Selma March 1st 1863

My dear Brother

Your letter of the 15th was received yesterday. Taylor had started the ~~week~~ day before, but we heard yesterday that he was still at Demopolis, the rail road between there and Meridian had been broken by the heavy rain of last Thursday night. I suppose he will go on by way of Gainsville. He started about ten days ago and had to return. His uncle told him this time not to "turn back, that a soldier must overcome obstacles." I received your former letter sometime since, I did not reply to it as we were expecting Taylor to go every day. Mother and brother Colin both wrote by him. His knapsack contained all the articles of clothing you mentioned and nothing more; the cooking utensils &c were not thought of. He is very careless and I am afraid will loose half he has, before he reac[illegible]. He is a good boy, but so thoughtless. Mack has twice the fore[illegible]d care that he has. He sends his lo[illegible] and says he [illegible] join your company next year. [illegible] will have to go thro[illegible] a thorough acclimation, for he has never had Measles, whoop[illegible]ugh or Mumps and I am afraid it will go hard with him. If he should be sick and could get furlough when well enough to travel he would be welcome at Mr Strattons.

We have had a great deal of wretched, miserable weather, to day is bright and beautiful. Taylor will give you the news, The sale of the foundry, the launching of the gun boats Sister E's visit &c. The govt. gave four hundred & fifty thousand dollars for the foundry. The actual cost had been over three hundred thousand. We were very glad that it was sold. It was wearing brother C's life out

He would not have sold out but this mission was urged upon him by the Govmt. He could not accept it with such large private interests at stake, so the Govt. bought him out at once & he will leave now by the very first opportunity. It is as yet a secret, known to but very few, and he does not wish it to get out as the difficulty of escaping would be much greater in the event of a capture were it known that such a messenger had left the country. He is to negociate a loan of fifteen millions for the Confederacy. We have vessels building abroad and no money there to pay for them. There is no telling when he will return — nine months is the shortest period probable. We will remain here, our present house has been rented for a year and supplies laid in — we are near Elizabeth and have made acquaintances. Altogether it is as good a place as we could be at.

Elizabeth has just passed a week with us. She had Lilly & Katie Armor with her, two nice little girls. We wanted Katie to stay but she could not be persuaded to stay from her Mother. Mother is going down next week to spend a [illegible] with Elizabeth, her first visit to her since Mr Boy[illegible]. She speaks of [illegible]ing brother John this summer. B[illegible] will stop here as he returns from Richmond.

Brother Colin still has the coal m[illegible] and brick yard. Mr Spear is interested with him in the latter and will attend to it, our negroes are there. Mr Gardner has an interest in the mine and works it. He is an Englishman and was the architect & engineer for the foundry. Brother C. left on Thursday evening for Montgomery, he had business with the Govt. He went thence to Mobile by rail-road whence he will sail for Havanna should a speedy opportunity occur, if not, he will go to Charleston or Wilmington. I went with him as far as

Montgomery and expected to have spent several days, but the weather was so unpleasant that no one could call & not being acquainted at the hotel I left on the second evening. The weather has cleared off so beautifully that I am sorry now that I did not remain longer. I found Colin Boykin here, he came up to attend to some bussiness for his mother. He is a great big fellow, weighs 160 pounds. He and Mac are in perfect contrast. The Boykin's, the married ones, have all got substitutes. For such fine eaters they have not held out well. I recd. a letter from Mrs Randall not long since. She told me of young Baptistes death, he was the only one of the company killed they were lying on the ground at the time, he was struck by a shell. A good many were wounded, amongst them young Joe Krebs and Louis Dupont who were at home on furlough. Aristede Krebs and Amanda Frederic were married a few days before. Aristede belongs to Morgan's cavalry but was trying to get transfered to Munnells partisan Rangers, which company brother C thinks will be disbanded so that the men can be conscripted, they are of no earthly use [illegible] Mobile. You have heard I suppose that Steedes company had been [illegible]ed. Mrs Randall says there is no doubt but that he bur[illegible] office himself. He had a good de[illegible] of money in his ha[illegible]ging to the company. He is very badly spo[illegible] of. Dr Griffin led [illegible] company at the battle of Murfreesboro and displayed great coolness and courage. His men gave him great credit and are perfectly satisfied with him now. Lieut. Johnson was wounded and taken prisoner as well as some others. Mac McKinnis was also amongst the wounded. Mrs Randall says they have heard of Luke twice. Once he was drilling in New Orleans as a Lincoln soldier & the second time he was at Baton Rouge in a black regiment. Mr L. is still at the Bay, his health is bad

He has sent most of his negroes to Covington County —
Sol and Valerie both died at Magnolia where
they were hired. He has but three men left, Dan, Cal and Lim-
ellon left. Gen Buckner has just made a requisition for
six thousand negroes to work around Mobile. He is having
an inner row of entrenchments made. If time, money
and labor can render a place secure Mobile ought to be, for it
has had all. We read your letter with great pleasure giving
an account of your visit to Natchez. Brother C. says Gen. Dalgreen
is all that you represent him in the way of an intelligent, interesting
and agreeable man but that he is visionary, not practical in his
views. He, you know, is a great admirer of President Davis. He thinks
he is the only man in the confederacy who could have kept our government
together. — I was interrupted by the entrance of Mr Diggs. We had no
idea that he was in this place. He has been working on the gun boats
and is now engaged on the ship. He showed us a letter from Mr Denny of
the 18th of Feb. Ten negroes had just runaway from his neighborhood, 5 of the Defrons'
two of Capt Rhodes's one of Mr Terrell and two [illegible] Mr Ellisons. None of Mr
Denny's have gone off yet. He says the whole [illegible] is desolate. Mr Steele
is suspected of having burned the office to [illegible] some rascality of his
[illegible] He had the bounty money of the [illegible] which he said was
[illegible]ned. Mr Randall's Wesley tried to [illegible] was caught.
I will finish in the morning. Taylor, I [illegible] reach you before
this. Monday morning — all well & no disp[illegible] this morning's paper
Brother C wishes you to write him to Mobile as soon as Taylor reaches you
He would like to know of his safe arrival. Old uncle Peter is our gardener
He sends a thousand how-dys to you and says he would like to wait
on you for the rest of his days. He was very sorry to hear that you were
sick & thinks if he had been with you he could have done a good
deal for you that no one else thought of. Pink gals to school & is
learning very well, she had lost a great deal. The attacks upon all
all points seems to be delayed, what are they waiting for at Vicksburg?
I do not expect peace while Lincoln is President unless he should be deposed. All send
their love & hope to get a long letter soon. your sister
Mr S. M.