

To Mr. Houston

Transcription taken from: *The Personal Correspondence of Sam Houston, Volume II: 1846- 1848*

Edited by Madge Thornall Roberts

The following letter is held in the collection of the Sam Houston Memorial Museum.

Grand Cane December 5th, 1846

My Dear Love,

Your most welcome package from Galveston came to hand yesterday, and I have been much happier, I assure you, since the reception of your letter than at any time since your departure. The fact is, I did not like your letter from Houston. I could perceive that it was a very hurried thing, yet there was about it a tone about it of despondency "je ne sais quoi" which pained me exceedingly. After reading it again and again, I still folded it with an uneasy sensation about the heart. I have since come to the conclusion, that it may possibly have originated from the omission of that very important expression "I love you," but of this I am not quite sure. I do not jest dearest. Oh no, I never was more serious. I have spent much of my time lately in the study of my own heart, in the careful examination of its different emotions, tracing each to the source, and endeavoring to cherish the good and reject the bad. But I am often enveloped by clouds of gloom, which I can not understand, and this is one of the occasions. Of one thing rest assured. I am much comforted since the reception of your affectionate letters from Galveston. I reviewed my old letter to you with a melancholy pleasure. Ah, how different are my feelings now, from those of girlish romance that dictated that letter. I loved you then with all the enthusiasm of my nature, but my heart was from care. I had never felt a mother's anxiety. I had never borne upon my heart the weight of immortal souls. But the lord has given them to me, that I may train them for a higher and never-ending existence, and I shrink not from the task. Oh that he may bring them early into the fold! Our sweet babe with her violet eyes raised to Heaven, hath drawn my heart thence more than ever. Ah what peace hath a mother's heart for the love of the world! Dearest our baby knows me! Yes, I have received from her, that first look of recognition, which stamps itself upon the mother's heart, never never to be erased. Mother says I must tell you, that when you left us, she was just half as beautiful as she is now. I think myself that she improves every day. She preserved melancholy silence for several days after your departure, but she has now a pretty smile and soft tone for everyone that speaks to her. Sam also grows more interesting each day. I am delighted with his developments of character. He is truthful, generous, affectionate, and magnanimous. With all he is circumspect and considerate, more so than any one of his years that I have ever seen. But facts will best speak for themselves. You know that he was perfectly familiar at home with the name of "Virginia" [Thorn], and the unpleasant association connected with it that he identifies her. I can not doubt, for he never speaks to her, but I perceive him occasionally at a distance casting a cautious glance toward her. He has perceived, that from some cause unknown to him, I never elude to the "poisoning," and strange to say, though he often spoke of it at home, he preserves a cautious silence respecting it here. She has been confined ever since you left, with a rising on the knee, and just now is recovering from it. This morning as I was sitting at the breakfast table, Sam was standing at my side, and saw her come out and seat herself in the entry. "Oh ma," he exclaimed "Jinny is getting well." "Yes my son" I answered, "and I am happy to see it, are you not happy?" "Yes ma," he said, "I am so glad," and drawing a little nearer to

Virginia, he tenderly inquired, "Jinny are you getting well?" She answered "Yes," and his eyes sparkled with real joy. It was the first time I have heard him call her name, since we came here. Sam and Sister Katherine's little Ann Eliza are almost inseparable. He never quarrels with her at all except when she steps on his toes and it is a little inconvenient, as she wears shoes, and he rarely does, and I can not make him understand yet the nature of an accident. This morning I read to him, from Gen. a portion of the history of Cain and Abel. When I came to the question "Where is thy brother Abel?" Sam exclaimed, "Ma when I go up to Heaven, I will tell God that Cain had killed him!" Here was a fine opportunity for some remarks on the omniscience of God, and I endeavored to impart it.

I have understood that Mr [Joseph] Ellis spent a night at Raven hill during his visit to Gen. Woods, and found the [Moore] family well, but I did not see him after his return as I only spent a few days at home, and then set off for this red lands. Mother, sister Kate and bro V. send a great deal of love to you.

