

C O P Y

Fitzgerald, Ga.
Sept. 20th (1917)

Dear Loy,

Your letter and pictures just received. I can't find words to thank you and tell you how I appreciated both but especially the picture and my heart filled and I could not keep back the memories of my childhood days and how strong and stout the old soul was and how forlorn and forsaken she looked. And to think she is the last of all Papa's old slaves that is left. And you know Uncle Dave went to the army with your Grandfather. To commence with Dave was the first slave your Grandpa ever owned. When too small to carry his gun to hunt in the woods my Grandfather gave Uncle Dave to Papa to carry his gun and go with him. Uncle Dave being older and larger. As Papa grew up others were added till he owned I think about 75 darkeys. At that time one thousand dollars was often the price of a good negro. Money was plentiful with both Father and son. That was before the war plenty land, stock, negroes and money. I, your Aunt Lela, was given Inez by Grandpa and Grandma Bryan to nurse and look after me. After the war closed and the negroes were set free, they still worked on plantation. They thought too much of their master, or "moster" as they called them to leave, but Papa had been good and had not beat and starved them like lots of other slave owners had done. That is why they stayed with him till they have all gone but Aunt Mary.

Your Great Grandfather (Ned Bryan) lived near Thomasville before Thomasville was built. He married a Miss Susan Ann Horn and raised 5 children namely, John, Hardy, William, Mikel James Jefferson (Your Grandpa), Mary Ann. There are only a few of the children left. If I can find out who has the old record, I will try and get it for you. There are a good lot of grandchildren but I don't suppose you care about them. Of Uncle John's family, one son, Josh, at last accounts he lived below Quitman. Cleopatra is all of Uncle Hardy's family. She lives in Florida between Quitman and Madison. I can't give her name for she first married a Dock Davey after his death she married again. I think both of Uncle William's children died. The last I knew of Baxton he lived in Jacksonville. Mary married and died. You are personally acquainted with Mike Bryan's family. Of Huntz, she has one girl by her first husband (Brown) and Lula Strum lives somewhere near Cornelia, by her last husband (Butler) two girls and a boy Joe. One of the girls

lives in Macon (Dixie) but I don't know who she married. Or Susan Ann either, she lived near Madison last I knew of her. Uncle Henry Butler married again, lived in Madison but died, I think, last year. Has not been very long ago.

Grandpa was over 76 when he died not many years after I was born. Can't say just how long. Your Grandpa and Ma married, went to live with the old folks as Pa had to look after his business. He was too old and Papa had never left them so Ma lived on with them till the property was divided then Grandma lived with Papa till just before she died. We moved to Orange Spring. She did not want to leave the other children but was to come when Pa came back for her in the fall. She was only sick a short while before your Grandpa got there she was dead. She never was satisfied after Pa left so sad. She was at Uncle John's at what they called Punkin Hamock a few miles below Madison. Her and Uncle Hardy died in a few hours of each other. I think she was 62. Your Grandpa was 52. They all lived to be old. Lula Strum and I are the oldest of the grandchildren. I think Lula is about 57. Your aunt 55.

Now I can't tell you what regiment your Grandpa served in or who his captain was. I have forgotten but will try and find out. Papa did not go when the war first broke out. He did not want to leave beings he had not been so very long married. So he hired a substitute by paying a big price to the man older than he was but after serving a while, they called for older men which took Pa's substitute so Pa had to go himself and serve.

Your Grandma, Lucy Eneck, was born in Carolina. My Grandmother was born in England. Now what Grandfather meant by sending Grandma and her sister over the water to Charleston to school I have never been able to find out. I was too small to ask questions about it and if I was told, have forgotten. But this much I know, after they both graduated, instead of going back to England to their Father, both married over here. Grandma first married Collins, then Enecks. You have the old bible to refer to to find ages. Her sister, Julia, married a man by the name of Cotman. Aunt Julia had two children, Jim and Sallie Cotman. Cousin Sallie married John Stark of Thomasville. She died leaving, I think, 8 children of which you know some of them. Julia and Sallie Stark you have heard your Ma talk of them. I don't know whatever become of Cousin Jim's daughter, Manie, after she married. Jim died since. I can remember Grandma left Carolina and moved to Thomasville. Not long after she had been there your Grandpa saw Lucy Enecks, fell in love with at first sight, and married. I think she was 16, Papa 26 or 27. My Grandmother was rich but through bad management of her oldest son, Alexander Collins, lost nearly everything she had and made her home with Mama

till her death. She died at Dixie, Ga. Was somewhere in her 60's.

Now, my boy I have told you all I can think of. If there is anything I have not told, write me. I am going to write to the one I think can tell me what Company Papa was in. I think his Captain was his Cousin Lousious Bryan but for your sake and H. L., if she should ever want to join the Daughters of Confederacy, she would have to tell what Company her Grandfather was an officer in. Both Grandfathers and about 13 Uncles were in the war. Bryan and Rast both Grandfathers. You see I was born in Thomasville 3 years before your Mother. Between our birth the whole family moved down on the plantation in Madison and your Ma was born there after the war. And just before Budie was born, Papa moved to Dixie, Ga. Budie and Roger were both born there. At the time after Budie came, there is 7 years between he and Roger, we had moved to Orange Spring, Fla., stayed 2 years came back to Dixie which made him 5 years old when we came back. Stayed there just before Jimmie came, he bought the old homestead. Jim and Daisy were born there where your Ma lives. Both Grandmothers lived with us at Dixie. Pa had a big store hotel. Had stage line there to Tallahassee and Monticello, No. 13 R 4, came from Savannah to Thomasville.

Well, Louise and I am very sorry I did not get to see you all. You know we came near loosing our darling baby with typhoid fever. My! but one night I thought he was gone when the fever left him you could not even feel his pulse. I am so anxious to see your boy. Hope he will be all you expect of him. You could not have given anyone else a picture that would appreciate it any more than I did. The one of your family. I have not been well since I have been up with Earl so much. Hope the girls are getting on nicely with their school. H. L. does not feel like typewriting this. Maybe you can spell all you want to know so will send it on. Tell you the truth I don't feel like copying it over.

I told you of the spoons, Grandfather sent Uncle Hardy to N. Y. with silver dollars and had a full set of silver made knives, forks and spoons. Huntz got most of the silver but all had spoons. There was six of grandchildren born in the same year so Grandma gave us the extra set of teaspoons and a plate. I have given Glenn the spoon when I die for I have always used it myself. It has Bryan on it. Write me soon. I don't love to write but love to get letters.

Aunt (Lela)

This letter was written to my father by a
sister (Lela) of my Grandmother Rast, nee
Bryan. I believe it was written in 1917.

Lela

8-15-69

* Aunt Mary was given to
Grandmother on her marriage.

This letter was written to Loy Edmund Rast,
my uncle. He was brother to my father.
They were sons of Mattie Claudia Bryan
Rast and William Walter Rast. Aunt Leila
was sister to my grandmother.

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