

BURWELL DAVIS 1756-1846

Burwell Davis and his wife, Martha Hawkins Davis, had nine children:

- I Sallie m Harry Betty, Moved to Tenn.
- II Dick m Winnie Powell
- III Jane (Jennie) m Billie Powell
- IV Sam 1801-1891 m Amanda Kearney
- V Nancy 1803-1874 m Simon Fleming
- VI Edward 1806-1895 m Rebecca Davis Pitchford
- VII John S. m Martha Blount Powell (Patsy)
- VIII Isham never married
- IX Lucy " "

I Harry and Sallie Davis Betty had four children, William, Martha, Harriet and John

II Dick and Winnie Davis, no children.

III Billie and Jennie Davis Powell, four children.

- 1 Eliza m James Albert Egerton
- 2 Ben m Anna Clegg
- 3 John Burwell m Caroline Egerton *grand-sons of C. B. Hill*
- 4 Tom m Lucy Avant

IV Sam and Amanda K. Davis had seven children. Charles, Peter, Frank, Sam, and Polly died between ages six and sixteen.

- 6 Minnie m Walter Allen
- 7 Robert Edward m (a) Della Tharrington (b) Annie Petar (c) Gertrude Cree.

V Simon and Nancy Dawson Davis Fleming had nine children:

- 1 Thomas m Delia Pennington
- 2 Lucy m James Albert Egerton
- 3 Mary m Thomas Egerton
- 4 Nancy m "
- 5 Martha m Benj. Powell Davis
- 6 Winnie m Henry Bobbitt
- 7 Richard, Dr. m Jennie Watson
- 8 Simon m Leah Paschall
- 9 Sallie m Joseph Shearin

VI Edward and Rebecca Davis had eight children

- 1 Matthew, 1830-1906, m Louisa Hill
- 2 Burwell, 1833-1901 m Caroline Allen
- 3 Mary 1836-1856 m James Harris
- 4 George 1835-1909 m Rebecca Johnson
- 5 Weldon 1838-1863
- 6 Thomas 1845-1864
- 7 Pattie Bet 1852-1915 m Frank N. Egerton
- 8 William (Billie) 1859-1937 m (1) Mamie Dameron (2) Blanche Egerton

VII John S. and Patsy Davis had eight children:

- 1 Isham (Dr.) m Pollie Pitchford
- 2 James (Jimmie) m Mary Cheek
- 3 Benj. Powell m Martha Fleming
- 4 Sallie m Rev. James Pitchford
- 5 & 6 & 7, Richard, William Wallace, and John S.
- 8 Pattie Lucy m William Gray Powell.

MATTHEW DAVIS (1752-1829)

Matthew and Mary Madre Davis had six children:

- I Peter R.
- II Stephen (Dr.) m Hattie Johnson
- III Nancy m John Powell
- IV Polly m Ned Kearney
- V Elizabeth (1789-1875) m Stirling Pitchford
- VI Rebecca m William C. Williams

II Stephen and Hattie J. Davis had four children: Peter R. II, Dr. Hugh, Sarah and Mary.

III John And Nancy D. Powell had 6 children: Mary, Morgan, Dr. Lemuel, Peter, and two other daughters, one m Peter Kearney, one m John Wms.

IV Ned and Polly D. Kearney had 6 children: Betsy, Amanda, Ann, Martha, Matilda, Tom, Henderson, and Jane. Amanda m Sam Davis. Jane m William Hooper, president of the University of North Carolina.

V Stirling and Elizabeth Davis Pitchford had 6 children:

- 1 Thomas Jefferson (Dr.) 1810-1883 m Matilda Cheek
- 2 Rebecca Davis 1812-1900 m Edward Davis — R P D
- 3 Polly Stephens 1814-1814
- 4 Nancy Dawson 1815-1899 m Henry A. Foote
- 5 George Anderson 1817-1821
- 6 Mary Turner 1818-1887 m Charles Jackson Egerton

VI William C. and Rebecca Davis Williams had 12 children:

- 1 Matthew (Dr.) m Anna Bryant
- 2 Mary m Bob Clanton
- 3 Martha m Dr. Lemuel Powell
- 4 Emma Rebecca m Benj. Iredell Egerton I
- 5 Wallace m Octavia Roberson
- 6 Buckner Davis (Maj) m Bettie Symms
- 7 Bettie m Jack Nicholson
- 8,9 Thomas & Stephen never m. Three others died young.

Dr. Thomas J. and Matilda Pitchford had nine children: John, Robert, Bettie, Pollie, Thomas, Annie, and Stirling II.

Edward & Rebecca P. Davis had 8 children. See Burwell Davis line.

Henry A. and Nancy Pitchford Foote had 5 children: Mary, George, Thomas, James, and Henry Jr.

Charles Jackson Egerton and Mary Pitchford Egerton had 10 children:

- Charles m Lou McKnight
- Sallie m George W. Blount
- Rufus, Sidney, Annie and Willie never married.
- Mary (Minnie) m Dr. B. Frank Whiteside
- Hugh m Hodgie Ballard
- Frank m Pattie Bet Davis
- Robert Zollicoffer (Zollie) m Lula Hill Davis

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SLAVES

The following are the names of the slaves belonging to my grandparents, Edward and Rebecca Davis, except that "Uncle Richmond," who was the husband of Lucinda, (Mammy Cindy) belonged to a neighbor, and Jim Green may have been a free Negro. Some of these names I remember, some are named in the will of Edward's father, Burwell Davis, as left to him, (Edward), Lucinda, named in the will of Edward's brother, Dick, and the others I have gleaned from Grandma's letters. I remember Mammy Cindy's granddaughter, Mary, daughter of Amy, but I do not know whether she was born before, during or after the war. There were others.

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LETTERS OF REBECCA P. DAVIS

with notes by her granddaughter
Blanche Egerton Baker.

INTRODUCTION

The letters in this collection, with the exception of a few, were written during the Civil War, 1861-1865, and were kept by my uncle, Burwell P. Davis, and now belong to his granddaughter, Lucy B. Pridgen, who kindly loaned them to me so that I could make copies in order that other members of the Davis family and connections might have the opportunity of reading them. Most of the letters were written by my grandmother, Rebecca P. Davis, who was Uncle Burwell's mother.

Uncle Burwell was in active service in 1861 and 1862, but was wounded in the arm and was sent to the hospital in Raleigh. He never recovered sufficiently to return to the battle line, but was retained at the hospital to help care for other sick and wounded soldiers. This made it possible for him to keep the letters he received, while his brothers, who were in active combat, could not keep theirs. Fortunately, Grandma sent him some of the letters written to her by her other sons, and I have included them in this collection.

In addition to the War letters, there is in this collection one by my great grandmother, Mrs. Elizabeth Davis Pitchford, (Rebecca's mother) and several written by Rebecca in her later years to different people. I have found in these the names of several people now living, including my own name.

I have added notes of explanation that may seem quite unnecessary to older members of the family, but which will be of help to the younger ones who do not know much about those older people, almost all of whom have passed away. The only person now living (1955) mentioned in the War letters is Cousin Mary Davis Allen, now 92 years old, who is referred to only as "Lou's baby," page 28, though in the letters written later a few are now living.

Since the letters are so closely associated with the descendants of Burwell and Matthew Davis, sons of Peter and Amy Davis, I am giving on the following pages a partial line of these brothers, especially the family of Edward Davis, son of Burwell, and Edward's wife, Rebecca, granddaughter of Matthew. I have also arranged an index.

I hope you will enjoy reading these letters as much as I have enjoyed working with them.

Blanche Egerton Baker.

Blanche Egerton Baker
See introduction to
about Sept 9, 1865

This letter is addressed to Miss Mary A. Davis
Warrenton, N. C.

Thursday, April 26, '55

Dear Mollie,

Yours of last week came to hand in due time, and I embrace the present opportunity of writing a few lines in reply.

I will send your blue lawn and apron by the very first opportunity. I haven't trimmed the pink lawn yet. I shall get some edging for the sleeves before it is worn. The white swiss is fixed up and looks tolerably well. I suppose those two will answer for the examination, will they? I want to make you a crimson velvet basque low neck and short sleeves trimmed with green to wear with your white dresses this summer. I thought to have it open in the front and back, and lace it in front with green ribbon or cord. What do you say to it?

I am very sorry I didn't send your apron and dress by your Aunt Patsy, but so it is I didn't. The stockings I suppose you have ere this got. The bonnet you must have fixed. If it is a real nice pretty bonnet you must have it done up in a real nice pretty style, and if it's not, it isn't worth while to have it done at all. I am going to have mine newly dressed when I come up. Which had you rather, that I come and stay a day or two before the examination, or at that time?

I don't expect to attend the ensuing commencements myself, and think it will be entirely out of your power to do so. Burwell has no notion of going to Chapel Hill. You couldn't fairly drag him there, and if I were to prevail on him to accompany you, would you be willing to go so far among so many strangers without a single female acquaintance? Your Aunt Matilda hasn't a bit more notion of going to Wake Forest than I have. As for Bettie, she may go, but I am not sure of it. It's a much bigger job to get to Chapel Hill than to Wake Forest. One has to stay all night in Raleigh and go by stage next day, and you are so little and unobtrusive you might get lost.

Mat says Mr. Whitfield expects to leave shortly for his home in the sunny South, so he says, but Mat says he doesn't believe he'll ever go South until he pays Warren and Nash another visit, so I expect he'll come with Mat in June, tho I've heard nothing said about it. He knows "Cousin Bet" will be at home then.

I don't know whether we shall have our types put in your breast pin or not. When your Pa gets well I'll try to get him up, and if I can't you will have to exchange your breast pin for one that is complete in itself. Your Pa has been expecting Mr. Egerton to send his wagon down after peas. I thought I could send your things in the wagon, but it hasn't been a ready. I reckon George will come down with it when it does come. Wonder what sort of a salesman he makes.

I want you to be very careful with your clothes; keep them in place and in order; don't lose small things; have a particular place to keep everything, and then you'll know just where to find it.

You must write before very long and let me know if you want the basque made, and tell me something about how, etc. I have the velvet on hand ready. The silk of which your apron is made cost \$1.62½ per yard. It is almost a yard wide, consequently I only put in one yd. I went down to your Aunt Matilda's last week to a quilting. She had some half dozen ladies to help her. I haven't had yours quilted yet, but I ought.

I was very much pleased with my dress your Pa got at Albert's the other day. I shall send your fan when I send your other things. Next Sunday is our quarterly meeting, shouldn't be surprised if I have right much company. Had a letter from Sal last week, just as nice as ever. I have heard from your Aunt Mary. She is better. As I am in a hurry I'll conclude.

My best respects to Eliza, Winea, Sallie and Bettie, and all, and believe me as ever, your affectionate

Mother, K. P. Davis.

P.S. Be sure to take good care of your fan.

(This letter was from my grandmother, Rebecca Davis, to her oldest daughter, Mary, whom she affectionately called "Mollie." Aunt Mary was at that time attending boarding school in Warrenton. The reason Grandma was interested in the commencements at Chapel Hill and Wake Forest was that her oldest son, Matthew (Matt) was a student at Chapel Hill, and her nephew, Thomas Pitchford, was at Wake Forest. Thomas was the son of her brother, Dr. Thomas Jefferson Pitchford and his wife, Matilda, who is spoken of in this letter as "Your Aunt Matilda." Also mentioned in the letter are:

Your Aunt Mary, Grandma's sister, Mrs. Jackson Egerton of Louisburg. Bettie, daughter of Dr. Pitchford. Mr. Egerton, or James Albert, my father's second cousin, who married two of Grandpa Davis' nieces. Eliza, daughter of James Albert Egerton and his wife, Eliza Hunt Powell. Winea (Winnie) daughter of Grandpa's sister, Nancy Davis Fleming. Sallie (Sal), Daughter of Grandma's sister, Mary Egerton, and Charles Jackson Egerton (my paternal grandparents, as my two grandmothers were sisters.) Matthew (Matt,) Burwell, and George, sons of Grandpa and Grandma Davis. George, when he was 15 years old went to live with Albert Egerton and work in his store. The following paragraph is from "Sketches of Old Warrenton" by Lizzie Wilson Montgomery, p 104:

"Across Front Street from Peter Davis' house and farther up, on the corner, stood a two-story white house, the home of Albert Egerton. Adjoining his house was his store, where he began business in 1845. Just before the War he remodeled and improved it, making it one of the most attractive stores in town. The block burned in 1872." Note: Front Street is parallel to Main, north of Court house. (Copied from "Davis" by Julia Hunter Skillman.)

Peter Davis, Grandma's uncle, brother of her mother.

The following in a small but beautiful hand, probably Aunt Mary's (Mollie), dated Nov. 21st, 1855, and headed "Warrenton Farn Inst." B.E.B.)

"Employment for young ladies after quitting school.

Bettie. 'Mollie, how do you think a young lady ought to employ her time after she has completed her education?'

Mollie. "Really, Bettie, I don't know, but I don't reckon she could spend her time in anything that would be more beneficial than in reading some useful book or something else that would be improving to her mind."

3
Friday evening, 18th July, 1856

Dear Mollie

You have doubtless been expecting me to send you your blue dress ere this. I know you ought to be wearing it this hot weather by all means. Albert's wagon will be here tomorrow after hams, so I'll send it up if I can.

Your paintings came safely to hand. I think the dog is very well executed, and the lady will do pretty well, but Little Red Riding Hood doesn't look like I always thought she looked. I don't think flats were in fashion in her day. I think she wore a red cloak with a hood to it. Are you painting this session or not? I should like for you to paint very well. I am afraid the school will not be as good as it has been heretofore with three of the most efficient teachers amiss.

I want you to let us know the true state of the case as early as practicable, and all about what you are doing, how many scholars, how many boarders, and how many new teachers. Try and improve yourself all you can this session. Don't let anyone be smarter than you. I never could bear to see you behind any girl of your age. I know you are as good and kind and dutiful as any, and I think you are as smart too, if you will exercise your talents aright. Matt opened school Monday morning with 32 scholars, and there were other boarders coming in at different boarding houses, who hadn't been to the academy.

Bettie Pitchford had a grand concert that night, so your Grandma said. She says Bet sings and plays pretty well, much better than she expected. Poll and Sam can play, and all the boys play something, so they are quite a musical set, it seems. I wonder how Sallie likes your leaving her.

Your Grandma is over the creek at this time. She is to be at Sarah Newell's wedding the 30th. Well, the weather is real hot and dry, and vegetation is drying up fast, and we can't get meal and flour, have to use cornfield peas and Irish potatoes, so I'll conclude for this time.

Saturday morning. No rain yet. Take care of your things; don't strew they about, and be sure to take care of your watch. Don't lend it nor lose it nor neglect it in any way. Don't let your trunk get abused if it can possibly be helped. I would have covered it if I had had time. I send you another every day underskirt, which makes about 10 you have in all.

Well, I can't think of anything else I want to say just now, so I'll conclude by subscribing myself your

Affectionate Mother.

(The letter is addressed to "Mary A. Davis, Warrenton, N. C." In the lower lefthand corner is written "Mr. Egerton, Please forward.")

"Your Grandma" was Grandma's mother Elizabeth.

Bettie, Poll, and Sam were children of Grandma's brother, Dr. Pitchford.

I think Sallie was my father's sister, Sallie Egerton.

Sarah Newell was the granddaughter of Grandma's aunt, Nancy Davis Powell. She married Col. Thomas Peterson Alston.

B.E.B.)

Mollie's Grave.

In yonder bright and beautiful spot
Which lies just back of our garden plot,
Where oft in her infancy she played,
My gentle, lovely Mary is laid.

And often in silence I look at her tomb
With feelings of sorrow, grief and gloom,
Then chide me not if I moan and weep,
For my lovely Mollie who lies asleep.

Beneath the arms of the white oak tree,
Where oft she reamed in her childhood glee,
My dearest child there sleeps alone,
Where the soft winds of summer mean.

Where the forest trees their branches wave
And seem to be sighing over her grave,
And oft in sorrow I go and weep
Where Mollie is sleeping her gentle sleep.

And think as I gaze on the heaven above
That I see her in that land of love
Where the wicked cease to trouble more,
And the weary rest on the heavenly shore.

This 4th of July, 1860. Her Mother.

She died the 26th of May, 1860, in the beautiful springtime - the season of bright skies, rich music, and lovely flowers. But where she now dwells skies are ever bright and music is never hushed.

"There everlasting spring abides
And never withering flowers."

Then - O, my Heavenly Father, grant that we all, father, mother, brothers and sister, may meet her and stand with the white-robed throng before the throne of God.

R.P.D.

(The above, which was written by "Mollie's mother, is copied from a "Souvenir Album" given to Mary A. Davis by her cousin, George A. Foote, Sept. 9, 1856, while she was a student at Warrenton Female Collegiate Institute. It contains the autographs of many of her school mates, among them, Eliza Egerton, "her friend and cousin."

It also contains a poem inscribed "To Mollie from her grandmother;"

"Young and happy while thou art,
Not a furrow on thy brow,
Not a sorrow in thy heart,
Seek thy Maker now."

The album was given by Mollie's (Mary's) mother - Rebecca P. Davis, to her namesake, Mary A. Davis, whose daughter, Myrtle Davis of Inez, N. C., now owns it. (1945)

F.E.U.)

Fishing Creek
July the 10th, 1861

Dear Burwell,

Yours and Weldon's letter of July the fourth fell into my hand the next day after date, and if I had known that you would have remained in Richmond so long I would have written to you ere this, for I expect it does seem to have been a long time since you left home. We were glad to learn that you all had reached a stopping place without an accident, for really I hardly know what I most dread, accidents or old Lincoln's army.

Your second letter, mailed the 8th, came to hand the 9th, so I'll write the 10th and mail it the 11th, hoping it may reach you the 12th, tho you may have moved your quarters ere then. I want one or the other of you to write pretty often, at least for a while, and I shall let you hear from home pretty frequently, that is, if you can get my letters, and I want you to mention John A. King's name in your letters. I don't expect he can write, and his friends are doubtless as anxious to hear from him as other people are, and will probably expect to hear from us.

had

We have fine seasons since you left, and all vegetation seems very luxuriant. They sowed peas in the lot Monday, the ground being in excellent order, and last night we had a gentle shower. I have an abundance of vegetables. Tom went to town yesterday after some things which he left, and I sent by him to the soldiers at the race track half bushel onions, half bushel snaps, and a peck of cucumbers and beets.

Tom sticks very closely to the hands every day, doesn't seem to mind at all, tho he says these hot days go right hard with him. He was anxious for a watch, and I found a silver watch in George's possession, and I let him take it. I believe it answers his purpose very well.

It seems to me to be very well to remain in Petersburg or some other place nearer home than Lewisburg to form the regiment and drill. I thought at first it wasn't good policy to take such raw material over among the Torgs and Yankeys, not even uniformed. I want to know exactly how many of your men are of Buck's company, how many of Drake's, and how many that remain in after the Co's united, without regard to either. It is quite shocking for people who have always lived in peace and quietude to be subjected to such scenes of violence, and to hear the profanity, and to see the many evidences of the want of the fear of God, as will probably present themselves to view in the course of camp life. I do hate to hear talk of our soldiers shooting and cutting up each other. I am glad to hear that there are some praying people among you; for the sake of the ten righteous persons, a great calamity may be averted.

I see accounts in the newspapers that in some regiments a real religious element prevails, and that many of the most pious men of the land are on the tented field. If there ever was a time when all should watch and pray, surely that time is now. I wonder if you ever sleep now-a-days, or rather nights, You could scarcely sleep with a noise in your house. How do you manage with so many men around you?

Every time the dogs bark, if Billie notices it, he runs to the door and says, "Yonder comes Bro' Burwell." Pat says, "The worst I hate,

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now Bro' Burwell is gone, if the children do anything to me I can't say, "I'll tell Bro' Burwell." It seems very lonely since you and Weldon left. We miss you a good deal, perhaps more than we do the other boys because you have been all the time at home, and they have not.

Your Pa gets up early every morning now that you are not here. They have cut the oats and stacked some yesterday, and I expect they will the balance today. The corn is looking admirable, so your Pa seems to think. I heard from Jackson's a few days since, and they are quite dry, gardens parched up and vegetables very scarce. I believe Rufus is at Yorktown. Your Aunt Mary spoke of sending something there for the hospital. They have many cases of measles there. Your Pa seems to be of the opinion that you will never have it. I suppose you are sight-seeing every day. If you stay in the army many months, you will probably see many things to astonish you in your rambles through the country.

We have been to church once since you left, and there was one young man there, besides Big John, and he sat to himself and looked rather conspicuous. It was Harry, and as I came out of church, he came to me and said, "I can't stand this." I didn't ask him what he meant, for I knew full well. I asked him why he didn't go up to see you all off. He said because he was ashamed, and I believe he spoke the truth.

John A. says it was the hardest time he ever had in all his life to let Bob go. His wife thought it very strange for him to say so, but it was not so strange after all, for things that are strictly providential we know we have no control over, and so we patiently, or rather, quietly, submit, but in this case I reckon he felt like he might have controlled the matter; hence it was that he felt so badly about it.

The watermelons are coming on fine, I believe, and will soon be on hand, but who is to eat them? Your Pa and I can't eat much like we used to, so Tommy and Pat and the Old Boy, as George calls Bill, will have to do most of the job, I reckon. Jim Davis' child is much better. Jim has been to see it, and Jim Pitchford came up too, and his Pa says he was the maddest man. The officers won't let him do as he likes every time, come and go when he pleases to. He says he has behaved himself so far and obeyed orders, but you may look out for squalls. He doesn't think he can hold out much longer I suppose, but he had better. It is a duty to which he has subjected himself, and there is more dignity in obedience than there is in a course of insubordination. I will now say a word to Weldon, and so goodbye, and believe me as your affectionate Ma.

B.E.B.

(This letter to Uncle Burwell was written by his mother, Rebecca P. Davis in the beginning of the war. At that time the oldest son, Matthew, was 31 years old. He had graduated from the University, was married, and was the teacher of "The Male Academy in Louisburg. Burwell, 29, had been the one most interested in the farm, and had carried on the work almost more than his father. George, 26, was clerking for Albert Egerton in Warrenton. Weldon, 23, had graduated from the University and went right into the war. Thomas (Tom or Tommy) was 16, and was planning to go to the University, but he tried to take his brother Burwell's place on the farm. Pattie Bet (Pat) my mother, was nearly nine. She was Uncle Weldon's special pet. Two of her children were named for him. Billie was a mischievous chap of 2½. He seems to have been the special pet of his Bro' Burwell.

Harry did go to the war later

Rufus Egerton was the son of my paternal grandparents, Jackson and Mary Egerton. Jim Pitchford was Grandma's nephew, Jim Davis, Grandpa's John A. Wms., a neighbor; Bob, his son. Harry, son of John Suxton Wms.

Dear Weldon,

July the 10th, 1861

I have addressed my letter mostly to Burwell this time and shall direct it to him, and to you next time, and so on, but then this is intended as much for one as the other, and they must at all times be considered so, and I think between you both, when you are seeing and hearing so much, that you can make up a pretty long letter every week when you are not in active service.

Pat says she does wish they would fight it out and be done. I asked her if she hadn't rather be done without the fighting. She said, "No, I want that old bad man whipped so he may let us alone." She says I ought not to have let you go, for I promised her not to let you go, so she says.

Your Aunt Mary says she is provoked with Rufus because he won't accept an office, to which his military knowledge entitles him. She says he says a plenty to shoot with, and a plenty to shoot at is his greatest ambition. She says she never shall see another easy moment while the war lasts on account of his youth, inexperience, and I reckon might have added recklessness, from her remarks. She says she is aware of the demoralizing effects of camp life, but told me as I had nothing to fear but bullets, that my boys had fixed principles, "Habits formed, principles fixed, and nothing to fear." Whether she was conscientious in what she said or intended to flatter, I don't know, but such I believe to be the fact anyhow. I know that all my boys are, to say the least, God fearing men. They have been born and bred in the fear of God, and have manifested it in all their ways.

I believe there is no news afloat since you left, more than what I have written. Your Pa told me not to fill up until he told me what he had to say, but when he read the three first pages, he said he believed I had said all that was necessary. I found the handkerchief you lost lying on the piano, and I also found a fine linen one of Burwell's in an old coat pocket, both as black as the - not the back, but they don't lack much. I got up all the old and new shoes after you were gone, and put them in a box, and they're some, almost enough to start peddling. I locked them up for safe keeping.

I understand that the soldiers very generally are regular readers of the Bible. I wish you both to bear in mind that the 12th Chap of Romans and 2nd Chap of Timothy are favorite chapters with me. Read them and think of that, and as I am about to close, I pray that you may be taken under the special care of your heavenly Father, that he will enlighten you by the influence of his holy spirit, protect you by his almighty power, sustain you by his grace, and keep you from all the snares and temptations to which you may be exposed while in the city and camp.

Farewell,

Your affectionate Ma.

Fishing Creek
Thursday, the 18th July,

Dear Burwell,

Your letter of the 16th reached me the 17th, and I proceed to answer. I am glad that you all are as well provided for as you are, we are all aware that a soldier's life is not a very enviable one, tho most of them seem to be contented and even cheerful and happy. They make a virtue of necessity, I reckon. It is well if they can hold out at it.

I don't think John C. Davis is dead; I heard he was rapidly improving, the last I heard of him. I expect he is quite well ere this. All our family and neighbors are well as far as I know except the long standing cases. Charity says she is better, and eats as much as a well man need to eat, but I do not think she is improving then.

Your Uncle Sam brought your letter from town yesterday, and broke it open and read it, but he is not to blame, tho I have not given him liberty to open my letters, yet he feels so much concern for you all that he cannot fairly help it. Billy heard your hogs squealing yesterday morning, (when it was raining and they were not fed as early as usual) and he jumped out of his cradle and ran to the door, saying, "Bro Burwell has come, Bro Burwell has come." He stood in the door a while, and looked around, and then he came to me and said, "Ma, ain't Bro Burwell gone way over yonder?" He is a mischievous little urchin, went under the table yesterday at dinner and bit Pat's toe, and he does it frequently of late if she isn't on the watch.

George begins to speak of visiting home, says it would do him more good than any thing in the world to walk about here in these cool shady woods and drink some good water and eat with white folks. I don't know whether he will come or not. If he does, I think it will be during melon time. He is anxious to hear from you, would write if he knew where you were, as you said by him. He is at home, it seems like. He says they sometimes hear that they are going to Yorktown, but they don't receive marching orders. I am to send him some crackers and biscuit tomorrow.

Your Grandma wrote yesterday to me, stating that she was tired of this plaguey war, so you had better speedily end it, if you don't want the old lady out of humor, for you know she is not in the habit of using such expressions as that.

You say Weldon has some advantages, as regards fare, and that you are glad that he has, for you can make out any way. That is a praise-worthy sentiment, but I know you entertained it before you left home, and I felt like I never could have been willing for him to go to the war but for you. Not that I think he is not as able to take care of himself as well as any other man, but I think it is a great consolation to have a friend indeed in time of need. You both have been called into the field by the necessities of the times, and most sacred motives that can actuate a human breast, and I trust the good Lord will protect and defend you from all harm.

I think you have very good roommates, but it seems like Weldon ought to be there too. I am afraid he didn't thank those ladies half enough for you both. You ought to have gone and done your share yourself, and I feel like I want to help you both. All the ladies seem to love the soldiers, and they manifest it. Winea Fleming is staying with Martha, and Eliza Egerton and Nancy are having rare fun, visiting and receiving

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visits from the soldiers at Sledge's Grove, so Eliza wrote me a few days since. I have sent them vegetables twice. I can't send them to you, so I send to them, hoping that some kind friend will do as much for you.

I did want yours and Weldon's daguerreotypes before you left very much. Both your types are here, but they are imperfect, and I wanted good ones before you got ugly, that is any uglier than you were first. You say the most I dread about the war is the idea of your getting sun-burnt, and as such I ought to have had the consolation of keeping up an idea of the original, for I have heard that after they remain in camp a month or two there is scarcely a resemblance of the original. Your Pa laughs every time he mentions Dick Fleming, just at the idea of the contrast between what he was and what he is.

Dick, Pitcher, and one (or our) Allen were three that went to the rescue of the British vessel. It was from Jerry, 15 miles from Guernsey only, and Pitcher saw some acquaintances among the crew, and sent by them a letter to his parents. The Yankees were in sight, but didn't venture up, so nobody was hurt.

I think the best thing for you and Weldon to do wherever you may go is to get into the good graces of the ladies. Try and form an acquaintance with genteel ladies if you can. You will find their friendship of great value. I think all the women are much disposed to befriend the soldiers. I don't allude to single ladies only. George seems to have an excellent friend in the person of a Mrs. Elliott and her two daughters. He visits them, walks with them to and from church, and receives many small favors from them, but I guess it would be entirely out of your power to do so in Richmond. There are too many there, and you are not as much of a ladies-man as George. Neither is Weldon, but I expect you will gain a little brass by being in the war, if you don't gain any silver.

Your Pa says they are near about through with the crop, and the last of this week the negroes will celebrate their annual holidays and festivities after the usual way of taking off a sheep's head.

Remember us very affectionately to Ben Davis, and tell him I expect his folks are well, as I haven't heard to the contrary. I haven't seen any of them recently.

I reckon among 3000 you do find someone in your way everywhere you go. You always did like to have a room and a bed to your self, and not be pestered. I expect it will be a long time before I write to you again, that is, if you are going to leave your present locality. Do you drill every day, or what do you do? Oh this war and this dreadful suspense, it is too bad. I wish all the world were Christians, and then I wouldn't care for anything but to say with the poet, "Give joy or grief, give ease or pain, take life or friends away, but let me," etc.

If you leave in the course of a few days, we shall want to know your whereabouts as soon as may be convenient for you to write, and if you do not move, write us as usual when you feel like it or have an opportunity. I will stop for this time and subscribe myself as ever
Your affectionate Ma. R.P.D. to B.P.D. & W.E.D.

Notes on the preceding letter by B.E.B.

Your Uncle Sam, Grandpa's brother, Sam Davis.
 Your Grandma Grandma's mother, Elizabeth Davis Pitchford
 Winea (Winnie,) Martha, and Nancy Fleming daughters of Grandpa's
 sister, Nancy Dawson Davis, who married Simon Peter Fleming. Nancy
 married Thomas Egerton, a distant relative of my father, after the
 death of her sister, Mary, who was first wife of Thomas Egerton.
 Martha married Grandpa's nephew, Benjamin Powell Davis (mentioned
 in this letter.) He was son of Uncle John. Winnie married Henry Bob-
 bitt. I heard Cousin Ida Heritage say that she was one of the best
 women she ever knew.

Dick Fleming, brother of Winnie, Martha and Nancy. Lula Skillman says
 in her book, "Davis," "Dr. Richard Fleming was a prominent dentist
 of Warrenton, and one of the finest men in the county."

I don't know who John C. Davis was.

Mrs. Elliott and two daughters (Kate and Grace) lived in Norfolk, and
 both Uncle George and Uncle Eldon were entertained in their home.
 Later when Norfolk had to be evacuated, the Elliotts left as refugees
 and went to Grandpa's home in Warren County. Kate and my mother, Pat-
 tie Davis, became the closest of friends, and after the war "Kate"
 visited there many times, and "Pattie" visited her in Norfolk. My
 mother named one of her sons Elliott for her. Kate married Mr. Britt.

I do not know who "Pitcher" was. He is frequently mentioned in Grand-
 ma's letters. He seems to have been a native of England.

Charity was one of the slaves.

Fishing Creek
Saturday, the 27th July, 1861

Dear Weldon,

Yours of the 25th reached me yesterday, the 27th, and I will reply this morning. I was not at all surprised to hear from you at that place, having heard of your great disappointment. As to my part, I am bearing up under the disappointment with real Christian fortitude, believing that these light afflictions may be for your good. I have been hearing that Burwell was sick for some time, and that he was very sick, but I did not believe a word of his being very sick.

