

Addressed to Eugenia Shackelford, Cokesbury, S.C. Written when M.E. Duncan was 14 years old.

Randolph Macon College

August 24th, 1839

Dear Eugenia,

It is with inexpressible grief that I now take my pen in hand to announce to you the death of my brother William. He died from a severe attack of bilious fever of only three days duration; but we mourn for him not as those without hope, we have a full assurance that he is now happy in heaven which is a great comfort to us in our affliction. We were staying in Georgetown at Aunt Jennings' when his death took place; he was taken sick Sunday night the 28th of July, and died Wednesday night the 31st. His death was so unexpected to us that I shall never forget the shock when the physician said he was dying. Oh! I think I can hear and see him even now, and sometimes I think he can't be really gone from us forever, but I hope we may all meet him in heaven, and may the Almighty help us so to do. Even before his illness he seemed to have a presentiment that his life would be short from the remarks he sometimes made. He was delirious all the time except at short intervals, then he would ask for the Bible to be read to him constantly, and said he cared for nothing else. He was sensible when he died, and Papa who was sitting beside him, whispered to him to look to his Savior. He was speechless but squeezed his hand and expired a few minutes afterward. To think that he who on Friday was in such high spirits and anticipating much pleasure from his visit to Washington, should ere the close of the next be laid in the cold grave. The Almighty hand has supported us wonderfully in our affliction. There is nothing which harmonizes and sooth[e]s the feelings so much as filial trust in God, and resignation under suffering. In the words of a writer, "If you look only at second causes, and fret and repine over the circumstances which were the immediate agents in bringing on your affliction, you will bear it with far less patience and resignation, than you would, if you saw in it the operation of wise laws and the arrangements of a wise Providence. Resignation under affliction is a virtue which, in a remarkable degree brings its own reward. The evil to which we are reconciled loses its power over us." We have reason to be thankful that God in his mercy has spared James to us, for he was so ill at the same time that William was sick that for several days he was not expected to live. The death of William had to be concealed from him for nearly

a fortnight, as the Doctor said it might kill him to hear before he had recovered. Aunt Jennings also lost one of her daughters in June, a lovely girl of sixteen.

She was in a decline. She was very. . . .

Upon our arrival here we found Mrs. Simms (who still boards with us) very ill indeed.

She is no better now and is hardly expected to recover. Mr. Simms has written to Boston for her Father and Mother to come on and see her. The neighbors are very kind indeed and some one of them comes and stays with her nearly every night. And Dr. Kennon who attends her is also very attentive, but still she is far away from her nearest relatives and friends, and be the people here ever so kind they cannot feel towards her as her parents and sisters and brothers do.

Mr. Garland is in very bad health and is now at the White Sulphur Springs. He has been away ever since a week before Commencement. He is expected every day. We heard that he had lost his oldest child William, but are not certain of the truth of the report, though he was not expected to live a few weeks ago.

The College has had a very bad beginning this year, Mr. Garland being away and Mr. Simms never leaves his wife to attend to any of his duties at College, and Papa was compelled to be absent nearly a fortnight after the session commenced, on account of the illness of William and James.

I received your letter two days before our departure from here, but deferred answering it until our return as we were all upset then getting ready to go. We were away eight weeks, and after so long an absence I cannot describe the pleasing emotion of my mind on approaching Home. I never knew how sweet home was before. There are so many little conveniences and pleasures at Home which can never be found elsewhere. In the words of the Song, "A charm from the skies to hallow us there, which seek through the world, is never met with elsewhere." I think if I lived on the last place upon earth (and doubtless you think I do) if I could call it Home I should prefer it to any other, for though I have been with my relations and friends all the time I have been away, and would have enjoyed myself very much had it not been for the sad occurrence which took place, still I wish (for Home) long before our return.

For fear of tiring you I must now close this long epistle. I think I have set you a very good example as you desired me to do in your last. I hope you will profit by it and that your next letter will be very long. In my next I shall endeavour to give you some account of my travels and what I saw in the Capital of the United States, and hope

it will be interesting to you. Mother is very much engaged attending to Mrs. Simms (and I tell you we had all better stay at home another time. . . . was caused by going down in the lower country at this time of the year, except Mr. Garland). She, Papa, and James unite with me in much love to Mr. and Mrs. Wightman and yourself. All the neighbors inquire about you very often, and I wish you would write oftener, to save me the trouble of trying to recollect when I heard from you last, whenever I am asked, and have at least to answer, for I don't know how long! With many prayers for your welfare, I still remain your ever affectionate,

Friend

E. Duncan

PS. On reading this over I find I have made many mistakes, which I hope you will excuse as I wrote this in a hurry. You know when anyone is so sick you can scarcely find time to do anything but wait on them. E.D.

Sent from Buckingham Institute Thursday, May 4th, 1843

My Dear Mother,

I received the bundle sent by Mr. Jones to Farmville Tuesday and now, in obedience to your request, write by the first Mail. I must be in a hurry as the mail goes out early this morning. The dress I think very pretty. It fits beautifully in the body and is just the right length. I like the way in which it is made very well. It is rather low in the neck before. I prefer them high enough to wear without a stomacher. I do not think it wrinkles at all in the body though it is very loose. The corset is not too large and is very pretty. I cannot bear them tight and have them looser than ever. The edging on the collar is very handsome, and I like the collar very much. You are very thoughtful of me. I did not think you cared so much about me, as you say in the letter. I certainly do not count the weeks but am constantly reminded of the approach of Commencement, the conversation of my fellow students, who almost count the hours—but I really begin to think, there is some truth in the old saying, "Absence conquers love," not exactly conquers either, for I love you all as well I reckon, but I do not think of you and going home half as much as last term. And I cannot think of Commencement or examination enough to study very hard, or attempt to write a composition, although some time ago I dreaded both so much. I shall not want another corset or anything except handkerchiefs. Two of my handkerchiefs are filled with nitrate of silver and most of them full of holes. I forgot to mention the reception of the apron, stockings,

etc., in good time. I like them all very much and many thanks for all. The gingham is beautiful and the gloves fine for the spring and summer. I was just regretting that I had no stockings fit to wear with a white dress when I received the bundle. All were dyed up with red clay and bad washing. The washing we hope will be much better now. Mr. Dashiell has left for Portsmouth and Mr. Lea has taken charge of the boarding department for the remainder of the term. Mrs. Lea directs everything and employs a lady to help. A considerable reformation has taken place in the fare and all appertaining thereto. All goes on more smoothly and quietly. We hear no complaints now.

I liked Mr. Dashiell and Mary Jane right well but do not regret the departure of Mrs. D. and I do not know that anyone else does. Mr. Lea has not received the last amount which Pa mentioned he had ordered to be sent from Norfolk. I wish it would come as I have a few small debts I should like to pay and I suppose Mr. L. would have no objection to its arrival. Miss Mary has just come in and says I must give her love to you and say that [she] regrets very much her inability to visit R.M. this summer but invites you to our Commencement and I think you will be highly entertained if you accept the invitation. She says I must not forget to tell you of our cakemaking last Saturday. Mrs. Lea gave the Sponge-cake into our hands as she had to attend to making something else and it is not more than we deserve to say it was almost as good as yours. Our cook is not as good a hand at baking cakes as Grace. Pa's paper came in good time. I have not heard from Cousin Indy yet. I believe I mentioned in my last having received a letter from Aunt T. I heard from Cousin William last week and received a letter from Nannie Lewis this week through the P.O. but without postmark. Perhaps someone dropped it in in passing. A new store has been lately opened within a hundred yards of the Institute, as good and perhaps cheaper than the Boydton stores where I can get shoes, and we have opportunity for sending to Richmond and Petersburg quite frequently. Kiss David and Wallace and tell them I got some very nice candy and thought of them all the while I was eating it, and after it was gone too. How I wish I could see them. Little Tommy seems a stranger to me. I cannot think of him as a brother and have almost forgotten how he looks. He was so small when I was at home. I would think of you all much oftener but whenever I begin to think of the pleasure of going home and meeting you all once more, that verse "Boast not thyself of tomorrow" comes to my mind and I fear something will happen before June. I wish Aunt Taliaferro would come to our Commencement and bring her carriage

and faithful Isaac to take me home. One of her friends in Caroline, Mrs. Sutton, has a daughter here and is expected. She might come in company with her. But she asks me what would Uncle T. say to such [a] trip. I do not think there is much chance of moving her to take the journey, unless she could be persuaded to do so for the benefit of her health. We have plenty of iron water here if nothing else. And she thinks the calybiate most beneficial I believe. Mr. Early was here last week, the third visit he has paid us. He requested me to remember him to you all when I wrote and says that he wished to go to R.M. last month but was prevented by some unavoidable hindrance. I think he said he would go as soon as possible. He is to be here again four weeks hence. Thank James for his letter and tell him I will write to him soon. I might send you the trimmings for the dress if I had an opportunity but do not know which would be the best. I want it made plain not low in the neck. I fear one examination will not be very creditable, on Mental Philosophy and Political Economy. We have had to go over them so fast. We went through Political Economy, but not through the other. Well I will not make myself uneasy about it, but really I am ashamed of my little progress in Music. I cannot practice enough and I forget everything so quickly. I have not time to say more but with much love to all—but I forgot my flowers, I am glad to hear of their flourishing condition. Is my perpetual rose living? I hope I shall not. . . . Give my love to everybody.

Your affectionate daughter

Elizabeth

April 23, 1844 R.M. College

My Dear Aunt,

You see I am getting to be more punctual than you have been. I received your truly welcome and kind letter by the last mail. Long and anxiously had we looked for an answer to our last, and many were the fears we entertained concerning your and Uncle Taliaferro's health; but gladly did we find them all groundless, upon the perusal of your letter. But before speaking particularly about myself, or the contents of yours, I shall tell you of other matters, and the family, etc. All have been well since I wrote with the exception of Papa. He hurt the forefinger of his right hand, so as to cause a dreadful whitlow, which he has now been suffering from for six weeks—at first it affected his health, so that he was obliged to take medicine, and remained confined to the house,

sending for his classes to come over here and recite to him, instead of going as usual to college. He goes out now, although it is still very painful, and he is still compelled to wear a sling, and has been so unfortunate as to lose the upper joint. It came (I mean the bone) out this morning. Of course his hand will be of less use to him.

He cannot write as well. I have been his amanuensis since he has been afflicted, and have written some of the driest formal law and business documents lately I ever saw—it was quite tedious. I do not think I should like the office of private secretary much, unless my employer were a lady's man, and had more business with poetry, love, and lighter matters than law and business of everyday life.

