

McClellanville
June 15, 1914

My Dearest Benjamin*,

Your encouraging letter was surely welcomed recently. Be careful, go slow, and you will soon be yourself again. I believe in Dr. Nevin*. He is certainly a good physician and a fine man. I can never forget the very handsome way he treated me last summer., The good time he gave me. None but a fine, unselfish, manly one could have done as he did, and now I can make no return.

I think I told you Tom had been up here for two days only. Mr. Reid Whitford, of the drainage and good road commission (engineer) got him to come up and measure the depth all along of two Santees with a view of bridging and building a caseway out of freshet reach. He went back with Mary, who left for Florida to visit her friend Bessy Clark, nee Stroman. Some fool boy here was persecuting her so she went off to let the rustic swain change his attention elsewhere, a thing not hard for him.

Should not fancy Florida myself at this season, but I understand it's no hotter than elsewhere in summer. We are getting it about now, but nights pleasant; generally a breeze and never a mosquito. So far not one. Cow and horse flies very bad in places. They are putting up vats for cattle and hogs--cost only \$12.50. Then government people come and put this stuff in it free of charge for the individual--known as tick eradicator. Great idea, salvation of stock. One plunge lasts 10 days and cattle absolutely immune. No flies or ticks. They just lie down in the shade of the "wide-spreading" and never raise a tail. Now that's what I call comfort, after what I've lately seen of the torture of animals by flies.

Mama goes to town by Marion's boat in the morning, only for a night, and returns. A lady friend who comforts feel and is her objective? point.

Caroline is here and I think she is wonderfully well. She is easily upset, headaches, etc., but when she feels strong, I do not know anyone who is more competent and efficient and who can accomplish more.

The deep well and plenty of pure, clean water is an unspeakable comfort and we all fully enjoy and appreciate it. Since recent rains the lot (?) is very green. We have shade enough and the grape vine (about 20 feet square) gives a fine shade and is loaded with very delicious bunch grapes. The mockingbirds are always very troublesome when the grapes are ripe and getting ripe, but I try to get my share. I try and raise the pipe to overflow as high as I can and have shells below for the water to splash on--clean, white shells. It is not a raging cataract or mountain torrent, but it is a lively ripple which catches the listening ear.

All crops much improved since recent shower and my corn is very fine. I had to replant much of my cotton, but now I trust all will be well with it, as I have John Snyder hired with his fine mule to set it up and put it in good shape for me this week. Have planted the "patch" and "Martha's" (?) in rice and will draw tomorrow. I have over half of Mainfield planted (in shares--one-half for me). We are going by degrees to stock the place with good cattle and hogs and "make some money." Did you ever hear the like! I feel very hopeful about this now since the vat business is a reality.

The club things are being sold off, all furniture, etc. Tom said he would write to you and ask if you could take an Indian canoe with him (\$15). Cost \$30, but as good as

new. All hands here have bought some things needed for the house such as a chair or two and a cot, etc., etc.

I have or will have soon plenty of vines for slips--very early for me, over a month earlier than last year. I had planted a large spent? bed, so I set them out soon. They will give me a fine lot of potatoes and the vines from them will make good slip vines. Peas (cow), as you know, are planted from about the 20th of this month to August first, but now is getting to be the time. To plant too soon--they all go to vine and pod but little--later is the reverse. For a forage crop you plant early. Now there is an early pea that makes two crops in a season--a round red pea called the "Tory" pea. It's a grand one, tough and prolific.

I have been traveling up to the hill with you and Earleston in his auto and handing you your crutches (poor fellow) and I see you get up to the class soon with difficulty, but better and with less trouble every day if it was not for the feet. Well! You will walk them off soon.

Met Perry Sessions at the Presbyterian Church yesterday, asked him round. We talked of the people in Mercersburg and he's a spirited young fellow. Sad thing--both his parents are in deplorable condition and they won't die.

I forgot to mention, speaking of the waterfall, that the birds have found it, and it's too pretty to see the "wild eyed" dart through the leaves, alight, fill their throats and satisfy their thirst and depart quickly rejoicing at their cleverness with their craving completely satisfied. A few very red bricks and very white shells attract their attention and instinct draws them to the running water.

I think of you all every day and in fact all the while and I feel as if I saw you, all of you at home on the hill under the shade on the green--and it's good to look on. I remember every feature of it--see it afresh without straining my eyes but little.

Is Irvine all right? Again, are you (?)? And is Arch as handsome and athletic as ever? And the "White Hope"! How's my bully boy? I trust Florence is now picking up and putting on some precious pounds. She has had an anxious time and is physically wonderful--no doubt of that.

My best love to one and all. Tears
will bubble if I mention each in
turn, so I'll gulp them down in one.
Thine, my Benjamin!

***Note: Benjamin was Henry's nickname for Archibald.**

***Note: Dr. Nevin was the physician who took care of the staff and students at Mercersburg Academy.**

Original copies are with the family.