

No Date

My Dear Sister Martha-

Let us shake hands again on paper after an absence of four years, and congratulate each other on the return of our "blessed old veteran". He looks as brown and weather-beaten as a Choctau Indian or a Guerilla and affects that the four walls of a room, much less a mosquito-bite, smother him. He gets very low-spirited some times when he thinks too much, but what with cotton speculation, striking oil etc, I think we will come out right after all, and I am bent on making a big fortune within the next six months.

About two months ago, when I was sick with anxiety concerning Mr. Hutchinson, I wrote you quite a lengthy letter, begging you to find out something about him and let me know at once, but in two weeks my letter was returned to me with "mail suspended" stamped on the back. You can imagine my disappointment. I have been afraid to venture again and truly glad your letter has met with a better fate. I have just read his letter to you over, and find that he has neglected telling you something which I know will make your heart glad, particularly as you were instrumental in its accomplishment. He has at last followed the most excellent advice of his Sister and has been Baptized! How grateful I am to you for that letter which caused him to think seriously of taking that important step - for I, alas, since the subjugation of the South have fallen from Grace and almost doubt Divine Justice. I suppose Mr. Hutchinson has told you in some of his letters about my having the body of my little Bessie removed from Chattanooga? I could not rest until I had sent for her, and she is now in my Mother's burying place, the side of my own little sister and brother who have gone before. You have heard of course of the death of my dear Father - almost two years ago - of congestion of the liver - sudden and violent! There have been no other changes, thank God, in our large family during the war - but that death almost paralyzed me.

Mattie is a great big "Tom-boy", the greatest Rebel on the place and a worshipper of her father's laurels - viz. an old vest with brass buttons, three or four hundred dollars in Confederate money, an old comb, pipe and tobacco bag. She learns her letters one day and forgets them the next. The only thing which she remembers with any certainty is the "Ave Maria" which her Catholic nurse has taught her and "Now I lay me".

Mr. H. is anxious to finish off, himself so I will give way. Write to me, and I will send him your letter if he goes. Should love to see you all once anyhow, but he wont hear to it now! Goodbye.

Yours affectionately,

Jennie

The following parts of letters were written on the back of this letter.

**and am greatly recruited(?) I have not been molested and do not expect to be, though there was some little excitement here arising from the opposition to the return of confederate soldiers in certain quarters. All is quiet now and you could never tell from outside appearances that there had ever been any war.

My dear father,

I have been thinking of you a great deal lately, and wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are well and happy. I have been very busy lately, but I always find time to think of my dear friends.

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Love,

The following are the names of the persons who were present at the meeting on the 10th of this month. I have not been able to get the names of all the persons who were present, but I have been able to get the names of the following persons.

I am especially delighted to hear that Joseph has escaped and returned home. I greatly feared for his safety knowing as how much danger he was continually. That of course will relieve your mind from half the sorrow of our fall. I am anxious to know how our fortune affects Jack - does he take it hard. Tell him I am wishing for a letter from him. I believe he owes me one. I wish to be posted as how the freeing of the negroes is going to affect you all and what policy and management you are going to pursue in reference to them.

I shall send this to Richmond to the care of Mr. Cauthorn as you direct. Write to me and make Joseph write. Direct to me here as no matter where I may be Jennie can send me your letters. She will remain here for the present. My love to Kitty, M. Pocatou, Jack, Betty etc.

**Tell Mr. Pointer I wrote to him from N. Carolina but suppose he did not get my letter. I omitted to mention, as Jennie has told you, that I have been baptized. Am a Christian (I hope a good one) though as yet I have not attached myself to any church as yet. Was baptized by immersion whilst in the Army, but after you last heard from me. She is a member of the Episcopal Church. I think I shall cling to the good old Baptist but do not think it a matter of much consequence to what denomination I may attach myself so I walk uprightly before God. Do you? Our failure so far from making me an infidel as it has done many has strengthened my faith if anything for reasons too numerous to give here. I know it has not shaken your faith.

Notation by Captain J.P.Pollard, March 1958
(Jennie was wife of Robert Hutchinson. She died 15 September 1878 of yellow fever. See Hutchinson Bible)

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