I am going to fix a bed tick and send to you, a pillow case, and the onions and some blackberry cordial. I shall also put in some crackers and perhaps some vegetables. If you have got to support yourself, I am really afraid you'll perish. So much for the advantages of being an officer. Well, I know Burwell will divide his rations with you. Tell him if he wants a bed tick and bolster, to let me know.

If either of you want anything to eat, drink, or wear, let me know, and I'll do what I can in the premises. Your Pa will procure you that trunk if he can, but Tom says there isn't one in Warrenton - that they have all been carried off by the soldiers.

Well, I do think Old Scott has made a most desperate effort, and if he had gained a victory at Manna's, he would have "carried the war into Africa," or in other words, into Richmond, straight away, or tried hard for it. I should guess that affair created a stir about Richmond, now they did think they had chosen a very propitious time, and so he did, he found someone else wide awake as well as himself. Some think this will dishearten them, but I don't think any such thing. I think they will be all the more intent. I fear it will take many more of the same sort to make them relax in the least.

I don't believe in this peace delusion, this taking every little thing as a sign of peace. We have nothing to rely on but the strong arm, with divine providence to direct and protect. 't is not worth while to cry "peace, Peace," when sudden destruction is near at hand.

You may tell Burwell that his boy, Billy, is a rusher yet. He goes after the cows almost every evening, and last evening came up swinging to a cow's tail, so Tommy told me. A day or two ago he came in with a bumble bee all gathered up in a lily, brought it to me, and was the best pleased fellow I have seen in some time. In one year from now he'll scarcely allow a frog, lizzard or a ground puppy to run at large in these woods.

Pat is as much interested in the events of the day as any of us. She notices everything she hears read about the battles, and generally wants to know if any of her brothers were there. George says three members of your company have written to Wade to know if they can get admittance into his company. He didn't say who they were I wonder if they are not trying to take the advantage of you.

Phil Alston came home last Friday rather poorly with chills, was barely able to get in the house when he got home. Tom Nick was here yesterday a little while, had been to Dr. P's to give his list in, says he gave your Col Green \$35 for the equipment of his company. He says all the boys in the Fork are off for now to Norfolk. He thinks

there will be no fighting there, and so do those boys, I guess. June Alston and those other Alston boys and Bob L. Williams and Harry and Tom Cook all gone down.

Harry would doubtless have gone with you all if it hadn't been for that "Wise" delusion. I am right sorry for Col Green. I expect he is making considerable sacrifice for the cause. Why not have him for Col. of your regiment still? I reckon he thought all the ---- he told you all would finally result in some good, tho we are nowhere commanded to do evil that good may come, and I am far from justifying such a course, be the result what it may.

Your Grandma says, "I am tired of this plaguey war," so you see she's getting in a pet about it. I hardly know which is preferable for you all at this season of the year, Norfolk or Western Va. In one you would have the Tories and Yankees to contend with, and in the other, I don't know what. Spose old Scott's army had come right down upon Richmond, wouldn't you'er fit a bit? ✓

Mrs. Buxton says, "Husband is very much hurt at Harry's leaving, but I am not at all." She's a mighty little woman, but I think she's got a mighty big heart. Tell Burwell the lot is green with pea vines, will soon be covered, and all nature looks transcendently beautiful.

How are you to get some of the melons? They are almost on hand, and who is to eat them? I must tell you what Pat said when she heard that you couldn't get into Wise's legion. She said, "Now Ma, I tell you I would have hated it mighty bad if they had taken Bro Burwell or Bro Eldon one, and not the other, wouldn't you?" I feel like you are almost at home now.

As I have got to the end I have concluded to stop.

As ever your affectionate

Ma, to W.E.D. & B.P.D.

(Phil Alston was a captain in the Confederate army, and was called "Captain Phil" as long as he lived. He lived in Louisburg after he was old, and I remember him well. When World War I broke out he volunteered for service, though he was then over 70. Of course he was not accepted. He and the other young men mentioned in the 8th paragraph of this letter lived in the neighborhood of my grandparents.

"Mrs. Buxton" was Mrs. John Buxton Williams, and Harry was her son. "Tommy" and "Billy" were the two younger sons in the Davis family.

B.E.B.)

Camp Carolina Hospital
Norfolk, Va., Aug. 4, 1861

Dear Brother Burwell,

Your welcome letter of the 27 July was received in due time, and no doubt you have been expecting a letter from me for several days. My reason for not writing is this. At the time I received your letter I was very unwell, having had a fever for nearly two weeks. I came up to the hospital the next day and have been here ever since. My disease is chicken pox. I have not been on drill in about three weeks. You would be astonished to see my face. It is broken out all over in blisters from the size of a pin head to that of a ten cent piece. I have had a high fever nearly ever since I was taken, without ceasing at all. It is slight now, and I hope will soon leave me. I am very weak, can hardly walk across the hospital. I have been trying to get a furlough to go home and stay until I regain my strength. If I succeed, I shall go off on the next train.

I suppose you are very well satisfied with camp life. Does Weldon like it? What has become of all your members? Have they left you and gone back to their homes? Cousin Benjamin Colonel Williams has sent for you. Have you heard anything of it? We have twelve infantry companies in our regiment and will have three more and an Artillery and a Cavalry company.

I am very feeble, so I will draw to a close. Excuse this scribble as I wrote it while sitting up on my bunk. We have more than 100 men down with measles. There are now 183 in the hospital, besides several excused in their quarters. Write soon, as I remain your brother,

G.W.D.

Warrenton, N. C.
Aug. 11th, 1861

Dear Burwell;

George landed at home last Thursday evening, says he heard at Weldon that our company expected to leave Garysburg for Raleigh one day this week. I want you to let me know as soon as possible what day it is, so that I may join in again with you at Warrenton Depot. If the Company does not go to Raleigh at all, I will probably start to Garysburg about the middle of this week, as Uncle Tom says it would not do for me to leave home before that time.

George has been complaining a great deal of rheumatism in his ankles, says that he does not sleep at all some nights because they pain him so much. I think he is right bad off. Uncle Tom has just written to Col. Williams to extend his furlough a week longer.

Charity died last Thursday morning and was buried that evening. All the rest of us are well except Stephen, and he is complaining only a little.

Yours etc., W. E. Davis.

(The above letters were addressed to "Burwell P. Davis, Esq., Garysburg, N. C. Care of Capt. Drake of the Nat Macon Guards.")

Uncle George and Uncle Weldon were at home on sick leave.

"Uncle Tom" was Grandpa's brother, Mr. Thomas Jefferson Fitchford, and was the family physician.

"Cousin Ben" was Grandpa's nephew, Benjamin Davis.

"Charity" and "Stephen" were slaves. B.E.B.)

Thursday Night, 15 Aug. 1861

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Dear Burwell,

As Isham is to pass here tomorrow on his way thither, I'll drop you a few lines to let you know how my invalids are getting along. I

have come to the conclusion that home is the best medicine in the world for camp sickness. I never saw sick men improve so rapidly as George and Weldon have. Weldon is looking as well, if not better, than when he left home, and would have decided on returning to camp tomorrow but for the message you sent him by Isham, but if he had decided on doing so, I think he would have been disappointed, for he is taken this evening with headache, sore throat and fever, and your Pa thinks it is measles. He went to bed early this evening and kept his bed till supper. He then came down with red face and red eyes. Haithcock is taken with measles since he came home, so your Pa heard today.

George is under the Dr. about those pains in his ankles. He is not so much troubled as he has been with them, but there is no telling when he will be fit for service. We are expecting Mat and Lou tomorrow to see the boys. Charity died about the middle of last week. She weakened and weakened to the last, and said, "The Lord's will be done."

George came to Warrenton and found your Uncle Tom there ready and willing to bring him home. We haven't seen enough of Isham to hear any news, only that your company is not filled out yet. I was a little surprised to hear it too. One of Dr. Tom Davis' grown daughters died yesterday with bowell complaint. Your Aunt Matilda had Dr. Edgar with her today for the same complaint.

Billy let a hornet sting him this evening, and went to sleep after he had had his cry, and hasn't awaked yet. It is very cool today, and Tom says it is going to snow. I have been so hard at work all the week that I couldn't even spare time to write, only this little tonight. I have made four shirts, two for George and one for you and Weldon, so you might guess I had worked if you knew how many stitches it took to make a shirt.

I am right tired and sleepy, so I believe I'll go to bed. I merely wrote to let you hear from the invalids. I may know in the morning whether Weldon has measles. Dr. Pitchford has gone to the legislature. I will finish in the morning if I have time before Isham comes along, so I'll bid you good night. As ever, your Affec. Ma.

Tuesday morning. Weldon is not well this morning, but doesn't know whether he has the measles or not. Stephen is sick and has been for two or three weeks. I fear he has typhoid. I think the Dr. was apprehensive of it. My good old Cousin Patsy hasn't come home yet, and I don't know when she will. She is over the creek now, but is to be here Sunday evening. She says this is the best place to live that she ever saw. I believe she feels perfectly at home when she is here.

(Isham, son of Grandpa's brother, John Davis. He was a doctor and for a good part of the war was stationed at the "General Hospital in Raleigh. Mat and Lou, Grandpa's oldest son and his wife. Dr. Tom Davis, a neighbor, not related to our family. I think he was a member of the Davis family from whom Eleanor Davis, wife of George is descended on her mother's side. Dr. Edgar Williams, grandfather of Dr. R. E. and Frederick Williams.

15
Wednesday the 21st August, 1861

Dear Burwell,

Your Pa and George went to the Depot Monday morning to see you on your way to Raleigh, and I fixed up a little bundle to send to you. It had about half a dozen cakes in it. I knew you were no great lover of cakes, but I thought you might miss your dinner that day, and so I'd put in a few for a sort of snack. I thought it was an established fact that you were to pass, or I would not have sent the bundle. They didn't bring it back, and so I don't know as you ever will see it, for it wasn't labeled at all.

Weldon has been quite sick with measles, but is rapidly recovering, in fact, he is up and about today, and wants you to inform him what day you go to Raleigh just as soon as you get into possession of the fact. George is almost well, but looks rather ugly, as you will very readily perceive. Don't you want your sheep skin sent to you? I should think it would help some. They are collecting them up about town to send down to Norfolk to the soldiers. Gid Nicholson is, but he told George that he wasn't to have one, he must get one from home.

I will go to the depot myself when you go up if I can, but if I don't, then I will try to go when you return, at all events. Old Cousin Patsy left us last Sunday. I think she's enjoying her visit fine. She is at your Uncle Sam's just now. I went up there yesterday. She says she has given Henry a great deal of advice about how to conduct himself when he goes into her battle - adopted a great battle. She tells him not to run up first man, but to stand back and wait for some of the older ones to go first. I reckon she thinks they all pitch in just like a parcel of boys killing a snake.

Stephen is better, but not well yet. All the rest of us are pretty well. As I am very busy fixing George off today, I cannot write you a long letter, especially as I haven't got to pay postage on it. If I had, why then of course I'd write a long one in order to get the worth of my money. Write as soon as you can let Weldon know when to get ready to meet you at the depot, if not before.

As ever, your affectionate, Ma.

Thursday morning after breakfast. Your letter has just this moment been handed in and read to us all, so I cannot reply to it more than simply to acknowledge receipt of it, for they are just fit to leave. Ma and Lou didn't appear, and I was anxious to know the reason. Got a letter Tuesday, repeating her same question, and begging me to let her know if the boys were at home, and she would come. She has not seen a thing of my reply to her first question. To think that they were so much disappointed and all the rest of us too, does really mortify me. George gave the letter to Mr. Reynolds himself, and he promised to mail it right then; but we must submit, for we are all doomed to disappointment in this world, but I trust my maker and redeemer that none of us may be disappointed in reaching a happy home in Heaven where there are no more disappointments.

Weldon is doing well I hope. He sat up more than half a day yesterday, tho he was chilly and had to keep up a fire all day. Farewell.

("Good Old Cousin Patsy" was the daughter of Giles Davis, who was Grandpa's uncle and Grandma's great uncle. She married Alpheus Bobbitt. Henry was her son or step-son. Records disagree as to that. He married Grandpa's niece, Winnie Fleming. B.E.B.)

No, Patsy married Miles Bobbitt. Alpheus was his son, and Henry was the son of Alpheus. I remember seeing Cousin Patsy as a very old lady. B.E.B.)

(Year not given, but probably 1861)

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Thursday, the last day of Aug.

Dear Burwell,

I wrote a very long letter to Weldon this week, everything I could think of that would be of interest to him and you, and I thought it was to go right on to Garysburg, but when your Pa came in he told me it was to lie in Warrenton until Saturday, and I tell you I do hate that bad enough, but not half as bad as I do the box of victuals being there so long.

Weldon wrote me that Buck would go back Tuesday. Buck is waiting for John Davis to get ready. I suppose they are fixing for a draft. It makes some of the married ladies look rather gloomy. Pollie Davis for one, but Isham says he is going to volunteer, but his Ma says he is not able, but he says he is very well. Mrs. Roberson looks gloomy, I tell you. We were all at your Uncle John's when the news came, at a quilting. Jack Powell's wife said Jack was able, and Gus is not able. Mrs. Roberson said there was no excuse with her old man, but she must try to get up some. I never did see so many inefficient young men.

I wonder when Old Scott will go "on to Richmond" now. Hope they will have enough men there to check him on his next desperate and last effort. I hope, indeed I hope, the last one is already made. I suppose you were in Richmond when the battle was fought. I reckon there was as much mourning as rejoicing.

Your Pa is going to town tomorrow, and I am going up to see Mrs. Capps and carry my cloth, and I am going from there to Mrs. Miles Bobbit's. I have been scarcely anywhere since you all left, or done anything but read the newspapers. I received two numbers of the Express just after I sent off my letter to Weldon, the same evening. I think they were from you, tho I couldn't find your name anywhere. There would be no getting along now without the Express. Your Uncle Tom takes the Richmond Enquirer. I like that pretty well too.

I wonder if you know that the 2nd Reg. has moved to "Ocean View," four miles from the rip-raps. I expect that is to take the attention of Old Point, but I can't understand all their quirks. Let me know in your next how long you expect to stay where you are. Did you see Jackson the other day on his way to Yorktown? If he saw you I guess he was surprised. I sent a little butter and a little cordial. It is strong of the blackberry and the liquor, and is very good for bowel complaint, but there isn't enough of it to cure many cases.

Well, as I have just written and expect you to get this and that at once, You must excuse my epistolary brevity on this occasion. I expect to send this by Mr. Collins.

As ever, your affectionate

Ma.

(The envelope is addressed to "Burwell P. Davis, Esq., Garysburg, Va., Care Capt. Drake." In the left hand corner is written, "Politeness of Mr. Collins." Inside the flap of the envelope she wrote, "I am very anxious to hear from you. Hope to hear that you are well, but am afraid you are too sick to travel.")

("Buck" was Major Buckner Davis Williams, son of Grandma's Aunt Rebecca Wms. and William C. Wms. Grandma was named for her.

John S. Davis, son of Grandpa's brother, Uncle John.

Mrs. Tom Roberson, a neighbor.

Jack Powell, grandson of Grandma's aunt, Nancy Davis Powell, and also grandson of Mr. and Mrs. John A. Williams.

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but does not give the year. However it was written before Uncle Burwell and Weldon were put into separate companies, so it may have been written as early as 1861. The envelope is addressed to "Burwell P. Davis, Company B, 30th Reg., N.C. Vol., Smithville, N. C. Care of Capt. Drake.")

Sunday Evening.

Dear Burwell,

I learned from your Uncle Tom today that Isham is to leave in the morning, so I will drop you a few lines by way of acknowledging the receipt of yours of the 5th. I was very glad to learn that you overtook your company, and I was glad to hear that you were faring as well as you expected, and Weldon wrote home about a week before you wrote. I hope you are fairly well by this time, and I reckon you will winter in as good a part of the country for health as any, so everybody seems to think.

George is very unwell again, but I'll send his letter and thus obviate the necessity of writing about him. Mollie Sherrin was telling me the other day that the company liked you and Weldon very much, and I wondered how she knew, but I reckon she has a correspondent or two along.

Mat was coming to see you that stormy Friday if it hadn't stormed so. He wanted to see you before you left. He left here this evening and carried Pat home with him. I expect to go out there next Friday and stay a few days. Your Pa thinks he cannot go with me, now that you are not here. I wish I knew whether or not you or Weldon want a blanket from home. I have a chance to send it now. Shall I have to make winter clothes for you or not. You can let me know when you need anything of the sort.

The cavalry leave today; they camp at Macon tonight. Your Grandma came down this morning, says she met some eight or ten carriages going up to see them leave. They had a big day out there last Thursday. The Gov. and big men met there, and they had a real drinking party, and I reckon I might say a real drunken party, I heard it was. They had a good many speeches, and Ransom and Jenkins had a falling out. Jenkins was drunk, and he was drunk in Louisburg last week, so Mat said. Joseph Turner made a speech in Lou. last week. He is candidate for congress. Now don't that beat! He oughtn't to be door keeper for the hen house.

Dolly has got the consumption I think, and several little negroes are poorly. The rest of us are well. I suppose the next I hear from you, you'll hail from Smithville. I wonder how you'll find it there. I shall want to know. You can read Weldon's letter, and he yours, if you and he choose.

As ever, Me.

(Pat mentioned in the letter was Grandma's daughter, and my mother. If this letter was written in 1861, she was then nine years old.)

Dolly, one of the slaves.

(I believe I copied the date of this incorrectly. It must have been Nov instead of Sept.) S. Lake of the Woods 18

Sunday, Sept. 3rd, 1861

Dear Brother,

It has been sometime since I have written to any of our boys, indeed for the first time in several years I am without a correspondent, and I reckon you will be somewhat surprised that I should choose rather to correspond with you than Weldon, with whom I have so long corresponded, but my reasons for so doing are very good. I have in a measure taken your place at home, and you know I never paid any attention nor cared anything about the farm before, and am therefore placed in a very awkward position now, and of course your advice and experience would be very beneficial and acceptable to me, and so if you should have time I would be very much pleased if you would write to me, and you may write as often as you please, and I will gladly receive and answer all your letters. I reckon you know better what advice I need than I do. Enough for preliminary, so I will commence my letter, which shall commence and indeed throughout be mostly concerning the farm. Ma will write the other items.

We commenced gathering peas before the 24th of September, and we have been gathering every opportunity since. We gathered first the field beyond the road, and gathered it over twice, which filled the icehouse crammed and chock full, the door being stopped half way up with boards. Indeed I concluded some that the low grounds would make as many in proportion to the size of the lot, for they were as thick as they almost could stick from the bottom to the top of the stalk as all over the row and that twice, but they didn't make the pile that the lot did.

We commenced gathering peas in the lot about the 10th of October, and finished about the 26th, having lost a great deal of time on account of bad weather, and some for the tobacco. It filled the upper barn to the tails of the tobacco, which is very short and hangs on second tier, the door being slipped up half way. Such a pile of peas! The corn lot also made ten bushels besides the eating peas.

We are now something over half done the field toward Uncle Sam's, and the small spot or hill lying between the bottom running from the bars to the apple trees actually made considerably over a load, and it was the sorriest part of the field. Just to think of the Amy field, which I went through this evening, some parts of it are equal to the low grounds almost. I reckon you have heard enough of peas.

Put up sixty shoats from house pen Thursday for fattening hogs, and we have been boiling peas for them at the rate of ten bushels a day, but they hadn't quite gotten through the yesterday's peas this evening, so you see we boil faster than they eat them. Our corn is tolerably good, and I think in spite of the worms we shall make a crop rather larger than usual. Measured lot corn last night, and found that it had made 22 barrels long corn besides 5 or 6 of short. Sowed wheat about a week ago in big lot of course. Have fanned out 168 bushels of wheat, but Uncle Sam sent for the fan mill and broke us up before we could finish. We haven't commenced gathering corn for sure enough, and don't know when we will, for it will take nearly twelve months now to finish gathering peas, for it is cloudy and rainy half the time.

Ma and I have taken a trip out to Uncle Jackson's and Bro Mat's, rather out to Franklin, and stayed five days. Uncle Jackson has up fattening 112 hogs, fatter and larger now than Pa's ever get to be, and he does not intend to kill them before January. I should like to

see them then. He laughed heartily at me for saying that they were as fat as P's ever got to be, and said they were comparatively poor to what they would be when killed. Bro Mat's are very fine also, and he has bacon for sale.

Ma and I went over to Uncle John's this morning to see Dick, who is at home sick with the jaundice. We found him a-bed tolerably sick. Cousins Jim Davis and Pitchford are also at home. Well, it is very strange to me why they were allowed to come, for in his last letter George said thirty from his company alone were at home on sick furlough, there being only 27 capable of performing duty, of whom he was one, and at one time it took considerably over half of the well ones to stand guard, so that some stood two nights in succession, but the whole regiment has recently moved down where he is, which lightens his or their duties.

The congressional election has been held in the Norfolk camp, and the vote cast by those from this district was as follows: Arrington, 120, Venable, 70, and Turner, 9. This election may speak the sentiments of the district, but not those of Warren. I think most everybody thinks Turner will be elected. The Franklin and Nash folks will certainly vote for Arrington, Warren for Venable, and the others split up and elect Turner.

Well, it is 10 p.m., and I will stop writing till tomorrow night, when I will finish and expect to go to town next day.

Monday. I thought last night that I would add considerably to my letter tonight, but as I only intend to write farming news, I will commit a digression by writing so much besides, particularly when paper is so scarce and Ma writes so often, so I will only say that Grandma is very poorly, and Saroney dead, died for want of breath, so goodbye.

Yours &c.

T. E. Davis.

(This letter hardly sounds like it was written by a 16 year old boy, but Uncle Tom was only 16 at that time. His handwriting is excellent, and certainly does not look like that of a boy.

Dick and Jim Davis, sons of Grandpa's brother, Uncle John.

James Pitchford, a Baptist prescher, son son of Dr. T. J. Pitchford.

"Uncle Jackson," Jackson Egerton, Grandma's brother-in-law. My paternal grandfather.

"Uncle Sam," Grandpa's brother.

Saroney, one of the slaves.

B.E.B.)

The Amy Field, so named because Amy, one of the slaves had her cabin there.

Though the 16 year old Thomas went bravely about the work of running the farm, in the absence of his older brother Burwell, his heart was with the boys in the army. He began to beg his father to let him go. Grandpa told him he could enlist when he was 18.

As time rolled on, he became more and more dissatisfied, and was not willing to attend church or go anywhere in public because he said he felt that people would look at him and think he was a coward. One morning in the spring of 1863, when he was 17 years old, he did not come down to breakfast. Someone went to his room and found that his bed had not been slept in. Pinned to his pillow was a note saying he had gone to the army.

When he was again heard from he was with his brother George, having gone to him instead of the older brother, Burwell, who he was afraid would have sent him back home.

In this book are a number of letters from after he was in the service. He came home once on furlough, and then never again. This sad part of the story is told in later letters in this book.

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Sometime between the 17th of May, 1863, and the 27th of June that year, Uncle Burwell was wounded in battle, and was sent to the hospital in Raleigh, N. C. He was shot in the arm, and never recovered sufficiently to return to the army. During the entire remainder of the War he was kept at the hospital to help care for other wounded soldiers. This is perhaps the reason that he kept the letters that are copied in this book, while his brothers, being on the battlefield and on frequent marches, were obliged to throw theirs away.

In Grandma's letters, she frequently mentions sending Uncle Burwell something by Uncle Tom or by Isham. Uncle Tom, or Dr. Thomas Jefferson Pitchford, was a member of the North Carolina legislature, and on his trips to and from Raleigh could take letters or packages to Uncle Burwell at the hospital.

Isham Davis, Grandpa's nephew and Uncle Tom's son-in-law, was also a doctor. He was in service and belonged to the same company that Uncle Burwell did. Later he was also in the hospital, whether having been wounded or sent there for medical service to wounded soldiers, I do not know, but it is probable that he was wounded and then kept there as a doctor. Whenever he or Uncle Burwell went home on furlough they took letters or packages for each other.

The following letter was written by Sattie Bet Davis, (my mother) to her brother George, who was in the army. She was at that time ten years old. Uncle George kept the letter, and it finally came into the possession of his daughter, Belle Davis Cooper, who gave it to me. I prize the original very highly. B.E.B.

Jan 16th, 63

My dear brother,

I will write you a few lines to let you know how I am getting on with my studies.

You see I can't write much, but it is better than not to write at all.

You must come home as soon as you can for I do want to see you bad enough for I do dearly love you you are a dear good brother as ever was.

Tell brother Tom I will write to him before very long if I can find anything to write about, tell him I want to see him very much, and I want to see my dear Weddy too.

I can't write well enough to write any news. I say two geography lessons every day, and two grammar, two reading, two arithmetic, two writing, at least that is what ma tells me to do but I am sorry to say that I don't always say them all.

The old bear is dead so there is an end to old Bruin forevermore.

Nothing more at present but remain your loving sister

Pat to G W D.

"Weddy" was her pet name for her brother Weldon.

Uncle George wrote to her, whether in reply to this particular letter I do not know, but I remember reading it, as she kept it until our home was destroyed by fire in 1905. In this letter he told her that he had made him a house by digging into the side of an embankment. He made an opening through the top for a chimney so he could smoke his pipe and the smoke would go out.

She also had the first letter she ever wrote. It was to Uncle Weldon, and was written in very large letters, as follows: "Dear Weddy, I love you dearly. Pat."

He replied to it, and she kept this letter too until it was lost in the fire. I also read that one.

(B.E.B.)

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Friday, the 2th of May, 1863

Dear Burwell,

Your second letter reached us this evening in which you say you have not had a letter from home since you left. Well, I am sorry to hear that, for I answered your first the very day I received it, and sent ~~him~~ also a letter of Weldon's and a list of casualties among the men of our county. I wrote to you the 14th day of May, and would have written sooner, but was waiting to get a letter from the boys. I promised before you left to let you hear from them as soon as I could, and I didn't get a scratch from them till the 14th. I directed the letter in care of Dr. Hill, sent it to town by your Uncle Sam, and it may be in his coat pocket yet. John Boyd found one in a coat pocket of his which he brought from the army 12 months ago, and forgot to deliver, and on opening it found it contained \$300, so your Aunt Nancy Foote told me yesterday. She is staying with us this week.

Well, I know you must be anxious to hear from home. I think you have been gone three weeks today. I would not have had you miss that letter of mine for a five dollar ~~note~~ note, tho if you get it now it will not be worth the 10 cents. I expected you to show it to Isham. He wrote to Polly for a list of casualties, but she, knowing I had sent it to you, (for I got it from her Pa), thought it useless to draw it off again, and so didn't send it.

Now I hardly know what to say first, as we have had no rain at all since you left, you may guess that things are pretty much upon a standstill.

(Here Grandma wrote a full page as to the exact condition of each vegetable, collards, peas, beets, strawberries, potatoes, wheat, sorghum, onions, tomatoes, and mustard, B.F.B.)

Your Grandma is at home now, came a day or two after you left. She went to John A's this morning, says John A. is very proud of his two soldier boys. She told him that Weldon said they fought valiantly, and he said, "Thank God. I wish my other three were there also." Says he has tried his best to get them off.

I am expecting every day to hear of the fall of Vicksburg, tho your Pa is still sanguine in his expectations of our success at that place. It seems that troubles gather thick around us. The clouds in the political horizon are dark and lowering, but nevertheless, the bow of promise may soon appear. I am hoping that some unforeseen circumstance may turn up somehow or somewhere to aid and comfort us. Unless such should be the case, I don't know what will become of us. The boys about Fredericksburg seem to be in fine spirits yet. It is thought that there will be another fight at that place. If so, I say Lord have mercy on our poor soldiers.

They have been pressing horses in the adjoining counties, but as good luck would have it, got enough before they got to Warren. Jennie died this morning. Old Aunt Betsy died last week. Jim Davis is still at home, I believe. Got a letter from Tom today, but it so illegible that I will not send it, and I have no other late news.

The box in the front yard lives on and grows some. I will write to you again two weeks from today or sooner.

Goodbye for this time, Ma.

"Your Aunt Nancy Foote," Grandma's sister.
Jennie and Aunt Betsy, slaves.

Dear Ma,

I wrote to you the day after I got back to camp from the battle field, and will now write again according to promise, fearing that letter may not have reached its destination. We left the battle field Wednesday the 6th inst, about 3 o'clock in the evening, and marched back to our same old camp (about fifteen miles) without ever stopping to rest. For a good part of the way the rain was falling almost as hard as I ever saw it, and the mud was almost half leg deep a great part of the way.

Our regiment had 29 killed and about 125 wounded; don't know how many of them have since died. Our Brigade carried into the fight a little over 1400 men and nearly 700 of them were killed, wounded and taken prisoners. Fortunately the number of killed was small compared to the number of wounded, and most of the wounds were only slight.

Our Brigade suffered more than any I have heard of. We were in the hottest of the fight for nearly four hours and twenty minutes. Saturday night the Yankees threw up a breastwork and then cut down the trees for fifty yards all along in front of it. Sunday morning we had to charge that breastwork over the laps and logs of those trees, and in that charge we suffered heavily. The Yankee flag was flying over the works until we got in about 40 yards of it, and then it got away from us, but I think our regiment killed many a Yankee in their retreat from that place. Their dead lay scattered through the woods for over two hundred yards. At that breastwork I witnessed a circumstance that I had never heard of before. There was a brigade of our men on our left who came to the works just before we did, and when we came up that brigade was on one side, and a Yankee brigade on the other side of the works, and each man would stoop down to load his gun and then poke it over the top to shoot, then dodge back to load again, nothing between them but the thickness of the works.

Bob and Amos Williams stuck up well all through the fight and both came out without a scratch. Ben Davis was taken sick late Saturday evening and did not get in the fight. If I had known the fighting was going to end Sunday evening I could have saved sugar and coffee enough to have lasted me a month or two. We got some of the nicest soap you ever saw, and many of the boys supplied themselves with writing paper for some time to come. I didn't even save a streaked cotton shirt, as many as there were and bad as I needed them.

None of the wounded of our company have died since Sunday that I have heard of. All were sent to Richmond the Saturday after the fight. I went nearly all over the battle field after the fight, and I feel confident there were ten Yankees killed to one of our men. Can't say anything about the proportion of the wounded. Yankee papers and Confederate papers may say what they please, but our army knows we have whipped them this time, for they have seen it to their own satisfaction, and there can be no doubt of it, for we were two days on the field, and each and every man could see for himself.

But for the hard rain Tuesday we could almost have ruined the Yankee army. Our army formed three sides of a square and the river the fourth side. The Yankees were in there and the shot and shell from our artillery could meet in the centre. We had everything

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ready to begin upon them Tuesday, when the rain fell in such torrents as to break it up and that night they skeddaled across the river.

Tell Pat I have passed safely through one more fight and intend to come home before the next one if I possibly can. There doesn't seem to be much chance for it now though.

As ever, your affectionate son, Weldon.

I will send three Yankee letters I picked up on the field, more because they came from Yankeedom than for their contents. There may be a little extra postage on them.

Your son, Weldon.

In Camp, June 1st, 1863

Ma:

I send five hundred dollars by Henry Foote. It is the only chance I have to send it; reckon he will carry it safe. There is some talk of moving, but none of us can tell where. Some say to the Peninsular again, and others say to Maryland. There is also talk of our going to Eastern North Carolina again.

Make use of the money in any way you see fit. There is no use keeping it.

As ever, your son, Weldon.

Vietsburg has fallen, but never mind, it wasn't such a very important place after all.

(On the back of the above note, which Grandma sent to Uncle Burwell, she wrote the following:)

"I am expecting letters now every day from Weldon and Tom, and I would wait and send them to you, but I know you must be very anxious to hear from them, so I embrace the earliest opportunity to relieve your anxiety. Tom Pitchford didn't mention Ben Davis' name at all, and we don't know what to think of it. W. Montgomery is slightly wounded, and Ben Collins. Daniel Allen has both legs broken above the knee; Mosely shot in the neck. The Potomac is up, and I fear Lee may get awfully trapped yet."

Tom Pitchford, son of Dr. T. J. Pitchford.

Bob and Amos Williams, These were evidently young men of the neighborhood. They were not brothers of Grandma's first cousin, Major Buckner Davis Williams, and I do not think they were related to us.

