

Dec 25th 1860

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To dear Granddaughter

From

[?] little Grand- [?]

[?]

Samuel

Mary [?]

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Suff. Dec. 25th 1860.

Dear Bro.

I thank the good Lord for having spared us all to see another Christmas day. It is remarkably quiet in Suff. to-day, and I feel that I could not spend a portion of it more to my satisfaction than to sit down by this fireside and write you a letter. The day carries me back to many circumstances and events both melancholy and pleasurable, and tho' I am growing old and losing my relish for many things that used to interest and amuse me, yet I cannot help feeling somewhat youthful and merry about Christmas times. It no doubt is natural and peculiar to our constitutions to feel so. We should like very much to have you, and sister Judith, and all of your children with us to-day, to sit down to an old-fashioned dinner and talk about old-times; but so it is, we are deprived of this pleasure, and the best we can do is to converse a little on paper. I suppose you are all safely quartered at your new home, and I truly hope well pleased with the same. You certainly have acted wisely in providing a home for your family, and retiring from the conference. You have had your day, and spent the strength and vigor of your manhood in trying to do good; and no doubt but that you look back with thrilling emotions at the success of your labors in the vineyard of the Lord. You will yet be useful and capable of doing much good as a local minister, and the cultivation and improvement of your farm will give you plenty of exercise and employment. When I was about your age I could do ~~about~~ as good a day's work as I ever did, but when a man gets to my age, he finds himself going down hill very fast. We should like to pay you a visit- when the weather gets mild and pleasant again, which we cannot expect until next Spring or summer. I find the chimney comes to be the best place for old people. You and sister Judith must visit us, and in the mean time let the girls come down and spend some of their time with us and their old acquaintances. Suff. looks about as usual-, dull and full of drones who do nothing, and yet eat up all the honey.

The Methodist and the Christian churches are about finished, and I suppose we may expect better times in a spiritual way than heretofore. As to my own part, I have nothing to do with any of them. People are making loud complaints about the disturbed condition of the country, and the scarcity of money: and many think the dissolution of this Union inevitable. Now this is a great noise for nothing. My word for it, the dispute between the N. & the S. will be settled, reconciled, and made satisfactory to both parties, in less than 60 days. The negro question will be at rest for at least 100 years to come, and we shall have glorious, peaceable, prosperous, and happy times again- So do not be uneasy about your funds; they are perfectly safe- go ahead and fear no danger- I must now close, by asking if your oysters got safely to hand. I attended carefully to your order myself, and had the bucket sent on Monday morning the 24th- Any further orders will be promptly and cheerfully attended to.

This leaves us all well and I [? st] it may find you and yours the same.

Our family is small at this time, comprising Cornelius and his wife, Mary and Henry and the old lady and myself. Do accept the assurance of us all for the present, future, and eternal welfare of you, sister Judith and all the children. Farewell. Write me as often as you can, and I will try to deop you a line every now and then.

Yrs. very affectionably
Henry Riddick

p. 6- On the envelope

Rev.d Jas. A Riddick
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