



The Rev. Erasmus Jasper Stockton  
1818 - 1902



The Rev. Brannan Jager Stockton  
1818 - 1902

## FORWARD

Several years ago I came into possession of a collection of letters that had been handed down from my grandmother, Kannie Williams, to one of her daughters and then to me. I labeled the collection the "Stockton" letters and put them away for future reading.

In recent years I have, from time to time, read some of them and gained much insight into the life and times of my great grandfather, Rev. Erasmus Jasper (E.J.) Stockton, his family, his ministry and church work, and his friends and neighbors. He was a Cumberland Presbyterian minister for some sixty years serving in Missouri, Arkansas, Alabama and Indian Territory.

Only recently have I completed the task of transcribing all of the sixty-eight letters that were in the collection. I have arranged them categorically by dates, the first one written in 1865 and the last one in 1897. The bulk of the letters are written to Kannie, E. J. Stockton's youngest daughter and my grandmother or to both Joe and Kannie Williams, my grandparents. The exceptions to this include the following: Letter 1 written to E. J. Stockton from his brother William Stockton; Letter 2 written to E. J. from his son, G. B. Stockton; Letter 68 written to E. J. from his son J. A. Stockton.

Every possible effort was made to transcribe or type the letters exactly as they were originally written. No attempt was made to correct spelling, punctuation or sentence structure. Several portions of some of the letters were in such a damaged condition until it was impossible to determine a word or a series of words. In such cases I simply, in the place of a word or phrase that I could not make out, typed in a series of periods or dots (.....) to indicate that a word or phrase was not readable.

In addition to the letters, which follow in this loose leaf binder, I have included, as **Appendix I**, the obituary of E. J. Stockton written by the Rev. F. A. Brown. It is a very detailed obituary and includes many of the details of his life. Although I have placed it as an appendix following the letters, it would not be a bad place to begin the reading. I have also included **Appendix II**, which is the obituary of Kannie Williams; **Appendix III**, which is a personal testimony written by E. J. Stockton; and finally, **Appendix IV**, which contains information on E. J. Stockton's family.

I wish to express my appreciation to Brenda Nikirk and Molly Welch (probably distant cousins of mine via the Stockton line) for transcribing some of the Stockton

letters, but more especially I express my appreciation to them because their interest in the letters prompted me to get busy and complete the transcriptions.

The original letters have been deposited with the Historical Foundation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church at 1978 Union Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee.

February 4, 2000

Joe Matlock

P. O. Box 312

Pickwick Dam, Tennessee 38365

## Letter 1

Dodsonville Alabama      October 15th 1865

Dear Brother I received your kind and unexpected letter of the 25th ult a few days back and in reply can say that myself & family are in tolerable health at this time & have enjoyed the same for the last three years as we have bin blessed with unprecedented helth. Throughout the Country the friends are generally well with the exception of Mrs. Jincy Grass who is very low at this time the issue of which is doubtful your letter was red to aunt Catherine Benson & numerous other friends. There is general Religious Excitment in this Country notwithstanding the clash of Political Sentiments which seem in no way to abate as our Election for State and County office comes off the first monday in Nov. next & the old elament of 60 is still discourverable on the horizon. You doubtless Still Remember my hostility to the doctrin of Sesion it is in no way abated notwithstanding I submitted to the action of the state & have lost two sons & bin despoiled of my property in the late & unnesary & wicked ware my principals are the Same as when you last seen me. I believe the doctrin of Sesion to be the same that it was when the Arch fiend fell from his high Estate after his contest with the Angel Gabriel.

Dear Brother you informed me of your being in antagonism with the Govern-ment of Mo. in Regard to a test oth Required of all ministers of the gospel now I am not acquainted with the nature of that oth nor the grounds in which it was thought Expedient to Incorporate it in the Constitution of MO. nether is it my provinc to determine yet my Politics.....all ways bin to observe the laws of my Country in good faith or leave that Country for I consider it a Religious duty of all men to be Sub-ject to the powers that be and we should Examine our Selves & See if disaffection otherwise has not Somethng to do with the Desision in the matter (.....Said to the Judg thou whited Sepulchar being reminded that he was the high preast recanted I wist.....that he was go.....high preast, an acknowledgement that it was his duty to do right even if other men don wrong) Dear Brother how glad I would be to See & Converse with you our difficultys have bin many & grevius Since last we met out of which the word as delivered us so fare & we Should be Careful to Return thanks & scrutinise our every act with regard to what the government requires of us all. We should ca..... .....of the great ..... of the world revolution of the entire Political Institution of our Country attendant on the liberty from bondage of Eight million of our fellow man of a different Rase for weal of for worse but I know not we have a gloomy prospect ahead as the pased Sumer has bin the dryest that I have any Recolection of in all my life & that with the want of Stock & lack of food for what we had & depresed Spirits of those few at home made the present Crop truly

short in addition to which many Reffigees are Returning to this Country & as a matter of Course with the Western chills & a viol of queinine & few harty greetings. Dear Brother you Spoke of visiting the Country I hope you will perform your promis to the great Satisfaction of all your friends. The churches in this Country are in a bad Condition in Consiquence of political differences & the want of diciplan or an observance of the Same & the all most universal of destruction of Church houses. I have not heard from L. D. & family in two years as male facilities have been Entirely broken up Except on Military lines. I had written to yourself & him also but without Receiving answers. Male Rotes are being Established through out the Country & we will be able to get & Send letters Successful. A. J. Stockton Return-ed home a Short time back & is with his Sister having the Chills being absent in the .....better than four ..... Second Suit of clothes but a sad Recollection of Camp Douglas & a very unfavorable opinion of Southern Patriotism. You will pleas answer this letter on the Receipt without delay though I hope you will make good on your promise of visiting this Country. I have just returned from Church. C. C. Ward Preached S. P. Wildmon exorted & Rotin Concles(?) did by Prayer at Concord with our flowr Chimny or Stove, but that is in accordance with the rest of this ..... lives with the old People. James lives .... the plantation. Robert lives whare he did when you left ..... Spences family lives in the Cove on the Dunham place .... having Reff(?) .....Perry is with Robert. John lives at the Thomas place. The Ballance as you probably have heard..... lost in the ware. .... Davis wants you to let me ..... in your next if you have any knowledge of John.....my Best Respects to all the friends. Wright Soon to Larkinsville(?)

