

Clifton Grove Oct 22nd 1853
Saturday Morning

My dear Parents,

Your letter enclosing others, have both been received and ere this, you have received one from me informing you of our safe arrival here. It would be wrong perhaps for me to form or express an opinion in regard to the manner's, customs of the people, after only two weeks Larry among them. I will not speak for or against, but will state things as I have seen them and you may form your own opinions. The words present a beautiful appearance now, the rainbow hues of attention contrasting beautifully with the deep dark green of the pines. Many of the trees are hung with vines, the honeysuckle, woodbine and others- now to mingle the better with the sweet, in these woods are snakes of various sizes, both harmless & poisonous, among the latter are large adders & occasionally a rattlesnake- scorpions too they tell me are plenty. There is one thing is our beautiful grass- the soil is sandy, and the grass is of a different character entirely. It is coarse & full of weeds, but where the ground is cultivated & planted with the different products of the Country it presents a fine appearance- the cotton fields are beautiful, the corn will range from three to twelve feet in height- the sweet potatoes & yams look finely.

...Is satisfied here be numbering its thousands of dollars, acres & hundreds negroes- house, furniture, dress are nothing- for instance the Dr.'s Brother a very wealthy man, lives in a brown wood house without lathing or plastering to be sure he has a handsome sofa, sideboard & chairs in his parlor, which contrast strangely with the unfinished stated of the house. However he proposes building soon- this I might say is the common style of houses & ours which is finished is the exception. As to house hold arrangements I have discoursed no system- wash, bake, or iron, just as the fit takes as to the kitchen, Ms. Chamberlain's advice was not so bad, provided one has control, if not I would advise them to keep clear as I have resolved to do, unless I am needed there. Baking is all done in the Bake- kettles. Cooking at a fire place, chimney are all built outside of the houses. The Negroes are certainly not out-tasked on this plantation- our house girl at the North will accomplish more than two here but I think the great fault lives in a want of system. Mother Williams works harder than any Northern farmers wife I know, indeed she sees to everything on this plantation. The Dr. has another seven miles from here, mostly pine land & that with his other business demands a good share of his time- he has gone with his Brother to Greenville to engage his turpentine, which is selling for \$4.00 per barrel- I don't expect him back until Monday. As to the treatment of servants, the overseer that Ben employed while he was away, struck one of the negroes & his Mother wouldn't speak to him afterward, and had him discharged- They are not different either, once one of the field hands, asked me to fix a dress for her the other day, another servant wanted to know if Massa Ben & I wouldn't ride over to Snow Hill to get her a new dress- they have plots of ground they cultivate & have what they make from them. They can go to Church or preaching as they say on the Sabbath, indeed the majority of the

congregations are colored. On Sunday they dress up and look very nicely, many of them- they leave off work at Sun-down during the week.

You will not wonder finding everything here so entirely different if I should feel like Stranger in a Strange land it must take time for me to become accustomed to such an utter change but with a husband who has proved so devoted I could not be unhappy anywhere. I think I can appreciate Mito Ophelia's feelings for I have not approached any of the little negroes very closely yet, like her I should wish a good application of soap & water, comb & clean clothes. I have just received a letter from Lavina full of good kindly feeling. In it she says "I meant to write to your Mother ore this- will you tell her that a week of engagements has prevented me- give her my best love- tell her I often think of the family alone in the dear pleasant homestead. Mother sends her regards for many thanks for the liberal supply of wedding cake she received." By the way the cake John brought came safely & we have had it on the table twice. The house was full for a week after we came with relatives, we had a very pleasant time & felt rather lonely after they all left. I expect my furniture is in New Berne, but we cannot get it till the river rises. Ben I expect will go away next week to Beaufort where he is talking of purchasing a lot & perhaps of building a residence at some future site. My paper is full & I have just room to say to both write of love to your Sarah.

Dr. Sends love.

Please send me a good recipe for soda biscuit. Love to all. I hope our neighbors have buried their unkind feels ore this. I can assure you I cherish no hard feelings toward them. Still think their course mistaken for my Bible tells me that "Charity suffereth long & is kind" & even our Savior could eat with publicans & Sinners. I wish Ms. Payore would write & Mrs. too if she has time. Emily Shays. Love to her & tell her how much I wish she was with me. Love to all Aunt Lydia's people & everybody that asks for me.

How shall I direct for the American Messenger & Child's Paper was our published in any Northern papers. Ask Mr. Payore which is the best paper the Evangelist or Observer?

Direct to Mrs. Dr. B.F. Williams Clifton Grove near Snow Hill Greene Co. N.C.