Well, I do wish I had something amusing to tell. Pa has gone to college, Mother and the boys to Boydton, and I am left here with Tommy to amuse and tease me. I have just gotten rid of him by satisfying his demand for cake, of which he eats a quantity. It is impossible to refuse him anything, he asks so sweetly for it. He really talks sweeter than anything you ever heard, and has so much sense; he can say anything whatever very plainly, and is indeed the handsomest of the family (my own fair self not excepted), is remarkably fond of company, not afraid of anyone, and goes into the recitation room, while the students are reciting, and talks to them incessantly, and so with every stranger who comes makes very free, amusing them very much. Yesterday he went to Mrs. Howard's with me, and took tea with the students who notice him a great deal—of course he was delighted; he talks about you, we have taught him to call you Aunt Tolly as Wallace used to, and he says always now when asked that "Aunt Tolly sends Tommy socks." He is really a clever fellow, or as Mrs. Taylor says, "a great boy and I might fill this sheet with his smart sayings and doings, but fear you have had too much of him already, so adieu to Master Tommy, who is playing so full of glee now at the door unconscious that he is of sufficient importance to occupy even one page of a sheet.

O! the weather is so delightful now, and everything so beautiful! My flower beds look better than ever I saw them, and the walks are fragrant with mock orange blossom, and wall-flower. I do not recollect seeing any of the mock orange in Gloucester. The bushes are covered with bunches of beautiful white flowers, in appearance and odor precisely like the orange blossom. But nothing can surpass now the beauty of the surrounding wood, and its melody. The snow dogwoods and green hickor[ie]s are filled with mockingbirds, whose notes delight my ear even while I write. And the scotch broom is not less beautiful with its golden blossoms, than the

other more fragrant shrubs. O the Spring! the Spring! all the gladness, music, and beauty of the year seem to belong to it. But I forgot that you too live in the country, and see, and feel perhaps all this, though you do not live, as I do, just in the depth almost of the green woods, with here and there an opening for the free passage of the cooling breezes.

In deed I think Mechlenburg has improved since you were here—it is to me a delightful spot, and I can now feel with the poetess that indeed, “There is beauty all around our paths, if but our watchful eyes Would trace it ‘mid familiar things, and through their lowly guise.”

I am studying Botany, which I have paid little attention to heretofore. Mr. Garland, who is an enthusiast almost in everything pertaining to Nature, proposed (it) to me, offering me all the assistance I should need. When I sometimes ride out (on horseback) with him and Mrs. Garland he entertains us with many interesting facts connected with the trees and wild flowers along our path. He is [a] dear good man—how I love him! They will leave (that is Mrs. Garland and the children) soon for the mountains where they will remain until the fall with his and her mothers, so Mrs. G. will not be here at Commencement, and Mother will I suppose have more company than usual. And can you not persuade Uncle T. and yourself to swell the crowd that will then be here! Mr. William Leigh and his daughter leave next week for Gloucester, it would be a fine opportunity to travel with them—will you not? can you not? or with Miss Margaret again? The old lady would be delighted, perfectly charmed, to have Mrs. Taliaferro with her again. Cousin Indy speaks of coming. I hope she will. . . .

(Letter ends here.)

Raleigh Eagle Tavern

November 6, 1845

My dear mother,

I suppose you received my note from Ridgeway by the morning mail. I wrote it intending to send it by the driver but was informed after it was sealed, that it was contrary to law for him to carry a sealed note, and so sent it by mail. Mr. Lomax says I must write to you from here again lest you should be uneasy concerning our passage over this rough railroad We were safely landed here between seven and eight o'clock, having left Ridgeway between one and two in the morning. We were roused from a refreshing sleep at the latter place at half past eleven and hurried off to the

depot, where, as usual, we had the pleasure of yawning and trying to amuse and keep ourselves awake, for some hour or two, by questioning an old negro, who very freely imparted all his knowledge of the road; but at last, I was just about to fall asleep in my chair, when the noisy engine came puffing and smoking along, and we were soon whirled away to Henderson to the best part of the road; at which place we somewhat slackened our speed, and became apprehensive of danger, as we were told the road to Raleigh was very bad, yet here we arrived in safety, over all the bridges, without the slightest accident. It is sixty miles from Ridgeway here. We intended leaving this morning, in the stage, at ten o'clock, having had ample time to visit the State House, which is just across the street, after breakfast, but it was only a four passenger stage, and there being three other passengers, we could not go with all baggage so concluded to wait until tomorrow. We walked about the town and looked into several stores, among the best a very fine book store where Mr. L. supplied himself with a book which he wanted viz, Macauley's Miscellanies. We also visited a milliner's establishment to see the pretty new things and found the bonnets in shape very different from what they were in the summer and larger. I tried on a beautiful white corded velvet, with a handsome plume in it, which was quite dashy looking and Mr. L. actually wanted me to wear it plume and all; but I would not consent to take the plume and the milliner said I might have it for eight dollars without, which was as cheap as it could be anywhere south for the material was handsome and costly and white and light velvets are more worn than anything else this winter, so I took it and now have to put it in my bonnet box. I find Mr. L.'s trunk so loosely packed, that I can take some things out of the bonnet box and put in it.

We went all over the State House and walked around the roof from which we had a very extensive view, in one direction, said to be an hundred miles. It is a very handsome building, granite and cost five hundred and thirty one thousand dollars. Many persons think it much handomer than the Capitol at Washington but it did not appear so to me. The Rotunda is very much alike in both, although this is smaller. We saw shut up sacredly in a room appropriated, the statue (or rather fragments, I should have said), of the statue of Washington by Carnova. It was broken to pieces and much disfigured by the fire when the old Capitol was burnt, the roof of the Rotunda falling in on it. The sculpture where it is uninjured is very beautiful and natural.

The town is very level and so filled with trees that it appears at first like a village scattered through the forest. but on closer observation it is found to be much more



closely built, owing its wild countrylike appearance to the groves of natural growth of oak etc with which the houses are nearly surrounded.

We are very pleasantly accommodated and have fine fare here. I am as well satisfied and happy as I could be away from you all; for Mr. L. is so good and kind I could not be otherwise. He is just now taking his usual nap. I am afraid I do or shall love him too much, now I have no one else with me to love: although you know too great affection was never my failing, for anybody; so I have often been told. I thought a great deal of you all last night as we were on the railroad and imagined you and Pa and James and all the dear children, and the servants, all before me again, as I saw you last and the tears again came to my eyes. Then I imagined I could see you awake and praying for us and I felt quite safe and sure that your prayers would be answered and we would finish our journey in safety. I hope you will not feel distressed or solicitous concerning our safety. The road and stages, I hear, are very good, and no longer to be apprehended. Gracy begged me to send her some message when I wrote. Tell her that I was surprised that she was so grieved, that she was unable to tell me goodbye. She ought to have been thankful to have some relief from the washtub. How often I think of you all. It seems to be all the time you are before me, servants and all.

Tell Jim or Pa to plant the Oleander and not to let it die. My love to Mrs. Garland and Mr. and Mrs. Doggett, Howard and Hardy etc. And with love to yourself, Pa, and the children, one and all, and the servants, I remain

Your affectionate daughter.

Elizabeth

Mr. L. desires to be remembered to you. He has just awoke.

January 13, 1846 (mailed from Abbeville)

My dear mother,

Your long-expected letter, mailed Nov. 28th, did not reach me until more than a month after. I had almost despaired of hearing from you and was on the point of writing to Pa to know if anything was the matter; when, one evening Mr. Lomax came in with three letters from yourself, Aunt Taliaferro, and Amanda Clark; together with four papers, which he was very much pleased with. I hope you will continue sending them if it is not too much trouble. I should have answered your letter immediately, and have every day intended so doing, and nearly every evening reproached myself for neglecting it.

But I was waiting until we should go to the Court House to live and get permanently settled, that I might tell you how I like it etc. And in the meanwhile I have been so very busy in various ways; but, most of all, so perplexed in mind, that I could not compose myself to write. Mr. Lomax has been very busy, since his return, attending to money matters, and business which necessarily attended the period of his younger brother's coming of age. He has been much harassed with difficulties in this affair, and I have been so constant a sharer of these cares and perplexities that I have felt little like writing in such a state of mind. On this account we could not, as we expected, remove to the Village; but have been boarding until last week, at the house of Mr. Ritchie, his father-in-law [step-father]. We are now staying, for a short time at an aunt's of Mr. Lomax. This business which has occupied so much his attention is the settling the affairs connected with his father's estate, and a large debt due from Mr. Ritchie to Mr. L. and his brothers, which, they have found much difficulty in making Mr. R. settle. Negotiations are still in progress between them and we do not yet know how it will terminate exactly. When it is all over, Mr. Lomax thinks of buying a house in the village and keeping house immediately, instead of boarding, as it will be much easier for us. There is a desirable place for sale there and property is so low that he can now purchase to advantage. One reason that I should like to have a house of my own is that any of you, if at any time I could not visit you, might come to see me.

And although it will be more trouble to me than boarding; yet I suppose we had better begin at once as we have our servants yet to train, and a good deal to learn about keeping house. We have very good servants so far as I can judge, but none much accustomed to the house. They have all been generally engaged working in the field. However, I have met with such success so far in teaching my maid, Telitha, that I feel much encouraged. She is very capable and well disposed and learns very fast.

You can think I often I think of you all and wish I could see you. About dark and supper time I fancy I can see you all gathered in the dining room, and almost hear what each one says. And often I imagine you are thinking and speaking of us and wondering what we are engaged in. But wherever I am you may know that about twilight my thoughts are with you, I know not why, but whenever I have been away from you I think most of you at that hour. When in Norfolk last winter, I remember, about the time the stars began to show their brilliancy and the moon perhaps was just faintly gilding the water, how often I use to seat myself alone at one of the windows in that large old room upstairs and think of you all until my cheek was wet with tears

and even now they are gathering in my eyes as I remember how much farther still I am away from you than then. Tears often come to my relief when thinking long of you. And almost every day I reproach myself, with much regret, for not having been a better daughter and sister when with you. I have been very well since I left you and have met with only kindness from all around me. Mr. L. is just as good and kind and affectionate as he can be towards me and only loves me much too well; far more than I deserve to be loved by anyone. Mrs. Howard is not at all mistaken in thinking him a good husband. He seems to wish to gratify every wish that I have and to do all in his power to render me happy.

I think Martha Jones missed a great deal by not taking Tennent Lomax. He was here last week and has altered so much I should not have known him. They say here he has not, but I think he has improved very much both in appearance and manner. He is very handsome and agreeable in conversation and easy in manner, not at all awkward, nor too bashful. A gentleman told us that he was one of the most rising young lawyers in Alabama and so highly esteemed that he could marry almost any girl he pleased. Some think he never will marry now. He has devoted himself so entirely to his sister and her family. He spoke of Pat and seemed even yet to regret her discarding. Said it was all Ligon's fault he did not court her long before he did. He is very anxious for us to go to Alabama and gave glowing accounts of the country. But Mr. L. has no such idea now and I hope never will have. I am too far now from Virginia.

