

our direction to
Mr. H. Blakeslee
care of Mr. J. E. Massicot
New Orleans
La
Mrs. E. Hedman
Astabula

New Orleans February 7th 1866

My dear Sister

Last week my Mother sent me your letter that you had written her, I assure you I was truly glad to hear from you and to find you were well, and anxious to hear from us, I assure you dear Sister we have had very many trial and troubles since I wrote you, for I suppose you heard, that we were in Mobile when the city fell, ^{Mr. Shaw} was doing very good business, but he thinking the Yanks would do as they had done in other cities, to burn down nearly all the houses, so he sold what he had, and then we had all Confed Money and we went to Paragoula he thinking he could go into the interior and lay out all this Confed Money which is \$10,000 - but we were not there 3 days when we heard of the surrender of the Army and no one would take the Money, so there we were with not one cent to dress ourselves, fortunately we had laid in 2 sacks of Corn Meal some flour and fat Bacon, and we could catch fish, oysters and Crabs so we lived in this way for 5 months, we had no rent to pay, but you know this could not last we wanted clothes and the people would want their property - so my Brother who lives in the city of New Orleans, he wrote a letter to A. telling him (there was some money) to come up to the city and see what he could do and that we could all live to his house until he was able to take care of us - and this has been now nearly 5 months and we are still living off my Brothers hospitality. He commenced business but had to get everything on credit and I assure you it is very hard, as soon as he gets paid for his work he has to spend it for something in the store, and so it goes. I tell you what, I just feel as if I was about 60 years

old, I am so worried in mind, having 3 children
to educate and clothe, and me to begin life
in this way - now is it not enough to make
any one feel bad - It bears it all very well
though he looks so much older, his hair was
real white so Bless your heart. What do you
think he did - he went to the Barbers and had
his hair died - and you would not believe what
a difference it makes - we all laugh at him,
but he says, it had to be done for the people here would
all say he was too old and could not be fashionable
for all is fashion in this place - well I hope it will
make him succeed - for I assure you being so
dependant on retentions is what I do not like

I am so glad you and Mr. Stedman continue
in good health, I pray God in his Infinite Mercy continue
to Bless you - I should so would it love so dearly
to see you - but whether we will ever be able to
go or not is a question, so when we go to housekeeping I wish you
and Mr. S. would come see us,

I suppose you have had it very cold this winter for
my sister tells me how cold it is in Baltimore also my friend
wrote me from St. Louis - it had not been so cold for
many years - and here it has been a very mild winter
it is only this last week past we have had cold weather,
but it don't last more than a week then it grows hot like
summer - We do not like New Orleans like we did St. Louis
but I thought we could do no better for the present so we
had to remain - now dear sister, we have written you a
long letter I had promised to write, but you know what
a poor hand to write he is, so I would not wait for him, write
very soon I send you and Mr. S. much love and the
Boys all join with me in sending both Mr. S. and you our dearest
a Kiss believe me your devoted and loving sister M. V. Blacklee