[On margin:] I send you the promised lock of hair. I presume you will need no necromantic skill to tell you from what head the little lock of silk was taken. Sam said as I was cutting his "Oh, ma, pa will be so glad, don't you hope so?"

ever thy devoted wife,

M.L. Houston

P.S. Dearest, I will try to make up to you the loss of the old love letter, and you must write whenever you can. Oh, how inexpressibly dear you are to my heart! I am sad and cannot be happy without you. Please present my compliments to Mrs. Graham, and tell her I design writing to her very soon. My breast is not yet healed, but still discharges like a boil, and I think the tumor will disappear in that way.

Sam's shoes are just the right size, but he does not seem fond of wearing them. Rebecca Maxey, the daughter of our old friend is dead. She died at Independence on last Sunday week. Mr. Knight of this neighborhood, is also dead. Sam says to come home, and "baby" will perceive that this letter was written with the impression of your having received a previous one.

To Mr. Houston

Transcription taken from: *The Personal Correspondence of Sam Houston, Volume IV: 1852-1863*

Edited by Madge Thornall Roberts

Huntsville March 11, 1856

My Love,

By last night's mail, I received yours of the 24 and 25 ult. I was expecting both with fond anxiety and should have been greatly disappointed if I had received none, and as it was, I was very, very happy. Your last gave me more delight, than I had recd from you for a long while, for the reason that for some weeks, you have made no mention of your visit in the spring, and I was left to infer that you could not come. But now I am so happy with the hope of seeing you soon. Indeed but for the impatience which I shall feel until you come, I should be as happy as I can be on this earth. I believe it is wrong for us to be separated [sic] as much as we are, and if we should be spared to meet, I intend to preach you a perfect sermon on the subject. I feel as if I could be quite eloquent with such a theme, but as my audience will not be very numerous (consisting only of my dear husband,) it will hardly be a test of my oratorical [sic] powers. However if I can bring my sole audition round to my way of thinking, I shall be abundantly satisfied.

Speaking of oratory reminds me of Mr. Fisher. You were mistaken dearest in supposing that my conversion took place during his visit to Marion. I made a profession of religion while at school in Pleasant Valley. You have heard me speak of him as a great revivalist, but I never admired his type of preaching, though I was too young when I heard him preach, to be a very fair judge of oratory. He was considered a very good man, but he had such a business way of getting up a revival. For instance he would stand up in the church before he commenced preaching, and publicly direct the arrangements of the seats, and other trifling matters of this sort, that with me destroyed the solemnity of the occasion. However his labours have been greatly blessed, and I humbly trust he is a good man. Ministers are but earthly angels you know dearest, and not Heavenly ones, and although it is a sad thing to see indications of vanity in one whose business it is to proclaim "the unsearchable riches of Christ." We can but mourn over the frailty of human nature. Vanity I suppose is the sin "which doth so easily [torn] him" and I can readily believe that one whose spirit might for the moment be charmed with the applause of the world, would suffer martyrdom rather than perpetrate crime.

During my recent illness my mind has been delightfully exercised on the subject of the final perseverance of the saints. It has appeared to me as clear as noon day, and I do humbly trust that my mind will never again be clouded by the doubts and fears that have given me so many moments of mental anguish.

Having been brought up in the doctrines of our church, I never could account for those gloomy fears of mine, unless that are from the peculiar nature of my case. My conversion was remarkably bright, so bright, that I never could persuade myself even in my darkest hours, that at that time I had not "passed from death into life." Yet soon led off by the vanities of early youth, I wandered far away from the cross. At length when conscious was aroused from its dream, and I found myself a presumptuous backslider, I