Ben Davis, Grandpa's nephew, son of Uncle John.

W. Montgomery, Ben Collins, Daniel Allen, and Mosely, young men of the community, not related to us.

"Miss Edna says Daniel Allen was the son of Turner Allen and wife, Betsy Watson Allen. One of their four sons in the army; only one of them returned. He was Aunt Carey's first cousin. I think Dr. Smithwick came from that Turner Allen family," and probably was named for Daniel.
M.I.D.

Dear Burwell,

I wrote to you and Weldon the 6th of May, thinking you were together, but I afterwards learned that you were not, and as I directed the letter to him, I don't know that you have ever seen it, and if you have, I presume you will be fully willing to hear from home again ere this reaches you.

I wonder if you saw Buxton last week. I have heard that he went down to carry his boy, (next oldest to Harry) to the 43rd reg. Phill Alston is at home, having hired a substitute by the name of Askew. John Pitchford is at ~~home~~ his Pa's on his way to Richmond, belongs to an artillery company. Bob will go with him, as the Dr. desires that his boys should be two and two together.

All vegetation is very backward up this way. My peas are but just in bloom, collards set out last Saturday, and very small at that. The strawberries in their prime, or will be in a day or two. They are fine in quality and quantity, but I cannot afford to have a single mess with cream; sugar is too scarce. Mrs. Holliman has 15 barrels on hand, but when she heard of the fall of N. Orleans, she went up from 30 to 75 cts a lb., so at that price I don't expect to use much.

When Mr. Foote was down here he said Jim had sent up a large box of clothes belonging to different soldiers, some to you or Weldon, or one or both. I have not received them yet. I have made a parcel of thick cotton bags, and now I am going to give all your clothes a good sunning and then bag them to keep the moths out, all yours in a bag to themselves, and all the others in a similar manner, and all cotton clothes in each ones trunk. So you see I am going to set my house in order before the Yankees come along here, for really I don't know how soon they will come. I used to think I'd stand my ground if they did come, but as I hear more of them, I dread them all the more.

I suppose you know that Tom has gone off to face them. I don't much think that I ever will see him again in this world. He has written to us twice, the last time from Gordonsville, Va. He says the weather was very cold at night, and very hot in the day, and they've no tents. There are gone from thence now, some say over into Pennsylvania. They are under "Stonewall" Jackson or Ewell, one or both. I am expecting to hear of the evacuation of Wilmington every day, and if you don't leave I think the Yanks will make you pretty soon, for I reckon they intend to compass you by sea and by land. We have left Pensacola, so John P. Says. He also says a ship load of powder and arms ran in at Mobile recently.

Tom made his apology for going off in the manner he did, says he got \$9 from Gus Cheek, which was all he had, and 4 from Iredell Egerton. They say Gus is very proud of having furnished him money, says "Yes, I will let anybody have my last cent if they will go in the army, anything to keep out myself." Tom has been deranged on the subject all this year. Joe Bobbitt has served his folks in the same way, and several other fellows are so fascinated with the maneuver that they vow they intend to do likewise. (Phill Williams and Whit and Jesse Roberson) but Tom never did make any such threats that I know of. I would send you his letters, but they are writ so badly

that I dislike to impose such a burden on you, in addition to reading of this.

Tell Bob I saw his folks yesterday at church, and I am going there one day this week on a visit. I presume they are well. Old Mr. French has sent up 300 lbs of sugar to your Uncle Tom to go as part pay for the board of the Nixons, but Matilda is awfully tired of them. We are all very well.

As ever your affec.

Ma.

Buxton Williams a neighbor.

Phil Alston a neighbor. He later lived in Louisburg. I remember him.

John and Bob Pitchford, sons of Dr. T. J. Pitchford

Mr. Foote husband of Grandma's sister Nancy.

Jim Foote their son.

Joe Bobbitt grandson or step grandson of Grandma's Cousin Patsy D. B.

Iredell Egerton, son of my father's great uncle Gilbert Grey Egerton.

He married Emma Rebecca Williams, daughter of Grandma's Aunt Rebecca

Davis Williams.

I don't know who "Old Mr. French" and the Nixons were.

(In her letter Grandma spoke of Uncle Tom's letters being badly written. It must have been because he didn't have good paper or ink or some other circumstance that couldn't be helped, for the letters that she did send Uncle Burwell from Uncle Tom are beautifully written. His handwriting was excellent.

B.F.B.

Orange Co., Va.
June 5th, 1863

Ma,

I will scribble you a few lines this evening, as it has been some time since I have written home. We are now on the tramp, but where to I do not know. We left our old camp night before last at 12 o'clock. We are now eight miles from the Rappidan, (The troops left at 3 o'clock,) and about the same distance from Orange Courthouse.

It is now about sunset. Our brigade and Ramsour's passed us about an hour since, and are now in camp about a mile ahead of us. I saw Weldon and Tom when they passed. It is very dry up here, and the dust rising from the roads in clouds. The troops look like old men, their hair and eyebrows white with dust. I was out on the road when they passed. Jim Foote stopped with us and took a regular wash out. He has just left us.

We (the wagon train) went in camp at two o'clock. I went off this evening to graze mules, and we grazed on the plantation of a Mrs. Rhodes. I went to the house and got as much buttermilk as I wanted. I asked her if she was acquainted with Dr. Goodwin's folks. She said she did not know them, but knew where they lived. She said Dr. Goodwin is dead. We are now in Stoneman's rout (?). Mrs. Rhodes is a young woman, and her husband is in the army. She said the Yankees took every horse on her father's plantation, and did the same thing once before. A negro man of hers went off with them when Stoneman went back, and a negro woman of hers sold out her things and was preparing to go with them. She said she knew it, but could do nothing. The woman was taken sick and died two hours afterwards and just half an hour before the Yankees came back. She said other negroes told her afterwards that the woman said she was going and carry her children with her.

I believe everybody is of the opinion that we are going to Pennsylvania. I do not know whether any corps is on the march except ours (Ewell's) or not. Your letter to all of us came to hand, and was sent over to Weldon. Dr. Foote came to see me before he left. He sold his horse for \$1,000.

You did not get the letter I wrote from Gunpowder Station while the fight was going on. I reckon Stoneman got it. We will start in the morning at 3 o'clock. I do not know what time the troops will start. We will cross the Rappidan at Raccoon Ford tomorrow and will go on to Culpepper Courthouse, but I do not know where to from there. The wagons start before the troops in order to have time to graze the mules before the troops come up. Our mules are all in good order. The clover up here is excellent.

When you write again, direct to Richmond. State the Corps, Division, Brigade, Regiment, &c, and write in it Army mail, and it will come to us. I will mail this when I get to Culpepper. Stog Collins is dead. Tom said do not look for a letter from him soon.

As ever, G.W.D.

Cousin John Powell, Cousin Ben T. Pitchford, Wallace Williams, Jim Foote, Weldon, Tom, & Ben Davis are all well, and Cousin Buck Williams. Cousin Thomas Powell is not very well. He belongs to the Signal Corps.

(I do not know whether "Stog Collins" is the same as the Ben Collins mentioned on page 24.

John and Thomas Powell and Ben Davis were Grandpa's nephews.

Ben T. Pitchford and Jim Foote, Grandma's nephews.

Wallace and Buckner Williams, Grandma's first cousins.) B.E.B.

Dr. and Mrs. Goodwin took Uncle Tom into their home and cared for him when he was sick in 1862.

Monday the 27th June, 1863

Dear Burwell,

Isham came up very unexpectedly last Thursday as wet and muddy as you like please, having walked all the way from Warrenton through the incessant rains that fell on that day. He got here about 2 o'clock, got dry clothes and dinner, and had to stay all night, as Pollie was gone up to Nancy Foote's, and Tom and Matilda to the Oaks.

Mat and Lou left here this morning at 7 o'clock and it is now 2 and the rain is pouring and the wheat is sprouting. It was cut Tuesday and Wednesday tied up in bundles, opened like a wine glass and stood up on end. Nothing more could have been done for it than has been done, but sprout it will and must. It is, I reckon, the best crop of wheat that has ever been made here, if it could have been saved.

Everything is doing its best now growing. The garden will soon be full of vegetables, and we shall fare sumptuously, if we can't get any wheat bread. I had plenty of snaps and chickens to go on while Mat and Lou stayed, but very little milk and butter. The cows well nigh dried up, but since the rains have begun we get a little more, and I expect to get plenty now very soon.

I think Lou's baby is the best and sweetest baby that's come along lately. Eddie and Bill both had a spell of intermittent fever while he was here. They both took calomel and a good deal of quinine. I think Eddie is over his, but is much worsted in looks. Billie is about today, but didn't sit up a minute yesterday nor hold up his head except to drink water. Today he hasn't lain down at all, and I hope his fever will not return again.

Pollie's poor little Bettie died sure enough as I told you I thought she would, and when they dug the grave they dug into the corner of another coffin. It was very thick poplar plank.

Your Uncle Tom went up to Raleigh yesterday. The election day was so rainy that it was only held at Warrenton and Grove Hill, 60 votes in the former, and 9 in the latter place.

I cannot tell you anything about the boys. I send you this little note which is all I have had from them since I last wrote to you. I do not pretend to write to them at all, haven't written a line to any of them since they left Fredericksburg. If you have only one man to wait on, you probably have a good deal of time to read, and if you cannot get profitable books to read there, you ought to have some from home. Your Brother Mat expects to visit you the last of this or the first of next week. Lou will send you some onions. I wonder if you sent my bag back by Dick.

I will conclude as I write pretty often. Mourning, Amy, and Fed all in the house, pain in the side. No more this time.

Remain as ever your affec.

Ma. R. P. Davis.

Notes on the preceding letter:

"Isham," Grandpa's nephew, Dr. Isham Davis, who was stationed at the hospital in Aaleigh, where Uncle Burwell was sent after he was wounded.

"Pollie," Isham's wife and Grandma's niece.

"Tom," or "Your Uncle Tom," Grandma's brother, Dr. Thomas J. Fitchford.
"Matilda," his wife. They were "Pollie's" parents.

"Matt," Oldest son of Grandpa and Grandma. He became president of Louisburg College.

"Lou," his wife, the former Miss Louisa Hill of Louisburg.

"Lou's baby," Cousin Mary, Mrs. Ivey Allen of "arrenton, who is now (1955) living in "arrenton at the age of 92, and just as young in all but years as ever. She was also president of Louisburg College.

"Eddie," Oldest son of Uncle Matt, then three years old. He was the Rev. E. H. Davis, Methodist minister. He died at the age of 93 at his home, the historic Green Hill place at Louisburg. Aunt Lou lived to be 95.

"Bill," or "Billie," youngest child of Grandpa and Grandma. Was then five years old.

"Mourning," "Amy," and "Fed," slaves.

"Grove Hill," a little country cross roadswhere the people of that community went to vote. At this particular time the election was probably quiet, but usually it was very different. Whiskey flowed, and was freely used, and fighting was in no way unusual. On one occasion, so my mother, daughter of Edward and Rebecca Davis, told me, there was a barrel of whiskey (or keg), and a dipper from which anyone who pleased drank. One man became so impatient for his turn at the dipper that he took off his shoe, dipped it in and took his drink. Two men got in a fight, and one struck the other on the head and broke his leg.

B.F.B.

Carlisle, Penn.
June 28th, '63

Dear Ma,

Your letter of June 3rd came to hand this morning, being the first mail we have received since leaving Fredericksburg. I was very glad indeed to get it too, for it seems to have been so long since I had heard from home. I wrote to you from Hagerstown, Md., but don't know that you will ever get that letter or this one either, for there was no regular mail, and I gave it to a citizen who promised to send it to Winchester.

Our progress from Fredericksburg to Carlisle has been a series of complete victories, so easily won that we have not yet fired a gun. It is only 18 miles from here to Harrisburg, and I hear that the Pennsylvania militia are preparing to meet us there. I never saw our army in finer condition for fighting in my life. Everybody seems to be in good spirits; there are but few sick ones, though some have sore feet.

The people about here are the most surprised that you ever saw. They say they thought nearly all the southern soldiers were killed long ago, and the rebellion about to be crushed. Little did they think three weeks ago that their state would be invaded at this time. We are now quartered (that is, three North Carolina brigades) in the old U. S. Barracks just in the edge of town. They consist of seven or eight buildings, each about one hundred yards long, and each containing about fifty or sixty rooms, besides numerous other smaller buildings. This place reminds me very much of Chapel Hill.

Saw Tom today. He is well, said he wrote home only two or three days ago. There is so much news to tell that I never can think of writing it all. Hope I may be able to get home after a while and give it all then. There is no danger of our suffering for anything to eat in this campaign, for I have seen more wheat than I ever saw in all my life together before. There is very little woodland about here, and the whole face of the earth is almost one big wheat lot with large clover and grass lots scattered here and there.

When I wrote home from Hagerstown I only found out about fifteen minutes before dark that there would be an opportunity to send a letter next morning, so I had to write mostly in the dark, and it was so dark that I could not make out the words after I had written them, which will account for the bad writing.

Bob Williams says tell his folks that he is all right, well and hearty as ever, and so am I with the exception of a cold and slight headache. When you write to any of us, just mention the Co., Reg't, Brigade, Division, & C, Fwell's Corp., via Winchester, Va. I have a nice little Yankee portfolio with just as much paper as I want, but it is all small like this sheet.

Nothing more at present, as ever,

Your son,

Weldon.

Wagon Camp
Six miles from Stanton, Va.
Tuesday night, July 7th 18

Ma,

It has been a long time since I wrote home, so I will pen a few lines tonight, as I am going to Stanton tomorrow, and will have an opportunity to mail this. I wrote a few lines to you from Williamsport, Md., and the next day. Cousin Ben has just called me, and said he has a letter for me. I will go and see who it is from. I guess from home.

Disappointed once. The letter is directed to me, and inside is a sealed envelope directed to someone else, and a few lines on it to me, asking me to please hand it to the owner. As I was going to say, the day after I wrote to you from Wmsport I was sent back with half of our wagons to Stanton. The other half went on with the troops. Wallace is with them. We have eighty wagons with us. Cousin Ben is in charge of the Brigade Wagons.

We left Wmsport the 19th, I think, and got here the 26th. The Army moved off towards Hagerstown. I have not heard from them since. The news came to us yesterday that our Division and Early's had thrashed out the Penn Melish at Gettysburg. Have heard no particulars. Also that Gen. Lee had met and whipped Hooker's Army.

Tom was well and looked as fresh as a June apple when I saw him last. It is unnecessary for me to write any army news. You get it as soon as we do.

We are having a delightful time up here in the mountains. We are camped in a beautiful rich country, right among the F.F.V's., the most hospitable people (Norfolk excepted) I have ever seen. I go out every day and get almost anything I want, don't pay a cent. There is one house about 1½ ms. from our camp I go to every day and get 1½ gallons of buttermilk. I very often take dinner when I go out. It is a Mr. Harper who gives me the milk. He is some of Old Kinchen's folks. There are but a few young men here, but lots of the women folks. Don't be surprised when you hear that I am married.

Wagons come in every day from Penn, loaded with leather boots, shoes, curry combs, lead, stationery, and various other things. I think we have passed through fifty towns since we left Fredericksburg. There is a splendid wheat crop in this part of the country. Some of the farmers have commenced cutting.

One thousand Yankees came on with us from Winchester. They were of all colors, ages, sizes, sexes, and from all nations. Ask Bill if he wants a young Yankee. We have some not as big as Harry, and some about six months old. I have not heard from home since I left Fredericksburg. When you get this write to me at Stanton. Direct in the care of Maj. W. N. Payne, in charge of Rodes Wagon Train at Stanton.

rite soon as I want to hear from home.

As ever, Geo. W. Davis.

Pitchford

(I think "Cousin Ben" was Ben ~~xxxxxx~~, and I think "Wallace" was the son of Grandma's "Aunt Becky Williams," who was Rebecca Davis and M. William C. Williams., or he may have been Grandpa's nephew, Ben Davis.

The preceding letter from Uncle George was sent by his mother to Uncle Burwell in Raleigh. On a blank part of a page she wrote the following:

Burwell, we have heard from the boys and they are safe, safely through another storm. Oh! how thankful I do feel. I have had no letter from either "Weldon" or Tom, but Tom Pitchford wrote the 7th and says Weldon, Tom, Jim Foote, Bob Pitchford and John Burt were all in the fiercest of the fray, and all safe.

I suppose Mat has been to see you. Lem Newell says he saw him in Raleigh. We have heavy rains almost everyday, are in mud, water and grass and have been for three weeks. Everything completely drowned, even the garden, and sorghum run away in grass. I wish they would let you stay at home and try to make something to eat; I fear a sorry corn crop.

The peas are not sowed in the lot yet. Don't you think it will be too late? I think there were some 50 bushels of wheat wasted, so they are waiting for the hogs to eat it. Perhaps we will save 150 bushels. All well except Fed. He keeps poorly, so he says, tho he looks pretty well.

Your Ma,
R.P.D.

Haven't heard from you in some time.

I think it was the famous Battle of Gettysburg.

Of course "Weldon" and "Tom" were Grandma's sons.

"Tom" and "Bob Pitchford" and "Jim Foote" were her nephews, and "John Burt" was the father of Dr. Perry Burt, who married Uncle George's daughter, Viola Davis.

"Fed" was one of the slaves.

Hagerstown, Md.
July 8th, 1863

Dear Ma:

Your letter of the 3rd inst. came to hand while we were in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. It seems that you had no idea at that time that we were going to Maryland so soon. Well, we knew nothing of it either. A few days before starting we learned the army was going to start somewhere pretty soon, but where to, we could not tell. The Yankee prisoners taken at Gettysburg say they did not know we had left Fredericksburg until the 12th. We had gotten to Bront Royal in the valley, had been on the march eight days. I wrote home from Hagerstown before, don't know though that you ever received my letter. From there we went into Pennsylvania for the purpose of collecting horses and cattle. Our army went to within eighteen miles of Harrisburg, hearing that the Yankees were collecting in our rear, we were forced to turn back, met them at Gettysburg on Wednesday the 1st of July, the anniversary of the Malvern Hill fight, and whipped them again; took ten thousand prisoners, also took their hospitals with all their wounded. The dead Yankees lay over the battle field almost as thick as they did at Chancellorsville.

The Yanks retreated to the foot of the mountains where they made another stand, and their position was such a strong one that we could do nothing with them, fought them Thursday and Friday, but did not make anything out of them. I am ~~rather~~ afraid rather lost by it. There were two wounded in our company, Bob Williams slightly on top of his head, and Lieut Loughlin's brother, slightly also through the leg just above the knee. Wharton Greene was wounded very badly, also Lt. Mosely of the 12th. All of our neighborhood boys escaped unhurt except Bob Williams. Gus Kearney was killed. The 12th Regt. actually clothed itself in honor this fight. Three regiments of their brigade were taken prisoners, but the 12th kept fighting, would not surrender, and by itself held the line marked out for their whole brigade.

During the fight, our wagon train went to the rear for a place of safety, but went too far, and a few Yankee cavalry made a dash on them, run of the Guard, and destroyed thirty or forty and carried off a few others. Our baggage wagon was among those destroyed, so I have lost all my clothes again. They have sent for the mail to go off. I have time to write no more.

As ever, your son,
Weldon.

P.S. I wrote a letter while at Carlisle, but have had no chance to send, but will send it now, though it is out of date.

Weldon.

C
(Col.) "Wharton Green says in his book, Recollections & Reflections, that he never rose above Lieut. Colonel. I notice he signed his papers, "First Lieut. Col." He said Jefferson Davis told him some time after the War that he wrote to Richmond recommending to the (Con) Senate his appointment as Brigadier Col., but his letter reached Richmond about the time of the evacuation, and in the confusion was never acted upon. Col. Green's book is very interesting."

M.I. D.

Dear Burwell,

As Weldon has left good room for another letter, and as paper is so scarce, I believe I will avail myself of the opportunity of saving a little of what little I have on hand. This is the last I have heard from any of the boys. They all wrote about the time this was written.

Tom was slightly wounded on the ear while storming the heights of Gettysburg, and he thinks his boy, Jim Green, has fallen into the hands of the Yankees, and he is very much grieved about it. The wagons were taken and all the clothing Weldon had. Tom didn't say whether his was taken or not. I reckon he hadn't any, but he thought his boy was taken with the wagons, but I was sitting here alone a few days since, and Jim came stepping in. He got straggled off, and so he decided to come home on a visit. He will return to the reg. next Monday week if it can be found. He will go first to George at Staunton, and from there in search of Tom. Tom says he is a good boy and worth any two cooks in the reg.

All as well as usual here, at your Uncle Tom's, and your Uncle Sam's. . . . R. Davis.

(I copied the above note from a page of the preceding letter from Uncle Weldon. See page 33. B.F.B.)

Jim Green was a Negro boy who accompanied Uncle Tom to the army. This was a frequent custom. Usually he was a slave, but sometimes a free Negro wanted to go. I don't know whether Jim Green was a slave or free, but Grandpa's slaves were named "Davis," which leads me to believe Jim was a free Negro.

Dear Burwell,

Yours of the 13th reached me Saturday evening, and I will now drop you a few lines to let you know what we are all up to at home. We had a big rain last Friday. It drowned several chickens as large as partridges, and we had another shower this morning. I reckon it is fine for wheat sowers; I think your Pa is anxious to be putting his in the ground. They are hauling and shucking the lot corn and making arrangements for wheat sowing. John A's wheat don't come up, and he says he is the most disappointed man that ever happened. He thinks it got hot in the shocks. It was not sprouted at all. I reckon he expected to realize a little fortune from his good wheat.

The things you sent by Col. Wms. all came safely to hand, and I was truly glad to see those shoes and to hear that they were for Tom if he needed them, for he has been writing home for a pr. ever since he was sick at Dr. Goodwin's, now about a year ago, and they are no nearer made than when he first called for them. I wrote to him pretty soon and told him his shoes were ready and a-waiting till he should call for them.

I reckon my letter being written with polkberry juice made you think to send the bottle of ink. ~~xxxxxxx~~ I was at your Uncle Sam's when John came from Raleigh. He happened to meet with your Uncle Sam in town, and then he happened to meet with me up there. I had no one with me but Billie and Mason, so he took a seat with me, and Mason carried him on home. I was glad to accommodate him, as he had accommodated you. I reckon you ought to have sent your Aunt Patsy's specs by him; she might have them fixed in Louisburg and get them too, soon.

They made 43 gallons of molasses over there, and say if all their cane had been Chinese instead of African they would have made 100. I think Mat is more pleased with the syrup than anyone I have seen. You know he loves sweetning.

I think they are all much pleased at your Uncle Tom's on account of Isham's being Ward Master. I suppose they think he will not be sent off now, or perhaps it is the honor they are pleased with, but you say there's no honor there, but perhaps others think differently.

I had a letter from Weldon a week or so ago. They were on the banks of the Rapidan at that time, but where they are now I cannot tell. He asked where John St. Sing was, said he had written to him. I don't know where he is. He has left home, and is probably in camp near Raleigh. I heard he was ordered off. Lem Newell wants to buy your place. I will enclose a note he sent over to your Pa the other day. As your Pa was not at home I answered it briefly by telling him that I heard you say last spring that you wouldn't take less than \$4000, and I ought to have added that according to the way things go up, I reckon it was \$24,000 by this time.

Pat has not got home yet; I expect to go after her soon. Your Aunt Nancy says she will carry me. Your Aunt Mary has another heavy (the not dark) responsibility added to those already gathered around her hearthstone. Mrs. Delia Fleming died of diptheria a week ago today. She left a baby which only survived its mother one day. I presume it was a premature birth. She was to have gone to Va. to be

to be confined, & her Ma had come over after, & so she happened to be with her in her last hours. The last I heard from them she and Thomas were both about to die, at least that's what Octavia Roberson said. She was there on a visit when she died.

Your Pa is a juror and is now gone to town. ✓
As ever your affec. Ma, R.P.D.

Monday night, 9 O'clock.

Your Pa has returned from court, says Tom is wounded in the knee and sent to Charlottesville, the wound being too slight to get him a furlough home. Peter Allen was wounded in the breast at the same time. He was in town today, says he thinks he and Tom both were wounded with balls nearly spent. It was done ~~with~~ by Yankee sharpshooters, cavalry at that, near the Potomac.

They are following up the Yanks; I fear they will get into a suck. Allen said George was unhurt. Weldon was under fire of sharpshooters and that was all he knew of him. Henry Twitty is also wounded, shot through the fleshy part of the thigh. You may not have known that he was in the army, as he had only been in service a short time.

The pressmen are after Brown, and we expect them to take him, this day, I do. They have taken Tom Downtin's, which cost him 2,100, for 500 cash, Bill Alston's which cost him 3,000 for 500 each, and so on. You will probably never see the animal again. Well I hope to live till I die, if the Yanks don't kill me. Your Aunt Nancy and I expect to start to Lewisburg tomorrow morning, so if you have any business with either of us before Monday morning, you must call on us at that place.

(John A. Mr. John A. Williams.
Billie The youngest son in the family - 4 yrs old at time of this.
Mason A slave, young at that time, son of Uncle Richmond and Mammy Cindy. He lived on the place until I was grown. He went to the War with Uncle George.
Pat Youngest daughter (my mother).
Lem Newell, grandson of Grandma's Aunt Nancy Davis Powell.
"Your Aunt Nancy" and "Your Aunt Mary," Grandma's sisters, Mrs. Foote and Mrs. Egerton - the latter my paternal grandmother.
Thomas Fleming Grandpa's nephew.
Mrs. Delia Fleming wife of Thomas.
Tom and Weldon and George, sons of Grandma and Grandpa.
Peter Allen brother of Miss Caroline Allen, whom Uncle Burwell married later.
Isham Davis Grandpa's nephew.
The "another heavy (the not dark) responsibility" of "Aunt Mary" my grandmother Egerton, was, I think, the coming of her youngest son, Robert Zollicoffer, ("Uncle Zollie"), since 1963 was the date of his birth.
Brown the family buggy and riding horse.
Octavia Roberson A neighbor, whom Grandma's first cousin, "allace Williams later married.

B.E.B.)

Nov the 6th, 1863.

Dear Burwell,

Your letter of the 29th October reached me the 4th, accompanied by two newspapers, the Presbyterian and the same said State Journal, and some time last week we received from you the Southern illustrated news and that same said Standard. Your Pa is now sitting by my writing table reading them, and I think all that ought to entitle you to a good long interesting letter from home, but don't promise that you will get your deserts, but you shall have one of some sort.

I have just had letters from all three of the other boys also. Tom says his knee is considerably swollen yet. He is still at Charlottsville, Va. Weldon said he was about to get off home, and we are looking for him now every day. He and George were at Brandy Station, both well. Weldon said he wanted to go to Louisburg after Pat, told me to hold on and not go before he came, but how disappointed he and all the rest of you will be now, when you come home there will be no Brown to ride. He has been conscripted and carried off into service. Now isn't that hard? I feel as if I had lost a good friend, but the best of friends must part.

We are having a very favorable fall, I think. Your Pa sowed his wheat last week, says it is nicely done, put 30 bushels on to the lot that usually takes 12. It has not come up yet, and the ground is getting right dry. I have a nice crop of collards. They are very much inclined to cabbage and not worm bitten at all, and every body else's are almost eaten up with worms. I account for it in this way. I had a hen stole her nest and hatched in the collard patch, and there she has kept her brood ever since, and wormed the collards well.

About the sugar-cane seed, your Pa has put up a fine chance of seed in addition to those you put up. Mr Hill regrets very much not putting his low grounds in sorghum, says he could have made thirty thousand dollars, whereas he makes nothing. Every body is going to make a fortune next year. Some say it will be down to nothing, and I hope it will be down to where every body can get as much as they want, especially those who have no meat, and that's no few these days. Dr. Matt was here a few days since, and I reckon it is about as hard times with him as any body else. Meat, he says he doesn't aspire to, says he never could supply his family with that article. He wants to move down and teach school for us and live in your Uncle Sam's old house, but it won't be did.

I went to Louisburg a few days after I wrote to you last, and stayed seven days, went to Mr. McNight's too, at last. The old man enquired about you as familiarly as if he'd been used to you all the time. He said Margaret knew you were in Raleigh at the hospital, said Hugh Egerton told him his Cousin Burwell was there, when he was in Raleigh. Isham wrote to Pollie some time since and told her that you had been promoted and as such were allowed to eat at his table when he supercedes Dr. Hill, then perhaps you will get up to where he is now.

Well, Jim Foote went to Weldon and got his furlough extended, tho I do not know for what length of time, but I hear that he expects to leave in a few days. Your Grandma came home today for the first time in a very long time. She came down on the rail road to Nancy's and from there to town, and yesterday to your Uncle Sam's with him, and so on here this morning.

Are you coming to see Weldon, or must he come to see you? I reckon you can't come to see him, and I can't make any bargain for him. He hasn't come yet either. He says the Yanks had Jim Davis. He surrendered to them, but they paid no attention to him; they were so afraid of being taken themselves. He was detailed as a cook. Jim Tom ran himself almost to death; he ran seven miles. He didn't surrender.

Yes, Col. Wms. has arrived with 20 negroes, all John P's and some of his own. All three of Bob Clanton's men were killed before they got up with the Yanks; 6 of Dr. Cheek's men have left, and all Tom Brown's and all his sister's. John Wms. says his and his mother's have no notion of going.

Bob Pitchford is sick in Richmond, and his Pa expects to start after him Monday or before.

As ever, your affec. Mother, R.P.D.

(But Weldon never came home. Two days after this letter was written he was wounded and captured by the enemy (Nov. 8, 1863), and died in Douglas Hospital, Washington, D. C., on Dec. 22. Grandpa and Grandma never saw him or Tom again. B.E.B.)

Dr. Matt Williams
Mr. McKnight

Son of Grandma's "Aunt Becky Williams.
Father of Lou McKnight, who married my father's
brother, Charles Egerton.
A neighbor, and I think great grandfather of Dr.
S. P. Burt.

Dr. Cheek

Weldon died

Ma,
I will write a few hurried lines this morning. I am so tired I cannot write much. I am sorry to have to tell you all that Weldon is a prisoner, and twenty-one members of his Co., Lieut. Nicholson among them. Most of his men who escaped are of the opinion that Weldon was wounded, and I understand that Ben Davis thinks he was killed. I do not believe he was killed, but from what I can hear I think he must have been wounded. He was on picket with his regiment at Kelly's Ford, when the Yankees made an attack. The 30th was on the river when the Yankees came up on a bluff on the opposite side and opened on them with 20 pieces of artillery, and as much infantry as could come up. There was hardly any chance to escape. The men who came off cannot tell what became of the others. They do not think that many of Weldon's company was killed, and don't know that anybody was. I have seen them all except Ben.

We took a hard march last night and crossed the Rappidan, and Ben is not with his company this morning, but he is this side of the river. The 30th and 2nd were both pretty smartly cut up. Col. Cose of the 2nd was killed and the Lieut. Col. of the 30th wounded, it is thought mortally. The Yankees made a dash and crossed the river in large force. We went down about 12 o'clock (this was Saturday the 7th) and engaged them and held them in check until 12 o'clock at night, when we left and came to Culpepper C. H. Fighting at the same time was going on at Rappahannock Station.

We have not heard much about the result. Our army, I reckon, is nearly by this time on this side of the Rappidan. The last we heard from A. P. Hill he was at Brandy Station. I do not know for certain that he has crossed on this side. The Sharpshooters were ~~only~~ the only engaged of our segment. They were 20 yds in front of us. Some of our men were wounded and one killed. The regular line did not fire, as the Yankee line, except their Sharpshooters, did not advance after we got there.

I do not think that it was intended by our officers for us to remain on the north side of the Rappidan this winter. We had no position and the Yankees had an excellent one. Only a few troops had built winter qu'rs. Amos and Bob Wms are both missing. John Daniel Shearin is in command of the Company.

