

Jacksonville Ala.  
Jan 10th 1877.

My Dear Husband

The Telegram announcing your safe return to Washington was a great relief me, for I was about to get into one of my ways. The Ashtabula Bridge affair with all its horrors was fresh, and I just knew there would be another equally as disastrous between N.Y. and Washington and you would certainly be one of the victims. The very best I could make out of your trip was, that you would be snowbound, and couldn't possibly

possibly reach W- until several days after Congress had convened and then, you would be sure to have a spell of Pneumonia in consequence of exposure to the severe cold while in N.Y. - But the Telegram came assuring me of your safe return, and very soon followed the letter saying you were quite well. I know I never felt more thankful in all my life, and I would have replied immediately, but was suffering with head-ache and neuralgia.

This morning I received yours of the 4th Inst. telling us all about your trip, we enjoyed it very much Sallie was here, she regrets that you did not wait until Summer and see the great city in all its beauty.

And now darling allow me to thank you for

my nice! New Years gift. I know it is just the thing, though, I have not yet had the pleasure of seeing it. The "bill of laden" came this morning, and possibly the buggy came too, though I've had no notice of it. I appreciated that part of y'r letter which said "no one else had any interest in it" but I don't think the boys enjoyed it much, especially Ed- he says it just does him good to think how many nice rides to PicNics he will have in Ma's new buggy.

We have had nothing done for two weeks past, but make fires and feed stock. We determined yesterday, to start our new negro out this morning to hauling wood, but Lightning fell down on him and hurt his leg badly, so he is laid up.

Lightning had not been out for two weeks (they have been watered in the stable) so she was pretty skittish, and while running pretty rapidly she came upon a sheet of ice and slipped and fell on the boy's leg. he had to be brought home in a buggy and I feared he was badly hurt, but he thinks not, his leg is swollen and he is unable to use it.

Ed got Bil Hudson and they took both wagons and have gone out for wood today. I hope they will have no trouble, but the roads are in such a frozen slippery condition that they are almost impassible. The snow that fell N. Years day is still visible not withstanding several days rain, the rain freezes as fast as it falls, forming a complete icing over the earth.

5th

I have never known any thing to equal the severity of the weather- just to think of the Thermometer getting down to 3 degrees in Jacksonville My flowers are all frozen, but my bird is still living in spite of the "wind and the weather" It was my orange [tree?] that I called my pet and not my bird. I prized my Orange more than any thing but I believe it is dead root and branch.

There have been some changes for the New Year. Seymour had gone to the Hammond place in the Flat and Mr Laird has moved into the Hammond house near our Church. Lon and Annie have not gone to house-keeping as was their calculation I think Lon has been taking his tea again. John Wyly is behaving rediculously, he has scarcely drawn a sober breath since you left, and of late he mistreats Amelia

and the children, he gave Amelia a lick a few days ago, which left her with a swollen face. I don't know what is to become of the poor woman and all those little children.

The M.O. of which you spoke will be very acceptable as I have been on credit some time. Johnnie has just come in and says he received the Orders this morning which I did not know before. Walter has gone to Dadeville to see after Welsh's claims on a house that has recently failed.

Hoping you will continue to write often, I will close, with a dull heavy head, but a heart full of love to you.

Affectionately Yours

M.D. Caldwell [Mary D. Caldwell]

JACKSONVILLE

JAN

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ALA.

U.S. POSTAGE

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Hon'l Jno H. Caldwell [John H. Caldwell]

(House of Representatives)

Washington

D.C.