

Clinton, Mississippi June 29 1857

My Dearest Eliza,

Doubtless you think I have long neglected you my earliest friend. When I reflect I am astonished that so many months have rolled their ceaseless sound without one kind interchange of feeling between us who as (far as my knowledge extends) have ever been friends. Yes Dear Eliza, I am, have been, & ever will be your sincere friend. Truly am I ashamed that I have so long neglected you. If you will forgive me for the past, I will do better for the future. Eliza, I have never had a feeling to pervade my breast for you but that of friendship. But perhaps you will ask how have you exhibited your friendship since you left? By writing so very frequently. I have no good apology to offer, but acknowledge myself guilty. But enough of this since I can trust to your forgiving spirit.

I fear I shall be unable either to interest or amuse you for I am living in the dullest little place I ever saw. Well I suppose I should tell you in the first place something about myself. I am quite well, & have been ever since I have been here. I am quite fleshy. I have as much color as Louisa had in Tennessee. You cannot imagine how healthy I look. I think you would scarce recognize me. I have received several letters from sister Jane, & she has always spoken of you. I have often sent my love to you & requested you to write first but perhaps you thought it was my duty to write first. I have received a great many newspapers from H. among others one containing an account of the celebration of May day. Oh! Eliza you cannot conceive, with what pleasure & interest I perused

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My love to your mother, & tell her I was sorry I could not see her before I left. I wish ever to be remembered by her for she was a fine friend of mine (as I believe the most and same in your letter to me. She knows me and I do not believe she would hear anyone speak against me. Aunt Betsy is a strange mortal but perhaps she has never told anyone sincerely I believe it. Although my relations may treat me unjustly yet I feel conscious that I have never injured them. I have a kind sister in Tennessee and I shall certainly visit her this fall if not -- Providence

every word. Oh! My heart did thrill with joy of ecstasy when I thought of you all as being my dear dear friends. I could almost imagine that I could see you all as happy as sisters. Would that I could have been with or near you all. Oft does my imagination revert to the past. I think upon my school days with delight & wish that I might once more enjoy such scenes; but farewell to such peaceful hours: years forever fled. We have often shared each others joys, pleasures, etc., also have we often sympathized with each other in sorrow & trouble. Eliza would that I had just one kind friend like yourself near me. But not one have I. True Eliza, I have what the world calls friends but I do not call them such but mere fawning sycophants. The young ladies here seem never to have tasted the joys of friendship, but are rather selfish beings. Few have feelings for the lonely, words of peace for hearts that ache. Tell me no more ye boasting ones that beneath southern skies dwelled warm, benevolent & sympathetic hearts. But I write as though I had no friends & had been deceived by mankind. Not so. I will give you my reasons. A short time since I attended the burial of the wife of our pastor, a devoted Christian, a kind amiable & affectionate lady – one in every aspect worthy of the highest regard. It was the first burial I have attended since I have been in the South & it has made an impression on my mind both deep & lasting. Many have I seen committed to the silent grave, but never before have I ever seen so little concern manifested for the dead. I cannot give you a faint idea of my feelings, never! No! Never can I forget the scene. It was the first time that I had demonstration of the coldness & inhumanity

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prevailed. You must excuse this letter for it is written in haste. You must visit my sister often for I know she feels bad & lonely. She says she does. I beg of you to go & see her quickly. Answer my letter soon & give me all the news. My love to your sister Mary & tell her to write who is dead & who is married? My respects to your brother AG. How are he & Margaret Ewing getting along?

which predominate in the breast of many of the Southerners. I was shocked and involuntarily exclaimed God forbid that I should die & be interred here. Oh! May it be my happy fate to die under the bright & sunny skies of my native state among my kindred & friends. Is this indeed the much boasted South? Is this the land where warm hearts dwell? Is this the climes where hospitality reigns? Tell me no longer ye boasting ones that here more regard is paid to suffering humanity than every Southern breast glows with sympathy & pity & every noble feeling of the same. Alas! Here the dying & dead are unlamented, virtue & religion are crushed beneath the feet & here the proud vain ones appear to forget that they too must die. Oh! Who would have a "Proud cold untroubled heart of stone that never mused on sorrow but its own." But perhaps you think I look upon the dark side of everything. No, no, I try to look upon the bright side of every object. Perhaps you will not thank me for such a sad & uninteresting letter, but if this is answered I will try & write something more interesting. I will tell you all about the beaux & all my love scrapes, some of which are quite amusing. Cupid has not yet pierced me with any of his arrows. There are a great many handsome & intelligent young gentlemen here, all of whom are exceedingly polite & gallant, but Eliza the generality of them are dissipated. Among all that I have seen I have not met with more than a half dozen who are professors of religion. I have quite an interesting class in Sabbath school. Brother speaks of coming down in September, if he does so I am going home with him on a visit. But perhaps you will ask will I surely come? Since my relations are offended with me. You Eliza have ever been my friend & confidant.

I am ever your friend.

Elizabeth? R. Todd

John says he loves you mighty good.

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Yet will I confide to you somethings I know that I have told you several things about Aunt Eliza about the differences that existed between the families. Well Aunt Betsy & Aunt Eliza became highly offended at some things they heard (doubtless you know all). A letter was written to me by a friend. I wrote to Aunt Betsy not because I wished to but through the influence of another & was more severe than I would have been. If you know all you would not blame me. You are as well aware that Aunt Betsy has a treacherous memory as I am. She charged me with

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things of which I never said. For instance she said that I often in her own house told her she told untruths. God is my judge that I never spoke either disrespectfully to or of any of my relatives. I wish you not to speak of this to anyone, but I wish to be

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justified & I believe that you will not doubt the veracity of what I shall

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I know Aunt Betsy so well that I fear she has caused me to have many enemies but Eliza are you among the number? I hope not. I want you to answer my letters immediately & tell me all you know & when you hear others speak harshly of me please defend my character then will I ever be your true friend & shall ever be under the most ? obligations.

Miss Eliza M. Greer  
Fayetteville, Tenn