I never have been so put up for womething to eat in my life as I have been for the last two or three days. We have just drawn some bread and beef. We drew five biscuits and a piece of beef about two inches square Saturday morning and we drew nothing else until this morning (Monday), but I am well and have some rations left. I do hope we get something from home soon. I would like for you to make me a pr of gloves and send me two prs of socks. I have not heard a word from Tom since he was wounded. I am expecting a letter from you every day. I am afraid it will be some time before we hear from Weldon and his company. Write soon.

As ever, your affectionate son,

George.

(Ben Davis was the son of Grandpa's brother, John Davis.) B.E.B.

(Evidently Nov. 14, 1863)

Saturday the 14th

40

Dear Mat,

I expect you have seen accounts of the hard fighting of late, and want to know the fate of your brothers, so I send you George's letter. Your Pa has been to Warrenton today, and says that Buck Williams has written to his wife and says Weldon is not wounded at all, but is a prisoner. How he knows and whether he knows, I do not know.

We have been looking for him home every day since I returned from your house, and just heard from him this evening, poor fellow. I have had a letter from him since I came home in which he told me not to go after Pat before he came, as he wished to have the pleasure of going after her himself. How I do wish he had got off before this great misfortune! Tom is bad off with his wound, couldn't walk a step when he wrote last, said he didn't expect to in some time. I fear he has erysipelas in it.

I have just received a letter from Burwell, and I perceive he was much concerned about Weldon, as he has seen in the papers how the 30th was cut up. I wish you to send on George's letter to him and also this note. He spoke of having received a note from you recently. Dr. P. has this day returned home from Richmond with the remains of Tinte. He found no difficulty in his undertaking. Billie Check also went with him after his Bro. A funeral is to be preached over Tinte, Caroline and Pollie's child. Pollie is about yet; your Grandma is there also. We are all well, even Ned has come out again. Pat has been very sick with high fever, but is up now, but looks quite slow.

As ever your affec. Ma.

Louisburg, Nov. 9, 1863

Brother,

Please present this account to Mr. Lewis for payment at your earliest convenience and forward the amount to me by letter. I do not know when I shall see him and I want the money. We are all well. Ma was out to see us about two weeks ago. My school will close about the 1st of Dec. and we shall go down to Pa's in ten or twelve days thereafter. We shall be glad to meet you there if you expect to go down soon.

As I do not want to put you to any expense on my account, I enclose a stamp to pay return postage.

Yours etc. M. S. Davis.

Louisburg, Nov. 17, 1863

Bro. B.

I have just received a letter from Ma, which you will find enclosed. The news is unpleasant, but I hope Buck Williams's statement is correct that Weldon is a prisoner but not hurt. That is bad enough, but it might be much worse. We are all well except Charles Davis. He has been sick in bed several days, but not seriously. I have not received from you an answer to my note. I presume you have not seen Gus Lewis.

Yours etc. M. S. Davis.

(I have not been able to find out who "Tinte" was. Dr. Pitchford had a son named Robert Tines, but he was called "Bob," and according to records he died in 1865, two years later than this letter was written. Neither do I know who "Caroline" was. Dr. P. had a granddaughter, Caroline, born years later than this date, and living in 1955. B.E.B.)

Dear Burwell,

As your Uncle Tom expects to go up tomorrow, I will not miss the opportunity of letting you hear from home. I wish I had something cheerful to write, but alas! I have not. We were so anxious to get a letter from George to see if he had heard from Weldon that your Pa started to town this morning after the mail, but met Isham and Simon at Joe Egerton's, and as Isham had the mail, your Pa came back. He took Isham, and Simon went back.

George has heard nothing from Weldon. He is not back to camp, as was reported about here, and if we only knew that he was not killed or wounded I would try to content myself, tho it is hard for one so good and gentle, so noble and true, to fall into the hands of such a cruel foe. John St. Sing writes that Bob Wms. is surely killed. I hope it is not so, but I fear it is, for Jim Green is home and confirms it. He came today sick, and brought a letter from George. I also got a letter from Tom. He cannot walk yet, but is improving.

Isham was in a great hurry to see the new baby. He must have started immediately after hearing of its advent. George and Jim Foote are both to be married the 3rd of Dec., and Tho's Pitchford the 16th, tho that is not public yet. Mr. Buxton had a large barn burnt a few nights ago, with a large quantity of cotton, between 60 and 100 bales, and I guess much besides; loss \$30,000. I think it is the new barn near the new house.

I suppose you received George's letter sent on by Matt with a note from me. Isham says he thinks you did.

I sent you two dozen brass buttons by your Uncle Tom. Pat has been cleaning the buttons for you, and has improved them a good deal, but not as much as might be by a good deal. Buttons are scarce articles now, especially brass buttons. Tom says his leg actually mortified. It was all occasioned by letting a blister plaster stay on 24 hours, and I guess that was done thru neglect. I suppose he has suffered a sight with it. He says it is improving now.

I think your Pa is more hurt about Weldon's catastrophe than I have known him to be. He has no appetite and is almost sick, and I am not well. I am - we are - invited to the dining at Nancy Foote's, but I hardly expect to attend. Your Pa has no idea of going, and I have no one to go with me.

Well I had as well conclude, so goodbye,

As ever, your affect.

Ma.

(Simon Fleming - Grandpa's nephew.

Jim and George Foote - Grandma's nephews.

Joe Egerton - First cousin of my Grandfather Egerton. His daughter, Blanche Egerton, married Grandpa's youngest son, Billie.) B.F.E.

Monday night, 7th Dec. 42

Dear Burwell,

Yours of the 26th came to hand, and as I expect you are anxious to know if we have heard from Weldon, I will write you a few lines and send you a note from Ben Powell to your Pa. We did hope to hear that he was not wounded, but our hopes are all prostrate now. I hardly think I shall ever see him again. We do not know where he is. I would joyfully go to him if I could, and your Pa says he would go after him anywhere if he knew the Yankees would give him up. I feel like it would afford me more pleasure to sit by his bedside and wait on him than anything on earth ever did. I imagine he would be so patient, calm, resigned, and uncomplaining, but I must dismiss the sad subject, as I have but little time to write tonight.

I reckon your Uncle Tom has delivered up the cravat to you ere this. If he has not, ask him for it, and if it does not suit let me know, and I'll try again. No, we had not seen a list of the casualties at Kelly's Ford until you sent it, and I was expecting you or Mat to send us some such account, and sure enough you did. I am keeping that and the notice of Maj. Sellar's death. Your Pa likes the Fayetteville Observer very much.

If you should hear anything from Weldon, let us know. You may happen to hear something which we may not. Can't you come home Christmas? Mat and Lou expect to be here at that time. Oh! me. Weldon came so near getting home, I even had his bed fixed for him. I think he had his furlough. I had heard what day he was to be here. It was Tuesday, 10th of Nov. I think it hurts me more on that account; I know it does. Oh, if I could see him once more!

I had a letter from Tom written the 23rd of Nov., and he expected to go to camp in a day or two, and I have not heard from him or George since; at least I have not had a letter from either of them. I heard they were in line of battle two weeks ago. George was, but I don't know whether Tom had, or has got there yet.

Your Pa says he has 55 shoats in the fattening pen. He has bought one sack of salt recently, but I am not so sure that he has enough to salt the meat. About buying a horse, I don't hear him say much. Bill Alston told him the other day to give him \$600 and he would buy him a horse to swap for our Brown, and I was real anxious for it to be done. Bill said he would rather have given \$100 out of his own pocket than that that horse should have been taken. He says they had no business with him anyway. Your Pa works Pigion to the buggy, and she does very well, and looks well, and he was going to pamper her up a little, but Oh! she has got the scratches so bad, and he can't cure it. She is right lame, and he has had to stop high feeding, as he thinks that is rather detrimental.

He is done gathering corn, and is now carrying ~~xxxxxx~~ every tenth load to the depot. He says tell you the wheat is looking well and plenty thick, and he has plowed up all the land above the road high and low land, and been plowing some days in the Amy field. John A. Wms. and B. Wms. together have hauled upwards of 100 barrels of corn to your Uncle Sam's depot, and Big John $\frac{1}{2}$ barrel. The corn and fodder are pouring in, tho I reckon there is but little to spare at most places where it comes from.

As ever, Your affec. Ma.
(I think Ben Powell was the son of Grandpa's sister, Jennie Davis Powell
B.E.B.

P. S. I remarked the other day that it wasn't worth while for you to sell your boots, that you had as well wear boots as any body else. Pat sais, "Ma, let Bro Burwell alone. He knows exactly what to do with them; he knows everything, he knew I would break my comb if I put it in my hair before Ma came home."

(In the same envelope was a small piece of paper, part of a letter from my other grandmother, Mary Egerton, ~~had~~ written to Grandma. Though the writing is perfectly legible, I couldn't make any sense out of it because it was cut intw@right across the lines, not leaving any line complete, but I will quote the half lines:) "our overseer was) he says he son of Enoch Powell. He is no big the nicest & best people as I ever could get along without them. I sent up for the cloth just as soon as I can get tionate sister, M. T. Egerton."

(This is the only bit of Grandma Egerton's handwriting that I ever remember seeing. The envelope is addressed to "Sgt. Burwell P. Davis, Peace Institute Hospital, Raleigh, N. C." B.E.B.)

(Charles Davis son of Grandpa's brother, Sam Davis.
Mason a slave. son of "Mammy Cindy" and "Uncle Richmond."
He and Mammy Cindy lived on the place until I was grown.
Wallace Williams son of Grandma's Aunt Becky Williams, for whom she was named. Aunt Rebecca and her husband, Williams C. Williams, had 12 children. Wallace was the youngest son. He, according to family records, did marry Octavia Robinson, or as Grandma spelled it, Rober-son. I don't know which spelling is correct, but it is the same girl.

B.E.B.)

Sunday night, 20th, 4 o'clock

Dear Burwell,

Yours of the 15th came to hand last evening, and I will drop you a few lines. It is altogether unnecessary for us to tell you our feelings at this time, as we know you can judge of them somewhat by your own. It is, I suppose, a stern fact, a dreadful reality that we shall see our dear Weldon no more on earth. It is a source of the deepest grief to us of anything that has ever yet befallen us. Indeed I have never felt anything to compare with it. Yes, I have, but not equal to it. He was so good and amiable, and dutiful, and almost everything that was good, and to have to die among strangers, and enemies at that, it is almost more than I can bear. But I must forbear, for I know you need consolation as much as I do.

I received a letter from Tom yesterday, and it is one of the best letters I ever read, and really has a good deal of consolation in it. He is deeply grieved, and yet he tries to console me. He says, "It is a source of great consolation to know that he died an honorable death, a sacrifice upon the altar of his country; but what is a source of still greater consolation is to know that he lived a life of such immaculate purity." And then he says, "Let us look to God for comfort and consolation, and try to bear it with humble resignation." And then he says, "There are five of us left, and God grant that we may all die as he did (if need be) rather than our names should ever be stained by a single disgraceful imputation." He says if he had lived the life that Weldon ~~lived~~ lived, he would not fear to die.

He says he reckons we loved him better than any of the others, and if we didn't, we did him a great injustice, and says, "If you had openly avowed it, I assure you that none of the envy of Jacob's sons would have rankled in our bosoms." Well perhaps I was unworthy of such a son, and so he has been taken from me, but I thank God for the glorious hope of meeting with all my children in that better land where there will be no more wars, nor suffering nor sorrow of any sort. I have a great desire that you all should be pious.

I cannot tell you when Isham is to go back. He was to have gone Friday, but had a chill instead. I hear that he is to go tomorrow. If he does, I shall send this by him, and if not, I shall mail it. I may give it to Hugh Egerton to mail in Louisville. He is here, and will leave tomorrow or next day. He came yesterday and brought Mary to stay a few weeks with Pat. He is a "nice" boy, as the saying is. Your Grandma is here and is quite well. I expect she will remain here the balance of the winter.

I did not attend the double dining at Nancy Foote's, nor do I think I should have gone to Thomas's if it had come off, which by-the-bye it did not, tho he put his folks to a great deal of trouble and expense. I am surprised at his proceedings. He failed to get his furlough approved, but we all supposed that that matter was all arranged long ago.

I think his Pa is much mortified, tho they all seem to bear it very well. They say it might have been much worse. I don't know how the fair lady likes such a disappointment. I read the letter that

Thomas wrote home to inform them that he was not coming, and I assure you he was much out of humor. He said one of the officials whom he expected to sign the furlough, said he did not approve of soldiers marrying during the war, and then he said "some men clothed with a little brief authority cut up such fantastic tricks before high heaven, as makes the angels weep." Shakspear. He tells them to hold on to his wedding clothes, he'll need them yet. Dr. Foote and Jim and their wives and Ma had laid up to stay with us that night, but they happened to hear the day before that it was a failure. They may all marry and welcome, but I didn't feel like, not intend to participate in any way. I had no relish for it when my own boys are suffering and bleeding and dying. I forgot to say in the right place that the Sentinel and Journal also came to hand.

Bob Wims is not killed as was reported, but is alive and safe at Point Lookout. Your Pa saw a letter from Jim Harris in which he said "Capt. Davis' boy arrived here." Said nothing about Weldon: don't suppose that any of the boys even knew he was even taken.

Your Pa says I may say to you that your Uncle John says that Jimmy has concluded to sell you that bit of land you once spoke of buying; says what must he do? Must he trade for you, &c? I asked him what price they held it at, but he says he doesn't know, so you must limit him, say how far he is to go. If the land is ~~xxx~~ really worth \$3 per acre, you may expect to pay \$30, if \$4, then 40 and so on.

Matt is to come tomorrow to stay a day or two. Lou is not coming at all on account of the children having the whooping cough. A great disappointment all around. I think if they all had come, it would have been considerable relief to our feelings. Tom was sent on to camp while they were in line of battle, but was sent back again. He however went to Dr. Goodwin's and stayed a week or two, when he heard of Weldon's death, he went to camp, said he wanted to see George. George said he was not well when he wrote last. He thought perhaps he had eaten too freely of the good things Dick Davis and Mc. Duke carried. Dick is back; they take no subs. Mc. got robbed in Richmond of \$35, and got his shoes burnt, and a hole in his coat and his boy's hat stolen at the soldiers' home.

As ever yours &c.

Rebecca P. Davis.

(Thomas, son of Dr. Thomas Jefferson Pitchford.

"The fair lady," Miss Pattie Plummer, whom Thomas finally married Hugh Egerton, son of Grandma's sister Mary. He was my father's brother. Mary Egerton, Hugh's sister, usually called "Minnie." She married Dr. B. Frank Whiteside.

Nancy Foote, Grandma's sister.

Dr. Foote, Her husband.

Jim (James) Foote, Their son.

Jim (James) Harris, the widower of Grandma's daughter Mary.

"Capt. Davis" Uncle Weldon.

His "Boy" the Negro slave who went with him to the army to wait on him.

Dick Davis, Richard Blount Davis, son of Grandpa's brother John.

Washington City, Dec. 8, '63

Mrs. Edward Davis
Warrenton, N. C.

Dear Madam,

In the discharge of a most painful duty, I address you, sympathizing most truly in the sore affliction which it has pleased God to appoint you. Your son, Capt. Weldon Edwards Davis, was wounded and captured at Kelly's Ford, Va., on the 8th of Nov. On the 9th he was brought to this city & placed in the Douglas Hospital, receiving the most careful attention and provision. Capt. Davis' wound, a severe fracture of the right leg, rendered amputation necessary. At first surgeons were hopeful, but on the 19th symptoms of tetanus appeared, rendering ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ unavailing all skill and attention of the surgeons in his behalf. He expired 40 m. after 4 o'clock on Sunday, the 22nd. I was permitted to visit him every day, was with him the whole of the last day of his life, witnessed his baptism, his holy & happy death, & received his last message to you, his dear mother, assuring you that he died a Christian in the hope of a glorious immortality. I attended his funeral to cemetery of the soldiers Home. At his request, the effects found on his person when captured are in my hand to be delivered to you.

With sincerest respect, your fellow sufferer,
Mrs. Elizabeth Blount.

Warrenton, N. C., Dec. the 26, 1863

Mrs. Blount,
Washington City,

Dear Madam,

Your kind and sympathizing letter of the 8th of Dec. reached me the 21st, giving us the particulars of the death of our beloved son, Capt W. E. Davis, and I must beg leave to make a brief reply and assure you that you have conferred a great favor & placed us under lasting obligations. I thank God that there is such a woman as Mrs. Elizabeth Blount; long may you live to visit the afflicted and offer the consolations of the gospel to the dying stranger.

We had heard that he was severely wounded, and had seen in the newspaper a brief notice of his death, but I still hoped it might be otherwise and that I might see the loved one again, but now I know that I shall never see his lovely form again in this world, and never more hear the sound of his soft sweet voice. I have shed many tears over your letter, tho I assure you that it affords us the greatest consolation that could possibly be offered under the circumstances. I have transmitted a copy of it to my absent children, and at their request must ask you if it be possible to have his last resting place unmistakably marked. His effects you will please retain until you can transmit them to me, according to his request. I feel so very thankful that he found a friend in whom he had full confidence. My husband says he feels entirely relieved since the reception of your letter. It is a source of the greatest consolation to know that he was properly cared for, and still greater to know that he died a Christian. If it should ever be convenient for you to give us any additional particulars, they will be thankfully received and read with the deepest interest.

With sincere respect,
Your friend for life,
Rebecca P. Davis.

Monday night.

I have just now received a letter from Washington City, from a lady who signs her name, "Mrs. Elizabeth Blount, your friend and fellow sufferer." She writes to inform me of the death of my son, "Capt. Weldon Edwards Davis." Says she was permitted to visit him every day during his confinement, and was with him the whole of the last day of his life, witnessed his baptism, his holy and happy death, and received his last message to "you, his dear Mother, assuring you that he died a Christian in the hope of a glorious immortality. I attended his funeral to the cemetery of the soldiers' home, and at his request, the effects found on his person when captured are in my charge to be delivered to you."

The above is pretty, yes, exactly the words of the lady. She says his wound was a severe fracture of the right leg, rendering amputation necessary. The physicians were hopeful of his recovery until the 19th when unfavorable symptoms appeared, and on Sunday the 22nd at 40 m. after 2 o'clock he breathed his last.

I am much obliged to the good lady. She assures me that he had the most careful attention and provision. It is a source of great consolation to us to know that he was well cared for, and that he died a Christian. I pray God to grant that we all may meet him in Heaven. The Washington letter is draped in mourning inside and out. ✓
Let us all dry up our tears now, and henceforth know that we have another tie in Heaven.

(Details of Uncle Weldon's being wounded and captured are given in a letter dated June 25, 1864, and the letter is in its chronological order in this collection of letters. However, it might be more interesting to turn to that letter now, and then come back to the next one here. I would have put the letter next, but it would mix up the dates and the order of other items in the letters.

B.F.B.)

Sunday night after supper, 10th Jan. '64

Dear Burwell,

Your letter of the 2nd came duly to hand. The news papers were also received, and your Pa is now reading the Observer. About that big rain, I guess we had it in full, and the creek looked like it had a notion of coming up to the house.

Hugh Egerton carried Mollie home yesterday, just three weeks from the day they came. It was very cold and icy. I sent two letters by him to mail, when he was here before, one to you and the other to George. They were both marked "Paid 10 cts," but the postmaster of Louisburg said it wouldn't do, so Hugh had to pay 10 cts more on each of them. I guess I don't get caught so again.

Thomas Pitchford has brought his wife up to see us, and I like her very much. He expects to leave the 16th. The soldiers seem to be getting very much in the notion of marrying. Poor fellows, I reckon they hardly know what to do. I suppose they have concluded that they had as well be killed married as single, and as for the girls, I suppose they think they are as willing to be widows as old maids.

Henry Bobbitt is now at home on furlough, and it is said that he and Winea Fleming are to be married in a few days, and I am inclined to believe it, as my authority was tolerably good, tho not official.

Dr. Foote and his wife and mother stayed here all night when they came down to Thomas' dining. Matt stayed only two nights. He was here at the time of the dining, but didn't go. None of us went: few families now feel like making merry. "It is more blessed to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting." just now at least. Jim Foote and Henry have gone a week or two. They were in camp when George wrote last.

Do you get any molasses at your house? I have used half of mine and more, but I can make out till time to make more. I have tried to tire Pat and Bill of it, but with no effect. The more they eat of it, the more they want. It seems that they never want any thing else.

I wish they would let you come home for good. I am sure you could benefit the Confederacy more by staying here and helping to farm than you can where you are. Your Pa says negroes can't, don't, or won't raise hogs. I fear most will get to be a scarce article. The soldiers' wives eat so much. Well, I feel for the soldiers' wives, and don't want them neglected, but they ought to work more and eat less, some of them. We are done with hog killing, killed 58, and they made 4,616. I still have a little old bacon on hand.

I have just got a letter from George. He says he and Tom, in fact all his brigade are to go on picket the 16th and will not return until the 23rd -- a week. How will they stand it? I am very anxious for Tom to come home and so is your Pa. The last time I saw him he and Weldon left home together. I think if I could have seen Weldon once more, I could have stood it better, and now if Tom should share the same fate, I don't see how I can stand it. Mat says there is a very clever man in Louisburg (a refugee) named French, who I suppose knows this Mrs. Elizabeth Blount. He says she is a lady of high

standing, the mother of three dashing belles, was originally from one of the Carolinas, and has two sons in the Confederate service. She was once a Presbyterian, but now a Roman Catholic, says a difference of religious opinion caused separation between her and her husband, but the matter has been amicable adjusted, and they were living together at last accounts. He says I may rely implicitly on the truthfulness of all she said.

As ever your affectionate
Ma.

(Mollie, another name for Grandma's Egerton's daughter, Mary, also called "Minnie."
Henry Bobbitt, married Grandpa's niece, Winnie Fleming, or as Grandma calls her, "Winea."
Jim and Henry Foote, sons of Grandma's sister, Aunt Nancy.

(The following has no date or heading or signature. B.F.B.)

I have sent you a copy of the entire letter of Mrs. Blount, thinking you might like to see it all. I received many letters of sympathy and condolence from various friends and relatives, all of which I highly appreciate, tho they stir afresh the deep fountain of my grief. Time may in a measure obliterate the keen anguish which I now feel, and partially heal the wound, but the deep deep scars will ever remain.

On the other side is pretty much what I wrote in reply. I wrote it on a whole sheet of nice ~~paper~~ letter paper which your Uncle Tom gave me, as I had none, tho we are only allowed to write one page. Met desired of me to ask the lady to have his grave unmistakably marked, if it be practicable. I want to see Mrs. Blount when the war ends, if it ever does end, and I am here to see it.

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Thursday evening, Jan 21, 1864. This a beautiful day, and I think the boys have had a tolerable good week to lie out, at least much better than last week was. I seldom ever mention the war, or the state and condition of the country, or of my feelings, to them, poor fellows. I know they have enough to contend with at best. They never mention Pitcher these days. I have asked them why and where is he, etc, etc, but they have not replied.

We were sent for to go the James Cheek's to a funeral today, and your Pa has gone, but I didn't feel like going myself. I knew I should cry myself pretty high to death at the funeral of a poor soldier. I shed bitter tears enough at home. Tom Cheek, Wallace, and Tom Davis all went into the service at the same time, two of them have long since filled soldier's graves.

I am very hopeful that Tom is a Christian, tho he has not as yet made an open profession. I like the tenor of his letters very much, and have for some time. He is a brave and noble boy. He has just read Dodridge's "Rise and progress of religion in the soul," and was much interested in it. If he should ever receive a more fatal blow than those he has received, I hope he may be able to say as dear Weldon did, "Tell Ma I died a Christian, in hope of a glorious immortality."

Mr. Clemons is living over here at Aunt Betsy's old place with his wife and 5 children and negro family ~~xxx~~ and going to make a crop. Phil Alston is to be married the 2nd of Feb. to a young lady of Louisville, who has been teaching school for Arch Alston last year. Her name is Crayton, sister of Lewis Watson's wife and Dent's wife. She is poor, but he says that he has enough for both. He is not provost martial at Weldon.

(Grandma spelled the name C-r-a-y-t-o-n, since that was the way it sounded, but it should be "Creighton.")

This the 20th of Jan, 1864

Dear Burwell,

Yours of the 14th came duly to hand and as your Pa will probably go to town this week, I will make a brief reply. I see you feel much solicitude in regard to George and Tom, as well you may, but I am afraid to say anything to them about getting a transfer, for in the first place, I don't know but as many cavalry as infantry get killed, according to number, and in the second place, if we were to cause them to make the exchange, and then they were to get killed, it would be an additional source of grief for all time. As you say I don't much like to give advice, tho I feel a great deal more anxiety about them than I ever have. They went on picket duty the 16th and will not return until the 23rd, so I shall not get a letter from them in some days.

Your Pa said he would have gone to the army with Thomas Pitchford if he could have got you to stay till he returned. The boys desired him to go to see them, and besides he wanted to settle up Weldon's affairs. I suppose he owes some, and others owe him some. He, however, sent on the power to B. D. Williams.

My molasses I have used three times a day ever since I had it, until of late. Pat and Bill never seem to want anything else either for Breakfast, dinner or supper, and I thought I'd try and tire them of it, but I found it was no go; the more they ate the better they loved it. I only use it now to sweeten their tea and give them a little occasionally. I have also sent some to the boys twice. They sent a canteen all the way home after some, and I made a good chance of preserves last summer too, and now have that big jar full not touched, so I think I can make it last till next time.

You said in your last, "I do not think I have written all I intended, but have forgotten the balance." I can tell you how to manage that. Whenever you think of anything you intend to write, note it down, just a word or two will suffice. I have to do that, else I should always forget the prime object of my letter, as apt as not. I am thinking the next campaign will end the war, but how I don't know. I hope some great power, either natural or divine, or both, may interfere in our behalf.

Dr. Cheek called on us a while yesterday. He is on a furlough. Your Grandma is here and well. Your tobacco is in a coppras a white bag, but don't you forget and call it a pillow case; I wouldn't like for Raleigh folks to know I used coppras pillow cases. How is it about this smoking? Have you quit chewing and took to the pipe? Well, I don't know which is the least of the two evils, chewing, I reckon.

As ever, your affectionate

Ma,
R. P. Davis.

(I think Dr. Cheek was the grandfather of Dr. S. P. Burt of Louisburg.)
B.E.B.

Feb. the 2nd, 1864

Dear Burwell,

letter paper

The bundle of pants, cabbage seed, and gumarabic came to hand today. I am very glad of the glue. It is a very convenient article, and I like very much to keep it on hand. I sent \$5 to "ouisburg last Saturday by Charles Davis and bought me a quire of letter paper just the size of this, so now I have two quires, but I don't care if I have, it is none too much. I shall be very saving with it, and you needn't be surprised if the next time I write to you it is on an old acct. I have some of that coarse blank book yet, but Pat must have some to write on. We expect her to start to school tomorrow to Mr. Fullford, Fishing Creek Academy, Warren Co., N. C. His salary is \$400. That may be more than he is worth, but it is but little if any more than enough to bread his family.

When your last letter came to hand with two ten cent stamps on it, I was real puzzled to know what that was for, but it came to me after awhile. I sent George and Tom a whole package of those old envelopes, and they were very glad to get them, said they were just as good as new. Tom has got into a bomb proof position, so he says, and I am so glad I hardly know how to contain myself. He is on provost guard at Rhodes' headquarters. He says the duty is very hard, and he wants Mason to help him when he is off so that he can rest. His place will always be in the rear, and no danger of his being taken unless the whole army is captured, and then no matter if he is. He may be sent by Wallace Williams the 14th of this month, not certain yet. Your Pa doesn't much like the idea, fears he is not able to find him. (Right here I am sure Grandma meant "Mason's place will always, etc, and Mason may be sent by Wallace Williams, etc. B.F.B.)

They are trying very hard to get George back to the Quartermaster's department where he once was, but his officers refuse to let him go, and I am very sorry for it. It would relieve my mind a great deal if he was back there.

Wallace Williams came here Sunday morning, stopped a few minutes, said he was going to your Uncle Tom's. We told him he was going to Tom Roberson's, but he positively denied it, said he never had courted Octavia and never meant it, and after that sent on straight there, was there yesterday, and is yet I reckon, as he has not passed back by here as he promised faithfully to do, and I shouldn't be at all surprised to hear that they are married. He was dressed very fine.

Octavia kicked Bill Check as soon as she heard that Wallace had come from camp. He is on sick furlough. It seems to be but little trouble for anybody to come home except my boys and Joe Rodwell. He has never been yet. His wife has just ~~xxxxxx~~ been to Lynchburg to see him. He is doing something in a hospital. His wife says she is satisfied now, she has seen him, had rather he should stay where he is and never come home till the end of the war than to be exposed in the army and come perhaps once a year. Her youngest child is weaned, and he has never seen it; she is sorry she didn't carry it. Your Grandma and Mary Newell went to see her the other day. She is as lively as a cricket, so they say. Your Pa is fixing to have his molasses mill made, and six barrels. Don't intend to fill them all tho, I guess.

As ever, Ma.

R. P. Davis

Feb. 29th.

Dear Burwell,

As you are beginning to want to hear from home, I will drop you a few lines. Yours of the 24th came to hand, stamped with the Governor's seal and 30 cts postage, and your Pa, who was the first to get it in hand, concluded it must be all the way from Washington City.

Yes, the ice on our pond was thick enough to put up, but it wasn't did. Our wheat shows a little, and but a little. Uncle Kearney passed here a few days since, and said ours was the best he had seen. If so, I pity the balance.

George left Friday. He carried some provisions with him, but I do not expect that Tom will get a mouthful of it. Poor fellow, he is sadly in need of it too. He has written since you left and said he hadn't had a mouthful of meat in two days, and very short rations of bread, says he would never complain if he could get bread, but when it comes to no meat and not enough bread, that is hard.

Your Uncle Sam gave George half bushel or more of potatoes a few days before he left, and Mrs. John A. sent him a half bushel and a fine lot of butter to carry to camp. Jim Foote and his wife stayed here Thursday night. There was a bundle of letters sent up here for George to mail, and one to you from Isham among them, but he went off and left them, so they will not get off any sooner than this, I reckon. I didn't know they were here until he was gone.

Mr. Cheek left his estate just as it stands to his wife as long as she lives. She can buy or sell a negro or anything she chooses, and at her death the money and negroes are to be equally divided among all his children. His land ~~is~~ to be divided between his two boys, and all the residue is to belong to Billie. All the land on this side of the creek and a little on the other side ~~xxx~~ down about the bridge is Gus's, and I reckon it is his now.

Well, what do you think! Last Sunday morning when your Pa fed hogs, he missed Louisburg, and when he went to feed his sheep he found his entrails where he was butchered, so he enquired who of our folks stayed at home all night, and Net for one said he did, but it was soon proved that he did not stay at home all night, but went over the creek, so your Pa sent George off to see what he could learn over there, and evidence began to gather so thick against Net that he took up his tools and left, and when we shall see him again remains to be told. He could not face that act. Your Pa think (now) that he has killed six or seven in the course of a year or less time, one very recently. We think he carries them over to old reeds (I'm not sure of that word. B.T.B.) and sells them. Now isn't he a pretty foreman! He was in a fair way to break up the plantation, and was by far the meanest Negro on it, I think. If he does come back, I don't know what ought to be done with him. He may try to go to Yankeeland, for aught I know.

Ann Eaton's little girl died yesterday with measles. She has only two children now, Bet and Turnbull are off. She would have him till her folks got willing, and then she wouldn't. Tom writes to me

that he is in love with one of the F.F.V's. and is just about to pop the question. What do you think of that? Poor fellow, I am afraid to say one word for or against it. I have no news, so I'll wind up the business.

As ever, your affec.

Ma.

(P. S. I am sorry to hear that your good friend, Dr. Hill, is going to leave you, tho perhaps you may like his successor quite as well.

(I think "Dr. Hill" was Dr. William Hill of Raleigh, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ great uncle of my husband, George Spencer Baker, since Dr. Wm. Hill was a prominent Raleigh physician at the time of the war.

"Net," whose real name was Nelson, was one of the slaves, and gave Grandpa much trouble. B.E.B.)

