

From S. Shelly to Mrs. Staples

[page 1]

Independence Missouri

Feb[.] 20th 1865

Monday Morning At Home

Mrs[.] Staples,

I seat my-self with pleasure this morning to employ a few moments in writing to you; although I havent much news to communicate.

This leaves mother and my-self well, with the exceptions of bad colds[.] which is a common complaint here at present; we have a few cases of small pox but dont think there is much danger of it scattering through town as they move all to the hospital out at the edge of town as soon as they are taken; most of them that has bin affected being negroes and Soldiers. it is a great wonder we are not troubled with more diseases than we are for there is no end to dirt and filth around town and the last few days the smell has bin awful being damp

[page 2]

and when the Sun shines out it is [*text stricken through*] real sickning for any one living on or near the Square; and there is a poor prospect for improvement very soon. I suppose they will organize the Malitia here and else where this week[.] Smith and [Meadows?] are to take charge of companeys again that are made up at this place[.] I dont suppose any one will be exempted unless they are blind in boath eyes or boath arms taken off. I laugh and tell Felix they will make a major out of him yet[.] he is improving so fast[.] I think he is looking better than I have seen him for two years and he thinks himself he is Rapedly improving.

Mrs[.] Staples[.] you will no dout wonder what has become of the balance of the family as no one remains at home but Mother and my-self[.] Louise has bin spending the winter with her relatives in Cass County. I received a letter from her yesterday[.] she wrote she would be at home soon. Frank is still at Denver City with Polly or was at last accounts[.] we havent

[page 3]

had any news from their for about six weeks[.] the mails having bin stoped on account of Indian hostilities[.] it is reported they will start again soon with a heavy escort of Soldiers[.] We havent heard from [MS. illegible] for more than a year or at least nothing reliable[.] Tom Fields came in a few weeks ago[.] he said he heard that he was still in Newbraska Territory but could see no one that knew it to be so. we feel very much alarmed for fear he has bin murdered by the [Savages?] Indians.

You know the whereabouts of the rest of the family as well as I could tell you[.] we've had no late news from none of them.

I was very sorrow to hear of [Bills?] misfortune but hope he may be released soon. I saw them last fall. We met with some losses at the time of the raid but nothing to compare with other[.] we still have plenty to live comfortably if we are allowed the privilage of staying at home[.] I think we have fared exceedingly well under the circumstances. I could tell you a great deal if I could see you but [*text stricken through*] it is

[page 4]

best not to write much. Mother often wishes she could see you all and would be glad to have you come up and stay with her awhile. She sends her best respects to all including [MS. illegible] and family[.]

I must bring my letter to a close as the morning is passing away and I have work that must be done; my best wishes and regards to all who think me worthy of enquiry and accept a portion for yourself from one that Remains

Most Respectfully your friend

S[.] Shelly

P.S. Answer this immediately as Mother is very anxious to [*text stricken through*] receive a letter from you[.]