Gov. Shorter

Dear Sir—

Pardon me for trespassing on your precious time, but as you are our "temporal head". I have taken the liberty of addressing you, at the request, and in ~~the~~ behalf of the ladies of the neighborhood— So many of our men have enlisted "for the war," that we are in a very unprotected condition, and as a Draught has been ordered, those on whom we have relied for defence, have volunteered, rather than stand a Draught— Enclosed, is a petition signed by every lady in the neighborhood— to be presented on last saturday to the regiment— but we were told that they only had power to release Mr Runnales, from that particular company— and that if more men were needed next week— he would again be liable to Draught— We have therefore, in order to induce him to remain, decided, to apply directly to you for exemption from future draughts

Allow me to enter into particulars— We are immediately on the river— surrounded by large plantations, almost entirely without overseers— 1st Mrs McMillan is on her plantation with— over 50 negroes, without a white

male member in her family – Her Brother and Overseer having both gone "to the Wars" Mr John Hollett with two sons and Overseer gone, leaving Mrs H– with a son about 12 years of age – on the farm, with over 100 negroes! – Mr Wm P. Hollett is over 70 years of age is alone on his place – and immediately around him are three farms. he has over 500 negroes – Mr. Runnales comes next, in relation, is about 72 years of age has over 50 negroes, All his sons except one are in our army – Where are five other farms adjoining, with from 15 to 75 negroes – and not a man under 60 years of age on either Mr. James Runnales, has remained at his father's, at the urgent solicitations of all the neighbors – until the present time – He has volunteered to go to Mobile rather than stand a draught – He is a rigid disciplinarian and the negroes are more afraid of him than of any other ten men – and as he will count for only one against the yankees, we think he had best remain where he can do the most good. It is wrong for negroes to be left as they are, there by inviting our enemies (if they knew it) to place temptations before them – No particular law can be framed to meet every emergency – but we rejoice to know that your power can meet the present one – We believed it only necessary to inform your Excellency of our situation

in order to have you act in this matter-
Every woman whose name is down on the petition - has done every thing in her power, for our soldiers, and if our lives and homes are spared - we expect to work as long as we have a needy soldier or as a yankee invader treads our soil - Please answer immediately by telegraph exempting Mr James Nunnalee - as the company of which he is a member will have Cahaba [illegible] of the [illegible] of April for Mobile -

Pardon the length of my communication and in reply address, respected Sir,

Your obedient servant
Mrs P. E. Collins
Cahaba

Whites Bluff
Near Cahaba
March 31st 1862 -

P. S. You perhaps recollect my husband Revd P E Collins formerly of Mobile

Answer sent by Telegraph -
~~March~~ April 5th 1862

Mrs P. E. Collins, Cahaba -
By request of the Ladies James Nunnalee is discharged from Military service.

Mo Gill Shorter,

Mr. P. E. Collins
Cahaba

Mrs. P. E. Collins