Mr L. had business in Augusta, Ga. last month and I accompanied him thither to see the place. I did not like its appearance so well as that of Columbia. The Savannah at that point is very narrow and muddy and ugly. It was raining incessantly every day but one that we were there and the streets, which are twice too wide for my taste all unpaved, were almost as bad as marshes. There is one handsome street, only it is such a journey to cross it, called Broad Street. The stores are principally situated here and there is a handsome Market House at each end. I suppose it is a much handsomer place than it appeared to me. We rode about every day, and saw nearly all the town, but it was raining and cold and disagreeable all the while so that it appeared under a gloomy and unfavorable aspect. I went into a store and betrayed my place of nativity by the currency I used, viz. ninepence, fourpenny etc. The storekeeper smiled and said he supposed I was from farther north. Mr. L. said, Yes, Virginia, and immediately he asked what part and upon hearing the county of Mechlenburg named he had numerous questions to ask about the place and people calling many of them by name.

He inquired particularly of Mr. Townes. His name was Warren. I met also there with a negro woman from Virginia. She formerly lived on the Eastern Shore. And how she praised the good old state and said how much better she liked living there than here; the people were so much more kind and hospitable etc. An old negro here belonging to the plantation here at Mr. Ritchie's came one day to see me purposely, she said, because she heard I was from "Old Virginny" where she was raised. She loved to look at me just because I was from there. I asked her if she did not like this state as well. Oh no, she said, this was not like "Old Virginny" to use her expression. The people lived so much easier and better there. This seems to be the prevailing idea here of Virginia, viz. that the people are much more hospitable and live much better there than here, and they are surprised that I could leave there for here. For my part, I think they ought to live better here than there and might if they would.

Amanda Clarke writes me that her aunt Amanda has improved wonderfully and is now devoted to Company and attends a great many parties. I received a letter from Martha Lewis a few days before yours arrived. The letters I wrote to you and her when I first got here are the only ones I have written until this. I have now about half a dozen to write. Why has not James written to me? He has vacation now I suppose. Does he still dread my criticisms? Tell him he ought to thank me for them. I only criticize a little for his improvement, not at all to make fun. And David, how does he get on at college with his Latin Grammar? I suppose he still remembers sister's curls. I wish I had him here with me. I would have plenty of time to teach him his lessons, and it would amuse me so much when I am alone. As it is, I have to take Telitha for my scholar, and teach her, not Latin nor spelling lessons, but hemming and knitting, at which she is very apt. Can Wallace read any? Do he and Tommy talk much about Sister? They must not forget me. Dear little Tommy! When I read what you wrote me about him it affected me so much I had to stop and give vent to my feelings in weeping or I should have choked with emotion. I think we ought sometimes to be away from those we love just to have the pleasure of knowing how much they love and think of us and how much of our happiness is dependent upon them. Tell Gracy, now I am going to housekeeping, that I often wish for her to help me. I shall have to teach my cook almost everything. Say to Grace that if I did sometimes complain at home, yet now everything there seems better than anywhere else, and I often wish for one of her nice hot rolls or cakes. Wherever I have ever been, still everything at home seems better and sweeter than anywhere else when I am away. You tell me not to forget my Virginia home, etc.

There is, I assure you, no danger, for however I am pleased elsewhere yet still it seems impossible for any other place to feel like home and I love it more and more every day. Does Martha still wish to come out here to live with me? Do you still keep Cary? and does that saucy little William still laugh and run about the house as fast as ever? How often I think of every one, even the smallest servant! Give my love to them all, Grace, Cary, Martha and Henry, and tell John and Temer I hope they are smarter than ever at churning and cleaning the yard etc.

Remember us both to Mr. and Mrs. Garland with much affection and to Mrs. Howard, Mr. and Mrs. Hardy and Doggett and all others who enquire after us. Does Jim walk home now at all with Miss Rowenna? And he has really given up Miss Betsy (!!!) just as I suspected. Tell him he had better try now and secure Tilla before someone else takes her off. Mr. L. was so much pleased with her that he says he intends sending his brother Warren to court her. Nannie is very well, or, at least was last week.

I forgot to mention in my former letter finding the missing handkerchief. I found it in my trunk on the road, in Columbia, I think. Mr. L.'s collar came very safely in the newspaper. Your letter found me just about finishing a watch guard for Pa. I have finished it now and think of sending it somehow by mail, when I go to the village, for he must need one now and he has no one to make them. I made it differently from any he has ever had, and don't know how it will please him. Knowing his predilection for round guards, I would have made it such, but could get no suitable braid. This was the best I could purchase, though too wide. I should like to send it if it were only to show him that I think of him indeed very often and wish to do something to please him. Mr. Lomax says he has no idea of my giving up my studies, and when I get fixed in the village, says I must enter upon a course of reading, and review all of my Latin and Greek studies, and advance further. I know not how it will be but think I shall try. When I come to Homer tell Pa I expect to call upon him for some long instructive letters.

Please give my love to Miss Margaret when you write and ask her to write to me. I should be delighted to hear from her. And ask Mr. Doggett for a certificate, if he can give me one, as we intend to join the Church at the Court House. I know that you pray for us every day that we may be good Christians and live happy both here and hereafter, and often when I kneel to pray the thought of my dear good Mother praying for me perhaps at that very moment encourages me much. We do indeed need your prayers much and thank you for them, hoping they may be answered in us, and blessings twofold be returned on your own head.

We heard at Ridgeway of Mr. Hugh Garland's failure, but I forgot to mention it in my note. Tell the children I saw the same animal show, I suppose, that pleased them so much, while in Augusta. I liked the L[1]ama better than any other of the animals, and thought the Hyena the least prepossessing.

Of course the monkeys' riding please them most of all. Could they tell any of them from the pictures they had seen? A good many little girls in Augusta rode on the Elephant. I have written all this to- night by candlelight, and now being after nine o'clock, I must leave it to close in the morning, when I expect to send it to the Office. So now goodnight and pleasant dreams attend you, not such as disturbed my slumbers last night.

Mr. Lomax sends his love this morning and says tell Jim he has been looking a long time for a letter from him. He heard me one day mention Matty at Aunt Jennings as being such an excellent seamstress and wish I had one as good, and he immediately proposed buying her if Aunt J. would sell. I told him she was such a rogue her mistress could hardly keep her. That she stole money and everything else. O he said if she suits in other respects he would not mind that, as most of them would steal. What do you think of buying her and do you think Aunt J. would part with her? I have dissuaded him from it but he says I must ask your opinion of it. It must remain, I suppose, until next time. My love to Mrs. Yancey and family and say to Cornelia I wonder she can fancy any other place to be better and pleasanter than "Old Virginy." When you write to J tell her I have waited very long for that promised letter. I saw Mr. Wightman at Church in Cokesbury and heard him preach. He desired his love to you all. He has not altered at all. Our love to Pa and tell him to write to us. Tell Tommy to keep my place for me still until I go back and not to forget me. Mr. Lomax is waiting for this so I cannot linger over it longer. Although I am not a very great lover, you know, of kissing, yet I will cross the rest with kisses and say now goodbye.

Your affectionate daughter

Elizabeth

February 28th, 1846

My dear mother, I received your last letter in much quicker time than any previous, and would have written immediately, but had just a day or two before sent a letter by Mr. Arthur. If I had have had any idea of his going, in time, I might have sent something else by him—pa's guard for one thing. But we never heard of his intention

until late Sunday afternoon, when returning from church, we met him and Nannie in the road; and I happened to have the letter with me and gave it to them. They had been to inform us of their intended departure for Virginia, early the next morning; but found us out, as we remained until after dinner in Cokesbury. I should like to have sent little D'Arcy something of my making had I have known in time. I am sure I am quite as much delighted as the Norfolk folks are disappointed at his being a boy.

Mr. Lomax and I have just returned (day before yesterday) from Augusta, where we have been to purchase furniture, and etc., for housekeeping. He has bought a house in the village which I like very much. It has six good rooms with fireplaces, and several smaller ones without; plenty of large delightful closets, and a fine storeroom. A long piazza both above and below at the back, and a portico in front, and good houses, including an excellent dairy with two rooms. Also quite a large vegetable garden, and a smaller flower garden, with different kinds of fruit trees, which we are told are of the very best quality. The gentleman who owned it was obliged to sell, and we got the place for eighteen hundred dollars less than it cost him. We have not bought much furniture yet, but expect to furnish the house gradually. We got a very handsome bureau and bedstead. And for our drawingroom have a beautiful set of mahogany chairs, for which we gave eighty dollars; and a very handsome table covered in black marble, of a pattern just becoming fashionable, to be used as a centre or a side table, as you like. We have determined to use lard for light altogether, and purchased a handsome large globe lamp for the drawingroom, and smaller ones for common use. We preferred getting less furniture at first, and having it good and handsome, to furnishing the whole house at once, in a more inferior manner. Don't you think it is the best plan and in the end, the cheapest? We have a beautiful set of kni[v]es and forks and castors and spoons. For our dining we only purchased a table and chairs.

These are nearly all that we have yet bought, at least, these are the most important and expensive. We have a few other articles, such as are indispensable. I specified them because I thought you would be interested to know how we were fixed in every particular. One thing I have not seen used since I left home, viz: a patent coffee pot like yours. The people here use the old fashioned way of clearing coffee. But I thought the former so much better and less troublesome that I enquired for one in Augusta and got a very pretty one. They make them of a handsome shape now and better material too I believe. This one seems to be very thick, and looks as if it would be a pleasure to make coffee in it. Mr. Lomax consults my taste and wishes in everything; and seems to be

always most desirous to give me pleasure and satisfaction. But what pleased me most of all that I saw in Augusta was a superb piano; the sweetest toned I have ever touched or heard; made by Lord and Comston, the rivals of Chickering, in Boston; and in this instance, at least, I think they have surpassed him. It was also a most beautiful piece of furniture. But considering the expense of beginning housekeeping and buying a house. I must content myself without such an expensive present. That must be the next thing. I was better pleased with Augusta in this visit than formerly. It appeared much better in good weather.

Broad Street is really beautiful; perfectly straight and level and two mites long. I met with a most polite jeweler on that street. After purchasing what we wished from him, I was looking at some very pretty folders of ivory, which reminded me very much of the one I broke for Pa a "long time ago," only made in more modern style. I did not however intend to buy one, and just as I was about to leave, he took one up and in the most polite manner, requested me, if I was pleased with it, to accept it from them. I learned afterward that the firm were very rich and gentlemanly men. I was so surprised at the present I hardly knew what to say. I mention it as an instance of southern gallantry. We bought all our drygoods of the same Mr. Warren, who is very polite and obliging still. I am very pleased with the idea of keeping house, altho at first I thought I should like boarding better. Please send me, the next time you write, your receipt for making yeast, how long it must work before using, and how much a quart of flour requires. Your receipt too for curing salted beef and bacon; and all those kind of things, any you think I might need. I thought these were the same everywhere; but I like yours better than any I have seen. Do you know Mrs. Lewis's method of making mattresses of shucks and cotton? We bought one large one in Augusta, but of course we will need more for the other chambers; and have all the materials necessary; and if I could only have them made as well as hers, I should like them almost as well as hair. She has the best homemade I ever slept upon. Please find out for me sometime and let me know. The people here know nothing about such things. They are not half so domestic as the Virginia country ladies. I shall be very busy now having sheets, and counterpanes, curtains, etc., all to make.

