

From Susan A. Staples to Mary W. Mason

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Mo[nday] Feb[.] 1st

Jackson County Independence

My Dear Sister

With a heavy[,] heavy heareart [heart] and broken spirit I attempt to write you a brief letter[.] you should not think hard of me for not writing to you oftener for if you knew the tr[ia]ls under which we labor you would not expect me to write[.] This leaves my family well with the exception of colds; Mothers health is not very good[.] she is fleshier than common but complains a good deal[.] she has quite a hard time as her servants are all in Cooper[.] Felixs health is better than it has been[.] The Doctors say his lungs are ceriously effected[.] he is using Cod Liver Oil and has been since last fall[.] he thinks it helps him[.] we are all very much affrait he will decline just like Mr[.] Staples did for he complains just like he did[.] Toms health is very bad indeed[.] I think he is declining fast[.] he has a very distressing caught[.] he cannot sleep at all for incessant coughing[.] his appetite is quite delicate and to tell the truth I am not of the opinion that he will live very long[.] he has commenced the use of Doctor O[.] Phelps Browns Aeacian Balsam[.] it has been hily [highly] reckomended for Bronchial affections.

Mary[,] I suppos that you have herd of Mr[.] Fields death. he died on the 17 of Oct[.] his death was of a very distressin nature[.] that awful Cancer killed him[,] it eat his face from his cheek bones clear down to his breast bone entirely up[.] it distroyed his upper and lower jawbone entirely[.] it also destroyed his swallow[.] he did not swallow one bite nor speak a word for nine days and nights[.] he was buried in Independence[.] Lin Maxwell is living with his mother[.] she lost her oldest child[.] I suppose that Mr[.] Maxwell is in arkansaw [.]

Col. Pennics [Penick's] Command is stationed at Independence[.] he deals very strict with southerners[.] he he has a great many female prisoners and says that he is

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going to bannish evry lady that has husbands in the Southern Army or with the bushwhackers[.] he has already bannished sevrals[.] I will tell of one or more Mrs[.] [Pal?] Parrish[,] Mrs[.] Cox, the widow Haller[,] the widow Bagby[,] and a great many more[.] he hung a southern man the other day in old Billy Liggitt Barn[.] he has hung Sam Wear and several others[.] he has made evry Lady that has been in town for the last three months take the Oath of Allegiance[.] his men burned 15 housses last friday and says he intends to burn every house that a bushwhacker has ever been in[.] these houses were in Dr[.] Lee's neighbourhood[.] the Federals killed Dr[.] Lee[.]

Oh Mary it is useless for me to try to tell you what Jackson County has to endure on paper but if I could only be with you a few days I could tell you something[.] the negroes have all left in a

great measure and those that has not is so impudent that there is no living with them[.] Goods of evry kind are extremely high[.] Tom and I went to Kansas Citty last week[.] we found goods equally as high there as here but a better assortment[.] we have all been so dreadfully Jayhawked that I cannot tell what is to become of my childre but as God has prommised to feed the young ravens who cry to him for help I hope he will in mercy remember my poor Fatherless Children[.]

William Staples was up as short time ago[.] he says papas health is very bad[.] the last letter we had from papa informed us that the Negroes were most all very sick[.] You must give my love to all the children and to Mr. Mason[.] My love to Mrs. Robbert Mason and receive a double portion for yourself[.] you must try and come down this spring[.] write to me and believe ever to be your devoted Sister untill death.

Susan A. Staples

to

Mary W. Mason