps her gang straight. Little Sally stays in the house all the time and tells everything she knows. She says Brooking is pretty and Mas [*master*] Antonie is too with his big eyes looking at me. I had hoped to have got a letter by this time from Mr. Gex but it seems he is too busy to write. I do hope he may enjoy the fruits of his industry and have every comfort in his family that he so richly merits. Now my dear child if I could but be permitted to see and be with you oftener, I think I could let the stream of time glide in more peacefully until I shall be called to leave this Vale of Tears and try the realities of an unknown world – where I pray I may meet my dear parents and friends and my more dear children.

Do my dear daughter write often and particular everything connected with you, interests me. Remember me most respectfully to Mr. Gex family and to Silas and Emma and to Mariam and Mr. L also to Edward and Elizabeth. My kind love to Louis and Betty Mason and Mr. Price and Jose and tell Virginia I desire to address a good long letter to her in a few days. My love to Betty and Robert and all the little children. Kiss John and my dear little sons for me. My respects to Thomas and all the servants. I shall expect to see Luke and hope that he may have a pleasant

visit. The Rail Road people have built a house above Col. Taylor's Pond and will soon be at work.

Farewell my dear loving child, may the blessings of a good Lord be on you is the constant prayer of your devoted

Mother

Mariam

B R

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