I went to hear Mr. George Peirce preach last Sunday in Augusta, and was not disappointed, but very much pleased with him. Alfred Mann who graduated with Mr. Hardy is the stationed minister there now. Have you seen Nannie Arthur yet or heard why she suddenly returned to Virginia? She said when we saw her that she was going very unexpectedly and that he would return immediately.



Have you seen Mrs. Merton or Pat lately? Since I wrote to you I have been visiting up in the district at Mr. James Lomax's, the older brother of Tennent, who was just married last year, to a fortune and has just gone to housekeeping. I was very much pleased with him and his wife. He is a member of the Methodist church, and very pious, very much like Tennent, but generally thought much handsomer.

At Major Graves', in that neighborhood where we dined, we found early in February, the garden all prepared and done up for the spring; a number of quite large cabbage plants set out and lettuce and watercresses for dinner. A large flower garden also all done up and cleaned out that early. This looks like being farther south than Virginia. I suppose you have not ventured to think of setting out cabbage plants or anything scarcely but peas, which are generally very high here at this season. When did you hear from Aunt Jane and how were they?

March 2nd. I have been reading over what I have written above and really I am half ashamed to send it. I expect you will laugh at it, it sounds so childish, but I just write any little circumstance to you that interests myself, or relates to our comfort or pleasure, thinking any such, however trifling, will be entertaining to you.

As to going to Virginia this summer, Mr. L., for several good reasons, thinks it impossible. I would indeed be perfectly delighted to do so, although I said I should not think of it until summer after when I left. I would even now be with you if I could. But why does Mrs. Robinson think I will need any nursing at that time? Give my love in return for hers and tell her when I need it I know of no nurse I should prefer to her. Mr. L. sometimes says he cannot leave his business to visit Virginia again until Jim graduates. And when he does go he will go by private conveyance, and spend the summer with you, and all of us then go to see Aunt Taliaferro, and eat oysters in November. But I cannot tell certainly when we will be able to go. The time is too far in the future to speculate upon.

We expect to go to the Village to housekeeping certainly next week, when the present occupant will vacate our house. If we cannot visit you next summer, I hope sincerely to see some of you, Pa at least, here, if he can possibly come, or Jim might come with some of the southern students, who generally pass through Augusta, which is only 60 miles, and a stage constantly running between there and Abbeville C.H.

Why does not James write? How much I want to see the little brother. Have you decided to call him D'Arcy? or the little brother Lucien which? Tell Tommy he must send me one of his letters, in yours, and if Martha is "such a goose" he must think of

something to tell me himself. And David and Wallace too, how much I want to see them. They must send some answers to my postscript to them by Mr. Arthur, and will write them a longer letter next time. Please write soon and give me all the instruction you can about keeping house. Mr. Lomax is still the same, only better and if possible more affectionate and kind to me every day. My love to Mrs. Howard and Mr. Garland and family, Mr. and Mrs. Doggett, Hardy, Jones and all others who inquire after us. Also to all the servants, ever your affectionate daughter, E.

April 22nd, 1846

My dear Mother, I have been, for a long time, every day, intending to write to you, even before the receipt of your last; but, since I have been a housekeeper, I have found so much to employ me, that I have not before found time. And I have never yet answered Aunt Taliaferro's or Aunt Pen's letters, although I think of it almost daily. Besides housekeeping, I have had so much sewing work. I have had for several weeks, and still have with me a most excellent seamstress belonging to Mr. Lomax's mother, but every thread of cutting out I have done myself. You know servants never know anything about that, and Charlotte is so much afraid of spoiling the things, that she always insists on my doing it. I have had bed, bolster, and pillow ticks, counterpanes, curtains, sheets, and all the etcetera, which you will know without need of enumeration, to make. Then our house servants are new, just from the plantation, and have to be taught everything. Our household consists of the cook, Ritter, and three children. A girl and a boy in the house, and an old man who attends the garden and cuts wood, etc. The cook does very well. She makes fine waffles which we almost live on, morning and evening, but she never yet has succeeded with rolls.

Light bread of any kind seems to be very rarely used here. I have only seen it a few times since I have been in the state. One of our next door neighbours, the Episcopal minister's wife, who is a yankee lady, sent me some risen biscuit and a loaf of bread at different times, and gave me some yeast cakes, but Ritter never could get the rolls to rise or bake well. I tried one morning and made up the dough myself, and attended to it all day, and in the evening put them in the oven and directed the baking, and Mr. Lomax said they were as good as Graces, but that is the only time we have had them right. He likes them so much better than any other bread, that as soon as I can get any hops, I will make Ritter make some yeast after your recipe, and try until she can

succeed. I think she fails generally in the cooking of them. Mr. L. is so much opposed to my doing any kind of work with my hands, that he declares he never would eat another roll if I had to make them; and it tea[s]es him very much to see me even trouble myself to go into the henhouse, or attend to the butter being made. But still I will persist in seeing the milk strained and always skim it and put it in the churn, and take it up myself.

I tried the cook with it once when I was very busy, but she did not do it to suit me, and I prefer attending to it, as I can know then whether it is done well or not. We have two cows here, which give us milk enough for using and butter, and after I have had them fed better, and better attended to than they have been among the negroes at the plantation, we shall have more than we can use. You see I do not eat quite all the cream as you used to predict I would if I had the management of milk. We have been keeping house rather more than a month, and I like it better every day. The flowers and garden have not had as much of my attention yet as I wished, but seem to do very well without it. I expect Pa will say, "no doubt they do much better," for he used to say I never would let the flowers alone long enough to grow. I wish you could see what beautiful large rosebushes covered now with roses perfume my flower garden. The greatest objection we have to it is, that the bushes are all too large and thick. I am told it is a perfect wilderness in the summer. And we can sit at one of the dining room or Mr. Lomax's study windows either, and pluck the cherries from the trees. Our garden and back yard both contain delightful fruit trees, Peaches and Plums of several kinds, cherries, Apples, Nectarines, strawberries, ras[p]berries and figs, and pear trees, which are right large but have not yet borne fruit. And from present appearances we are justified in expecting a fine crop of them. Then we have such a fine piazza, both above and below stairs, with a full view of the flower garden and shaded with the honeysuckle and white jessamine, in which to sit in the cool of the evening, and how much delight it would afford us to have you all seated there this summer, enjoying our delicious Indian and heath peaches, or partaking of the fine strawberries and cream that abound in this district.

Some persons in the village have plenty of young peas already, but ours are not so early. They are however in full bloom, and from the length of time since they commenced blooming, three weeks ago, I suppose there must be some pods formed. The cherries, peaches, and plums, and apples are, I think, quite large for the season. It is far more pleasant to have all these ready bearing than to have to go to work and

plant and wait years for them to come to maturity. Mr. Lomax seems to be quite interested in the garden. He works a little in it nearly every day. For the last few days the weather has been like summer. I have often thought of and wished for a nice bucket of ice from Mrs. Howard's ice house. I have to place the milk and clabber and butter in water to cool, which is very troublesome, and after all will not cool them well. You say I ought to give out everything for breakfast the overnight, but although it might be better so to do, I cannot, for Ritter tells me that the rats are so bad in the kitchen that, although she has a safe, yet she cannot keep anything on table there all night. We have not seen or heard of any such nuisance about the house. I have a delightful storeroom, quite large enough to have a small bed in, as Pat Jones used to advise you. Four fine large closets also, beside two small rooms without fireplaces which seemed to have been used as closets. Then we have six rooms with fireplaces, which all seem to be pleasant and comfortable. We are altogether very well and comfortably situated. Much more so than I suppose young housekeepers generally are.

April third. Charlotte and I have just completed today a beautiful white dimity counterpane, made with a full ruffle in the French fashion, we were telling you of last summer. I had no one to show me but just cut and made it and a calico one also by guess, and they look very pretty indeed.

I do want to see you all so much that Pa and Jim should not have their excuse for not visiting us, had we the means just now to send, but you know we have had to spend a great deal, and the times have been such since the drought here, that all Mr. Lomax's debtors, although good, are unable at present to pay him, and if he has a creditor to the amount even of a dollar he is eager to be paid, so that money is about as scarce here this year as with you.

We were much interested in your account of Jinny and Dantzler. I was much surprised. (The following three lines are scratched over and obviously contain some scandal.) ... but says don't blame him for being his friend, for he imagined him to be a high-minded honorable young man, and I suppose his being a South Carolinian rendered him also more partial toward him, and he wished Virginia to marry well, and thought, in a worldly point of view, he was a good offer. We heard, from good authority in Columbia, that his father was one of the wealthiest and most influential men in Orangeburg District.

Dear little Tommy! how very much I would like to see him. Tell him I have a great many more roses here than I used to have at home and wish he were here to see them,

and the other pretty flowers. He and Marfha might pull as many as they pleased without missing them. But the hop vines, which are very fl[o]urishing, attract Mr. Lomax's admiration more than anything else, he is such a lover of rolls. Tell Jim he must be very smart and graduate with all possible speed, as Mr. L. says he cannot go away back to Virginia, from his business, until some such grand event shall call for our presence. By that time David will have gone through many a Latin book and be in readiness to enter College. I should hardly know any of you after such a length of time. Has not James' thumb yet recovered? I have been waiting patiently for his long promised letter.

We were very sorry to hear of Mrs. Howard's sickness. Our love to her, and congratulations on the Capt's return. My love also to Mrs. Boyd and Betty, and Mr. and Mrs. Garland and all others who inquire of us. The newspapers interest us very much. Mr. Lomax always seems delighted at their reception, and only complains that you do not write enough in them. He says he is much obliged for the repetition of Ann's remark, he knows you just wrote it out of goodness to please him. And indeed I believe nothing pleases him more than to hear me flattered by anyone. He very often speaks of writing to you all, but is so much occupied with his law books that I have to write nearly all of even his business letters. He is constantly begging me to renew my studies and commence some regular course of reading, and nothing would please me better, but really, just now I cannot find time to devote thus. He seems to dislike to see me sew or [do] anything about the house but wants me to be altogether a student, just as though the house could keep itself.

April 24th. Well, I have not finished yet. I have just been setting a hen. I might have had chickens long ago, but, moving so late in the season, had no eggs to set the hens. I expect those at the plantation are large enough to eat. Mr. L. and I eat strawberries from the garden this morning, very fine large ones. This is rather earlier than yours begin to ripen.

You ask about our neighbours. We have very good society here, and plenty of it. Nearly everyone has called on me, and I have returned their visit and become slightly acquainted. So far I am very well pleased with the place and people also. Mrs. Cunningham, just opposite across the street, and Mrs. Marshall I like better than any others. The former is the daughter of old Governor Noble, and the wife of one of the best lawyers here. She and the wife of the Episcopal minister Mrs. Cornish were the first who called. I have never been to the Episcopal Church yet. Wesley Wightman is

one of the preachers in this circuit this year but has not preached any day, I believe, since I have been here yet. He is married the second time. Tell Wally I wish more than ever that this place was as near as Mr. Macklins. Then how he and David could climb the cherry trees, and enjoy themselves coming to see us. Give my love to Grace and tell her I wish I had her here about a month. My love also to Martha and Henry and Cary. I hope indeed to see you next year but do not much expect it. Mr. L. sends a great deal of love. He is so much more affectionate and attentive to me every day that I often fear he loves me too much and makes an idol of me. He seems to be always thinking of me in all his actions.