(The following note from Isham Davis, nephew of Grandpa, was with Grandma's letter, and the date, 1864, on it certifies the date of her letter. B.E.B.):

Test

Thos. J. Pitchford, Sr.

I hereby nominate and appoint Burwell P. Davis my lawful attorney to sign Payroll for me and to draw any money that may be due me at General Hospital No. 8, Raleigh, N. C.

I. H. Davis.

On the other side of the paper he wrote:

Warren County, N. C.

Feb. 25, 1864

Cousin Burwell,

I send you a power of attorney to draw my money. I want you to buy a jacket for me from some of the details. Walton promised to let me have his. I don't want you to give any more than the Government prices. George leaves tomorrow, and I will send this letter by him. Give my respects to all the boys.

Yours &c.

I.H.Davis.

Letter not dated, but must have been March, 1864, because
the context shows that it was written a few days after the
preceding letter in this collection. Monday evening.

56

Dear Burwell,

I have just finished your pants and sent them down to Isham to carry to you. I hope they will suit you. I tried to cut them by the cloth ones, but the cloth ones are too small for the present fashion. If they will not suit you, you can save them for Tom, if he should ever need any more.

I don't know how I shall get clothes now, my cotton is out. I have no more than two or three lbs on hand, and my cards are getting very bad off, and I see no way at present but for all hands to get to go naked. I hear a good deal said about cards for soldiers' wives, but not a word about cards for soldiers' mothers.

Lou writes that there are a great many marriages pending out there and almost everywhere else. She says she heard a lady say that there was no such thing these days as for a man to be discarded. Well if a body could know that the war would ever end, it would be a very propitious time to choose a wife.

Nelson has not returned yet, but Sary told me this morning that Ann went off yesterday and carried a lot of bread down toward the creek, and I reckon it is true. He can stay out as long as he pleases and get well fed and harbored. There is nobody to catch him.

George has not written to us since he left. He wrote back to Mr. M. C. Duke as soon as he got to camp to let him know he lost his box of provisions at Weldon. He had three boxes, one for himself, one for Mark Duke, and one for Matthew Duke. When he went to change cars, he took his own box and left the other two in the care of a man who offered to watch them till he got back. When he got back, the man, boxes and all were gone. Now that man stays there for that purpose, I reckon. Mr. Duke said George was in a peck of trouble, but he wrote on to him to be easy, he was satisfied; he knew he did his best. He said George opened his own box to the Dukes and told them to take what they chose. The Dukes send on a great many boxes and George always gets a good share of them.

I have heard today that the 12th N. C., was engaged with the Yankee cavalry last week. I haven't heard the casualties. I don't want to hear anything to hurt me any worse than I am hurt, and I don't know as I can. I can't hear from Tom, and it seems that he can't hear from me. I have had no response to the three last letters I have written. I had a letter from him Feb. 4th, and that is the last I have heard of him, and then he hadn't received my last letters.

Your affec. Ma.

(The above letter was written over or between the lines of one from Aunt Lou. I can read very little of Aunt Lou's letter, but will give that little. B.E.B.):

Louisburg, Feb. 29th

Dear Mother,

It has been now nearly a fortnight since I've heard from you, and I wish that we may hear again. We are all well except the

cough which has not abated much yet, though the children ~~xxxxx~~ seem well enough otherwise my cloth ready You know it is a new business to me, and I fear I should make more blunders. If there is any way and let me know how much I am in your debt my next attempt will be to have the children some aprons and dresses, but my chance will be worse than ever now, as we have another boarder

The marrying fever seems to be increasing about here. I hear there are three weddings in prospect I am so sorry we shan't see George. I would willingly divide my yeast cakes and (?) if he would give me the opportunity.

(I cannot read the rest, but it is signed:)

Affectionately yours,
Lou H. Davis.

{On the back page is a note from Uncle Matt, and I can read very little of it. The date, however, confirms the time of Grandma's letter. It says:

Mar. 2nd, 1864.

Dear Ma,

I wrote a note some time ago in reference to Aunt Patsy's spectacles, but have heard nothing from it..... What is the objection to the glasses now in them? Age is a bad standard by which to select glasses. Persons of the same age frequently (?) very different ones. Let me know whether

M.S.D.

("Aunt Patsy" was the wife of Grandpa's brother, Uncle John Davis. B.E.B.)

(following is part of a letter written by Mrs. M. S. Davis, (Aunt Lou) to Grandma. The date is not given, but it was probably in 1863 or 1864. B.E.B.)

Saturday morning. I am expecting Hugh every minute, though it looks like we might have rain today. Mr. Davis is setting out potato slips this morning. Eddie has been worse off than anyone I ever saw with the measles. He seems a little brighter this morning. His face has been a deep crimson for two or three days and very hot fevers with it. Here is Hugh, so I must close. I hope we shall be able to get to see you in the vacation. I do want to see you all very much, and won't be satisfied if I don't get to your house. Let us know if you have any tidings from the boys.

As ever your affectionate
Lou.

(Hugh Agerton, Grandma's nephew and brother of my father. B.E.B.)

(No date given on this letter,) but I think it was in March, '64⁵⁸
since the letter on page 59 shows that it was written soon after this one)
B.S.B.)

Dear Burwell,

Yours of the 2nd came to hand this morning, and we have fixed up a lot of provisions to send you -- some 8 or 10 lbs of flour, with peas in one end of the bag, as much meal with a little Confederate coffee, a middling of meat, half a ham, some old ham meat cooked, a little sausage, but it is right hard, and I am going to look for your canteen, and if I can find it, I will send you some molasses to sweeten your coffee with. I expect they will send you all off soon, or make some arrangements to feed you, for they must know you all cannot ramble over the country looking for provisions, or do they think you all can live on the wind, or on acorns, or what do they think?

George is at home on sick furlough, tho he is as well as you ever saw him, if not a little weller. He is affected with sore boils. He will go up tomorrow to carry your things to the depot, and he says he wishes he had taken transportation to Raleigh, and if he had he would go on to see you and carry the things to you, but he says his money is scarce, and it would cost him some 12 or 15 dollars, and he hasn't got it to spare.

George says "Tell him I say write to his officers to know if he can't get a discharge." He says you could if you were in his reg. easily enough. I wrote to you a few days since. I have no news, so Goodbye,

As ever yours,

R. P. Davis.

Friday the 5th. Can't you send your Pa an almanac? He wants you to do so.

(On a separate slip of paper, I don't know what date, the following:)

Why doesn't the weekly Journal come? I suppose it hasn't started yet. I don't know what we should have done for news but for the papers you have been sending us. Pat is much pleased learning the deaf and dumb alphabet.

(The following is on a slip of paper.)

Gen'l Hospital, No 8
Raleigh, N. C., April 4th, '64

Sgt. B. P. Davis has permission to visit his home in Warren County & return by the 16th Inst.

H. G. Leigh
Surgeon in charge.

Wednesday, 6th April, 1864

Dear Burwell,

Your letter, acknowledging the reception of those articles of provisions we sent you, came to hand last Thursday, and I expect you are anxious to hear how all this bad weather has served us. Your Pa bedded his sweet potatoes (Saturday, the 19th of March, I think it was) a bright and beautiful day, and we were of the opinion that day that spring had fairly set in, but "man proposes, and God disposes," The following Tuesday the big snow came, and we have had bitter cold weather ever since, and more rain and high water than a little.

.

Your Pa has been quite sick for several days. He was taken very suddenly last Thursday on his way home from Warrenton with a violent pain in his side or breast or both, which lasted him several hours before he could get any relief at all, and he was not able to be out of bed in several days. He is up now lounging about on the sofa. He thinks it was pneumonia. The Dr. didn't say what he thought of it. The snow and cold rains have thinned out the pigs and lambs. I think we lost five lambs if no more, and pigs not a few.

.

Your Pa sold his sweet potatoes for \$10 per bushel after the third was taken off. He went up last week to carry his government meat, and took up $2\frac{1}{2}$ bushels of wheat to exchange for salt, as he had heard of similar exchanges, but when he got there, Mr. Parker had no salt on hand, but took the wheat and sold it for your Pa for \$150, and bought salt at 80 cents a lb from Sledge, so we have a little salt now to put in our broth.

Nelson has not made his appearance yet. A party of gentlemen were out in the snow looking for runaways, but caught none. The Kobersons, Cheeks, Newells, and Dick Davis composed the crowd.

What has become of your wealthy lawyer? Do let me know how you all get on feeding him and buying tobacco for him. I am glad you saw B. D. Wms. Did he call on you, or you on him? I shall love Buck as long as I live for his kindness to you and Weldon. I have forgotten whether or not I told you in my last that we had got another letter from Washington City from the surgeon in charge of Douglas Hospital in regard to Weldon's affairs, namely the articles he left there, and telling where Mrs. Blount lived, and that she was kind to him, and would be glad of an opportunity to send his things to his friends, &c. He had \$81 in Confederate money, one pocketbook of letters, one haversack and jacket, and one cup and spoon.

Buck says he is doing his best to settle his affairs, but says it is a slow process. I am sorry your Pa couldn't see Buck, but he is almost done going to town now, and besides he was not aware that Buck was going to stay so long.

Bettie Bobbitt has a beau; that Mr. Thomas that married a South-all is paying his addresses to her. He is at Kinston. I think he is in the 43, at any rate he is in dead earnest courting Bettie. I rath-

er think she will accept the offer of his hand and heart, but she doesn't know what to do about marrying these war times. She first saw him at Southall's, and now they correspond.

George and Tom were both well when last I heard from them, which was some week or ten days since. Tom seems to be in love with a fair lady, but he hasn't popped the question, but I expect he will, and that soon, and get kicked too, I guess. Well, I have nothing to say. I can't see how people know what to do these times. I did tell him that if he married he'd repent it, and if he didn't he'd repent it, so he has just to decide whether he had better repent single or married. Poor fellow, he is so far from home, and no kind friend near but the Goodwins, and they are not very near, but they are very kind to him. I don't see how they can afford to do so much for him as they do.

Your Grandma has been pretty sick for three weeks, hasn't been out before today. She is getting better now. The sick negroes are about the same as far as I know. Billie is very bad and noisy all this bad weather, and Pat has been compelled to lose some time from school, but it was a great cross to her.

As ever, your affectionate

Ma.

P. S. Don't say anything about Tom's sweetheart, no danger, I guess. Frank Davis saw your red seal, and was so pleased with it that I had to give him the envelope. He begged your Pa for it before I saw the letter.

(The following is from a letter that is so faded that I can read only a small part of it. B.E.B.)

Friday, April 29, 1864.

Dear Burwell,

Your letter of the 26th reached me a day or so after date, and I will now write you a few lines.

.....

Your Aunt Nancy Foote drove up here Saturday morning very unexpectedly, for I thought she was at the Forest. She went up on the freight because it could stop at the college for her to get off, and not because Mary was alarmingly sick, tho she was poorly. She has a baby some 2 or 3 weeks old named after Tom Foote.

.....

Nelson came up one morning last week, said he came to have a talk with your Pa, he knew he hadn't done anything. Your Pa asked him what he ran away for. He said he didn't intend it when he went off that evening, but that night he came back home, and some of them told me his master said he never wanted to see him any more, "and that stamped him." They said he was looking very dry and poor. I did not see him. He only stayed a few days before he ran off again. I don't suppose he wished to receive correction for his faults, and when he thought it was about to come, he took to his heels. I am sorry he left again so soon. We are about as when you left.

Affectionately, Ma.

[The Forest" meant Wake Forest, where Aunt Nancy's daughter, Mary, lived. She married William Gaston Simmons, professor at Wake Forest College.)

(Date not given, but I think it was the 9th of May 1864. N.W.B.)

Monday 9th

Dear Burwell,

I wrote to you this day was a week ago, and might not have written again so soon but your Pa wished me to say to you that his "Confederate" had come with a X on it, and he wished you to renew his subscription. I have received your two letters, and I hope you have received mine of the 3rd of May.

Your Grandma is now carding in your new cards, and says they are the best that she has handled since to war times. I have Sary spinning in the house.

I hear flying reports of fighting on the Rapidan, nothing definite only that Henry Bobbitt is captured. His boy came home, (a free boy). We do not think that Tom or George is engaged in it. George is on the sick list, was when we heard from him, had chills and risings and was under ~~the~~ medical treatment. I got a letter from Tom Saturday written a few days previous. He said they were anxiously awaiting an attack, not that they were very anxious for a fight, but they had it to do, and wanted to undertake it right where they were. I don't suppose Tom will be exposed to the shot and shell unless by accident.

Several persons say they saw Mary Newell's Alfred at Plymouth. They say he begged to be sent to his mother, but was shot, as all negroes were who were dressed in Yankee uniforms, so I have heard. I have often been asked what my new cards cost, and I do not know, but I tell them \$100 I reckon. I have 18 yards of jeans in the loom, 9 yards I am going to save for Tom, and the balance is to be used as circumstances may require.

We get the mail now every day and will for some time to come. Ned Turner brings it down. He is hauling from our depot, so if you hear anything that you may wish to ~~communicate~~ communicate to us, we can hear from you pretty directly. And if I hear anything important I will let you hear, that is if it is anything pertaining to our boys.

If you want me to send your money in my next for those books, say so when you write, and I will send it in haste.

As ever

Your affec. Ma.

"Sary" and "Alfred," slaves.

"Your boy, Frank," a slave.

Monday, the 27th July

Your boy Frank used to lament your departure very much when you first left. He would often come in the house and say "My poor Mars Burwell is gone." He misses those biscuit you used to give him, tho he got some from Mat while he was here.

I should think you might come home sometimes, there is so little ~~for~~ to do there. If you ever do come, bring me some pens, steel pens if convenient, and some stamps. I have been out of stamps 6 weeks, have borrowed some. Sometimes your Pa forgets to get any, and sometimes he tries and they are out, and so it happens that I get none. Wish I had a peck. Your Pa says he is going to town tomorrow to some sort of meeting. They are all the time having meetings. It is something about the home guard. and never do anything. Your affec. Ma.

62
Battle Field,
May 11, 1864.

Dear Ma,

I have just been to the company and at their request will drop you a few lines to let you know that after six days hard fighting all the neighborhood boys are still safe. Capt. Trumbull and Jim Bobbitt are the only ones in the company hurt. . . . his brains out this morning. The fight Our brigade arrived from Hanover Junction on the 6th. Have been in three charges and yet the loss is light. Yesterday was the biggest fight of all. Our boys are in breastworks . . . At 12 o'clock yesterday the Yankees commenced charging our breastworks a little to our left and charged time after time. . . .

. . . Sunset however they made another charge upon . . . Through some mismanagement took them by surprise. Daniels' and Scales' brigades became panic stricken and ran in great confusion. . . . The Yankees took our breastworks and artillery, and for a while we had squally . . . Yank. . . Our guard is . . . about a quarter of a mile in rear of the line of battle to stop skulkers &c. which . . . is a minnie ~~mk~~ or bomb . . . broke yesterday . . . a few hundred yards in front. We had one man killed about 10 steps from where I was, and one or two wounded.

Our brigade (which I neglected to say is now attached to Early's Division, whether temporarily or permanently I don't know) were lying in reserve about a half mile from where our boys gave back, and were double quicked down there and made a splendid charge, driving them back across our breastworks in a few minutes, General Lee being right ~~in~~ with them, his hat off, charging them on. Cousin Jimmy Davis desired me to mention himself and Ben. Both well so far. Thomas Pitchford is well.

Our boys are in splendid spirits, anxious for them to come again, and I do hope and pray that they will try it again this evening and charge our whole line so that they may all be killed out, unless Providence may see proper to end it otherwise.

I intended to write a right smart, but found to my surprise that my ink was no account, and I hate to write with a pencil, so I will close by saying that I haven't received a letter from you of later date than the one of 17th of April. Write soon. Of course I saw George when I was at the company. He is full of boils, but standing to his post still.

As ever

Your son,
Thomas.

P. S.

We are about a mile from Spotsylvania Court House. It is about 10 or 11 p.m. Sharpshooting heavy. Some cannonading.

(This letter was written with a pencil, and has become so dim that some of it is illegible, which accounts for the skips in the above copy.

B.E.B.)

Monday the first.

Dear Burwell,

I started off a letter to you last Saturday, but as Dick is going tomorrow, I will write a few lines to send by him, for in-as-much as you didn't get my first letter, you may not have received my second, so I'll try a third time. Nothing new has transpired since I wrote, only a very little rain. The weather now is very drying, but the potato slips are living on, but not growing any.

No disaster has yet happened to our wheat; the worms and crows destroy the corn terribly. Your Uncle John's old steer got to his potato bed last night and entirely demolished it. Accidents will happen sometimes you know. We would soon have enough for him if it would rain tonight, but your Uncle Tom has spoken.

I had a lot of gals here Saturday, such as they were. They were a wild and noisy set. Kate Simmons and Bet Mills came down after Nancy Foote, and Bet Nicholson came down and brought Ella Hawkins with her, and Anna Pitchford was in the crowd, and Rosa and Pat made out the set. Ella is nearly 15 and thinks herself almost a little lady, and Bet Mills is 16. Your Aunt Nancy had her carriage at the gate ready to start home and was taken so violently sick that we sent the carriage off a wheeling after the "r.", and it really appeared as if die she would in spite of all we could do. We got her on the bed, put hot mush on her breast, bathed her in hot brandy, and gave her all kinds of (?). She had some five or six of those attacks while she was here, and I really think they will carry her off some of these times. I suppose it is cramp colic.

Patsy is down at your Uncle Tom's today helping Polly make Isham's pants. I reckon he needs them badly by this time; I thought so when he left.

I went to town some time since and tried to get some cards at \$25, but I was a little too late, just as we always are. Now they are up to \$35. We are not willing to give that price now; in a month or two we will consent to give \$35, and then we shall find them 40. I have a notion not to bother my mind about it, ~~do nothing~~ but just simply suspend operations and be done with it, do nothing and have nothing. The less I have, the less the Yanks will destroy when they come along.

I hear from the boys very seldom and very little. Tom says he so sometimes goes into the river bathing with the Yankees, says they are very sociable. He says they have heard from Hugh Allen. Well I wonder if Vicksburg has fallen. I suppose it is cut off. If we only had men enough to attack Grant's rear, we might save the place.

Sam Newell and Tad Alston had a great fish fry at Wms. Mill last week. They had a fine dinner, so I heard, and invited Ann Eaton, the Misses Sherrin, Misses Trumbull, Misses Cheek, Octavia Roberson, &c &c. No single ladies attended except Mary and Liza Cheek, and their daddy went after them. I heard that Sam Newell said he (?) to see Liza once more, and that was the plan.

Your Uncle Sam has gone to Louisburg today after Charles. We

have a right good stand of watermelons, but they don't grow off. I proposed to your Pa to send you a basket of strawberries, but he made light of it. I reckon they would be spoiled before you could get 'em.

I have got to send this down to Patsy before she leaves the Dr's, so I'd as well close. I have writ in a great hurry, for I have just heard that Dick was going to R. I commenced writing as soon as I heard of it. I expect that Mat and Lou will come the last of next week. We are all pretty well today. I will close my scribbling for this time.

As ever, your affec.

Ma/

[Your Aunt Nancy" that Grandma speaks of was her sister, Nancy Foote. I remember her well. We called her "Aunt Nannie." The attacks of "cramp colic" did not "carry her off," for she lived to be an old lady.

Of the girls mentioned in the letter, Pat was my mother. She was at this time eleven years old. Kate Simmons was Aunt Nannie's granddaughter, the daughter of Cousin Mary Foote Simmons and Dr. Wm. Gaston Simmons, a professor at Wake Forest College. She was about nine years old at this time. She died at the age of ten, and people said of her mother that she was "so brave and took it so well." Cousin Mary said, "They didn't know that my heart was breaking."

Bet Mills was the sister of Mrs. Joe Bobbitt of Louisburg and aunt of Rob Bobbitt. I remember her when she would be at Mrs. Bobbitt's home. Grandma said she was 16 at that time. It is hard for me to realize that "Miss Bet" ever could have been "sweet 16." I do not know who Bet Nicholson, Ella Hawkins, and Rosa were. Grandpa's mother was Martha Hawkins, so Ella may have been a relative. Anna Pitchford was Uncle Tom's daughter, and was a little older than my mother (Pat.)

(B.E.B.)

(The following notes were sent to Uncle Burwell by Uncle Matt. The envelope is addressed to "Sgt. B. P. Davis, Gen. Hosp. No 8, Raleigh, N. C. Care of Dr. Lee," and dated May 30. B.E.B.)

Louisburg, N. C.
May 24th, 1864.

Bro B.

I have just received from home the letters herewith inclosed. I fear George is dead. I hope however that such may not be the case. It does really seem that all the youth of the land are to be sacrificed. May God grant us deliverance from our foes now in this our time of trial. I do not feel like writing and in fact I have nothing to write. Our school closes June 2nd. I fear I shall not be able to go to Warren this vacation, as I have in cultivation a full crop for my horse. If I can, I will steal a day and go out to Raleigh to see how you are getting on.

All well,
Your brother,
M.S.D.

Sunday evening, 22nd May.

Dear Mat,

Our negroes went to Reedy Creek today, and say they saw Wallace Wms. there, and he told them to tell us that George was certainly killed. Another negro came from Warrenton and says he heard several men say so. I have some hope that it may not be a fact, but fear it is. Tom Powell is certainly killed, and George Duke and John Dugger. It seems that all our boys are to be killed. May the Lord have mercy on us.

Send this to Burwell. I do not feel like writing.

As ever,
Your Ma.

P.S. I send the last letter I have received from camp. It is very illegible.

(Inside the flap of the envelope is written the following in Grandma's handwriting, tho' I do not see how it came about that she wrote in the envelope sent from Louisburg by Uncle Matt: B.E.B.)

"We may all hope for the best but prepare for the worst with regard to poor George's fate."

(Date not given, but evidently May 27, 1864. B.E.B.)

66

Friday evening.

I believe they are about to set some potato slips, had a light shower at 4 o'clock. Mat planted out his last Saturday was a week ago, so Hugh said. Your Aunt Jennie did send down to your Uncle Sam two weeks ago and asked him to give her something to eat to keep her from starving. She hadn't a grain of corn in her crib, not a mouthful of meat in her smokehouse.

It was a doleful letter she wrote, and she hadn't heard of this awful news then either, but she was talking of it beforehand, and she always does. She certainly has had her share of real troubles, if any poor mortal ever did, to say nothing of her imaginary ones, or rather anticipated ones. I did hope that her last days might be pleasant, but alas, all hope of happiness in this world is at an end for her, and indeed for many of us, I fear. Some (it is true) may suffer much tribulation, and then so gather up the crumbs of comfort as to keep their hearts from fainting, but she, poor creature, seems to have no crumbs of comfort to gather up.

If you do hear anything definite from George, from any source, let me hear. I do not see any Richmond paper. Wonder what will become of us all. Lord, have mercy and save us all, I pray.

Sat. Morning, 28th.

We had the biggest rain of the season last evening about 6 o'clock. I think it frustrated your Pa's plans decidedly. He made no hills, just got to bedding up the patch. Net has not come in, and I hear nothing from him. Joe has been laid up some days with a very bad cold headache, and Stephen with a rising under his arm. Four of my hands are gone out, and I am very willing to give up another, tho Margaret is lying in, her baby nearly three weeks old. She will have to stay there as long as Winea lives, and really she seems like not living long. She is very willing to die, seems to enjoy the fullest assurande of happiness beyond the grave.

No letter from Tom yet, and haven't heard a word of Jim Green. His Mamma is much troubled to know his fate, but I can tell her no more of his fate than of George's. I surely shall hear very soon, perhaps today.

Sunday morning, May 29th.

We had a terrific hail storm yesterday about 4 o'clock, which has altered the appearance of vegetation very much. It was accompanied with wind and such a rain as I seldom ever saw fall. The whole face of the earth was one pond of water. All the rain that has fallen since the season commenced is but as a drop in the bucket in comparison. We had no glass broken, tho we expected it every minute. My lettuce is torn all to pieces, and the cotton is knocked down and run over. The melon patch has not been visited. Your Pa says he doesn't care to go there through the mire, but he expects they are pretty well ruined. We haven't heard a word from elsewhere. Hope it was no worse anywhere

than here.

I am sorry I failed to get my letter off yesterday. I wish it could have gone before I had any bad news to write, and before it got old. The corn is torn to pieces considerably, but that will come out I expect, but woe be to the cotton, melons, garden, &c. I don't know which was most disastrous -- the hail or rain. Hope however things may not be so bad as they seem this morning.

No further news from camp yet, not a word from any source. Why Tom doesn't write I cannot tell. The poor 12th and the poor 30th seem to have a hard time of it indeed. I am thinking they are almost annihilated.

("Aunt Jennie", who had lost her husband, Billie Powell, and both of her sons had gone to the army, was Grandpa's sister. There was now no one to run the farm but herself. Now the "awful news" was that her son, Tom, was killed, and she was afraid day by day that she would hear that her other son, John, would share the same fate. During a battle John heard a zooming sound and saw Tom fall. He had to go on, but came back when he could, and found his brother with a remrod shot through his body.

I think that "Winea in this letter was the widow of Uncle Dick Davis, Grandpa's brother.

Several slaves are mentioned in the letter. They are Net, Joe, Stephen, Margaret, and Jim Green. B.E.B.)

Fishing Creek
Monday, June the 6th, 1864

Dear Burwell,

Your letter by your Uncle Tom came to hand one day after date, and the paper also, as you will readily perceive. It is very good paper and exactly the right size. I reckon you had to pay a very high price for it, perhaps 8 or \$10 per quire. There are four and a half quires of it, and I do hope that the war will not last till I use it all.

I haven't heard a word from Tom since the 23rd of May. He was back with his reg., and attached to Early's Division, and I suppose there has been a good deal of hard fighting since then. No tidings from George. I wonder if we shall ever hear from him. We may or we may not; I still hope and pray for the best, but if the worst comes, I will try by the help of God to bear it with becoming resignation. I know truly, as you say, that death is the ~~ordinary~~ lot of us all, and it must soon come, and when it comes in the ordinary way, I think I can and have submitted to it with a great deal of resignation, but really these things are hard indeed, almost too much for a mother to bear.

About your getting a discharge, I doubt not but it could be affected if the right steps were taken and strenuously carried through, but I do not know even the initiatory step. Your Pa spoke of it Saturday in town in the presence of two Watsons, Best, Bowlet, and Dr. Pitchford, and he said the crowd seemed to think that you could and ought to get a discharge, and Mat thinks so too. He says get Dr. P. to write to Gov. Vance and state all the particulars, and get him to endorse a petition to the Sec. of War. I haven't asked him to do so yet, but I reckon I shall as soon as I hear from you again. Jim Foote thinks it a bad chance; he says there are thousands of petitions being sent to the Sec. of War.

You just ought to be at home now to manage Net. He stays round about here now all the time I think, without anyone to molest or make him afraid. Bet went after brush Saturday, and said she saw him, and he said he saw your Pa going off to town, and said Joe needn't be sitting up there in his house crosslegged, for he shouldn't stay in it.

Jim Foote did get his furlough extended at Weldon. He asked me if you wrote me anything about his sudden and unexpected departure. I told him you did. He said he met with Mr. Simmons and by going right off, he got a free seat, when if he had gone back as he expected to have done, he must have missed it. He said he had a haversack full of good victuals which he intended to have left with you.

Mr. Jackson came down with your Pa Saturday, part of the way. I suppose his toe is distressingly bad off. Your Pa gave him dinner, a bit of bread and meat, and he said it would sell for a dollar in Raleigh. I understand that the Government is going to press half of our meat. Well, if it is for the good of the country and the soldiers, so let it be. It is better for us who are at home to eat dry bread than for the poor soldiers. We do have some comforts, and they have none.

Our molasses corn is sorry, drowned I suppose. We have rain eve-

ry day. The Amy Field is torn all to pieces with the big rain of May the 27th. A swarm of bees came into the garden a week or two ago and pitched, and your Pa hived them and they seem to be doing very well. Your Uncle John sent this morning after potato slips and got all he wanted. He wrote us a note and said there was hard fighting Saturday within eight miles of Richmond. They are getting too near to Richmond to suit my fancy. It must be very encouraging to their people to see how they are driving our army, but our army doesn't confess to have been driven. Well this is a life and death struggle with the Confederacy sure.

A man went to your Uncle Sam's Friday to get him to sign a written document to keep him out of the army. Your Uncle Sam told him he had too many relatives in the army to try to keep others out, so he said he would go down and get Dr. P. to sign it. He didn't ask your Pa, and he needn't, for your Pa thinks he ought to go. I don't see how any man who has sons in the army can try to keep efficient men out of it. It looks rather bad now to see well men riding about with the ladies enjoying themselves.

Do you want a couple of shirts? If you do, I will take some I have on hand with linen bosoms worn out and the shirts good, and put in new bosoms of some colored muslin I have on hand. I think they would look very well with bosoms, collar, and wristband of colored muslin. Let me know whether you want them or not.

Well I am getting on very well with George's misfortune, thinking that he is a prisoner and perhaps not hurt, and that his life may be saved by that very accident, but if I hear now that Tom is killed, what shall I do! Others have even had that much to bear. May the Lord have mercy on us all I pray, and give us grace sufficient for our day and generation.

As ever your affec.

Ma/

(Mr. Simmons son-in-law of Grandma's sister, Nancy Foote, having married her daughter Mary.

Jim Foote (James) was Aunt Nancy's son.

Fishing Creek
Sunday evening, June 12th, 1864

Dear Burwell,

I received your letter yesterday, written 8th of June, and as I shall have an opportunity of sending it up to town tomorrow I will just dash you a few lines for fear I may not have another opportunity very soon, and besides these are stormy times, and of course you want to hear from home as often as you can. Thomas Pitchford wrote his wife the 4th of June. He said Johnson's Brig. was not in the fight of the 3rd, but was held in reserve. He didn't mention Tom's name, but we infer of course that he was safe up to that date, for he said that they did have one man killed through his own recklessness. He would stand up when he was ordered to lie down.

I am always anxious to hear from him. If I hear today that he is safe, I want to hear again tomorrow. He tells me to keep my spirits up, and not to give way to grief on account of my bereavements, not even if I have an additional one.

John Pitchford and John Wms. are both wounded, the latter slightly, the former seriously in arm and leg. They are both in Richmond, and Your Uncle Tom went on yesterday to see if he could get them home. He received a telegraphic dispatch from Bob, and last night after he had gone, a letter came written by John Pitchford himself. He said he couldn't walk a step, but I see he can write. I hardly think he has any bones broken, tho he doesn't say. Mrs. Burt's son is also badly wounded in the arm. I think we shall soon have no more Warren boys to be killed or crippled.

Ben Davis' wound was too slight for him to get home upon, and Pattie Wms. is afraid that John's is too. Pattie Pitchford says she saw Peter Allen (a wounded soldier) the day before she came down here, and he said that it was thought that George was slightly wounded, and Wallace Wms. says he saw a member of Co. D. 12 reg., in Richmond, who said that he saw George when he was wounded, and that he thought he was wounded in the shoulder, as he saw blood on him there, and then again I have heard that he was wounded in the thigh, so it may have been both, or it may be nowhere, or he may be dead.

About the meat, I asked your Pa if I must tell you that you could get some, and he said if I had it to spare. I have it to spare to you as much as to any one else. I keep sparing it, and I think you had as well eat some while it is going. Your Aunt Jenny sent here after meat last week. She depends altogether on getting her meat here and at your Uncle Sam's. I think I will send you her letter. I am sorry for her. I have often wished that her last days might be her best days, but alas, no chance now for her to see any happy days.

I wonder if you can't come home on furlough shortly and stay a few days and get you something to eat and see the wounded soldiers. If they get home at all they will be here tomorrow or next day. Nelson came home the next day after I wrote you last. Your Pa asked what he came for, and he said he came to go to work, and acknowledged that he had done wrong, but didn't say what the wrong was. I expect that he wanted something to eat more than he got. Your Pa says he would like to have help, but he doesn't want Net to know that he wants it.