struggled hard to cast away the sweet vision which I had seen in the beginning. I believe if I could myself yet in the gall of bitterness and bonds on iniquity, than I would make myself to the cross, but how could I a converted apostate [sic] ever hope for mercy! In vain my attempts to forget the sweet evidence of acceptance in the Beloved which I have received. There was the unforgotten brightness of the earth and trees and sky and the low whisper "Jesus of Nazereth [sic] passeth by!" You know How I have struggled on for the last few years, through alternate joy and gloom, hope and fear, and until a few days ago, that same dark cloud has hovered over me, threatening at times to fall upon me and extinguish the feeble light of my soul. One day as I lay on my sick bed, mourning over the barrenness of my soul, and "writing bitter things against myself," on account of the sins of my youth, and the backslidings of mature years, my spirit became so overwhelmed with sorrow, that I felt as if I should "sink in deep water," I recalled this passage, "whosoever is born of God, doth no commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he can not sin because he is born of God." What then I asked myself can be the condition of my soul? For I have not passed a day of my life without sin. All at once the true meaning of that passage flashed upon my mind. I have often heard it explained, and even explained it to others, but never until that moment, had my soul taken hold of it. It was presented to me in this way, that it was the holy principle created within us by the Spirit of God that never sins! I felt that I had never taken pleasure in sin since the day of my conversion, and that there was ever a quiet monitor within me, that was grieved when I went astray. So then it was the poor frail body, that had so long weighed the spirit down with its infirmities. Oh how my soul rejoiced and I could even look with pity upon the poor perishing clay that was so soon to be cast off for a glorious body. How is it with your soul my dear one? Do you not feel that there is a new principle within you that shrinks from the appearance of sin, and though the flesh was against the spirit, its voice can not be silenced? This is the new birth and whether the beginning be small or great, it leads to this same result, our final sanctification. Oh glorious hope! We shall be free from sin! We shall be like, him, for we shall see him as he is!

Write me a long letter when you get this and tell me how you are progressing in the divine life. Present me affectionately to bro. Sampson. If I never see him in this world, I do believe I shall see him and know him in Heaven!

Thy devoted wife M. M. Houston

[In margin:] Did you receive my letter announcing of Sister Creath's death? It was written about the 23rd of Jan. My health is still improving and the children are all well.

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To Mrs. Houston

There is no transcription for the letter written by Mr. Sam Houston to Margaret, dated 29, Jan. 1857 and written from Washington.

This letter is held in the collection of the Sam Houston Memorial Museum.

There is no record of this letter ever being published.

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To Mrs. Houston

Transcription taken from: *The Writings of Sam Houston, Volume VI, January 1828 to February 1858* edited by Amelia W. Williams and Eugene C. Barker.

Washington , 1st March 1857

My Dear:

After two night sessions I did not go to church today. My friend Stuart, of Galveston has been with me up to this time since my return from breakfast. After dinner I intend to pass the evening and night in reading the Testament and Harvey's Meditations.

Today is pleasant and betokens spring. When I reflect on the distance from this to where you are and our flock, I feel that I am indeed an exile, interdicted from all that is dear to me on earth. I have felt exile in other lands and from other homes, but then I was an exile that combined no wish or hope of return. In my present case, there is blended both desire and hope. Desire to be with you and hope that the day is not distant that it will be the case! Our sunny home appears to me more bright and lovely than it has ever done in the realizations of the past. So many, so bright are the joys to my fancy acumen that I can scarcely contain myself. You have around you many of the pleasures which I so much desire. I can fancy you in the enjoyment of health, and all our children, ruddy and noisy, with their thousand antics and childish pleasures. Sam with his mannish conceits. Nannie with determination to do all that will with genius can accomplish. Miss Maggie with her quiet brooding mischief. Mary Willie with her sparkling temper. Antoinette relying on the truth of her conclusions and the justice of her perceptions. Andrew doubting nothing in achievements, and believing that which he cannot *accomplish he ought to do by some means*. And you, my Dear, a kind Mother looking on each on as a nonpareil and half vexed for fear I will not say as much as you wish in their bountiful behalf, I live to return. Sam I do not exactly class with the others, as they consider "brother Sam" in the light of an oracle! I hope if spared to find then all that a fond Father can wish them to be and their Dear Mother happy.

Bro. Samson has left me with two sermons which I had the pleasure to hear him preach, or rather, two copies of one sermon. One I send you with this note. The things mentioned in the note I will try to convey to you. Thy Devoted

Houston