Mrs. Howard was not mistaken in him. He has such an exalted opinion of me too, that the expression of it sometimes makes me ashamed, and causes me to feel as though I had been acting hypocritically, I know I so little deserve it. With much love to Pa, Jim, and the children, I remain, your affectionate daughter.

PS With regard to nursing perhaps I may need it this summer as you suspect. I wish whenever I . . . you could be with me. So far I have been very well, and hearty, and active. Write soon. You cannot write too often nor often enough. I suppose little [brother] (have you decided to call him Paul or D'Arcy?) is quite large by this time. He will not know anything about his Sister. Please send me your receipt for making both berry and grape. . . .

May 30th, 1846, Saturday

My dear mother,

My last letter commenced yesterday a week ago, you will probably receive today, and learn therefrom the birth of your grand-daughter and namesake, little miss Alice Amanda. Mr. Lomax gave me the choice of a name, as it was a girl, and I could not think of naming it except after you. He too proposed that it should be so called. She is now eight days old, and I have been very well, her birth not having caused me a moment's sickness since. Mr. Lomax has been very careful of me, and would not suffer me, although I was so well, to get up at all until Thursday. I was up yesterday, nearly all day, and the whole of today. The baby too has been very well, with the exception of one night, and is the best little creature you ever saw. I believe Mr. Lomax gave you a full description of her. He is in rapture with her, notwithstanding he wished so much for a boy. He is just as attentive and tender as possible with us both, and quite an admirable nurse. You would laugh to see him sometimes, with the baby. He handles it

too quite skillfully, considering his experience in nursing. He stays with me constantly. The neighbours have been quite kind and attentive, both in visiting and sending me things, and as Mr. Lomax told you, I had the best medical assistance the place would afford, in the person of a very skillful and kind physician, whose wife also has shown me every possible attention. I have a great deal of milk, and have not had the least trouble with it, never having to have it drawn even from the first, except by the baby. I am truly thankful to be able to tell you that I have been so blessed, and ascribe it to your prayers, in a great measure, for I have great faith in them, and used often to think, before I was sick, that in the event I would be better for them. And I have often thought, during the past week, of poor Mrs. Sims, and your attention and kindness to her, and when all the ladies around were so kind to me, I thought I was reaping part of your reward. Mr. Lomax, as you know, was absent, not anticipating, in the morning, the event of the afternoon, and some of his relatives were present on the same account. His mother came as soon as possible after being apprized of it, and seems delighted with her little granddaughter, and quite astonished to see me so well.

There are no such things as nurses to be hired on such occasions here, as you have them in Virginia; but I have a negro woman, who is as attentive as she can be, and experienced in such things, and very willing and anxious to do all she can for me. Although I believe you should not feel anxious about me if I had no nurse, and were not noticed by anyone else but Mr. L., for he is so kind and so tender and so fearful that I may do something wrong, that no old nurse could be a better guardian, nor so good, for his affection would, I believe, keep him watching me night and day, if there were the shadow of necessity for so doing. His kindness alone is sufficient to cause me to love him dearly. And then I discover so much every day to admire in his character and temper etc.

I think the Almighty has indeed blessed me throughout my life, and his mercies and loving kindnesses alone have placed me under innumerable obligations to love and serve him; and yet how very short have I come of fulfilling these obligations! O I do wish to be a sincere and devoted Christian, but I find so much in my heart averse to what is good and acceptable in the sight of the holy Lord, and so much to cause me to wander from the Gospel path, and attach me to earthly things more than heavenly, that I often fear I shall never enjoy that rest prepared for the children of God, who remain faithful unto death. Pray for me, my dear mother, even more than I know you do, and for my dear husband too, will you not? Mr. L. has been quite sick all day, lying down

nearly all the time. But I hope he is better this evening. He has just jumped up, hearing the baby stir and run to look at it. I am afraid we will think too much of it. He seems to be so fond of it and I cannot tell how much I love the dear little creature. I don't know when it will learn its name, for we call it now only "little precious darling" and such names. But Mr. L. declares I must stop and give it some dinner before it cries. She has been asleep so long. Here he has brought her to me.

Well, the little precious is soon asleep again, and I will try and finish this as it will go on Monday. We cannot tell yet what color her eyes are, but think now they will be blue. At any rate they are very bright, and when not closed are always actively engaged, for she loves to look about and notice more than any little thing I ever saw. I heard the ladies say before she was an hour old she was looking at them as if she already noticed them. She has never cried for being washed. I washed and dressed her myself this morning. I often wish we could be with you or you with us. But I don't know when little Alice will see her Virginia Grandmother and Grandfather. I suppose it would make you feel right old to be called grand-ma. Tell Jim he must write very often to his little niece. She has his dimples too in both cheeks. Mr. L. was just regretting today writing to you in such a hurry and with such a bad pen, but expect you read it very easily and I tell him that is all sufficient.

The cherries look so tempting now, I can see the trees from my door hanging so full. I begged so hard that Mr. L. brought me two or three yesterday, and I barely sucked the juice. The doctor said I might eat a few raspberries, and I ate some today with sugar, but was afraid to take cream, although it looked very tempting on those Mr. L. was eating. How sorry I am about the war! Both of Mr. L.'s brothers have volunteered to go; but so many more have volunteered than are required from this State, that I hope, when choice is made, they may be left out. I am very anxious to hear the news from England. We received the other day your last paper, charging Mr. L. to take such good care of me, which charge was not necessary, for he had then already commenced that duty.

Sunday morning. Mr. L. is much better today I am glad to say, and I feel so well that I have persuaded him to leave me and go to church. As far as feelings are concerned, I think I could go myself as well as any one. I have discarded gowns and wrappers this morning. I am again dressed as usual in one of my gingham dresses. The only difference I can perceive in myself is being thinner than usual, caused principally, I suppose, by the light diet I have accustomed myself to lately. Little Alice is sleeping



soundly and sweetly after being just washed and dressed. I am rather awkward in dressing her, I believe, but I love to do it, and think the servants won't do it as well as I can, at least I am afraid they won't be particular enough. And she is so quiet that it is not much trouble. You see we call her Alice in place of Amanda. One of the greatest objections I have to calling her Amanda is that one of our neighbours has a little negro girl about the house by that name.

Monday afternoon. The mail goes out this evening, but I would not close this until the last. I feel very well this afternoon, and have just eaten a hearty dinner. They have let me eat whatever I wanted almost, at least. I do wish I had some of your nice ice cream; perhaps you have some today, for it is as warm as July nearly. Mr. Lomax insists upon sending you the length of the baby and of its foot. The sewing cotton is the length of its body and the other of its foot. Mr. L. says it has a pretty good foundation of its own.

O I do wish so much to see you all. It seems to me this evening as though I could sit and cry all the evening, if it would do any good. I feel somehow melancholy, I don't know why, for I have no cause, except being absent from you. And when I think perhaps I may never see you again, the tears will come in my eyes in spite of myself, and I resolve that I will try and live better in order hereafter that we may meet, if not on earth. Mr. Lomax is sitting near me, trying I believe to make me feel cheerful and happy by his affectionate attention, and the little Alice is sleeping quietly and her grandmother with us too; but yet I feel this evening as though I could not be cheerful without you. Your presence seems more than ever missed, but I must stop with much love to you all.

Your daughter

Lizzie

My dear mother, Your letter of the 16th reached us only yesterday, the paper with the gloves arrived the mail before. I think it must be because of the carelessness of the postmaster here, that we are longer receiving your letters than you ours. We never missed sending every other day to the office and ought to have received your last seven days before we did. Thank you very much for the gloves which fit me exactly, and the ribbon will look so nice on little Alice's caps. The little shirts fit her better than any I had made. Mine were all too large, as were the caps also. D'Arcy's cap fits as well

as if it had been made for her. She has it on now. I do wish you could see her. She is so fat and sweet, and has a double chin so like Aunt Jennings. Sometimes I think she looks more like her than anyone else, and then again she seems to resemble Pa. She has his expression about the mouth precisely I think. At first her features seemed to promise a greater resemblance to Mr. L. but they are more like mine now. And Mr. Lomax is quite disappointed in her forehead which he thought so high and noble looking; since her hair has grown out more it is not so high, but, I think, sufficiently so for beauty. Tell Betty I cannot tell yet how *pretty* she will be, but I know she is as *sweet* as D'Arcy now. Her eyes I believe will be blue, although some say they will be like mine. (The flies do worry me so that I can scarcely write, and the heat is really oppressive.) Alice sends you a great many kisses, and thanks for her presents. When I tell her about her Virginia grandfather and mother and uncles, she looks at me so attentively, and with a great deal of intelligence in her countenance too I assure you, just as though she understood all I was saying. Tell Wallace and Tommy, Oh yes she can both laugh and crow a little, and notices a great deal.

I have just been to see Mrs. Cunningham, across the street, who had a fine son yesterday. She is quite well today. She is one of the ladies who has been so kind to me, you may remember.

You have I suppose received Mr. L.'s letter before this. Do write to him soon. A letter from you pleases him so much. He read yours over yesterday three or four times, and was quite outdone that nothing was written in the paper, and says I must tell you do pray not to send again without writing.

You are all very quiet now no doubt and enjoying the vacation. Mrs. Howard more than any, and Mrs. Smith. My love to them. I often think of them and the other friends and neighbours around and if I did not banish such thoughts quickly, and not allow my mind to dwell on them, I should be constantly sighing for "Home, Sweet Home," and wishing I could be there. Tell Mrs. H. Alice has not been measured lately. I have just had to stop and take her. I have as you rightly supposed a great quantity of milk; she cannot take the fourth part of it yet, but it runs so freely I have no trouble in getting rid of it. I can milk it out for any length of time by just a gentle pressure, and never let it remain long, although it always begins to run out of its own accord whenever the breast becomes full.

I recently saw a young lady of Cokesbury, an acquaintance of Misses [sic] Dantzler and Foster when they were here at school, who had just received a letter from the

former, saying he would be in Cokesbury next month. She mentioned part of the contents of the letter and from their \_\_\_\_\_ I think he must have alluded in it to Jinny, but spoke of similar circumstances without applying them directly to himself. This young lady mentioned having heard Dantzler say that his father never would allow him to marry any but a rich girl. She did not seem to be aware of his ever having courted anyone in Virginia and of course I did not mention such a thing.

Monday night, July 6

Just a week ago I commenced this, and thought to have finished it long ago, but dear little Alice, and company, and visits which I was obliged to make have prevented. I have just returned from seeing Mrs. Cunningham who is quite smart this evening. Ever since Friday I have company. Mrs. Ritchie and Warren are still here, but expect to leave in the morning.