Your Uncle Tom carried wool to Raleigh to swap for spun cotton, and that is the very thing that I want to do too. I wonder if there will be none brought to Warrenton to swap. If not, and you should have chance to come home in the course of a month, I wonder if you could bring me three bales, and carry back the wool to pay for it. I hardly reckon they would trust you. I think cotton is and has been and will be so scarce with me that will be the best thing I can do, for a bunch of cotton will warp 25 or 30 yds, and three lbs of wool will fill some 10 or 15 only. I am not having a particle of summer cloth for the negroes, and they must have winter clothes, and so if I can get the three bales, I will make the women's winter dresses of it.

I asked your Pa the other day if he thought of trying to get you discharged, and he said the country was in such an uproar at this time that he hardly thought it a proper time, as your present position was a bomb proof one -- said if it was not he would lose no time in trying.

Wallace Wms. came down yesterday and brought that dispatch to your Uncle Tom. He got there at 10 o'clock, and your Uncle Tom was gone over to Tom Roberson's. He put a negro on his horse and told him to ride as hard as the horse could go after him. He got home 15 minutes to 11, and got off 15 minutes before 12 to take the cars at (?) at 2. Whether old Nat could go it or not I can't tell. While the boy was gone after him they baked up cakes, biscuit, bread, etc. and packed up two suits of clothes.

Your Pa carried up 12 bushels of wheat a week ago to Warrenton depot to swap for salt. The bargain was all made with Gid Nicholson, bushel for bushel, but when he got ~~there his~~ there his agent (Dr. Tyndall) said Gid gave him especial orders not to take it if it had any sprouted wheat among it, and it had some, I suppose, and so he was not at liberty to take it. (All the wheat in the county has some I reckon.) A Mr. Hubbard who was there and is a salt man, promised to let him have it -- says it will be on soon. The wheat is in Warrenton at Jack Nicholson's.

Above I told you to try and come home, but just now is a right bad time to come. Peaches are not ripe, and vegetables not in. It would be best to come in fruit time, but come when you can or when you choose. When I came to get your Aunt Jennie's letter, it was notched up by Pat or Bill, so I am not sure that you can read it, but I'll send it anyhow. We sent her 20, and your Uncle Sam 25 lbs bacon.

Your affect. Ma,
Rebecca P. Davis.

(John Williams may have been a grandson of Grandma's "Aunt Rebecca Wms., but she did not have a son by that name. However, she did have a daughter named Bettie (mentioned in 4th paragraph.

"Mrs. Burt" was probably Mr. S. P. Burt's grandmother.

"Your Aunt Jenny" was Grandpa's sister. She married William (Billy) Powell. B.F.B.)

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Sunday, June the 25, 1864.

Dear Burwell,

I received your letter of the 19th of June a few days after date. I had been expecting it for several days, and thinking when it did come that you would say "send me some meat," but never a word did you say about meat. We are very willing for you to have some if you need it. According to scriptures, "It is not good for man to live by bread alone," and if you do get any from here it ought to be before the Gov. agents come round. They are going round in Franklin now. They weigh all the meat, and leave 2 lbs to all over 12, and 1 to all under, that is, if they find that much, and I guess they will not get much on those terms.

Yes, your Uncle Tom did succeed very well in getting the Johns home, tho it took him nearly a week. They are both doing very well. John Wms. says he will be ready to go back when his furlough is out. He was shot once in the thigh, John P. twice in the thigh and once in the arm below the elbow. He can't walk a step, but is very hearty and lively.

This hot weather must prove fatal to many a poor wounded soldier. Capt. Bob Wms. died the 9th of June of wounds rec'd at Spotsylvania C. H. His Pa went on twice to try to get him, but failed. Your Cousin Mary Egerton died last week of typhoid, and Charles Davis lies sick of the same disease. Jim Foote is still at home and Wallace Wms. also. I heard yesterday that Wal. was married, but I hardly believe it, tho I can't tell who I don't. Whit Haithcock is at home wounded, and John St. King also.

(?) Wms. has been exchanged, and is gone back. He told some particulars in regard to Weldon. He says they all surrendered except Weldon, and he tried to escape and was fired on, and that was the only shot fired at them. He said when Weldon fell a Yankee officer galloped up to him and said, "Capt., I am sorry to see you so badly wounded. Have something to drink; it will help you," and handed him his canteen, which he took and drank of its contents, when one of our men fired at this officer, and he fell by Weldon's side. Now everything of the kind stirs afresh the deep fountains of my grief, and yet I want to hear everything I can. I could sit and listen all day if anybody would talk to me about him, and cry myself almost to death.

I have heard nothing from George, and if he is killed, I don't know but what it is best for me if I never hear the particulars of the affair. As it is now, I have a little hope which helps my feelings a great deal, and it seems to me that that hope will long long be cherished unless I am officially informed that he is dead.

I have not heard from Tom since the 11th of June, and the 12th is the last they have heard from Thomas Pitchford. They are in Early's Div., and some say they are gone over in the Valley, and some say they are gone over towards Washington. Tom was on cooking detail when last heard from.

I talked with Mr. John A. the other day about your getting a discharge, and I assure you that if everybody else is like he is, that the thing would be easily accomplished, and I think that everybody else is like him. He says it can be done and it ought to be done, in the first place through respect for you Pa, and in consideration of your being wounded, and I don't know how many other things he did name, and he said

there was nothing to do but to have a writing drawn up of the right sort, but it must be done by somebody who could and would do it right, for he said it was just like the painting of a portrait.

I then asked him if he didn't think that when we got that article of writing that we could get Mr. J. B. Williams and Mr. John A Wms. to put their names to it. He said "Yes, yes, that you can." I think your Pa intends to try it as soon as things get more quiet about Petersburg and Richmond, that is if they ever do. Mississippi (?) John Wms. was asking me about you the other day, and I told him you were getting tired of staying there, and we wanted you to come home. He said tell you to stay right there until the war ends.

I have a right good chance of chickens, but they are small yet. I hardly know how to send you anything that couldn't be packed up in a bag and carried on a horse's back. I have made you a very pretty blue muslin shirt. I would like for you to wear it this summer, and if you like it I will make you another. They are intended for summer only. This one has a sort of puffed bosom; the other is to be plaited if I make it. Only the bosom, collar and wristbands are blue. The weather is exceedingly hot and dry, vegetation falling fast, tho the corn has not suffered much yet.

I think I can swap my wool in Louisburg very easily. As to that salt, there is no hurrying up now. The thing is at a standstill. If we whip the Yanks we can get salt, and if they whip us we shall have nothing to salt.

I think I told you that Buck Wms. had married a refugee and brought her home and gone back to his post. His Ma was very much opposed to it. She thinks a girl is a ---- to marry a soldier now. She was a Miss Peters, rich but very ugly, so Mrs. John A. told me.

Your Pa had right bad luck with his hogs; some are dead and some sick yet. I know it is impossible for him to attend to hogs, and negroes are not apt to do it well, and so if you don't come home I think we will get out of meat after a while, and as my paper is full I will round up the business by bidding you adieu.

R.P.D.

Monday morning. Charles Davis died last night, very happy in the love of God, so I hear this morning. Your Pa is up there and I am about to start. His funeral will be preached today. He seemed to have brain fever, has been out of his head for some days at intervals.

("Your Cousin Mary Egerton" was the daughter of Grandpa's sister, Nancy, who married Simon Fleming. Mary Fleming married Thomas Egerton, a distant cousin of my father. B.E.B.) See note page 75. Charles Davis, Uncle Sam's son. Charles died at the age of 16. He was fine young man. He was studying for the ministry.

Fishing Creek
Monday 10th July, '64

Dear Burwell,

I had almost determined not to write another letter to any one before it rained, but John Wms. has just now sent me word that he will be along after dinner, and will carry a letter to Raleigh if I wished. It looks a little like rain today, and I trust that we may have a glorious shower.

You wanted to know if I had seen or heard from Mat during vacation. Well up to that time I had not seen or heard ~~from~~ one word from him, but last Thursday night at 8 o'clock up came he and Florence. They left Sunday morning about sunrise. I told him about your inquiry and he said he did wish to visit you and intended it, but had had his hands full all the time, and so he failed to go to see you, and I think he came very near failing to come to see us.

I want you to notice the Raleigh Advocate for an obituary of Charles Davis, and if it appears, cut it out and send it to me in a letter or send me the paper. I think Mat or the minister one will prepare a notice of his death. I heard Mat say that he deserved one if anybody ever did. I shall not see it unless by accident as no one about here but Dick Davis takes that paper. I think I shall send it to Tom if I get it. I got a letter from him the 18th of June at Lynchburg. None of them have been heard from individually since that date, but I write to Tom every week nearly.

Mat brought me 3 bales of spun cotton No 9, very good, and fine enough. I may get more. He carried back six lbs of wool for your Aunt Patsy. Dick stayed at Mrs. Coggins when he went up, and said she talked about you and Weldon just as if she had seen you all the time, but seemed to know nothing of George. She knew about Weldon's fate. George was in town when Coggins was here, hence it was that she had heard nothing of him from her son.

Did I tell you anything about old Mrs. Cheek's will? I am so forgetful that I do not know. She left Emily 16 negroes, Caroline 13 and \$1,000, and Matilda 4 negroes. You know she had given her a woman and children, tho they are all dead. She left all her household and kitchen furniture, stock of all kinds, cash on hand and growing crop to be sold and equally divided between Eliza Cheek, William Cheek and Annie Pitchford.

I have heard today that your Aune Winea is dead, don't know the particulars. Another Mary Egerton died a few days ago, sister to Nannie Egerton. The sugar corn has improved this dry weather, but I expect it is sorry enough yet. I have as much ice as I want. Your Uncle Tom wrote me a note saying I might send and get just as much as I wanted, and I have used it pretty freely to his hot dry weather. Sometimes I get it from your Uncle Sam's. As for scuppernongs, we haven't a washpan full, but a right good chance of Catawbas.

Octavia Roberson is very sick and they have lost 6 negroes, all the rest sick nearly. Wallace was there a few days ago, don't know whether he saw her or not. They have measles or typhoid.

As ever,
Your Ma.

(The envelope of the preceding letter was addressed: "Sgt. B. P. Davis, Gen. Hospital, No 8, Raleigh, N. C. Politeness of John Williams Esq. of Mississippi." The envelope was made of an old letter, and on the inside I could read a few words. It seems to have been in Uncle Weldon's handwriting, and I believe was written while he was a student at Chapel Hill. The following is all I can make out:

"Notes on letter:

Your Aunt Winea, . . . widow of Grandpa's brother, Dick Davis.
 Florence Uncle Matt's oldest daughter, about 6 yrs old
 at time of this letter, married Eugene Allen.
 Mrs. Cheek Mother-in-law of Dr. Pitchford.
 Emily Her daughter. M. Married John A. Burt. They were
 grandparents of Dr. S. P. Burt.
 Caroline Another daughter.
 Matilda Another daughter. She married Dr. Pitchford.
 Eliza Cheek, William Cheek, and Annie Pitchford, grandchildren of Mrs. C.
 Mary Egerton . . This is confusing. I think the Mary Egerton mentioned
 on page 73 was Grandpa's niece, so I don't know who
 this one was.

B.F.B.)

July the 26th, '64.

Dear Burwell,

As this is tax day and I am alone, I will just drop you a few lines. I haven't seen the Col. since he came from Raleigh. He did stop at the gate and your Pa saw him.

.

There are a goodly number of melons, and they may get to be of fine size for all I know, if the rogues will let 'em alone, which by the bye they seem not to do. One night last week, somebody walked all around the patch in the grass, and then got down on their knees and crawled in and got one, and last night three came, and I reckon carried off as many as they could manage. They had a dog with them. Now I do hate to write to you about such things, for I know it makes you feel bad, but it is so, and it gets worse and worse, and I see that those who try to have things, and those who do not will soon be all even. I would cheerfully give up all the melons if I could compromise with them, but they intend to have all the hogs and sheep also.

After the sheep were shorn, they were put in the low grounds, and in a few days we found five of them had been butchered on the banks of the creek, so they were taken there and carried up to the Long Branch field, where they soon butchered two more. Yesterday they were put in the lower Long Branch field, and your Pa thinks they came after one last night with their dog, and failing to find them, they took off the melons in place of a sheep. He tracked them from up there to the patch. He thinks it was either your Uncle Sam's or Clement's folks.

We lose a fat shoat every week. I do not think that any body about here gives their negroes a mouthful of meat to eat except us, your Uncle Sam and John A. Sol may give his some. Negroes are not going to starve when there is a hog, sheep or cow going, and I would not be at all surprised at any time to find an ox killed. We can't keep anything while our neighbors have no meat and not half enough bread for their negroes. It's mighty hard upon us.

.

I intended to send you a lot of Tom's letters to read. He has sent me a sort of daily Journal of his trip from Richmond to Harper's Ferry, commencing the 13th of June, and ending the 5th of July, and that is the last that I have heard of him or of any of the division personally and individually, and what is the reason that we cannot hear from them if they have access to the postman, or are they all killed? Many many of them doubtless are, and who they are I do not know, but I fear and tremble for Poor Tom. He may be at Richmond, or Petersburg, or he may be yet in Maryland. I surely never was so anxious about him before. You spoke of coming home about the 4th of August, that will soon be. How I do wish you could stay at home all the time. Many think the war will end this year, but upon what ground I don't know. Our preacher Long tells us that he thinks this the brightest day since the war commenced. If you come soon bring me a pen or two if convenient. We are all as well as usual.

Your affec. Ma.

R. Davis.

Wednesday, 27th.

I can't tell you when the melons will be in their prime, not at all I reckon. Your Pa has found where the stolen melons were eaten, in the low grounds, so they were searching the pastures for meat and just happened by the melon patch. They cut open eight. They were very green, most of them.

I get a fine chance of milk since the rains set in. All the negroes have milk. Fed will not live many days, I think. We thought this morning that he was dying, tho he hasn't taken his bed yet. I think he will die sitting up.

If I ever hear from George any way, I shall soon let you know of it. In Tom's last letter, he said he was more hopeful about him than he had been, but he had no ground for it as I know of. I think I told you in my last that your Aunt Jinea was dead. She once told me that she intended to leave me a negro, but I hope she changed her mind. She told me that old Aunt Amy had requested her to leave her to me, and she was going to do so. I am glad she didn't, if she didn't.

P.S. 29th.

I got a letter from Tom of the 15th on the South bank of the Potomac. He had fine fun in Maryland.

(The above is part of the letter on the preceding page. Grandma wrote so many particulars as to the progress and condition of the crops and and vegetables that I just didn't copy all of it. That accounts for the omissions indicated in this letter. Farming was the important thing in their lives, and besides, she knew that Uncle Burwell was very much interested, as he had practically run the farm before he went to the war.

"Fed" mentioned in the letter was one of the slaves.

B.E.B.)

30th of July 1864.

Dear Burwell,

I wrote to you yesterday, but I have some such good news to tell you that I must write again today. Oh, I feel like the dead was alive and the lost found! I have a letter from George, and he is not only alive and well, but not wounded at all. His letter was written in May and came by flag of truce.

He was at Point Lookout with Jim Harris, Bob Williams, and other friends. Mosely and Duke (?) only.

I also have a letter from Mrs. Elliott. She had heard from him by way of Norfolk through her friends at that place, and hastened to let us know, but said she was so overjoyed that she could scarcely write. The news was joyfully received in Warrenton. I will send you Tom's last letter, but you must bring it back to me when you come. I couldn't sleep last night. I suppose my excitement was too great. I tried and tried in vain. Sleep and slumber had departed from my eyelids. I do wish that I could have got Mrs. E's letter one day before I got George's; it was almost too much at once.

An ox cart is to go to Warrenton depot next Saturday, which I believe will be the 6th of August after salt again, so if you are there you can ride home. I do not know whether or not your Pa has got to go, but I rather expect he will. Now I am not urging you to come home, whether you can or or ought, or not, but merely letting you know of these things, in case that is about the time you intend to come. I gathered a bushel of long stems today, and have commenced drying apples on a small scale.

Such a good chance it would be Saturday to send up a bushel or two to the depot for you, that is, if you are not coming home. I have asked your Pa, and he says he expects to be at the depot next Saturday, so I reckon I shall look for you on that day. If I don't see you before, you needn't expect any melons. We are in need of rain now. A man told your Pa that he was as glad to hear from George as he was. Your Pa said, "No, you may be as glad as you can be, but you can't be as glad as I am."

R.P.D.

(Grandma did not say so, but she evidently knew that Uncle Burwell would understand from the above that Uncle George had been taken prisoner by the Yankees. Jim Harris, who was with him, was his brother-in-law, widower of Aunt Mary (sister of Uncle George). His name was James Harris.

I couldn't read what she wrote about "Mosely and Duke," but there is something about Mosely in her letter on page 79, and about Myrick Duke on page 80. I do not know who they were, except that they were soldiers and probably friends.

B.E.B.)

Aug. the 26th, 1864.

Dear Burwell,

Yours of the 16th of Aug. reached me the 23rd, one week after date, and the reason I have not replied was because I have not had an opportunity of sending a letter to town. Yours came Tuesday of Ct. Week, and everybody went to town on that day, and so no one has been since, but your Pa speaks of going tomorrow.

(A page of particulars as to vegetables, apples, molasses, etc. B.E.B.)

I have had no use for cards this summer. My new ones have only been used to spin some dresses for Pat and myself, and I forgot to show them to you while you were at home. I have four bales of excellent cotton on hand now, waiting for filling. I have just woven one piece of very coarse wool cloth for the men's winter clothes, which, with the old coats about the house, I hope will answer them for winter wear. I don't think of buying anything but cards and spun cotton with a little coppras now and then.

I received a letter from Mrs. Elliott a few days ago. She says her mother received a letter from George written the first of July. Our prisoners have been removed to Elmyra, but I don't know when. It is said that the cars ran off as they were enroute for that place and killed 100 of them. I am very anxious to hear something definite from George. Mosely is in Washington. I reckon he doesn't know anything about George except what Mrs. Elliott's mother writes him.

I wrote to Mrs. E. a week ago, or more, and invited her daughters to visit us, and she wrote me that they were delighted at the idea of coming, and that she would take them right off the next week. Her letter was written the 18th; the next week is nearly ended, and they haven't arrived. The Yankees have taken the Seldon R. R. since her letter was written, which is probably the cause. I believe the Yankees are nearly whipped, but I am afraid they'll come it again, since they have fortified themselves on the W.R.R., that is, if they have done that, and I hear they have.

Did you read a long piece in the weekly Confed. headed "The campaign of 1864 from a Canadian?" The daily you sent came to hand.

As ever, your Ma.

R.P.D.

P. S. They now say that our prisoners have not been removed at all. Old Mr. Harris has a letter from Jim written in Aug. at Ft. Lookout. He said he was well.

Warrenton, N. C. 80
Sep. 12th, 1864

Dear George,

Your letter written in May came to hand two months and a half after date, and I replied to it very soon after its reception. Your other letter written the 24th of Aug. reached me the 9th of Sept., and I can hardly realize that you are in New York, and are you to remain there during the winter? God forbid.

The reason why you have received no letters from Dixie I attribute to your removal. I hope you will find friends over there; I think you will be about as apt to find friends as any body else. Tom was very well the first day of Sept. He writes home often. Burwell came to see us about a month since and stayed one week.

I have been expecting the Misses Elliott for two weeks. Mrs. E. wrote me that she should take them on to visit us two weeks ago. I wrote them a very cordial invitation.

Do you know what became of Myrick Lake after he was wounded? His parents have never heard one word from him, and do you know what became of Washington Burge? I was requested to inquire of you.

I am sorry that you and Jim are separated. Capt. T. left Warrenton ~~xx~~ some two weeks since for his post. I believe he is quite well. We are all tolerable well, and much hope this may find you in as good health and spirits as it leaves us.

Crops are very good generally, and fruit abundant. I am expecting Emma Harris down to see us, so tell Jim they are well if he is with you. John A. is also well. Is Bob with you? Pat and Billie are both well and lively, and very anxious to see you at home again. I shall expect Tom in a month or two; it is almost his time. Your Pa is well and busily engaged in his farming pursuits. I will show your letter to Dawsie and Nancy and tell them to write to you.

As ever,

Your affectionate Mother,
Rebecca P. Davis.

("Mrs. Elliott and "The Misses Elliott," friends Uncle George and Uncle Weldon made in Norfolk.
"Nancy", daughter of Grandpa's sister, Nancy who m. Simon Peter Fleming.
"Dawsie," grand-dau of "
Her name was Margaret Dawson, and she was always called "Dawsie."
"Jim," husband of Grandma's daughter Mary. His name was James Harris.
"Emma Harris," his daughter by a former marriage.) B.E.B.

The letter was written to Uncle George while he was in Elmyra Prison. The page is folded into the shape of an envelope and addressed on the back as follows: George W. Davis

Ward 24, Barracks No. 3

Elmyra, N. York,

Care of H. V. Colt, Maj. & Pro Martial

It bears a U. S. stamp, and the Post Office stamp begins with the word, "Prison." The rest is illegible.

Sept. 12th, '64

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Dear Burwell,

Yours of Sept. the 2nd came duly to hand, and I expect that you would like to hear from home and the boys. I have just got a letter from George, written the 24th of August at Almyra, N. York. He is well, said he got there the 14th of Aug., left Jim Harris and Jake (not sure of that name) Allen at the Point, but thought they would soon be on, says he has not received a line from Dixie since he was a prisoner. Said "arnelle (?) died at the Point, was well treated.

I have a letter from Tom written the first day of this month. He desired me to send him your address, as he wished to write to you. Amos Williams was killed on the suburbs of Charleston a week or two since. Oh, how awful it is, when it comes even this near home!

We all were invited up to your Uncle Sam's yesterday to eat the big melon and eat mutton. Well what do you think? We have made 36 gallons of syrup and haven't cut a cane of ours, so you see it is good to have a mill, cane or no cane. We made 10 gal. for your Uncle John, 5 for Bill Green, and the balance for your Uncle Sam, and we have half. We all wanted a little for present use, and their cane was ripe, and ours not, and we had a mill and they didn't. I am preserving rapidly. I have plenty of peaches yet, that is, for preserving purposes. The syrup is very good, but not altogether as nice as what we made last year. I think we made 10 gallons a day, and I think it took 6 of juice to make one of molasses.

Yes, we have lost the W.R.R. and Atlantic too, and how long it will be at Petersburg, Richmond, and Mobile may fall, I cannot tell. And Mr. McClelland is the nominee of the Chicago convention; about as well be Lincoln, I expect. Nothing to expect yet but hard fighting as I can see.

Sary has been very sick two weeks, and Bet is wounded in the arm, and so I have to take Fillis as my housemaid. They were peeling peaches and Dorcas accidentally cut Bet's arm, a gash two inches long and it laid open an inch wide nearly. However, Bet and Sary are both convalescent.

We have been expecting the Misses Elliott for two weeks. I invited them to visit us, and they accepted the invitation, and wrote that they would be here the next week, and that is the last I have heard of them. Zack is not dead yet, but I suppose he is doomed to die or drag out a miserable existence. We may make as much as four or five barrels of molasses for all I know.

As ever, yours &c.

(On the small margin at the top of Grandma's letter she wrote: "I like very well for you to direct your letters with a pencil, so I can use the envelopes again, but when you write the letter with a pencil you can't write so much on the same paper. Were Graham's socks big enough?"

Sary, Bet, Dorcas, Fillis, and Zack were slaves.

(B.F.B.)

Camp near Winchester, Va.
Friday, Sept. 16th, 1864

Dear Ma:- It has been but a short time since I last wrote to you, having written on the 11th, nor have I received a letter from ~~you~~ you since, nevertheless, as the day promises fair for a quiet one, I will drop you a few lines for fear of not having another chance soon. We came from a point about half way between Winchester and Bunker's Hill yesterday to take the place of Bershaw's Division, which it is said has gone to Richmond. It is rumored here that Petersburg has fallen, and our troops are a little gloomy over the prospects. We hear none of the particulars as yet, haven't heard whether or not it even cost a struggle. I fear we are about to experience a repetition of the disasters of all our previous fall campaigns.

It begins to look as though the death struggle is at hand, whether Petersburg has fallen or not. I am very hopeful that it will be in our favor. The principal way in which the loss of our towns injures us is the encouragement it diffuses throughout the North, and I must acknowledge that I look to a division among them as about the strongest ground for hope. If that fails, our condition will have become desperate, and I think we had better raise the black flag at the opening of next summer's campaign. I have meditated a good deal upon what would be our condition as a subjugated people, and I think there is but one thing worse, and that is certain death. Some say that is preferable, but upon mature consideration I think all would prefer anything to certain death. I am for the black flag though, which is next akin. If that is raised, in my opinion the struggle will be life or death; we will gain all or lose all, and that at once. The terms of peace which Lincoln offers are as you have seen, "Emancipation with no confiscation." Of course they will not be accepted, and if we were to be crushed, it would of course be emancipation with confiscation, in other words, Starvation.

Thus far I think the issues of the present campaign need by no means discouraging. If Hood can hold his own now, and Lee can hold Richmond, the campaign will be ~~the~~ the most successful of the war. The war cannot last much longer in my opinion with all our successes, and upon the next campaign I am willing to stake all.

But this is an unpleasant topic, and the less said and thought about it by those helpless as we are, the better, I reckon.

The weather is quite cool up here, has been for some time, and we are having a good deal of rain, had a tremendous hail storm a few days since. We have nearly cleaned the country of fruit, and indeed of almost everything else, and I hardly think it probable that we will continue north of Strasburg many more weeks. We have an occasional skirmish up here, as a general thing with little or no gain or loss. On the 13th we had a skirmish down where we came from yesterday, had one man from the regiment wounded and simultaneously the Yankee cavalry made a dash upon the 8th South Carolina, which was on picket where we are now (for our whole brigade is on picket) and captured the whole of it.

My furlough will very probably be delayed some longer than I thought when I last wrote, as I have learned since that time that there are more men before me than I was aware of, so if this reaches you before Jim Green leaves, I shall expect the money by him, if Bob Mont-

Montgomery doesn't bring it. I received a letter from you the 4th, written August 27th. It is now the 16th, and I fear you have broken your rule. I shall grow more impatient until another comes.

Cousin Tom Fleming is well and drinking a canteen of milk; Cousin Jimmy is asleep and snoring vociferously; Billie Cheek is reading a N. C. Presbyterian which came yesterday; Jerre Draper is also asleep and too unwell to eat his rations, which I dispose of for him, and I can very well do so, as our appetites are growing better with the season, and rations scarcer. These compose my roommates, the last named, my messmates. Walter Montgomery reached camp from home two or three days ago. Thomas Pitchford is doing well. The army generally is in good health. I hope crops will be good throughout the South. If the Yankees can't perish us, they can't subdue us.

Thursday 17th. We were roused up about daybreak this morning by the Yankees attacking our outpost, composed of cavalry, which they are said to have captured. They didn't come near enough for us to get a shot. We are about a mile from where we lay last night; have thrown up a breastwork of rails in case they should see fit to give us a trial. We had preaching last night, the only sermon save one that I have heard since leaving winter quarters. It seems that a connection with the army sears all conscientious scruples as to duty, even in preachers. Our Reg't has a regularly appointed chaplain, a Mr. Robins, who has not been with us in all that time, indeed I never saw him until a day or two since at all. He preached last night, a tolerably good sermon.

Myself and four others went after apples last night and got more than the company could dispose of. I read a good long letter last night from Cousin Jim Pitchford to Joe Davis. It was a splendid letter. I suppose there were a large number of converts at the protracted meeting at Prospect. I am glad to hear that a better spirit is diffusing itself over the land, for really from all accounts it seems that religion and morals generally have sunken to the lowest ebb.

Many think that the war is sent upon us as a punishment for our sins and that it will last until we grow better. Though such is not my opinion, I rejoice as much as any one to see our people growing better. Certainly if all our people were Christians, the war would soon end, for then every ~~any~~ man would do his duty, and that is all we need to whip the Yankees. War was never known to improve morals, consequently I don't think it could have been sent for that purpose.

Write as often as you have ~~xxx~~ been in the habit, if not often-er until I come home.

As ever, your son,

Thomas E. Davis.

Dear Burwell,

Tuesday, Oct. the 4th, 1864

Yours of the 21st came duly to hand, and I know you are anxious enough to hear from Tom, and I have waited and waited to hear from him myself, and even now I have heard nothing definite. I feel satisfied that he was not hurt in the first fight because I heard of others who were slightly wounded of his Co., and if he had been, I think his name would have been mentioned. Strange to say, Wallace Wms. was slightly wounded, also George Duke, and Dr. Ward's son was killed. Since the fight of the 22nd, nothing has been heard from any Co. or Reg., as I can learn. If you learn any particulars of interest to me, write to me immediately, and I will do the same.

Mat and his family left here yesterday. Lou says she and Madeline expect to go to Raleigh soon to have their teeth fixed, and they will write to you first, and get you to meet them at the depot and conduct them to the hotel. So you may hold yourself in readiness, or rather in expectation of being called on. I told Lou that you would cheerfully do what you could for them, but whether or not you would be at liberty to wait on them whenever they might call on you I could not tell.

Madeline has had bad luck with her teeth. She broke out one, and went to get Dr. Malone to extract another, and he unfortunately took out the wrong one, so now I presume she intends to have some new ones.

We have just closed a ten days meeting at Shady Grove, had a glorious revival, a good many added to the church. Among the number were your Aunt Amanda and Peter Davis, and your Uncle Sam was the happiest man you ever saw. Some of the converts were baptised by immersion down at Davis' Bridge, where there was much water.

I was sure that I had written to you about Zack being shot, but I am forgetful. He is not living now. Your Uncles Sam and John did not get your Pa to make their molasses; he got them to let him, because I wanted some molasses, and he had no cane ripe. We have just begun today in good earnest to make ours up, made a little every day last week, but not much, as we attended meeting every day and all day. We hung on the big pot this morning.

Last Friday Mr. Ben Powell got a negro boy's hand crushed up, and John Cheek another, and Mr. Clements got his head nearly crushed up. His head was caught between the lever and a post, and he is awfully wounded. Sent for three Drs, and could get none until next morning so they sent for a fourth, Dr. Sol. Your Pa and Mat went over after supper and found him in perfect agony. His nose was mashed and the blood was running down his throat, he not being able to help it, and it made him very sick at the stomach. Your Pa and Mat did what they could for him by pouring water on the wound, which helped him very much, and they do not think he is very seriously injured, tho hurt as badly as mortal man could well be (I expect) not to be mortally wounded, as all thought he was at first.

Well, I would like to send those cakes and gully apples, but how can I do it? If I lived in town I could, but as it is, I have no chance. I wish I had told Lou to carry you some; I could easily have paid her the flour again. It makes very nice cakes. I believe I will tell her when I write, to carry you some if she does go, but I very much doubt her going. She is one that can't leave her children,

and surely she will not carry them with her. Madeline will go I expect. She has been up and had one tooth put in.

I send you Tom's letter. One preacher has read it, and I wish more of them could see and know what's thought of them in regard to their duties. I have had company every single night since the first day of the meeting except last night. Mrs. June Nicholson and Emma Harris stayed here four nights, and about the middle of this week Mrs. Lou Egerton and family and your Grandma are to come. I had a barrel full of flour when the meeting began, but it is low down now.

You have a good winter vest here, but it is very rusty, and I have an idea of giving it to one of the men. What do you say? It is a very good fitting vest, and not worn out, but looks bad. I gave all the men a vest last winter except one. Joe is gone to Weldon to work on fortifications, and we have had two beeves pressed this week, but they pay us for them, and we can live without them, perhaps.

9th Oct. It seems that I shall never get a chance to send off this letter. No definite news from Tom yet. T. J. P. has written. He says they were whipped, but said nothing about Tom. He wrote immediately after the first fight.

Write soon. I have sold one bushel of dried apples for \$10.
Write soon.

(In a short note not dated, Grandma wrote:

"I wish you had told me how Jim Foote made it; I haven't heard a word from him. I am glad you can get something to eat. When you can do no better, send home; however scarce it may be, we will divide with you to the last. I want to send George something by Wallace Williams, and Tom something by ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Jim Foote, if I can ever hear that they are alive.

