

Clifton Grove Oct 10 1853

Monday

My dear Parents,

I arrived at my new home on Friday last but have found no time to write until now. I wrote you last from Philadelphia from there we went to Washington where we remained a day & two nights, they were refurnishing the Senate & House of Representatives, so that we could not judge much of them- the paintings in the Rotunda are remarkably fine- the Patent Office contains enough of interest to last through many hours of study- we did not stop in Richmond or Petersburg, but from Washing came home as speedily as possible. You may imagine I have seen many strange things, as for my opinions, in so short a time, it would not be fair to give them. I have seen no unkind treatment of servants, indeed I think that they are treated with more familiarity than many other servants. They are in the parlor & in your rooms & all over. The first night we spent in the slam holdings states we slept in a room without a lock, twice before we were up a waiting girl came into the room & while I was dressing in she came to look at me, she seemed perfectly at home, look up the look up the locket with our miniatures in & wanted to know if it was a watch, I showed it to her, "well she said I should think your Father & Mother were mighty old folks". Just before we arrived here, one old Negro caught a glimpse of us & came tearing out- of the prairie woods to touch his hat to us, all along the road we met them & their salutation of "howdy, Massa Ben" meaning how to do you do. They seemed so glad to see him, what I felt assured that they were well treated as we came to the house. I found Mother Williams ready to extend a Mother's welcome. Mary & Harriet were both here & delighted to see me & I soon felt at home. At dinner we had everything very nice & it is customary, where the waiting girl is not passing things at table to keep a large broom of peacock's feathers in motion to over our heads to keep off flies.

I feel confused everything is so different that I do not know which way to stir for fear of making a blunder. I have determined to keep still & look on for a while at any rate. Yesterday I went to Church in a handsome carriage servant before & behind. I began to realize yesterday how much I had lost in the way of religious privilege. We went six miles to Church, as they have preaching at Snow Hill every one or two Sabbaths on arriving. I found a rough framed building in the midst of woods with a large congregation consisting of about equal numbers of white & black these meetings are held once a month and then addressed by two or three exhorters who are uneducated, and each speaks long enough for any common sermon. The singing is horrible- prize your religious privileges they are great & you would realize it by attending Church here once. I shall miss these much.

Things that Northerners consider essential are of no importance here, the house & furniture is of little consequence to all these differences I expect to become accustomed in time. My Husband is all kindness & loves me more than I am worthy, with him I could

be happy anywhere. I have seen enough to convince me that the ill treatment of the slaves is exaggerated at the North, but I have not seen enough to make me like the Institution. I am quite the line of the day not only in the whole County but on the plantation. Yesterday I was in the yard & an old negro worried came up to me "howdy Miss Sarah, are you the Lady that won my young Master. Well I raised him" her name is Chany & she was the family nurse. Between you & I my husband is better off than I ever dreamed of, I am glad I did not know it before we were married, he own 2000 acres of land in this vicinity but you must bear in mind that land here is not nearly as valuable as with you, but I'll leave these things to talk of when I see you which I hope may be before many months. I will write you more fully when I have time, some of our friends leave this morning & I must go & see them. Write some very soon. Ben sends love.

Love to all

Every yours Sarah

Direct to Clifton Grove, near Snow Hill Green Co. N.C.

I wish you could see the cotton fields, the bulbs are just opening, I cannot compare their appearance to anything but fields of white roses. As to the cotton picking I should think it very light-pleasant work. Our house is very unassuming not larger than Mary's.

I shall feel unsettled until my furniture comes & after our return from Charleston next month. Then I hope to settle down & be quiet for a while- the house has been full of relatives ever since we came & more friends are expected tomorrow.