The village was quite full of company and bustle on the fourth. We had the cannon fired before day I believe, though it barely woke me, I was up so late the night before. There was an oration delivered by Col. Tilman a few hundred yards from the village, at quite a romantic looking spot where there was also a dinner prepared in honour of the volunteers for Mexico, the public generally invited.

This drew a great crowd of course. A great many persuaded me to go, and Mrs. Cunningham offered to take care of the baby. But I never fancied the idea of going to a public Barbecue, though it is quite the fashion here, and all the "bon ton" among the ladies attended. Mr. Lomax was one of the committee of arrangements in the affair, and one of them sent me a large joint of barbecued shote (shoat?), as I did not go I suppose. Mr. L. gave a toast which was so highly complimented, I tell him I fear it will make him quite vain. Remarks in a crowd, you know, are easily overheard, and the Episcopal minister said it was the best toast, and the best delivered that day, and Judge Wardlaw said, yes it was eloquent. The Judge, you must understand, is one of the great men of the state, and himself, truly eloquent and talented.

Mr. Lomax went to his plantation this morning to see a very sick negro, the most valuable young woman that he has. I hope she will not die. He expected to return tomorrow to breakfast. Dear little Alice is sleeping. I wish you could see how sweet she looks. I have just been to look at and kiss her.

Everyone says she is a very pretty baby. I never told you that we have a namesake here at the quarter. Duncan is not so rare a name as I imagined. One of our finest young negro men is called Duncan, after old Mr. James Duncan, that wealthy merchant

who was in partnership with Nickolson in Charleston. He has been here all day working in the flower garden which reminded me of it.

Did you ever see anything like the flies this year? They gather around the water wherever they can find it and drink until they burst and fall to pieces, and they are found dead in quantities where there has been any water every day. It is said to be a precursor of the Cholera, and the same singular phenomenon, I suppose it might be called, was noticed when that dreadful (disease) visited us before.

It is a general thing throughout the country here. Have you remarked anything of the kind with you? We cannot have a hearth cleaned but before it is dry it is covered with the apparently petrified remains of numbers of flies.

Saturday night, July 11th

I am indeed ashamed to send this sheet commenced nearly a fortnight ago and written so very badly too but cannot afford to lose the time for I don't know when Alice will let me write one all at once. I hear her even now, but perhaps she will go to sleep again. The little darling has had, and continues to have, the Hives so badly. They are constantly going in and causing her to be in consequence, very subject to the colic, and then I have to hold her all the while, sometimes nearly all day and until ten o'clock at night except when Mr. Lomax lays aside his books and walks her about which he does several times a day usually. She was so sick from the eruption disappearing a few days ago that we were very much alarmed and sent for the doctor, but before he came it was out again, and she seemed quite well. We have just been feeding her with saffron tea for it, and Godfrey's Cordial, which cordial is certainly the best thing to quiet children I ever saw, for she will lie perfectly quiet or sleeping always after taking it. The directions on it advise its use for "froward" bad children as well as sick ones.

Nannie Arthur has been to see us since I last wrote but stayed only a short time. She is the only one who has thought the baby small. Mr. Arthur is to preach here tomorrow, and we expect to go hear him. We received a paper yesterday and were glad to hear you were well, and Mr. L. was outdone because you did not write more, and wonders why you don't answer his letter. He says he told you that he feared the baby would be too precocious, and reckons Pa will laugh heartily at the idea although the fear is not at all unreasonable, for tell Betty she has been talking a long while with her eyes, and for the last few days has tried very hard to use her tongue. She is certainly not tongue tied, and grows sweeter and prettier every day while everyone remarks what beautiful bright eyes she has and what a pretty sweet mouth. I do wish you all

could see her, for sometimes she looks so sweet and pretty, I think she cannot possibly look so again and want you to see her just then. She is very fat and quite heavy. To give you an idea, there is a lady across the street who has a little boy six months old, and yesterday we compared the two babies, and Alice is, not only much larger, but would weigh as much again. But the little boy is remarkably small.

Tell Jim to write soon, and don't let him follow the example I have placed before him in writing this so miserably. I cannot tell how it happened to be so badly done.

Tell Mrs. Howard I think Mr. Lomax made a mistake in measuring the baby as I believe her to be much taller than the length of that measure, and he will have to take it again to get the true size for you. I put her in a large tub of water every morning and she enjoys it finely and never cries.

I think Pa might afford to give us a letter now that he has vacation. I shall expect one certainly before the session again commences. Mr. Lomax says he is going to the office in about five minutes as the stage comes in tonight to see if there is a letter for him, and if not, do pray, if you please, write, he enjoins me to say. Well, Mr. Lomax has just returned sadly disappointed poor fellow! and says some of you must be sick or you never would neglect his letter so, but I know so well how it is with you about writing that I do not feel uneasy. I am so sleepy I must stop, and will not seal this until just before the mail goes that I may say how we all are Monday.

This must go this evening—I must close it now. Mr. Lomax is sitting by in the Piazza and says I must tell you he has little Alice in his arms, patting her on the back for the colic. She is still prettier every day and crows and laughs all the time when she is not sick. Mr. L. says I must tell you he has just begun to live since roasting corn and tomatoes have been plenty. I suppose you have plenty too by this time. He thinks there is no danger of fever if we eat plenty of tomatoes every day. I have a receipt for making corn pudding with sugar which I think would exactly suit Pa. You take twelve ears of corn and grate it. Then stir into a quart of rich milk by degrees a quarter of a pound of fresh butter and a quarter of a pound of sugar. Beat four eggs very light and stir into the milk alternately with the grated corn a little of each at a time. It must bake four hours, or if you boil the corn first, two hours.

It is really too warm to write any longer so you must excuse me. My love to all our friends. Mrs. Garland's and Mrs. Boyd's families, etc. Kiss all the little boys for Alice and me, and let Betty Boyd give D'Arcy his share. Our love to yourself, Pa, and Jim, and write soon.

Your affectionate daughter.

September 17, 1846

My dear mother,

I am afraid you have been rendered uneasy by not hearing from us for some time during this sickly season. There have been various preventives to my writing little Alice being the principal one.

The day after receiving a paper from you, containing cousin Indy's letter, we left home in a visit to Warren's, expecting to stay two or three days only, but while there Dr. Rostow from Georgia, an old acquaintance of Mr. L., arrived in the neighbourhood with his wife, and intending to spend a week with Warren, Mr. Lomax proposed prolonging our visit, which extended it to nearly a fortnight. In the meanwhile, Alice was taken sick with chills and scorching fevers for several days, and the doctor gave her calomel, dover's powder, oil, and quinine, which made her very sick, and she required my constant attention for a week, and even now is not quite well. When anything is the matter with her, she will not be quiet, for any length of time, with any other than myself. Her sickness has reduced her a little, and made her very pale. I was quite surprised at the physician giving such medicine, to a little baby; but he said that this climate required it. I have continued very well, as has Mr. Lomax also. But this year has been more sickly in the village and the surrounding country than any time for twenty years previous I am told. The doctors are constantly going, and there have been a great many deaths particularly from congestive chills. A good many of Mr. Lomax's negroes have been sick. Betsey, whom I wrote you some time ago was so ill, is here at present, just able to walk about again. She lost a fine child, and was unable to use her left side for some time. When she became able to walk with a stick we had her brought here to be placed under the care of Dr. Branch, the most skillful physician here, and he has cured her so far as to render her capable of walking very well alone again, and thinks she will soon be entirely well. She suffered a great deal, enough, the doctor said, to kill twenty common women. You speak of getting "that good Mrs. Cunningham" to write to you if we do not write oftener, but poor Mrs. C. has been, and still is, very sick, and I have been nursing her baby every day, several times during the day, for some time. Mrs. Wilson too whose baby is a little older than Alice sends her every evening for me to nurse; and sometimes I have quite a concert here with three babies at once. I still have a great deal of milk, much more than sufficient for Alice. I have had the heat most dreadfully, it is just getting better since I have been drinking Seidlitz powders for it.

When in the country I rode through Mr. Lomax's cotton, and it was quite a novel

sight to me. Although it had all been topped, yet some stalks were above my head on horseback, and the branches interlacing so that we could hardly pass through. It was full of boles, and some was open then. They have been busy ever since picking it out, but Dr. Rostow says the cotton here is nothing to the Georgia cotton. There they make more than they pick out, though they are in the field from August to March picking. He gave such glowing descriptions of the fertility, etc., of the country that Mr. L. speaks of sending some hands out there next year. He wished to persuade us to go there to live and finding me much opposed to the idea, said if I could only see the cotton crops that they have I would be ready to go tomorrow. You ought to just hear Mr. Lomax. He has just come in and taken Alice, and will hardly let me write, talking to her and telling her how smart she will be by and by, and what she will do. And she all the while smiling, and looking as if she understood it all. He commenced writing to you one day but never finished.

Tell Jim I have not forgotten his letter, but will try and answer it soon, but should be very glad to receive another from him without the ceremony of waiting for an answer. We have been looking for one from Pa for a long time. I am very busy just now and cannot write more.

Please write soon and often. We receive your notes regularly in the papers, and would hardly know how to do without them. We expect to take the Southern Christian Advocate next year, and make an exchange with you. Give our love to all the neighbours. I hope you all have kept well. We were very sorry indeed to hear of Mrs. Garland's affliction. What was the matter with the baby? My love to Pa and Jim and all the children. What would I give to see them all! Tell David I will look for a letter from him soon. I do wish to see little D'Arcy so much! Remember us to the servants. I have taught them how to make rolls here at last. I suppose Martha would not be so anxious to come with us now that she is married.

Well goodbye, I hear Mrs. C.'s baby coming.

Your affectionate

Elizabeth

P.S. Well the baby has gotten his dinner and is gone; and Mr. Lomax says I must say to you that he commenced writing, and that just in the midst, I exclaimed, Oh I do wish mother would write a long letter! and he answered, Well then don't you write for some time, and she will think something the matter and will write to enquire, and

therefore he says, for my accommodation, he deferred writing. Had he have made this explanation sooner I would have excused him from accommodating me at such expense.

Abbeville Court House

Thursday morning November 26, 1846

My dear Mother,

Last Monday was the time I should have written to you, but was very busy fixing Mr. Lomax to go to Columbia, and had company besides. He left Tuesday morning, and will not return until tomorrow week. I stayed with Mrs. Cunningham last night. She is about to move very soon to Charleston, and I, as well as others, shall be very sorry to lose such a kind and pleasant neighbor. We should like very much to buy their lot. It is the prettiest I think in the village, but the house is not so large nor good as this, still we would prefer [it] if we could dispose of this; and Mr. L. likes the lot so much better that he would have boarded, and waited until the sale of it, if he had have had any idea of Mr. Cunningham's moving. It is the same that was formerly occupied by the Hon. A. Burt, and I think it a beautiful place.

