Lower Peach Bee Ala. Feb. 8th 1867

Dear Sister Sarah

It is a month or six weeks since I wrote home, I have been looking for a letter for some time, but none comes. I would like to know how you all are getting along and what your prospects for this year are. I have hired Sam for five years, pay him forty dollars every a year, I am to pay one half every year the balance, viz one hundred dollars at the end of the five years. I am to teach him, to read and write, and cypher through the fundamental rules of arith. Rose left eight days before her time was out, got in a pout and left at night I will not pay her a cent of her wages only what I have given her until she makes full satisfaction for her time, We have not got a regular cook for this year yet. Kate has been quite unwell for the last month, She has been staying at Dr Smiths for nearly three weeks, she took cold and suffered much with her breast & shoulder, had her breast lanced last sunday, She is now doing better, but is not well, She has got come home yet, Sam has been doing the cooking for most part since she

left. we send the flour and lard up to Dr Smiths and have the biscuit made up, for supper & breakfast and he bakes them and fries meat. Bakes coffee &c. Flate has a girl nearly grown staying with her, but she is no better cook than Sam. I wrote you in my last about our baby. It was born Dec. 10th at 5 o'clock in evening. Flate has been sick so much since, that the poor little thing does not get near enough to eat. Flate says one part of her name must be Flate after her Ma. I have not added my part yet. I enjoy good health and have ever since I got back to my home in Ala. I am sorry you miss getting so many of my letters I hardly know what to write, when I hear that you have not received my letters, for there are some things that I wished to tell you, but dont know whether you have heard them or not. I am kept very busy in my school now. I have thirty two boys, my school will be worth at present rates about, sixty five hundred and fifty or sixty dollars. I expect I will have to employ an assistant part of the day, for I have already have too many classes. I am not making any farm this year except my little patches about home. I want to make a good potato patch turnip patch, and garden. I have six boarders besides Rickett. They are a great deal of trouble, especially now, when we have no regular cook and Flate is sick, we could get along almost any way, if we had no boarders.

We have had an unusually hard winter this winter if it has been proportionally hard in N.C. you had a hard time unless you had somebody to find stock get wood & light wood &c. I thought of you often. Freedom is one of the most damnable curses that could be inflicted upon us. If the negroes were all in Africa it would not be so bad. Still I would hate right bad to see Sam going to Africa. Has Pa got his lamp yet? did he ever get that dollar? Has he put a lock on the mill yet? Has Mother got her well? Has little Annie got her present? Is Mary still teaching? I wrote to Murdoch some time before Christmas, asking him to come and help me in my school as I expected to have more than I could manage, but my school has not increased as much as I expected. I cannot afford to employ an assistant all the time, but I think I will have to get one some part of the time. I hear of more boys coming. I wish I could just be independent enough to take just twenty scholars at the beginning of session and then refuse to admit them at any other time, it is such an abominable arrangement to receive boys at any time. I thought if I could get Murdoch in with me again we could by our united efforts build up a good school that would sustain us both well. He told me that he had made other arrangements, before getting my letter He said that Christopher had to quit school and go

and go home. He thought may be he could assist me part of the time and study the balance but I thought best to make another arrangement I think I will get our preacher Mr Salter to assist me part of the day, say in the forenoon and I can get along the balance of the day. Feb. 12th Sarah I did not finish this letter Saturday and have been so much occupied since that I had no time. It turned very cold Saturday, and I concluded to kill my big hog. I dont know that I ever told you about him It was one I had to turn out last year because he would not fatten It was not because he was young, but was growing, that kept him from fattening, he was of a large breed, and there say who know something of such hogs, that he would not fatten well till three or four years old he was not as fat as he ought to be for his size, but I could not afford to keep him till next year. He was fatter than he had been. He weighed two hundred ninety seven and half lbs. I got twenty five lbs lard out of him. I killed about a thousand weight of pork this year but it will not be more than half enough. I want to buy some pickled pork and swap with Mc Intosh for hams, we buried one of our boys to day, who came here only a little over three weeks ago, He was only sick a little over one week. Had pneumonia, was apparently getting better seemed to be much better yesterday and expected to be up and at school in a few days. But suddenly and very unexpectedly to Dr Smith and others, (He boarded at Dr Smiths) he sank, and could be roused no more. He was a pious young man, had been through the war and received a severe wound. By which his lungs were injured, and no doubt, that was the reason he could not bear up under pneumonia. He was the last one of a large family. His father & some of his brothers fell in the war. It is so sad to die away from home and home folks.

Sarah write often as you can whether you get my letters or not. I will write oftener. May be you will get some of them. It will soon be gardening time I would plant peas, Martin &c. Next Saturday if the ground was ready, we had as hard freeze Saturday, sunday, and yesterday morning as we had this winter. Tell mother I to make a fuss till she gets her well. Your brother Archie.