"Poor Tom, I have never sent him a mouthful since George left him, and not much before, but he has very kind friends up there, among the citizens and in the army. Wallace is at home."

(I think the note was written earlier than this time, as it seems to have been before Uncle George was taken prisoner. B.E.B.)

[George Duke was probably the Baptist preacher by that name whom I remember years ago.

Lou was the wife of Grandpa's oldest son, Matthew. Madeline was her sister. She married Hiram Best.

"Your Aunt Amanda" was the wife of Grandpa's brother, Uncle Sam. Peter was their son.

Mrs. Lou Egerton was the wife of my father's brother, Charles Egerton. She was formerly, Miss Lou McKnight.

"T. J. P." was the son of Grandma's brother, Dr. T. J. Pitchford. When Grandma said "two beeves were pressed," she meant they were taken by the army.

B.E.B.)

Dr. Malone probably was the one known as "Old Dr. Malone," the father of Dr. Ellis Malone.)

Friday the 14th, 1864

Dear Burwell,

Your letter of the 12th reached me the evening of the 13th, and I will drop you a few lines today in reply. I will get a bit of silk and try to make you a hat band, but I fear I shall fail.

I got a letter from Tom last night. He had been missing eleven days over in the Yankee lines, and had just worked his way into our lines; however I will send you his letter. I had heard that he was missing, either killed or captured. I was just about to write to you about it, but thank the Lord, he is yet spared, but Oh! how long is he to be spared? I am so anxious to see the poor child.

I have another letter from George. He keeps up a correspondence with Mrs. Groann (sp?) of Nor. and Mrs. Blount of Washington, and they both send him help. I thought he would make friends for himself. He has that social nature; he can't live without friends.

I also have another letter from Mrs. Blount. She tells me that my son, G. W. Davis, has written to her three times, and assures me that she will do for me whatever she can. She also assures me that Weldon is buried in a beautiful place ornamented with shrubs, with a handsome white headboard, black lettered, and that she has written out the incidents of his last days for me, but can't send it now. She said that she asked him if he had any directions to give, and he told her he had given them to his orderly, J. G. Newsom.

Yes, the frost has swept off the pea crop entirely. Your Pa thinks he lost \$3000 worth of peas. He is really hurt about it, I tell you. He had the prettiest pea patch I ever saw, but now it is the ugliest. The cane fodder is ruined, and all my late corn, and the scraps you sowed are all ruined, not one saved, but I have plenty of the white ones saved.

I do not think there is any fun in getting one's head mashed in a cane mill. It didn't get caught in the cogs, but the lever carried it against a post. He is doing very well. Did I ever tell you about his negro killing our hog, and your Pa trying to shoot your new gun, and both barrels refused to fire? I rather think I did, but I am so forgetful.

I would like for you to pay particular attention to Lou and Madelind, but be sure to pay particular attention to your business. Be as useful as you can. I fear they will get you off anyhow. I don't think Isham is at all uneasy, and if you were to see him, you wouldn't either. He is too slow to live. Yes, they are taking the M. D.'s and the J. P.'s and almost down to X, Y, Izzard. Your Uncle Tom will look nice ~~in~~ with your Yankee overcoat on. Tom wants \$150 to pay off his debts. He is not extravagant, but he has not been paid off this year. His Pa has the money ready to send by Phil Alston. He is scarce of money too, and his peas was his money crop.

Your affect. Ma,

R. P. Davis.

Your Pa has been busier for the last month than I ever saw him in my life. I did not think he either could or would have done so much business for the sake of all the molasses, apples, pigs, &c, &c. put together. He says he has about 70 young pigs, and of them the meat for another year is to be made. If made at all he has to run after them, and then he has made about 120 gallons of molasses and attends to the grinding and boiling himself, and takes a great deal of pains with it, and makes it very nice. O, how I wish we could have you with us, but then I am very well satisfied for you to remain where you are.

The apples are gathered, that is, those that had not fallen off before gathering time. We have enough to last perhaps as long as they will keep, and then a fine pile of crabs to make cider. Your Pa has not been to town in a month or two; when I write to you my letters get old before I can send them to town.

I did think I would send you Tom's letters, but have concluded otherwise. He got lost after the battle at Fisher's Hill the 21st, got over into the Yankee lines, and straggled off into the mountains and finally reached our lines in safety, and wrote to me the 2nd Oct. at Charlottesville, and was going to take the cars that day to go on to his regiment which he supposed was at Staunton. He said he wanted to see the boys mighty bad, "That is, if there are any of them left." Jerry Harris and Jerry Draper were both with him, got together in the dark accidentally.

(The above is written on a scrap of paper with no heading, no ending, and no date except "Saturday night, the 15th." The following is also on a scrap of paper, and probably is part of a letter. I believe they were in 1864. B.E.B.), and I believe were a part of the letter dated Oct. 24.)

I did not say anything to the boys about going to the cavalry, for I knew they couldn't get horses anyway. You sent some very interesting new papers in your bundle. We shall read them a good deal, if they are a little stale. You must not let the Raleigh boys (? and ?) give you the blues. I have suffered a great deal of grief and sorrow, but I am not a submissionist yet, nor a unionist, nor a croaker, and don't expect to be until I get under the jurisdiction of Beast Butler, and then I may have to say I am, but if I do I think it will choke me to death.

(I have decided those two words that I couldn't read are "Torys and unionists. B.E.B.)

It does provoke me to see so many who are doing nothing for the good of the country, and all the time trying to discourage those who are doing everything and suffering everything. It is giving aid and comfort to the enemy and virtually tying the hands of our brave soldiers in the field.

George Duke, (not the one you spoke of) has been to see us. He is a fine fellow, and says they are all in fine spirits. He is gone back to the army. He came to see if we wanted to send anything, offered to carry anything we wished him. He stayed all night. We had ~~just~~ just sent clothing and provisions by T. J. P.

Tom hasn't called for his shoes yet. Tells us to save them for him till he needs them.

(This date is verified by Hansell's "A Higher History of the United States," which says "Sheridan and Early met at Fisher's Hill Sept. 22, 1864." B.E.B.)

Dear Burwell,

Your letter of the 27th has come to hand, and with a heavy heart I take my seat to reply and thus relieve myself of the painful duty of telling you that Tom is killed. Yes, the poor child has fallen. It occurred on the 19th of Oct. at the time of Early's humiliating and ignominious defeat. Bob Alston has come home wounded in the jaw, and brings us this sad news. I pray God to give us all grace sufficient for our day and generation. My anxiety for him of late has been so intense that it was almost as oppressive as my grief and sorrow is. I have heard no particulars, have written to Jim Davis for the particulars. There is no sort of cause to doubt the fact that he is dead; only one other man from the county killed, only pair in the reg. How hard it seems to be, but I must try to bear it as well as I can. Life is but short at best, and those who are gone from the evil to come are perhaps best off.

He read his Bible daily with deep interest, so he wrote me, and prayed fervently, and lived I think continually in the love and fear of God. I have good reason for thinking so from his recent letters.

O how I wish you could come home. We feel so sad. It would help some to see you, but I know you can't come when you please. I am glad that you can even stay there.

As ever, your affectionate Ma.

P. S. Your Pa has just carried me out with him to see the potatoes, and a real show it is. He measured one that was 17 inches around and about a foot long. He says you may tell Mr. Editor McKay of that, and tell him he may have it if he will come after it. They house 100 bushels a day, commenced yesterday morning. I do not know whether or not they will finish today, but we expect so.

About half of the sorghum was caught in the frost, and didn't yield as much molasses as the first. Your Uncle Tom made four barrels, your Uncle John, 12, your Uncle Jackson 12. The government gives 10 dollars per gallon, or rather the county. It is buying it up for soldiers' families. Your Uncle Sam is authorized to buy 40 barrels. Gus Check's wife has written to your Uncle Sam to resign and let Gus take his place. He objected politely, but he says she is very angry with him.

Sary is still very sick, or at least not able to do anything and suffers much with pains at times. I have sold some dried apples at \$10 per bushel, but I do not like that price much. I do not know how I am to get my cards unless your Uncle Tom brings them to me the first time he comes on a visit. Is there anything you expect me to send you by him besides your overcoat, if indeed he will carry that?

Another potato has just come in, measuring 20 inches around it, but alas! alas! everything has lost its charm for me since Tom is not to come home to see and enjoy them, and I feel like I had almost as live die as to write to George and tell him that Tom is killed. In all his letters he was so concerned to hear from Tom, and I was so proud to say to him, "All's well with Tom."

I I suppose "Bob Alston" was Major Rob Alston, grandfather of Eleanor Powell, George William Davis' wife. (E.E.B.)

Fishing Creek
Saturday evening.

Dear Burwell,

Your letter of Nov. the 6th came to hand day before yesterday, and as I always have something to say to you I will commence a letter to you this evening, and finish when I can. I have rec'd two letters from camp recently, from Jim Davis and Wallace Williams. I presume that neither knew that the other had written. They say everything good about Tom that I could desire to hear. Jim says he was faithful in the discharge of every duty, and he believes that he was a Christian. He was instantly killed, died without a struggle or a groan. We seldom name it at home. Many long and deep sighs are heard, but when we speak it is foreign to that subject.

I just can't bear it, to think, speak, or write about, and when I lie down at night, and it comes to my mind, I soar aloft in my imaginations, and leave all earthly things behind. I think of a happy home in Heaven, that bright celestial city, with pearly gates and golden streets, and of all the happy host of loved ones that I hope to meet there to praise God forever, and when I get into that state I ~~get~~ of mind, I am apt to fall into a pleasant slumber, and if I do not, I get off on my domestic concerns. I try to look at all times just like nothing had happened. I am getting on very well with it, I hope. I just know if I reflect much upon it, and indulge my grief, it would be more than my mental or physical powers could stand. I pray the good Lord to help me through with all that I am or may be called on to bear or suffer. I expect to say and write but very little on the subject henceforth.

I didn't see Dr. Ward's peice; would like to, but then I know it would send a thrill of anguish through my inmost soul.

Well, the apples do rot very fast, and we are very anxious to send you some. I expect to send some by Dr. P. if we can, but you ought to have some right now and some cakes, tobacco, and your overcoat. Do tell Dr. Leigh to have you detailed to come home after apples, and you will carry half bushel for him, and let us know in time to have some cider beaten for you, tho I expect that the cider will be beaten next week, as the apples are rotting. Our potatoes got very warm that hot weather, and I feared that they would all be lost, but by removing some into the cellar, they cooled down, and I hope they are saved.

Your Grandma is here now. I told her that you wanted a plain woven suit of mixed. She said "It is very nice and fashionable, this plain woven." Do you like light or dark? It will be a good while before I can have it spun tho, as I must get the winter clothes first. I have four bales of factory cotton on hand yet, so you see I am quite independent on that score, and I have the wool now in black dye for mixing.

Your Pa came home a few days ago from town and told me he had sold my dried apples. I told him not to be too fast, I shouldn't promise to stand by the bargain; my price was \$15 per bushel. He said, "Yes, but I got \$25," and he laughed at me heartily. He then said that he had bought a pr of cards, and asked how much I was willing to give for them. I told him \$50. He said, "But I got them for \$22."

Mr. Fulford was here; and he said he never saw anybody as completely cornered in his life as I was. They all laughed at me. He then took out a paper of large needles and told me to guess the price of those, and I was determined not to give too much for those, so I guessed \$1, but it was \$4. He carried up 25 bushels of apples today. Dr. Cham-bless takes them for the winter (not sure of that word. B.E.B.) hospital. I saved enough to last me two years. I gave Mat one bushel.

Sunday morning. Your Uncle Tom took supper here last night as he came on from town, and he says he is going to Raleigh next Saturday. I was not aware that the time was so near at hand for him to go. Well, I wonder if you can come home in December. The cards your Pa got are not made. The teeth and wood are separate. They are at your Uncle Tom's; I haven't seen them. If I don't like them, I may write you (to get me another pair) by your Uncle Tom. I shall send you the \$50 for those you have, and I do not know whether to send you the \$70 for the others or not, but it is here for you, and subject to your orders at any time. Money could be sent you in a letter without much risk, I should think.

What do you think of our trying to send George a box of cloth and provisions? We are anxious to try to do something to alleviate his sufferings, and it ought to be done speedily.

Your Uncle Tom says that he will be up Saturday, but if he fails on that day, he will go Sunday, so you must meet him and get a letter and perhaps some apples &c. I have not heard from George since the 20th of Sept. What do you think of that? I am not at all easy about him. Thomas Pitchford has been missing some 14 days, supposed to be captured, but Joe Egerton made his escape from the Yankees and got back, and John Powell was not taken, as was reported.

If there is anything particular you may wish to communicate to me before your Uncle Tom leaves, you can write. Your Pa will go to the depot I reckon to carry some apples for you, and I think we shall send on a box to General Warren also to forward to George.

(This letter was not signed, but it was certainly written by Grandma.

Mr. Fulford was the teacher of the community school. My mother, Pattie, attended.

B.E.B.)

Dear Burwell,

I will drop you a line or two and send you some apples, cakes, socks, tobacco and overcoat. You must exhibit a specimen of the apples to Dr. Leigh, and when they are all gone you really must get him to let you come home after some more for you and him. We want you to come home.

It would help to sooth our sorrow.

Thursday night. I have just finished fixing a large box to send to George. We shall send it on to Raleigh tomorrow to Capt. J. N. McDowell. I hardly feel like George will ever be so fortunate as to get it, but I am willing to run the risk of losing it, thinking that if he does get it, it may even save his life. It contains clothing, provisions, blanket, pickles, onions, vinegar, red pepper, and a sight of tobacco, but I reckon the best plan after all would be to send him green backs, at least George Foote says so. George and his wife left here this evening, also your Aunt Nancy.

I haven't heard from George yet since the 20th of Sept. Your Uncle Tom says he will do the best he can with the box. Can you pay any attention to it if it should need your attention? We know very little about the business.

Your things are in a sack bag, tied up and sewed up, so if the name gets torn off you must hunt it up. You'll know it by its contents, that overcoat, apples, cakes, socks, and two peach bloom irish potatoes and sweet potatoes.

Your Pa had some old money which he wished to have exchanged, so I have sent it to you to pay you for the last pr. of cards you bought. It lacked a little and so you see I have put in a few little pieces to make out the \$50. I would certainly send you \$70 more if I thought that you wanted it sent. The cakes are in the sleeves of the coat.

As ever your affec. Ma, R.P.D.
Write very soon.

"George Foote," Grandma's nephew.

"Your Aunt Nancy," Grandma's sister and George Foote's mother.

"Your Uncle Tom," Grandma's brother.

Fishing Creek
Monday the 28th of Nov. 1864

Dear Burwell,

Yours of the 21st came duly to hand, and I ought not to write again so soon, "but I rather think I shall," as the song goes. In the first place, I want to tell you that I did get a letter from George after I had sent off my last letter to you, hence it was I said nothing of it to you. He says he is very well, that he knows nothing of Myrick Duke or Washington Beage. That John D. Shearin died at Elmira on the 4th of Oct., of consumption, he thinks, and on the 11th all sick and wounded soldiers were sent off.

He also said "I have just rec'd a letter from Cousin Alice Minis of Baltimore and 10 stamps." Now what do you think of that? I might think it was some friend whom he wished to disguise, but in the same letter he says, "Mrs. Groom also sent me \$2 on the same day." This letter was No. 5. He has all his letters, but No. 4 didn't come. Perhaps if it had, I might better understand this. He sends me stamps in all his letters, says not a word about fare.

Jim Harris is at home, and I am hourly expecting him here. Jim Pitchford says he saw him in town, but I heard no particulars, don't know whether he is exchanged, paroled, or what. We do not want you to go to your reg't and get a discharge, not even if it were certain that you could get one, for even then you would have to go into state service. I am not making myself unhappy because you do not come home; I merely suggested the idea. I want you to be very punctual to all duties, so as to be sure and stay there as long as the war may last if possible.

I think that we are bearing up under our last bereavement very well; we seldom express to each other our feelings, but talk of any and everything else. What's become of Graham? And is Smith there yet? I feel for that little fellow. I know you gave him some apples and cakes. Treat him kindly. What a pity for him to have to leave his Ma and Pa! He is not near as large as Sam Pitchford. Sam didn't like it at all when he was sent back. They are all very well at your Uncle Tom's, and it is rumored that Thomas has got back to camp. They say that Phil Alston has writ to that effect, and I heard that your Aunt Matilda was going to send to Mrs. Alston's to know about it. I do not believe it because if others could write about it, he could and would. His wife has been down lately, and visited me. She is a lovely and lovable character.

I have just heard that Eliza Egerton and Nancy Fleming have come down to your Uncle Sam's to spend some time here and there. They There are some 8 or 10 soldiers up at the gov. barn packing fodder. They have been there some weeks; they are cavalry men, all clean well informed men. They have been visiting by invitation around here, and they are delighted. They say they count this equal to a furlough. They are Georgians, Alabamians, and Mississippians. They talk about get to go, get to do whatever they do. Eliza and Nancy never could get to come down until they heard that we had a lot of boys among us. Four of them are young men, one just out of College when he entered the service. He was telling me about his old president, and said "He is a bastard. He doesn't know who his father is; he is a real self made man." I was beaten, but I thought, "If you don't care, I don't."

From the Raleigh Christian Advocate, Friday, November 25, 1864.

Thomas Edwards Davis.

Killed in the battle of Bell Grove on the 19th of Oct., Thomas Edwards Davis, Co. F. 12th, N. C. Troops, son of Edward and Rebecca Davis of Warren County, N. C.

While looking over and meditating seriously on the long list of martyrs who have fallen by the hands of our cruel and relentless foe, offering their lives a free sacrifice on the altar of their country, none causes the tear to flow more freely - none causes the heart to heave a deeper sigh and call loudly for vengeance than the subject of these few lines.

Reared and trained by pious and Christian parents from his earlier days, he imbibed the principles of morality and the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ. Strictly conscientious in all his duties to his God, country and fellow man, he won the confidence and esteem of his companions. But he has gone, yes the noble youth of twenty summers, with the flush of health on his cheek, and with the glow of friendship in his heart, is reckoned with the glorious number whose bones lie bleaching on the renowned fields of Virginia, but his memory is yet with us, and his spirit still lingers around us, infusing the glow of patriotism in our breasts, teaching us as he often remarked that "it was better to die a brave man in the discharge of all his duties than to live the life of a base recreant and hypocrit."

We offer to his bereaved family and friends our warmest sympathies, and exhort them still to look to the God of all mercies for consolation in this their trying hour, humbly trusting that although their darling boy, the pride of their hearts, lies a mangled corps on the field of strife, his spirit is now happy in the bright Elysian fields of Paradise, never to be disturbed by war's rude alarm.

(Signed) J. A. D.
Co. F. 12th N. C. T.

(The above obituary was written by Mr. John A. Dameron, who lived in the same community and was a member of the same company as Uncle Tom. His niece, Mamie Dameron, was first wife of Uncle Billie, youngest brother of Uncle Tom. B.E.B.)

We have to make many allowances for the difference in the manners and customs of people in different localities. They are certainly men of extensive general information.

I hope you are well ere this. If you were to get sick, very sick, I could go to see you if necessary, but I hope it has worn off. You ought to write to George. He has not received but two letters from home yet. His address is Sgt. G.W.D. - Ward 24, Barracks No. 3, Prison Camp, Elmira, N. Y., care of H. V. Colt, Maj. and Provost Marshal.

I have seen Dr. Ward's piece; Lou sent it to me. It is a touching thing, to me especially. We are all well except Sary. Your Grandma is sojourning with us now.

As ever yours &c.

Rebecca P. Davis.

(The following written on a scrap of paper shows something of what they were going through. B.E.B.)

"The patrol caught a runaway in Prime's house the other night cooking a quarter of one of our sheep. They sent us over the other three quarters and took the negro off to jail. It was Mary Newell's Tom. Prime said, "If I had known it was your sheep, Mars Ned, he never should have come in with it, but he told me he brought it 10 miles."

"They gave Prime the hickory, gave the done meat to their dogs, and took the skin themselves. I hate to tell you such things. It has been two or three weeks ago. Prime is a real rascal, and has helped eat 10 or 12 of our sheep this year. He and Buck and Tom are the sheep eaters."

(On another piece of paper Grandma wrote:)

"I have just had a piece of cloth woven for Mat's summer pants and coat. Lou spun it herself in part. It is woven serge."

(Mary Newell, daughter of Grandma's Aunt Nancy Davis Powell. She married Billie Newell and later married Jesse A. Alston. The slave, Tom, belonged to her. Prime and Buck were slaves, but I do not know whether they belonged to Grandpa or to a neighbor.

B.E.B.)

12th of Dec. 1864

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Dear Burwell,

I will write you a few lines by your Uncle Tom. He came down Saturday evening, got here $\frac{1}{2}$ after 7 o'clock and took supper with us. I did receive yours of the 30th, also the one of the 4th of Dec. Your Uncle Tom wrote us a note, informing us that you were very sick, by Mr. Norwood, Sunday before court, and I replied to it, and told him that if it should become necessary, we would go to see about you.

It seems that you are not anxious to be visited by us, and I assure you I am truly glad that it did not become necessary, for it has become almost a matter of impossibility for either of us to leave home at all. Your Pa saw Windsor in town after he had carried his Master up to the legislature, and he said he saw you down town, that you went to see Mr. Alston, &c. &c., so we thought that you were quite well. I say that Windsor told a story, that he did not see you out at all. Your Pa thinks he did; I want to know.

Well, Jim Harris has not been to see us yet, and he is exchanged and ordered back, but says he will not go before the first of Jan. Your Pa has seen him in town several times, every time he goes, in fact. Bob Wms. has not yet been heard of. It is supposed that he died on the passage; Jim said 120 died. He tried to take charge of Bob, but was not allowed the privilege. Jim Foote is at home, reduced almost to a skeleton. Mr. Simmons brought him and had to tote him on his back from place to place, that is, between cars, besides a bag of clothes and about 20 lbs of rocks which he got in the valley as mineral curiosities.

I was thinking perhaps you might come home with your Uncle Tom, until the weather got so bad, but I don't know that you even knew that he was coming home at all. I thought you might write by him for something, but as you did not, I shall not send you anything, not knowing what you need, and if I did, I don't know that I could send it. We are all well, no news.

I suppose we needn't be much surprised to see Yanks at any time, as they were marching on to Weldon the last I heard of them. Truly we are troubled on every side, and perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted, but not forsaken, cast down but not in despair.

Tom Pitchford has not written home yet, but it is looked upon as an established fact that he was sent to Ft. Delaware and not hurt at all. I have been expecting Lou for a week, but the weather is so bad now that I have given her out almost. Your Grandma is here for the balance of the winter, I guess. Your Uncle Jackson is in the army; now isn't that the last resort? Or will your Pa have to go as the dernier resort? Nothing more.

As ever your affec. Ma. R.P.D.

(The letter is addressed to "Sgt. B. P. Davis, Gen. Hospital No. 8. Raleigh, N. C.

(Windsor evidently was one of Uncle Tom's slaves. (Dr. T. J. Pitchford)

B.E.B.)

Dear Burwell,

Yours of the 22nd ¹ received Saturday evening. It was late and cold when your Uncle Tom passed, so he did not hand it out, but sent that and the cards up the next day.

I should have written to you last week, but as I was pretty sure of getting a letter from you Friday, I concluded to wait, and besides, Mat and Lou and all the children were here all the week, and Jim Harris and Emma part of the time, and I really have not had a chance to write in a fortnight, and now Bettie Nicholson and her family are spending this week here, but have gone up to dine with Amanda today, so I will try to write a little.

I did not mistake your meaning in regard to visiting you while you were sick. I knew you never desired to put your Pa and me to any unnecessary trouble or expense, and I assure you that I was truly rejoiced when I learned that I didn't have to go, tho I think I should have gone anyhow if your Uncle Tom had said you were dangerously ill, that is, if I could, tho as you say, it would have been a great undertaking for me, for now, above all other times, I desire to stay at home.

We have not killed hogs yet, have about 43 to kill. Yes, Ben Roberson has brought his wife home, so Mrs. Roberson has two little responsibilities now, added to those already gathered around her hearthstone. I fear you were disappointed when your Uncle Tom went back; I would have been glad to have sent you some apples or anything that you wanted, but the weather was too freezing cold to send to the depot, and it was too bad to ask him to carry anything in the night, and the ground hard frozen. I suppose he will not go back soon. If you come home, bring me some stamps. I am not out, but I'll take a few more if I can get them.

Lou was telling me the other day that Lou Egerton said she thought it was very strange indeed that you had never called on her the first time, as much as she had stayed at her sister's so close to you. Lou said that some gentleman, (I have forgotten who) said that soldiers were not allowed to keep Sunday clothes at hospitals, and perhaps you didn't like to call on ladies in your every day clothes. Her reply was, "He might have called on me." She thinks a mighty sight of Charlie's kin except his Ma and Pa and Brothers and Sisters. I would be truly glad for you to go soon to see her every time she goes. Charles Davis went out to see her once and stayed several days, and she was much gratified.

I hope Mr. Graham is getting well, as you didn't say to the contrary. I told Jim Harris to go to see you, but he said he couldn't be seen in Raleigh. He says Bob W--- left the day before he did, says he had a dreadful cough and diarrhea brought on by his own imprudence. He says he is the stingiest man he ever saw, and tho he had money and he might have lived comfortably, yet he preferred to hold on to his pelf and lie on the ground, until he told him it was shameful. He then had a trunk made which cost him \$12. Jim says Mrs. Green sent Bob a suit of clothes, and he wouldn't accept them because he thought they might be to pay for, tho he badly needed them. Jim took them and wrote to Mrs. Green that he would pay for them to her daughter, and he says she, Mrs. Wharton Green, is badly in need of money, and for \$60 in green backs which her mother advanced to him, he intends

to pay her \$300.

Jim is looking very well, has just bought a very ~~new~~ fine suit, and wants to splurge if he only had the horses, but there he is sadly lacking. I do not mean that he has any notion of trying to get married, but he likes to dress and dash about among the gals as well as anybody I ever saw; and I tell you the gals are ready and willing to marry and I do not think they will be very choice these times, and as for attention, they accept of that gladly from any source.

Those soldiers that stayed up at your Uncle Sam's went to Sol. Wms' constantly and had more fun with the girls than a little, and sometimes they went to Jo Clement's and Bet and Pat and Emma would meet them there and all hands stay all night sometimes, and then sometimes the soldiers would leave later in the night. "we all looked upon them as perfect gentlemen and treated them as such. One thing they all said they knew "they were soldiers."

Two of them, Rhon and McRae, have come back to spend Christmas, got to Sol's Sunday, and are here today; just now landed, came from Battleboro in a buggy and an old horse attached, which they say they succeeded in getting by much effort. I thought I was going to have this one day to myself to answer my letters, but I will treat soldiers as I would that my boys should be treated. I asked your Pa how much corn I must tell you he had made. He said "more than we made last year."

Well I do begin to think that the Yankees will sweep over N.C. before they are done. I can but await my fate, whatever that may be. I have no idea of leaving home even if I hear they are coming right here, tho we know not what we may do. I haven't heard from George since the 20th of Sept., nor has anything direct been heard from Thomas P. No flag of truce boats pass now, so I am informed. I wonder if George did get that box. If he can have his health, I had rather he would remain a prisoner until the end of the war than to have him exposed to danger and death in its most violent form. I pray God to shield him from all harm, and grant that we all may meet in heaven at last.

Your affec. Ma.

(Jim (James) Harris, mentioned in the above letter, was a son-in-law of Grandpa and Grandma, having married their daughter, Mary, who died at the age of 20. Emma was his daughter by a former marriage. She married Mr. Myrick, and they were the parents of Clarence Myrick, who married Mary Stuart Egerton. James Harris was a descendant of Wilmot Egerton, who was brother of my Gr-Gr-Grandfather, James Egerton. B.E.B.)

Feb. 5th, '65

Dear Burwell,

Yours of the 26th reached me a few days since, and I expect you begin to want to hear from home by this time, so I will write you a few lines.

Yes, poor Frank did die at last sure enough. He suffered a great deal both in body and mind. He was sensible to the last, and his dying words were, "Lord, take me." He asked his Ma if she would forgive him for all he had ever done amiss. She told him she would freely, but there was one higher than her to forgive. He said, "I know that, and I am praying all the time." It was Monday after you left that he died, and his funeral was preached by the Rev. Mr. Cook. The little girl is sick now, seems to be threatened with croup, not serious, I hope.

I wonder if your Uncle Tom has told you about his sheep getting drowned. He may not know it himself. Every one he had was drowned in the big fresh, and all your Uncle John's with them except the house lamb. They were all found in a raft together frozen some ten days after the water fell. There were between 30 and 40 of them, and it was the very last of the month that they thawed enough to get them out and save the wool.

That is a considerable misfortune these hard times. Curs happened not to be in the low grounds. As long as your Uncle Tom stayed at home after the freshet, he did not find that his sheep were drowned before he left. After Mr Baker came, he searched the plantation for sheep, and could find none, so he supposed they must have been drowned, and proceeded to search the creek, and there he found them all in a solid raft.

Our Academy is nearly completed, and the school was to have commenced Monday the 6th of Feb, but Tom Harris sent up yesterday for Mr. Fulford to go to Tarborough to see about his son Bill, who is sick with measles at that place. Tom Harris is down with it himself, and nearly every one of his family.

I reckon you have seen some of Thomas' letters to his Pa. They got four from him the other day all in a batch. He says he is now receiving the finishing touch of a soldier's education. I have also had two letters from George since you left. He is quite well yet.

We did hear that the Legislature was to adjourn yesterday, and Sam went up after his Pa, but he saw Dr. Mat just from Raleigh, who said that next Thursday was the day for adjournment. All this talk of Armistice and peace &c is very cheering to despondents. I don't know how we shall all feel when it blows over.

I reckon you got plenty of ice about Raleigh this time; if not, I hope you will not be favored with another such an opportunity. Lou Egerton is in Raleigh now, and I expect that she will stay a time, for she has run away from the measles. Mat has been ordered into service twice, and only got as far as the depot each time.

A great many soldiers pass here now. They generally stop at your Uncle Sam's. Pat Sherrin is knitting fancy gloves for some of them, who happened to fall in love with her, or she with them, or both, we

tell her. Joe is sick yet; all the rest of us are well. Your Grandma is gone to see Mrs. Check. She went to John Newell's the other day. She says it is a sad looking place. John says the hurricane blew his hat off and he thought it took every hair off his head, scalp and all. As ever, your Ma. Write soon and a little more.

("Poor Frank" was the son of Grandpa's brother, Uncle Sam Davis. Frank died at the age of eleven.
 Rev. Mr. Cook, named Charles, was pastor of Shady Grove Methodist Church.
 Uncle Tom, Grandma's brother.
 Sam and Thomas, his sons.
 Mr. Baker, his overseer.
 Uncle John, Grandma's brother.
 Mr. Fulford, teacher of the Academy.
 Dr. Mat, son of Grandma's Aunt Rebecca Williams.
 Tom Harris, a neighbor.
 "Your Grandma," Grandma's mother.
 Mrs. Cheek, Uncle Tom's mother-in-law.
 John Newell, son of Grandma's first cousin, Mary Powell Newell.
 Joe, a slave.

The first day John Newell ever went to school he accompanied his older brothers, Lem and Sam. The teacher wrote down the roll, asking each child his or her name. He asked Lem his name, and John was surprised to hear his brother answer, "Lemuel Newell."

"What is your name?" he then asked Sam.

"Samuel Newell," he replied.

"And what is your name?" he asked John.

"Johmuel Newell," said John.

B.E.B.)

("The little girl," mentioned in the second paragraph, is thought to have been Uncle Sam's daughter, Polly, named for her maternal grandmother. Polly died in her childhood, I think of croup. B.E.B.)

