

[Letter to Effie Rector from a cousin, N. Royston, both in Texas]

April 7<sup>th</sup> 1875

Mrs Effie Rector

Dear Effie

I just settle myself down knitting in hand for a lonesome, blue day. – Dr C & Dick are both gone to B. when lo! A knock at the door & Mr. Able [*unclear*] with a letter, a letter from you. I could hardly believe it, but the blues took to wings & my eyes to water for I have a weakness I can't quite keep down when I hear from you all. I too have been thinking I would write to you often & after [*unclear*] adopt your plan of writing after supper when the children go to bed, indeed, I tell you the child won't go to bed till he is rocked an hour or so & sung to until my throat is sore and then by that time I'm sleepy myself. No I'm not so busy that I can't find time to write, then too I could steal a few minutes to scratch a line while he is out either under the floor in the ashhopper hatching little chickens or some other mischief, but the draw backs for the last month or two has been a want of ink, that same little mr.

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incorrigible found the ink bottle on a table & making a brush out of the paper stopper, he done the floor up nicely though whether it was a horse or dog, sow, or calf, he painted for the soul of me I couldn't tell, to tell the truth, shame on me. I do love to get a letter & I do hate to write one. John spent a day or two with me not long since. [*Leu---*] had gone to Miss. [*Mississippi*] on a visit. I see as little of her as I do of you, which being interpreted means I never see her at all, she is waiting for a visit from me. Etiquet [*etiquette*] oh [*unclear*] now she is losing a world of pleasure if she could only be brought to believe it in not cultivating my acquaintance because the inestimable advice I could give her, an old matron like myself you know, on the subject of – little responsibilities should she ever be troubled with the like. Lee drops in occasionally, poor boy, came home to die, do write to him & point out some particular chapter in the Bible that 'twould be well to read, not forgetting to urge him to say his prayers, he too came to the conclusion here lately that Kenner is a "mighty good man," he is a good boy too, but he ought not to put on airs so, especially when he is so fat. Katy the little mouse does she say I won't write to her; goodness didn't I write her a letter, a whole half page long & is that the way she talks

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to my friends. You don't know how glad I am to get Kenner's sisters & Kate's photos so they are grown, those two little girls how strange. It seems they don't look a day older. K don't look a day older than when I was a little girl in [*unclear*] my mother, brother, friend and master I wonder if he ever will look old, he is so jollie & happy. I don't believe he every will. Lizzie staid [*stayed*] all night with me not long ago. It hurts me to think she is in such bad health. I made her talk about you all till bed time that night. Pa's family were all well the last I heard. I would be so glad if Aunt Elisa would come, you must try your best to come too when she comes home. I envy you your good fortune in getting Aunt and uncle to live with you. I'm so lonesome, I seldom ever leave the house. I haven't seen Mrs. Watts since I stayed all night with her when her baby was a week old. She has never been to spend a day with me. She sent Johnnie with a horse after me not long since but I couldn't go that time. Your brother was well too the last I heard. My three rose bushes have all buds on them & promise many a nice boquet [*bouquet*]. I have also a pretty little bed of chamomile which is just beginning to blossom. We would have plenty of peaches this year but for that killing cold on the 13<sup>th</sup> March it came

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nearly killing the pears & grapes though it passed harmlessly over the little apple trees. We have only a few Irish potatoes up yet though every thing is now planted. Mrs Hancock spent the day with me not long ago. She is as fat as ever she has only George [*unclear*] none in the prospective that I know of Ma [*several words unclear*] myself all in the same happy condition. Tell Johnnie I want to see him more than I can tell & little Ernest too, Tell him Gary has a dog name Laneo, he has all sorts of fun with him & Tom, he pushed Laneo on Tom & you can imagine the consequences he can say "Don's done to town I [*unclear*] done ome & Did's done to his wanch" he can also say "moon" & "Docker tome to tupper," & so Leon has two girls what a [*several words unclear*] a boy. Will Ernest wear breeches this summer, but I know he is too little I don't know when to put them on Cary. I'm afraid to try him, I heard about John & the monkey. Effie Cary pus me in mind of him almost every day. He "sulls" sometimes like Johnnie use to, I'm glad K has got off the Burckner Creek property. Are they going to make the mill pay? I hope so. How is aunt Sallie. Give me love to her & all m kinfolks up there. I'l be as glad when sister comes home. I hate for her to be so far away by herself & Kate too. She wrote me about the nice ring Aunt sent her. Now I must close by asking you to excuse this pencil for writing so badly & ask not to look twice at all the misspelt words for fear of taking sore eyes, I'm not trying to raise a great many chickens, as I will have no corn to feed them on. I'll have a hundred or so hatched & when half of them die with some head or other chicken disease I'll only have about fifty & if they meet with the same fate Dr. R's crops have the last two years I won't have any.

Yours ever

N. Royston

[*On side and top of page 1*]

Kiss Johnnie & Ernest for me & Cary C had only one of the dimes his Uncle K gave him. He is so careful about that. When we start to take a walk, if any of the little darkies here goes with us they must walk behind him & if it Lanco gets before he is certain to get a thrashing. Dick is well at his ranch now. The bachelors round here are so independent do there own cooking. Mr Shaw, Mr Heard, & Dick some talk of Mr Shaw & Mis 'Tish Grady getting married Don't know any thing about it my-self. Miss Caroline [*unclear*] and Mr. Smith I don't know how true