

Kinston N. C.

Jan 7, '65

As I have a little leisure time today I will answer your letter, Sis dear, but I cant promise to interest you as I have a bad cold & haven't a comfortable place to write in.

I am glad you have determined to try & mingle in society & be less of a recluse than you have been – though I cant see much in our old neighborhood to attract you farther from Arnmore than the “Oasis”. I owe the “neighborhood” no attachment & if it were not for yours & sister Jacque's families, I would scarcely wish to visit there but once more as it only stirs up old recollections & gives me a homesick, lonely feeling like that of an outcast & I suppose I will always have that feeling until I get settled down & have a plenty to occupy my mind with. I try, & sometimes succeed, to cast off such feelings by mingling in society & occupying my time in reading &c. I only associate with two or three private families here & they are nice people who seem to care for me & with whom I spend many a pleasant evening.

I am so so sorry that there should be any misunderstanding in our family about division of property or anything else. I don't see why these things cant be avoided. Of course you have as much right to say what shall be done regarding the division of the negroes as any one. Pete wrote me that he was perfectly satisfied with the division &c but before agreeing to its accomplishment he is going to try to have Sister Jacque's share made over to her by S. so that in case anything happens to his (S.) his creditors cannot lay hands on them. Don't speak of this to any one as were are not certain about S.'s position &c yet & wish to do this without any fuss or creating any ill feeling with S. but it must be done. Jacque would have nothing for self or children if S. were to die & his creditors (for

I think he is in debt) get those negroes. As Pete wants Jacqu~~e~~ & I do not & as we both have claims of 41.66 2/3 on the division & I've offered him enough of mine to add to his to make up the \$1000.00 at which Jack is valued he will probably take him in lieu of the money.

As far as the Management of the Estate is concerned the administrators have exclusive control & if any of the heirs are not satisfied with it they can remonstrate & if that does not do any good then they will have to resort to law but hope it will not be necessary. In allowing Pete & Pet to be made Administrators (if any one of us had objected they could not have been appointed) we showed our preference for & confidence in them & I think they will do the best they can & hope all difficulties will be avoided. As Administrators Pet & Pete have nothing to do with the Entailed (Grandma's) estate, - that is entirely separate from the oasis & other property & at once reverted to us for whom it was entailed. Any one of us had, & have still, a right to call for a division of the lands & Negroes, of Grandma's estate, by the Court of Equity, but I thought & still think it would be better to avoid that expense, divide the Negroes now & not sell the land for division until the War ends when we can sell it to better advantage & can see what is best to be done.

It is a shame that those negroes have had no clothes, they could have been supplied two months ago easily & at one half the price it will take now. I wish I had a place of my own to move mine to, but my hands are tied & for the present I will leave them where they are as it has been their home so long.

I am sorry Sister I forgot to put in the catsup you sent for we can get no vinegar or anything of the kind here. All the cider was made into apple brandy & the country is

flooded with it. It makes my heart sick to see how drunkenness rules throughout our land.

One man in Kinston, which is filled with bar rooms, sold \$4500.00 worth one day!

Possum-dam is over flowed & the old Neuse is now a noble river, but alas! The urgent necessity for troops at Wilmington prevents our having a land force to cooperate in an attack on Newbern. It would do my heart good to help take that place. I've been within 100 yards of its wharves & see the place I must – if I cant help take it. Fate seems to work against us but we will come out all “Rectus in Curia” in the end. I say fight Yankeedom forever if we have to Bushwack & live in the swamps. We've gone too far to back down & I glory in our cause; though we all become engulfed in ruin still we who have fought can say with pride “It is not our fault but that of the croakers & skulkers & extortioners.” The darkest hour is before day.” We are not yet whipped & I our people are not discouraged. We will yet be free. Everything I am willing to lose to gain that one object then I will have a light heart to begin anew.

Good by. Love to all, kiss Alf for me.

Affectly your bro

Rich