Saturday the 18th of Feb. 65

Dear Burwell,

Your letter of the 13th came to hand yesterday, and just as I expected, you had begun to wonder what was to pay. I wrote in good time, and thought to send the letter to town the next day after I wrote it, but missed seeing your Uncle Tom's boy when he passed, and didn't get another opportunity in a week, and then I sent it by a soldier, and so I don't know that you ever will get it. Let me know when you write again whether or not it has reached you.

I am sorry that Graham had to leave. I do hope you will not have to go, but if you should, try to get with Buck Wms. or somewhere out of reach of bullets, if it be a possible thing. Buck has a lot of great big able men with him, riding about looking for ^{corn} and giving receipts, when such as you could do it just as well as they.

The negotiation gale blew over just as I expected it would, and I fear the recognition yarn will run out the same way. This war is a terrible thing, and I hardly know what to do or say about it, only that we all should try and be prepared for whatever fate awaits us, whether it be to live or to die. Of all men under the sun, the soldier has the greatest need of pity. Amid the privations ~~and~~ hardships incident to a soldier's life, he needs the consolations of the gospel, and nothing but grace can preserve him from the vices and ~~firm~~ follies which have doubtless marred many a promising young man. Let me urge you then to make it your first, chief, and constant concern to be a Christian. God demands nothing but a willing heart. He never neglected a repenting sinner and never will.

I know that I have not said much to you all on this important subject, but I have felt much. My anxiety for the temporal and eternal welfare of my children since this war commenced has been more than I thought my human nature could bear. God grant that we may all finally be permitted to meet together in a world where wars and rumors of war can never disturb us, and where love, peace, and joy reign forever.

I have heard of no casualties from among our county boys of late except Dr. Tyrrell's son was killed, and Levister wounded in the fight near the plank road, the 9th I think it was.

I have just made you a hat, cap rather. It is very nice and well made, and I think you would like it. It is not made soldier fashion at all. It has a piece around the head little more than an inch wide, and then a sort of bell crown like George's black velvet one. It is made of black broadcloth and lined with silk. If you want it sent to you, suggest some way of sending it, and then if you don't like it, you can sell it for 20 or \$25, and that would get me a good chance of paper, needles, &c, &c. I also intend to have you a straw hat made if I can, and Mrs. Fullford says she will make it. We have bargained for it, and in fact, I have already paid her for it. Bad paymaster to pay beforehand. I don't know as it can be made before wheat gets ripe.

Your Pa hasn't lost a great many pigs, but has lost several sheep. Write tolerably soon and let me know if you got my other letter. If not, I must write some of it over again. If convenient, you may subscribe for the N. C. Christian Advocate for me. I think the price is \$10 per year. Have it sent to the address of "Mrs. K. P. Davis." Make haste and send it on; I want it.

I think the paper is \$10. If however it is more and you think the Yanks will break it up before the end of the year, you could pay the \$10, and let it come as long as it will for that amount.

We are well. Let me hear from you soon, and if you have to leave, I hope you can call at home a few days. This is Monday, and John Wms. has just passed and left \$75. I have recently rec'd a letter from Jim H. He is at Bellfield on Provost guard, lively as ever. Do you know this A. J. Barber? He says he is well acquainted with Mrs. Elizabeth Blount, says her son, Capt. Tom Blount, was killed in the 7 days fight around Richmond while carrying the flag of the 30th N. C. Reg. I have heard you speak of the very circumstance, but you didn't know who he was.

Adieu, your affec. Ma.
R.P.Davis.

(Written on a small piece of paper was the following note:

"Mr. Davis,

Mr. Reynolds purchased for me today 25 bushels of fruit from you. I was glad to get it and will take all that I can get. I am an agent for Dr. Chambliss Hospital, and it is an N. C. Hospital and our soldiers are much in need of"

(The page was cut off here. On the other side it says:

"to this, and I shall be much obliged to you. I will keep the bags until you send for them. Let me know if we can get any fruit, butter, or candles in your neighborhood.

Respectfully yours,
Kate V. Chambliss.

(Letter not dated, but evidently in the spring of 1865.)

Monday morning.

Dear Burwell,

We have had the prettiest weather, I mean the prettiest rains for a week or two I ever saw, and vegetation is doing the best, I expect. The potato bed is well bulged up, and will be very green in a day or two. We have set a few rows of cabbage plants, and have a good many little ones and plenty of tomato vines as high as my finger. The lot corn is up fine and growing off. Hugh says it is the prettiest piece he has seen this year, says his Pa's wheat is excellent. He expects to make 1000 bushels, and as many barrels of corn, and has three cane crushers, or intends to have, and has bought two boilers, gave \$80 in Raleigh for the bottoms only.

Your Grandma is off on her 6 months furlough, started $\frac{1}{2}$ after 5 and expects to dine at Mat's. Frank Davis has just come in with a fish hook stuck into his thumb for your Pa to cut it out, but he has backed out and says he must go on to the Dr., so he is off again, and when he gets there it will be as bad as it was here and at home, so I reckon he will go on over to your Uncle John's.

Well it does seem hard that we cannot hear from our boys. Why is the community kept in this dreadful suspense? I fear the state of affairs is so very bad that it is deemed most prudent to withhold it from the public. Alas! When the curtain is raised, what shall we behold? Your Aunt Jennie is almost deranged about hers, and almost upon starvation at that. She has sent to your Uncle Sam's today, and says she hasn't an ear of corn or a piece of meat as large as her hand. Oh Lord! help us all I pray. R.

Thursday. I heard last night after dark that one of your Uncle Tom's negroes was to go to Raleigh today. Wish I had known it in time to send you my letter to you. I fear you will get impatient to hear from home. We have about 1000 bushels of potatoes yet, and I cut up 24 for coffee, which made 4. I have about one bushel of apples only. Jim Foote is able to ride to town in a carriage, tho some think he never will get well.

Why doesn't the weekly Journal come? I suppose it hasn't started yet. I don't know what we should have done for news but for the papers you have been sending us. Pat is much pleased learning the "dof and dum" alphabet.

(The above letter is written on three different pieces of paper. On the back of one is part of a note from someone, but not signed. It reads:

"Dec. the 11th, 64. Aunt Becca, I received your note this morning and hasten to answer it. I am glad to hear that Cousin George is doing so well, but sorry to hear that Cousin Burwell is sick. Jimmy has received your letter some time ago, but had not answered it as late as the 26th of Nov., but said he would do it in a few days. In one of his letters he wrote that he ----"

(I think "Grandma's 6 months furlough" was her annual visit to her other daughters, my maternal grandmother, Mrs. Jackson Egerton, near Louisburg, and Aunt Nannie Foote in Wake Forest. "Mat" was Grandma's oldest son, M. S. Davis, who lived in Louisburg. "Hugh" was my uncle, Hugh Egerton.

I thought "Frank Davis" was Uncle John's son, but the 2nd paragraph sounds like he was not, but a relative, so I don't know. B.E.B.)

January the 16th, 1869

Dear Cary:

I have been thinking of writing to you for sometime, but my eyes are so bad off I dread to undertake it, for I could not see a line if there was one on the paper, but I want to see you and Sal so bad I will go to it blind and talk to you if I cannot see you. I am as well as when I left and some blinder. My eyes are quite painful and there is a gloss over them all of the time, very painful at night.

I have been to Matt's twice, stayed two weeks the last time. I went to a reading circle one night with Lou; Matt was not well enough to go. It was held at Mrs. Person's that night, and Mrs. Person said I had to come. Miss Camilla Goodlow was the lady reader, and Doct. Crenshaw the gentleman. They have them every Wednesday night at private homes, but it's just to meet together to amuse themselves. There is not much reading done. I stayed at Mrs. Person's part of the time I was in Louisburg, but I had to go back that night with Lou. They had the circle at Joe Davis's last Wednesday night, Mr. Jones Fuller's this week, and so on. Haven't seen either of the Miss Browns since I came out last, don't know whether they are in Franklin or Warren.

Jackson and Hugh have hired as many hands as they need and are going on bravely. Five of his own men that he raised have come back and begged him to take them back, some of them say "Forever." Five or six of his women too.

I should like to know how you all are getting on down there. There's no way to get along with a Negro but to make them know their place. Jackson's don't seem to know that they are free; they go early and late, night or day. Mary has a new ~~xxx~~ cook and a new house girl. They seem very anxious to please, but they are rather raw hands at the business. They will try to please I think, for they know she will not keep them if they don't, but the cook is a beautiful washer and ironer. She belonged to Sam Reddie.

Well I reckon Pattie has got in her mansion. Have you been to see her? I want you to write me all about everything that's taken place since I left; who is dead and who is married, and who has got a baby, and who is going to have one. Not you, I hope. How is it with Sam's wife, and how do the two Pats and Annie come on with their sweethearts, and is Simon Fleming married or not, and has your mother been to see your brother Nat yet? I saw Mrs. Craton in Louisburg and O, how she did praise you up to the highest notch. "What a fine granddaughter-in-law I did have!" I told her I was aware of that, and she said she verily believed your mother was the best woman in the world. She said she was going to Phil Alston's in a few days. I saw her and her sister Tempe King at Doct. ~~xxx~~ Joe King's. Doct. Joe is going to move to Warrenton next week to supply Doct. Wilson's place. Doctors are getting right hungry for rich folks about here, and they'll perish before they get their money, they say.

Give my love to Maude; tell her I was glad to hear what a great fat boy her baby had had got to be. Give my love to Matilda, Pattie, Emma and Annie. I am very sorry for Matilda. She has seen trouble with her children. Don't let Sal forget me entirely. If she does I shall hate it, a little imp; I wish I could see her. I am afraid she will be like some little "nigs" here. They are afraid of me and run and hollow every time they see me. If you do, Sal, I mean to whip you, gal

I should like to hear from Mary Newell. You can write me some news. I have nothing interesting to tell you. Give my love to Mrs. Cheek, Tom's, Ned's, and Sam's folks, and take what is left for you and Sal and Burwell.

All join me in love,

Elizabeth Pitchford.

(The above letter was written by my great grandmother, Elizabeth Davis Pitchford to Uncle Burwell's wife. The Louisburg people she mentioned are names familiar to me, but most of them had passed away before my day, though I remember "Miss Camilla Goodlow" and "the Miss Browns." She was visiting her daughter, "Mary," who was my grandmother, and my grandfather Jackson Egerton, and spent part of her visit with her grandson, "Matt," and his wife, "Lou" Davis.

The Warren County relatives she asks about or sends messages to are all mentioned in Grandma's letters and are to be found in the index of this book. One of the "Fats" mentioned in the 5th paragraph was my mother. The only person mentioned in the letter still living (1955) is the baby "Sal," Uncle Burwell's oldest daughter, now 88 years of age.
B.E.B.)

Elizabeth Davis Pitchford was born in 1789 and died Mar. 5, 1875)

Creek, 10th Sept. - 85

Mrs. Dameron,

Dear Tempe, all the time during the meeting at Shady Grove there seemed to be so much to remind me of you, and I kept thinking of you every day, so finally I decided that, as I couldn't see you, I would just write you a few "random sketches," as the newspapers sometimes say. In the first place, I think we had quite an interesting meeting, especially for old Shady. I have never seen such large congregations (during the week) before. Some days I feared that the loaves and fishes would not be sufficient to feed the multitude, but I think there was quite enough on every occasion, tho Mr. Dameron, on one occasion, seemed to think the supply was short, but I saw meat and bread on the table after all were "filled" and had left.

I think we had some rude chaps around our table (sometimes) of the juvenile persuasion, not so very juvenile either. I saw a lady try to slice a cake she had brought, and it was nearly taken away from her, but I am sure that I am satisfied if all the others are, and I do not feel inclined to complain, only that I lost a dish, but I will not complain at that. It was only a small white one, and is the only article that I have ever misplaced on such occasions, so I think I have been exceedingly fortunate.

Now I must say something about Julia -- I think that is the name of your little girl. I thought she was very interesting. I looked and looked at her every day, and she sang every day, and really looked like she was singing with "the spirit and the understanding" also, but of course such was not the fact. She is a very stylish looking child in her white dresses, broad sashes and more and most especially those handsome little gaiters and fashionable stockings. Now I reckon you will wonder how I happened to scrutinize and criticise your child so closely, and I can't tell you why it was, but somehow or other, she did attract my attention rather more than most of the other ladies. I think Bro. Holden laboured faithfully, and Mr. Dameron and Miss Nannie Alston were very efficient, and many others also, but poor me, I could even sing or pray as I ought to, and felt very insignificant.

Pat left just before the meeting. I reckon she didn't like to carry her children or to leave them. They are very interesting little ones, but not on the model order, not up to her expectations by any means. She intended to make them perfection, but they are mortal, and have to be coerced and corrected just like other children, but she is a faithful mother, and spares no pain in regard to the welfare of her children. She never tires; she is quite thin but very well, and has more energy than a little. It seems that she can accomplish whatever she undertakes, but she has a new baby every year, just like you, and what can a woman accomplish at that rate, unless they have a double amount of zeal.

I must tell you something about that boy, Edward, of hers. He has absconded several times when he finds the gate not barred against him, and one time he went to a gin house about 50 or 100 yards distant, found a little hole and crept in, so he says, and threw rocks in the well. He was at the gin when found and showed the little hole and said he "wiggled" in. Pat said she couldn't sleep that night at all, so next day she sent him to me, and I kept him six weeks. The well has no curb, only two planks laid over it. His greatest desire is to throw rocks in the river. He always takes a rock in his hand and starts to the river when he gets out of the gate.

I did intend to finish on the other sheet, but found no room to put my name, so you see I had to take another sheet, and by the way, I have not offered my congratulations. I hear that you have a son and that you are well, so please accept.

I regretted not seeing your Pa at church. Mr. Davis says he is quite sure that your G'dpa Wms' was not older at the time of his death than your Pa is now, but I guess his father was 80. As we have been discussing the matter, I will thank you to ascertain the facts, and ask Mr. Dameron to tell Mr. Davis at church, for not other reason than to see which guessed nearest. I shall not ask you to write that, or anything else. I would not impose on you so much, for I am sure that all your time and attention must be fully occupied with your household cares and duties, and I feel like I am now almost imposing on you. Your Ma never did like to write at all. I don't know how it may be with you, but sure I will not require it of you.

We had a fine shower of rain last Sat. Eve - and I guess you have had some since that time. It may benefit the turnips, cabbage, and potatoes, but the late corn doesn't seem to be benefitted in the least. Fruit is rather scarce now except grapes. We have a pretty good crop of scuppernongs, but they are not quite ripe enough to begin on. I have preserved some peaches which Pattie Pitchford sent me. We have but few trees, and those are early and soft. Billie has quite a lot of young trees on hand, and grape vines and all such.

I have been reading some of Sam Jones' sermons, and sure he is a curiosity. His style is coarse, almost vulgar. He uses a lot of slang and often bad grammar, which seems to fit into his style and composition very well, but he is certainly orthodox, and touches the tender places, and perhaps suits for a Georgia preacher, but somehow or other it wouldn't do for our minister to say such things, and to say them like he does. The sermons that I read were preached at High Bridge camp meeting, and were said to cut "gwine and coming."

Pat's baby is nine months old, and strange to say she is nursing it yet, or was when she left two weeks since. Its name is Blanche Wilmot. Minnie Weldon seems to be about the size and age of Julia. She was carried up to Hickory in July and stayed with her Aunt Minnie about six weeks. Frank carried her on an excursion train bound for that famous Black Mountain hotel, and when they got to Hickory, her trunk was bottom, and no chance to get it. She said, "Oh, I would give \$100 dollars for my trunk!" It was carried on, however, and brought back next day. Her aunt has tried to get her every summer since she has been up there, but something or other always happened to prevent. I wish I could tell you some of her tricks up there. She went to the theater and went on the stage and asked a little girl her name and who learned her to "sing so pretty. Now, dear Tempe, please excuse old G'dma for telling long winded stories about G'dchildren and oblige.

I wish I could see you and talk over our affairs in general, and in particular all about farming, gardening, chickens, and children. Now I think it is about time to wind up, lest I may not find room on this sheet for my signature. We are all well, and I hope that you all are ditto. Much love to you and all yours, and with many good wishes and eternal welfare of all, I bid you adieu. As ever, your friend,

R. P. Davis.

Creek

Monday, 18th April, 87

Dear Miss Tempe,

It has been quite a long time since we met, but good friends never forget each other, and I am often reminded of you in one way or another. I know you are there, and even that affords me much consolation. And now, in-as-much as it may be another long time ere I see you, I will just write you a few lines and inform you that I am still in the land of the living and didn't freeze or starve during all the long cold winter and spring, but on the contrary spent the time pleasantly and enjoyed excellent health. We have had but little spring as yet, but summer will come by and bye. I don't attend to my garden now as I once did, and that for several reasons, but I have set out a new strawberry bed of the sharpless variety. They are very large, very early and white. Pat sent me a few vines about the first of March, and I thought I would try them. I have no objection to red strawberries at all; they are good enough for me, but as "variety is the spice of life," I thought I would try a little of the spice.

We have lots of little chickens on hand. They are mostly down at the horse lot; we have a hen house there, and Billie attends to it. I reckon you wonder what I do. Well, not much of anything. I do nothing, ton I love to work, but since Mr. Davis has become so very blind I read for him right much of my time, and that breaks into my arrangements, and I lose interest in my work. He has always been very fond of reading, and I can't bear to see him looking so sad and lonely. I never knew him to be dejected under any circumstances before this visitation of blindness came so suddenly on him. Of course it makes me feel sad too, but tham we may be very thankful that it is as well with us as it is. His health is real good at present.

Cary and the girls went up to Mrs. Allen's a week ago today to stay the week out. They hadn't been for a long time. They found Minnie's children all with whooping cough and Minnie nearly broken down, hadn't had a night's rest for six weeks. They also have measles in the yard, and have both at Mrs. Rodwell's with Drs. in attendance at both places. Her aunt, Mrs. Purefoy, died the next day after they went up, and Mrs. Allen was summoned by telegram and went up to W. Forest and stayed some ton or three days, so I am thinking it was a bad time for a pleasure trip. I have been to see Mrs. Tom ams. once, and spent a long evening with her, and I like her ever so much. She is a real good neighbor, but not much of a visiting one, and who is? And as for Tom, I think he is a better man than he represents himself to be. He is very pleasant at his house, and he means what he says, and says what he means in business matters.

I have a recent letter from Pat, no, not so very recent, written a week ago today. She said her strawberries were set out like cabbage and were almost as large, and as full of blooms as could be. Frank suffered more this last gone winter than he has ever before, and for the longest time, and he requires a great deal of attention in his extreme sufferings to keep life in him, and Pat's baby was very young, and I am sure they must have had a hard time, but she has lots of energy, and Frank has too, and there is much recuperative power in a strong will, and a determination, by God's favor to battle with difficulties. Frank happened to be in N. Y. during that cold spell we had in March, and he suffered exceedingly. Pat's baby was born early on the morning of election day. I told her he came in time to vote, but wasn't qualified, and she has named him Frank, and I don't like it at

all. I told her to wait and call the tenth one by that name. I told them all not to name any more babies after daddies and G'daddies, but to branch off and try something new for a while.

I have been wanting to see Jim, your brother, ever since he came back to N. C., but never could come up with him, but while I was with Pat last fall, he came, and on my arrival home, I was informed that Jim had been to see me, and I was very proud of his visit, and very much regretted his coming at that time, or my being from home at that time, but about a week later I heard Mr. Davis and Billie say something about the book he was trying to sell, so I learned that he was on business, which took the shine off a little, but not much; why not mix up business and pleasure when convenient? It would surely make me think of the good olden days times (to see him) when he was a little boy, and I used to visit the family at Sunny Hill, and I can truthfully say, "Long, long be my mind with such memories filled."

I understand that your Pa's health has improved, and that his last days may be his best days in many respects. I asked Mr. Davis if he was at church last meeting day. He said, "I don't know; I couldn't see him, but I think if he had been there, he would have spoken to me." Mr. Davis said that morning that he was doubtful of ever going to Shady Grove again himself, and I don't go for several reasons, and one good one is enough. I can't leave, and I can't get there either, so you all must watch over us and not let us become heathenized. If need be you must send over missionaries. I hope you haven't the measles and cough among your little ones. They are both very prevalent, but do try and take one at a time, and that will be bad enough.

I reckon Julia is most large enough to go to school, but perhaps you, like Pat, are in no hurry. She says Minnie is so little and so delicate that she doesn't care to send her just yet. Florence May, the third one, went with her Aunt Minnie home to Hickory, and I wish I had time and space to tell particulars. I love to hear about the little ones, and I like to talk and write about them also, and I would be ever so glad to see you and all the children, and I hope to do so in the near future.

Well, now a word about farming. I am no farmer, but I am much interested in it tho, but it seems to me to be at a low ebb, and I think farmers are much discouraged. There seems to be a dark cloud in the agricultural sky, and we are all Micawber-like, "waiting for something to turn up." But I must not complain, for I am not in suffering circumstances, and "Grace for today is all that we need, for there never will be a tomorrow, For tomorrow will be only another today, with its mixture of joy and sorrow."

I hope that Mr. Dameron's health is fully restored, as I have heard nothing of his having been sick for a good long time. He was quite sick when I was at your house. Burwell is often sick; he has an attack of chills very frequently. Pat has not as yet informed me at what time she expects to make her annual visit to us. Sometimes she comes twice, in April and then again in July or August. They are all very well now, and with much love to your own dear self and all your family, I bid you adieu.

R. P. Davis.

Now I don't require any reply to this article. I am not very exacting of my correspondents. A visit will answer every purpose.

This is Mr. Davis' birthday. He is 81 years old, and I am 75, and we have certainly lived in an eventful age. If our own lives have not been very eventful. And now the renowned Mr. Becher has left us, and like Cluverius, without having made a confession. May the good Lord have mercy on us all. We were certainly very sorry it happened so that we saw so little of Mrs. Duxton Mrs. last summer when we went to call on her. I fain would have it over again if I could.

Beck's new baby is named for or after Mrs. F. N. Egerton, but don't know what they intend to call it. They have only one boy. His name is Weldon Thomas, called by the first. Billie came from there this morning and George left for N. York.

Creek, N. C.
Jan 16, 93

Mrs. J. A. Dameron,

Dear Tempe,

I have been thinking of you ever so much for several days, and feel that I cannot be satisfied until I write you a few lines. I wish you to know that I feel for you, that I heartily sympathize with you in this your first sorrow in that direction, the loss of your "sweetest and brightest baby." I know that you are hurt, and that you cannot refrain from grief, but then I hope and believe that your Christian fortitude will sustain you, and that you fully realize that you have one tie less on earth and one more in Heaven.

"Bear your cross meekly,
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot cure."

Billie wished and intended to go with Jonas that evening, and we wished it also, but it was so late, and so intensely cold, and we had no one to care for us but him, and felt so very dependent that we were loth to have him leave us. We are tolerably well; ~~Billie is on~~ I have been standing the cold weather very well, but it holds on and holds on, and I am afraid its effects will be telling in many instances.

I write a short letter this time, and must now look around me and try to prepare for the very coldest night of the season. Adieu, and may Heaven help you and yours.

Your friend,

H. P. Davis.

(The following letter is not dated, but seems to have been written in the late summer or fall of 1893, since it was not too long after Uncle Billie's marriage to Mr. Dameron's niece, Mamie Dameron. They were married June 7, 1893. B.E.B.)

Mrs. Dameron,
Dear Tempe,

I am right unwell with a cold, but feel disposed to write you a line. I was real glad you sent Julia over, and real aggy when she left. She was so bright and happy all the time, and helpful when need be, and as ladylike as a mature lady need be.

I always admired the child and I have told you so before. When she left she came to me and told me how pleasantly she had passed her time and seemed to thank me for the part that I had contributed just as the grown ladies often do. Mamie took immediate possession of her, but Julia was bound to divide her time to some extent. I was real well all the time the girls were with us and enjoyed their happiness, but have been sick all this week. I did intend for Mamie to play lady for one month, but alas, before she had time to look around she was pressed into service, but it seems to bear lightly on her.

I am not sure you can read this, so I will close with love to all, adieu,

Yours truly,
R.P.D. to Mrs. John Dameron.

(These letters (pp 104-109) were written by Grandma to a friend and neighbor, Mrs. John Dameron, who kept them as long as she lived. Mrs. Dameron's daughters, Tempe and Belle, lent them to me to copy.

Those mentioned in the letter besides Mr. and Mrs. Dameron were their daughter, Julia, and their "little ones" (other names not given) (but the little girl who died (p. 108) was named Lula;) Mrs. Dameron's parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Buxton Williams; her brothers, Jim and Jonas Jms; her grandfather Wms. (p. 105); her cousins, Mr. and Mrs. Tom Wms. and Miss Nannie Alston.

Members of Grandma's family named in the letters are her sons, Burwell, George and Billie; Uncle Burwell's wife, Cary, and their daughters, (Sallie and Mamie); Uncle George's wife, "Beck," their son, Weldon Thomas (born the same day I was), and "Beck's new baby" named Pattie Bet for my mother; Grandma's daughter, Pat, and Pat's husband, Frank N. Egerton; their children, Minnie, Edward, Florence May, Blanche (I'm Blanche) and Frank; and Uncle Billie's wife, Mamie.

Also in the letters are "Mrs. Allen," (Aunt Cary's mother?) "Minnie, who was Uncle Sam Davis' daughter and married Aunt Cary's brother, Walter Allen, and their children (Eva, Lucy, and Sam) paragraph 3, p. 106. Mrs. Rodwell in the same paragraph, was Aunt Cary's sister.

"Bro. Holden", pastor of Shady Grove Church at that time.

B.E.B.)

Dear Mattie,

Yours of the 27th was duly rec'd, and I was ever so glad to hear from you and that great big little baby, but just to think, you didn't even tell us what it is named, so I presume you have found no name as yet that is pretty enough. I expect you would like to honor your Ma by giving it her name, but she and I think we have the very ugliest sort of names. Perhaps your other mama has a pretty name.

I hope she is a good quiet baby, and I know you will try to teach her to be a good quiet woman like your own dear self. I asked Billie if your Dr. Fountain was still with you, but he didn't know. I thought you would like Hannah, from what I had heard of her.

Well, don't we have bad weather! It is bad on farmers and on all pulmonary and consumptive constitutions, and there have been very many fatalities all around far and near. I wish Blanche could come and stay some with us; she is a very lovable character and much beloved by all and especially by G'dma.

I am glad if Joe did have a good time, but I can't imagine how he contrived it, only "where there's a will, there's a way." I should suppose the roads were in very bad order. I should dread it if I had to go over them, or even to Arcola or Warrenton. If I live and remain well, I expect to visit Arcola and Louisburg after a while, but I have no plan made out as yet. I am sorry Viola failed to get that broom in time, but that broom she shall have, soon or late, but it seems to be all later.

I hope you can come to see us when the roads and the weather seem suitable. I am real glad that you love Joe's mother so much, and that they are so kind to you, but that is all just as I expected. Everybody loves good folks; religion is love. "Love the brethren; by this you shall know," etc. etc.

Now about that letter which you wrote me and never more heard of: I will tell you just how it was. There were many things I wanted to know after I had been home a while from Arcola, and I "ruminated" a while as to which one of the family would be best for me to write to for all the information I wanted on all subjects, and I finally decided to choose you, to do my letter justice, and sure enough after a while, you replied to my letter, and that was just about all of it. All my correspondence is carried on in just that way; we exchange occasionally.

Now let me tell you, I rec'd a letter from a S. C. lady recently. She said she saw my name in the Constitution; said her mother was named Elizabeth Davis and she was from N. C. I wrote her that my mother was also named Elizabeth Davis, and it seemed like we ought to be a little kin, but that I hardly thought we were. Sallie said, "Tell her that you think we are sisters." She signed her name "Martha E. Watson." I wrote her that she didn't let me know if she were a maid or matron, but I presumed that she was a maiden lady, heart whole and fancy free, but I would not give her any advice on the subject of matrimony, for if she married, she would repent it, and if she didn't marry, she would repent it.

I am in my room writing; I have nice fires. Edward sleeps with me every night, and he is a nice little bed fellow fellow. He uses his knife and fork which you gave him three times every day. I sometimes ask "Who gave you that knife and fork?" He says, "Mattie." You see he has no cousins at all.

Yes, you were surely kind to Mamie and M's first child, and she never forgot, and never intended to forget it, and neither do I. Oh! It is so nice to do such a great favor as you did in caring for her and the child, and I know, when the proper time comes you will hear the welcome plaudit, "Well done, good and faithful," etc., etc.

Well, such a long letter and nothing in it. Billie and Blanche are very well, and Edward and I also. At Burwell's they are about as usual. With kindest regard and best love for you all, adieu and may Heaven bless you.

G'dma.

(This letter written by Grandma to Uncle George's daughter, Mattie, is still one of her treasures. Mattie married Joseph Hunter, (referred to in letter as "Joe.") The "great big little baby" in the first paragraph was their first daughter, Lula, now Mrs. Clarence E. Skillman, and it was she who let me copy the letter. Hannah was the colored nurse.

Mamie (near close of letter) was Uncle Billie's first wife, and Edward was their oldest child. Sallie was Uncle Burwell's oldest daughter.

I was the "Blanche" in the third paragraph. I did not go to school that year, as my health was not very good, and I spent two months at Uncle George's at Arcola, and two months at Grandma's. The Blanche in the last paragraph was Uncle Billie's second wife. Grandpa had died in June, 1895.

B.E.B)

Miss Ella A. Alston;
Dear Ella,

Yours of the 4th came duly to hand, and I hasten to reply, but fear I cannot give you any satisfactory information in regard to the genealogy of your family. I have often heard of Jacob Hunter, who married a Miss Alston, and lived at the home afterwards occupied by Mr. Billie Kearney, but I never knew them.

I know that Mrs. Kearney had four sisters and five brothers. Their names were Tom, Sam, Billie, Phil, and Whitmet Alston. The first two lived and died in Wake County; Billie and Phil lived and died near my home. Whit never married. Then I knew of your grandpa, Tom Whitmel Alston, and his brother Sam. Both married Falcons, and I have heard my husband's father say that they were the most superior women in all that region round about. But I do not know what constituted superiority in those days, whether good heart, or good manners, or good looks, but I doubt not that all were combined, for I knew them both, and I still think they were the sweetest old ladies I ever met.

I expect you have heard of Jimmie Alston, who married a Miss Somerville. His older brother John was in an asylum for many years. Then there was Ben, Doc, and Phil, and one sister, Miss Mary H. Alston, my particular friend, for whom I named my first daughter, and she received in return a handsome watch and chain, and many other presents. She died near Memphis, Tenn.

I am in my 88th year, so you see I am old enough to know many things which I do not know. There were no railroads when I was married, no lamps, oil or matches. It seems as if everything has been invented or discovered since I came, except the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus.

Now I am going to tell you of the prettiest sight I ever saw. It was the falling of the stars, or meteoric shower, as the scientific people call it. It occurred in Nov. 1833. I wish I had time and space to describe it to you. Then came the cold Saturday, Nov. '35, then the big snow of Jan '57, then the big snow of Feb. 1899, and last, though not least, the snow of 4th of April, '99. As I was unable to tell you what you wished to know, I thought I would tell something anyhow.

It has been long since we met at church. I have been quite unwell with cold and cough, but am improving and expect to go on a visitation to my grandchildren and grandchildren in Louisburg about ten days hence. I will be with them two months, May and June, but I see not a step before me, and I am sure I haven't much time ahead of me; but I can live only a day at a time, and strength for today is all that I need, for there never will be a tomorrow, tomorrow will be but another today with its mixture of gaiety and sorrow.

Adieu, and may Heaven bless you.

R.P.D.

(This letter was written by Mrs. Edward Davis (Rebecca) to Miss Ella Alston, Saxon Hall, in 1899, a year and one month before the death of the writer. The original letter was given to Mrs. Davis' great granddaughter, Alma Davis Scull (Mrs. Frederick Williams) in July, 1944, by Mrs. Missouri Alston Pleasants of Louisburg, sister of Miss Ella Alston. This is the last known existing letter written by that remarkable letter writer, Mrs. Rebecca P. Davis.)

Alma Scull was the daughter of Uncle George Davis' daughter Beaufort Davis Scull and Leon Scull.