I have written to Mrs. Lewis, inviting her to come and see us; but have not yet received an answer.

Little Alice is growing very fast. She has two teeth and can sit alone without any support and play with anything. She is sitting on the floor now by my side and has just torn half the border off her cap. When I last wrote I mentioned that she had a chill the day before. She has had no more and I found afterward it was occasioned by her gums. The teeth appeared in a few days after. Mrs. Cunningham thinks Alice very much like your Daguerreotype, but most persons think her like Mr. Lomax. Your likenesses are very much admired, particularly Jim's. The ladies generally seem to think him quite a handsome fellow. Mr. James Lomax was here two nights last week and says it is a pity Alice was not a boy. He admires her forehead so much as a fine one.

I received a letter from Tennent last Monday. He speaks strongly of courting a young lady in Ala. and is utterly astonished at Mr. Garland's forsaking R.M. Says "surely there must be some tremendous revolution in his character" and asks "Is he ambitious or is he an infidel or what?" I suppose he is unaware of the financial state of R.M. Mr. L. thinks Dr. Smith will make a fine President, and how surprised we are to hear of Mr. Wadsworth's leaving the Conference.



I got Mrs. Taggert, the best mantuamaker here (and a very fine one she is) to make my cashmere, but she had so many wedding dresses on hand for Miss Calhoun, with whom I have a slight acquaintance (a niece of the great John C. who lives about twenty mites from here), that she has not finished mine yet. She cut, fitted, and basted the calico, and Harriet, one of Mrs. Ritchie's seamstresses, is now here finishing it.

We received two papers from you last Monday. Orders have arrived from Gov. Aiken for the company of volunteers from this District to march to Charleston for inspection, and if they are received I suppose William and Warren will have to go to [Mexico] to be shot at. I hope it may not be received for I think they have a sufficient number of men, sixty-four being necessary I believe.

Warren is at present in Georgia, looking at some lands where he and Mr. L. expect to send some hands. Dr. Royston [Rostow], the physician who attended Alice when she was sick at Warren's, persuaded them to do so. He (Dr. R.) told me a great deal of Col. Lomax, Mr. L.'s father. Represented him as a man of intellect and popularity, and also a perfect Christian gentleman. He must have been very popular, for he was a member of the legislature, and part of the time speaker of the House, for eleven years, and once was elected over McDuffie to Congress. Everyone that I have heard speak of him, mentions him in exalted terms.

I am anxiously expecting that long letter you promised to write after Conference. And, if Pa decides to move, tell us that you will visit us this winter certainly.

You spoke in one of your letters as if you thought I had offered myself as "nurse general." No indeed, I never overed at all. The ladies happened to hear that I had plenty of milk and they themselves very little or none, and sent their children begging me to nurse them. But Mrs. Wilson never sent here but one day more than once a day, and not many days either, for she got someone nearer to nurse her after a while. Even now sometimes I have to milk out the milk, for I still have too much for Alice, and it runs all out in my clothes. And Mrs. Cunningham's still comes three times a day. You see I drink so much gruel. I have just drlulnk about a quart or more.

I received a letter from Aunt T. the other day or rather week.

Please send that cape pattern again in a newspaper for I carried the one you sent to Mrs. Taggert's and left it through mistake, and one of her little children burnt it up.

So, if you please write soon. My love to all the neighbors. Kiss all the children for Alice and me.

Our best love to yourself and Pa.

Your sincerely affectionate daughter.

20 Monday, May 10th, 1847

My dear James,

Your letter of March 12th, now before me, afforded us great pleasure, and certainly merited a much earlier answer.

However I will not consume time and paper with vain excuses and apologies for delay, but simply warn you not to expect a very good letter in this, at least in the writing, for my hand trembles so with nervousness, that I can scarcely write at all. This is the effect of a nervous headache, my old enemy, which still continues occasionally to haunt me. It has left me now, but I suffered from it considerably last night. It was occasioned by loss of sleep consequent upon the dissipation of the last week; for though Abbeville, I am told, is a dull, stupid, and monotonous place, at this time, compared with its character some few years ago (this pen is really abominable and plainly will not assist my nervousness, so you must excuse me until I get a better, how I do miss Pa's nice pens), yet we have occasional weddings and little parties to enliven and render us more sociable. These are however quite rare. I have been to one wedding since we have lived here, been invited to a bridal party but did not go. But the young ladies of the Female Academy have had quite an interesting May Day Celebration which we attended. The coronation took place in the afternoon in an old field near the Academy. The position of the throne was well chosen, and the Queen with her attendants concealed themselves in the wood, about a hundred yards distant, the space between being carpeted for her Majesty's approach, and little girls representing the Seasons, etc., heralded her strewing her path with flowers. Miss Rose Wardlaw was Queen, and performed her part well, although she was confused while delivering her address. There were a number present, and notwithstanding its ill accordance with the should-be dignity and self-possession of a Queen, the gentlemen seemed to admire her confusion far more than any other part of the ceremony. I suppose they thought that boldness would be less becoming in one of her age. After this ceremony the whole school joined hands, and danced around the garlanded Maypole. But they did not allow any of the boys or young men to join in, although some implored the Queen's permission.

We enjoyed a handsome supper afterwards at the Academy, with four rooms being open for the company, and the greatest [treat] to us was Ice lemonade The girls sent by the stage to Augusta for a small quantity, not enough however for freezing ice-cream.

We spent a delightful evening last Wednesday at Judge Wardlaw/s, where we were invited to partake of strawberries and cream. And on Saturday last went to another

Strawberry party at Mr. White's. Judge Wardlaw has a large and beautiful flower garden, and we were invited to go early, before sunset, expecting to have the table in the garden; but the evening proved cool enough for fire, and we were compelled to enjoy them in the piazza. I think I have given you quite a detail of our Spring festivities in return for your travels.

Dear little Alice is playing about the room as merry as possible. She can walk five steps alone, and walks all over the house by the wall or any support, climbs into a low chair, or up the steps, and requires constant watching. She's the fairest, sweetest, little creature you ever saw, and says Ta-ta, Papa, and calls Georgianne, a little girl of Ritter's, of whom she is very fond, quite plainly. She has walked eight steps for me today without stopping. But she rebels very much against the reception of the hundreds of kisses so often sent her.

She puts up her little mouth so sweetly when asked for a kiss, you ought to have the pleasure of bestowing them yourself.

What very dry weather we have had! Everything is suffering. We had a few showers yesterday and Saturday, but very slight. We have had English peas from our garden only twice, and the vines are beginning to dry up. They are very full of pods which only require rain to bring them to perfection. Some persons, who take a pride in excelling in such matters, had them early last month.

Aunt T. is mistaken; I have not answered her last letter, not two. And as to Aunt Penelope she has never paid her debt to me. I was not at all surprised that you should like her so much. She is no doubt a very superior lady. What has become of the Richmond Advocate? We have not received a number lately. We always welcome its appearance gladly, and read it with great interest. Mr. Lomax thinks it far superior to the Southern, and told me he thought the latter was not worth sending to you since the postage is increased, so that I have ceased sending it. But if you care about it, I would take pleasure in sending it in exchange for the Richmond. We hope you [do] not forget to send the R. when you have read it. The number of the Repository arrived safely and we thought it very interesting.

What do you all think of "old Rough and Ready" as our next President. Mr. L. says he will vote for him, but I do not wish him to be President, although he is a whig, because of his military character. I do not think we ought to elect men from the army for our Chief Ma[g]istrates, but rather peaceable men. Mr. L.'s brother did not go to Mexico. The company in which they volunteered only offered for one year, and when

news came that all must volunteer for the whole period of the war it was disbanded and very few of the first company joined the second that was raised. Captain Marshall who resided in the Village commanded the Abbeville company. I also knew a good many of the volunteers; twelve of the most promising young men went from the Village, all single, but Capt. M., and six of the twelve. Marshall was a lawyer, and had just completed the building of the largest and most beautiful dwelling house in the village, and now it is left empty and desolate, for Mrs. M. and her children stay in Columbia, at her father's, during his absence. They were in the thickest of the fight during the bombardment of Vera Cruz and Capt. M. was knocked down by the shock of a shell or cannon ball, I forget which, and the letter writers of the company say they were fanned by the passing balls, which fell thick around them, yet not one of the company [was] hit or wounded. One of Mr. Lomax's cousins, Wm. Lomax, went.

I do wish very much to go to Va. this summer, but cannot. Some of the Villagers—that is a part of Judge Wardlaw's family—are going to the White Sulphur Springs in Va. How I should like to be going too, but I could not think of going without Mr. Lomax. He is so good, and kind, and affectionate, that my conscience would condemn me for wishing even to go and leave him alone. He says he will get a carriage by next Summer and go in private conveyance. It is too long off however to talk of.

Give our best love to Mrs. Howard and tell her Mr. L. speaks of her very often, and I will to visit Va. once more, if I live, to learn her way of cooking and housekeeping as no other seems to suit him as well. I must conclude, or this will be too late for the mail. Our best love to all, and do write again soon to your dear Sister. Tell me more about D'Arcy and the other children when you write. You all say so little about them.

February 2, 1849

My Dear Wallace,

I was very much delighted by the reception of your circular and letter the other day, especially as it evidenced your fair reputation as a student, and a good boy. And really I must give you credit for your performance in letter writing. You sent me a very well dictated and very well spelled letter, and the handwriting much far better than I expected from a little boy. I am particularly pleased to find you such a correct speller, and hope you will become very perfect in this branch of education, for it must be a great mortification as well as inconvenience for a grown person, who has had suitable advantages, to be unable to spell correctly, and of course, if you do not learn

now you will be in just such a position hereafter, for I believe persons who neglect this when very young rarely if ever pay much attention afterward or are able to overcome incorrect habits of spelling.

I did not think David would have treated me so shabbily. To think of his not having written to me all this long while.

Tell Tommy, no, Mr. Lomax has not grown any taller but is still tall enough. If he would come and stay with Mr. Lomax in the winter he might stir molasses very often for we have such changeable weather that we are very seldom all clear of colds and Mr. Lomax is very fond of molasses candy. We have had a great deal of Pneumonia in this state this winter. It is as dangerous as any disease can be and is what used to be called the galloping consumption. Hearty, robust persons sometimes die in a few hours from its effects. We have met with quite a distressing and severe loss in the death of Mahala, a girl of fourteen whom we had about the house. She was first attacked with chills from cold and we gave her medicine and she had no more chills but continued to have a cough but was in the house and we thought had not so bad a cold as we had often before cured her of and did not think of [its] being Pneumonia that was gradually seizing hold on her system. The first day that the Doctor saw her she was in a very critical situation, no hope scarcely of saving her, and in a week she sank under it. So insidious and deceptive are the advances of this disease that we should not have called in a doctor even when we did had not Warren happened to come here that day and was astonished to find we had done so little for her, and said she was so dangerously ill. Several children have had severe attacks of it. Two gentlemen in the country within a mile or two have died of it. I was very apprehensive of Alice taking it. She had a chill on the same day that Mahala did, but has been well since. Four of our negroes have died on this lot since we have lived here, and we have lost two infants at the plantation. I have a cold in my head and feel very badly myself this evening and think I shall take a dose of castor oil tonight. I fatigued myself a great deal waiting on Mahala. We had plenty of negroes to attend to her but she seemed to want me with her constantly and some white person was obliged to be with her all the while on account of following the doctor's directions. I sat up two entire nights and until after midnight nearly every night for a week and more, and strange to say it has not cost me headache.

My hens and geese are laying finely, and Alice has just been bringing in eggs. It pleases her so much to get them out of the nests. We have had unusually severe weather for this climate of late, but now it [is] very delightful. The plum trees are in

full bloom and peach blossoms almost open. We had a quantity of spring flowers in bloom killed by the severe cold, but more have opened since. Alice talks incessantly about you all and begs her pa to get a carriage and carry her to see you. You are right about her hair; it is curly like mine and she has very dark eyes, almost black, and fair skin with rosy cheeks, but her face is too round and fat to please her grandpapa Duncan. Your letter has put Mr. L. more in the notion of going to Virginia than ever, and he says now that he will go directly after March Court, which comes on the third week in March, but I am afraid of the steamboat trip between Charleston and Wilmington at that time. You know it is so boisterous usually at that season. Ask Pa if he thinks it would be safe. Mr. Reed, the Episcopal minister who was with us a little while and who expected to remain until April, has left. His father-in-law in Edgefield died after he came here of Pneumonia, and his family were so afflicted that he could not remain away from them well, and the church there in the meanwhile losing its Pastor, gave him a call which he accepted.

Well I have written a long letter which you must soon answer, and now say goodbye. Give my love to Mrs. Howard and to everybody else.

Your affectionate Sister

(The above letter is addressed to Master William W. Duncan, Randolph M. College, Boydton PO, Virginia. It was given to me (Margaret Hart Cannon) by my grandmother (Rebecca Margaret Jones Hart).

23 May 24, 1849

My Dear Aunt,

I have been intending for some time to write to you, but somehow never could get started, and now I have commenced, I have about half a dozen most miserable pens, and Papa, the only good pen maker, is at College, and Mother and old Aunt Peggy are talking to the baby, and making such a fuss immediately at my ears; while David, who is laid up downstairs with the mumps, is screaming as usual for "Monday" and now I hear Mr. Lomax coming up the steps to swell the chorus of noises, so that between the pens and noise with Master Jimmy and the rest, I fear your letter will come off sadly wanting. Mother has just seized upon Mr. Lomax and [is] trying to start him out to work in the garden, since he is complaining dreadfully of having nothing to do, and wondering how he shall ever be able to get through the summer here unemployed; but when you come (pray, do make haste) we will find employment enough in the way

of gallanting us about; for, you know, we shall not think of sticking down here all the time, and he will be the only beau, Papa hating to "trot" about much, and Jim will be trotted off somewhere else.

But I must stop awhile for Master James. Well, old Peggy is rocking him again and I will return. Do come soon or Mr. Lomax will run off in spite of us all; and Mother says if you bring any servant, do pray bring a young one, little Amy would suit admirable, for I have tried an old one to my sorrow. Mr. L. thought an elderly one would be so much more trusty and useful, that he insisted upon bringing such a one, and the old creature has taken it into her head that the cars have nearly ruined her, "jostled" her to pieces almost, and upon the strength of it has laid herself up in the kitchen ever since the baby was three days old, and he is five weeks old today. So do be admonished by my example, and never travel with an old negro if you want a useful maid. I would give all she is worth to have her back home. I should like very much to see little Amy.

May 29th. Well, Mr. Lomax would not let me finish writing the other afternoon, but started me up to pay a visit to Mrs. Yancey, so now I resume with much the same scene around which I described before, only Tommy is in bed now screaming for Mother, and David, Alice, and D'Arcy up here turning up the house, while Mother, with little Jimmy in her lap, and Mr. Lomax carry on an occasional conversation. I reckon you will wonder why I should pepper the paper over in this manner, but really the pen will spatter in spite of all my efforts to the contrary. Wallace comes now when I have barely commenced to know if I have not finished the letter. He is in such a hurry to get off to Boydton. Mother says she has been trying to make Mr. Lomax write to you for a long time, but she cannot get him to stop eating long enough. It is nothing but eat, drink, and sleep from morning till night and from night till morn again. He says when you come do bring some receipt to keep people from sleeping both night and day. And the house too is packed full of work and nobody to do it. Cary is laid up with a baby nearly a month old, but apparently will not pretend to do any work for a long time to come yet.

Since the Cholera is in Norfolk, I fear you will be afraid to come through, but you can come here without passing through Norfolk. Mother says if you possibly can, do come before Commencement and see Jim graduate, and we all join her in this request. We were very sorry to hear you had been sick with the. . . .

She says too she hopes Cousin indy or Cousin Amanda Jennings will come with you. Do pray don't disappoint us for we are so anxious to see you, and if you do not

come here Mr. Lomax and I will not see you at all, for we could not go to Gloucester during the summer, and Mr. Lomax is compelled to be at home at October Court, so that it would be impossible for us to visit you in the winter.

Little Master James Lomax sends a dozen kisses to his Grand Aunt, and hopes she will not fail to do herself the pleasure of gazing upon his pretty face this summer, and he would be greatly indebted to her for the fulfillment of her wish to amuse and play with him all day; for really he thinks he has great cause for complaint on the scarcity of nursing, since his mama will read and write and sew and play the piano, and his grandmama must beat up cakes and puddings and make ice creams, and so leave him with old Peg, who has her knitting to do, and just trundles him off into the little cradle, and shakes away all day with her foot. Everybody seeming to think that nursing him is a secondary consideration, and he to be the President of the Union some of these days too, so old Grandpa Howard says. He hopes sincerely, therefore, for his own sake, as well as his dear Aunty's, that she has entirely recovered from her cold and sickness and will soon be here to take his many kisses in person and he will promise to laugh and crow for her until she is tired. We expect Virginia Piemont soon. She is coming with Mr. Leroy Lee from Richmond. Betty Boyd's mother is here at Mrs. Hazard's, came the other day. She regrets very much that she could not visit you while she was in Gloucester. Well James is absent in Warrenton where he went last week to make a speech he was elected to deliver before an Academy of young cadets. Jim preaches very often. I have never heard him yet. Mr. Lomax says he preaches remarkably well. Jim is quite a considerable character about college and the surrounding country. Susan Smith is still quite sick. Has been very ill from an attack of cold, which has lasted about six weeks. Poor Mrs. Smith has had a laborious and trying time this winter, and looks very badly herself. All the neighbours speak of you with affection and hope you will come soon.

I should be very glad to see Miss Fanny, and have the pleasure of presenting to her Miss Alice and Master James, but am afraid it will not be in my power to do so unless she will consent to pay us a visit. Give my love to her. Mr. Lomax sends a great deal of love and anticipates much pleasure in seeing you this summer. Mother and all the boys, Wallace, David, Tom, and all send theirs and say, all they have to say is "Be certain to come. Wallace is hurrying, he makes me leave out words and write very badly, which I must beg you to excuse, and Jimmy wants me too. My love to all the servants, particularly old Nell, and Amy and Agnes and their families.



Accept for yourself many wishes for your welfare, and much love, from your affectionate Niece

M. E. Lomax

Abbeville Court House, S.C.

November 5, 1849

My dear Grandpapa, I have been waiting for a long time now, and watching whether anybody would write to you, as I am a very little fellow yet to be writing letters; but, seeing that all the letters went to somebody else, I determined that my dear Grandpapa should not be slighted, for his little boy should write him a letter too.

I have a great deal to tell you about myself, if I can only remember all. I have grown a great deal, and am much bigger than Patrick Noble, who is so much older, and Pat too is afraid of me, for I can whip him and take away his play things already. I have grown fatter than ever, and how I make them all grunt and complain of tired arms. If you could only see me jumping and dancing. I can turn out my toes, so they say, and dance as naturally as a born dancing master, and am sure I could tire down any two fiddlers. That great careless Telitha let me spring out of her arms the other day, and down I came upon the hearth (wonder I didn't go into the fire) and got up with more than one bruise. That has not cured me, though, of jumping. They all say I am a remarkably sprightly boy, and laugh as sweetly and joyously as any bird. My Mamma has made me a red flannel sack, all spattered with black dashes and trimmed off with braid, and I wish you could see me when I get it on with my Leghorn, which just fits me snugly now, and go a-visiting. Ah! If only I could just visit my Grandpapa's study! The ladies here call me a noble looking fellow and say I am like my Mamma, but then they have not seen my Grandpapa! Mamma has nearly finished a beautiful sack for me, which takes my eye for it's flowered all around with red braid, and how funny I will look in it. Sister Alice has one trimmed with cherry velvet, and poor little thing, I am afraid it makes her quite vain, but my mind is superior to vanity. I amuse myself as yet with pulling Sister Alice's hair, and sucking my fingers, and biting my ivory rattle, but sooner than they think I will put away these childish things and be writing letters about Latin and Greek to Virginia. Only think how quietly I progress without anyone suspecting it. I actually had a tooth before anybody discovered it, and they would not look until I bit Telitha well one day for the impertinence of putting her black fingers in my sweet mouth.

I have been sitting alone some time. I wonder often if this is an advantage or not, for now I am put down on the floor, and left to look at old flowered screens and paper walls, and only at calico counterpanes and lounge covers, when before I was walked about under green trees and sweet rose bushes. Old Mrs. Ritter is sick again, has been grunting for some time. I go to see her sometimes, but don't care much about it, as she can't jump me now.

I have missed Mamma several times lately and find she has been sitting for her portrait and papa too, and they are to be sent to you. I hear them talking about taking Sister Alice too; the painter is very anxious, but not a word about this little precious, noble looking boy.

How I wish my dear Grandpapa and Grandmamma and all the rest that used to pull me about so much lived here. Maybe you may come soon. Mrs. Noble who knows all about the College in Columbia and has relations there, says that the Latin Professor talks of resigning. He has married a fortune, and they do not think him a good professor, and wish him to resign. He gets 25.00 I believe and house, etc., and has only two recitations per day, only Latin. Now if he only would resign and you only would get there! It is a beautiful, agreeable, and healthy place. Recommendations from some prominent men to the Legislature would be necessary. The climate would suit my Grandmamma much better too. It is more agreeable than Abbeville.

Maybe you will think this letter too knowing for a little boy like me, but who knows how much little fellows listen to and understand what is going on, and how many thoughts we have that would astonish old folks. They say too I am a "knowing looking little chap."

Walker has been almost dead but is getting well. The rest are well. The piano not heard from yet.

I don't know how many sweetest kisses I would give you all if I could see you, and would even stand Jinnie's squeezes now.

Kiss all around for me, Jinnie too, and squeeze her hard with interest and,

I remain

Your affectionate

Grandson

James D. Lomax