Yours Truly Wm. Stockton

## Letter 2

Clarkton, Mo. Oct. 5th 1868

Rev. E. J. Stockton

Dear Father

This leaves me with the balance of the family & people about our little village except Uncle Billy Walker who has been very sick now for several days past, though better today. He was here when we returned from St. Louis. Came out with a C. P. minister from .... Nothing new I believe in the Country in the way of news. Everything quiet & every body busy about their cotton. So far as can be ascertained cotton is turning out tolerby good - corn light. Owing to a disappointment about getting our goods hauled we are not doing much yet. Think the balance will get here tomorrow. Prospects tolerby good for us to do well & I hope we may. The Gin is or will be busy from this time on. I haven't been to Four Mile since I return-

ed. McBride is very sick. Thought to be dangerous this evening. No other that I know of except Chills. Several of Uncle Perry's family are having the chills. One of the McCowans boys died last week. Wort, the fittified one. Also Isaac Gregory was killed by his horses running off with him in the wagon. He was killed almost instantly. I believe those are the only deaths that I remember now. Health generly pretty good. Tommie has shipped one bale of cotton & will ship about three or four more next week. Cotton full - few buyers and plenty of sellers. We are not buying yet. Waiting for the thing to settle down.

Dr. Turnbaugh (as well as Tommie) requested that I write to you about a Deed. They wish to know of you whether or not you have the Deed to the Land you bought of Tommies near Four Mile. Tommie seems to think you have it. And if you have, they wish you to bring it down when you come. Dr. Turnbaugh says, please look through your papers for it, as it will cost a law suit if it isn't produced from some source or other, & he does not want that. Give my love to all the children, Laura & Kannie, tell them to be good girls & not forget me. Howdy to Ma! Tell her to tinder my best wish & kindest regards to her Mother & Sisters & every body else, as well as Flora & Miss Lizzie McFarland & C.... I claim a thought in your devotional exercises. Write soon - when you are coming & all about it. I am as ever, "Very devotedly you Son," G. B. Stockton

Oct 7th/68 P. S. As I have not sent my letter on yet I will add a little more. I was at Jimmie Barretts wedding last night. Married Miss Lizzie White had a very nice supper. Jimmie sends his best wishes & many compliments to you all. Uncle Billy still better tonight. No other neds at present.

As Ever, G.B.S.

**Letter 3**

Scottsboro, Ala. Feby. 22nd 1879

Dear Kannie:

Your good letter has been to hand sometime, but one thing and another have prevented me from writing until now. This logrolling day with us, 4 women are helping your Ma cook. She has a nice cobbler baked for dinner, & I am running round waiting on the cooks, while Pogue has his hands in the newground piling up the logs. We have cleared 8 acres this winter & 10 last & about 3 the first winter after we got back. So you see we have been at work. Having a little time between errands I am employing it in writing to you.

We have had some sensations in our midst recently. In the first place we had a serious difficulty between neighbors that cause..... resulting in the death of one, growing out of one insulting the wife of the other & then publishing slanderous re-

ports upon him to palliate his own guilt. Four of us set to work & finally settled the trouble.

Next my neighbor Montrose whose land joins mine, & who is well educated & wealthy & wirthal a good Christian man has gone crazy & his wife has gone to Tuscaloosa to assylum while their house looks like death had visited it. How strange the providence!

In the third place, three men came from the Southside of Tennessee River with "wildcat" whiskey to Mr. James Brooks, just on this side of the river, stayed all night & all four started down to the .... this morning for the purpose of crossing over in a light skiff, after getting over, two left for the mountain when they live, leaving the others at the river. Some how (both were drunk) they got into the skiff & out in the river they capsized it & both were drowned. This is the ninth day & still no news of their bodies. Two men were drowned a few miles below here last summer crossing the river after whiskey. These last were young men & had married sisters. What a record whiskey has! Our Circuit court is now in session in Scottsboro & on day before yesterday, our elegant court house, costing about \$40,000, was burned to the ground, thought to have been set on fire by some person. The records of the Probate Circuit Clerks office were saved. The devil seems to be working in our midst.

You write about the distance to Russellville. I went to our depot agent for information but got none. My own opinion is that it will cost between 25 & 30 dollars perhaps the later sum. Have you & Joe any notion of coming to see us? Write soon.

Your father,

E. J. Stockton

#### Letter 4

Scottsboro, Ala. Jan 26th, 1880

Dear Joe & Kannie:

I got home from Center Star in Marshall County today, having left on Friday, .....in waiting for me I will answer immediately.

You need not ship Kannie's trunk to any place or firm. She is entitled to it with her as baggage When she gets on the train do have it put on & checked by the "baggage master" & give the check to Kannie. She keeps the check herself as long as she stays on the train. She may have to change cars in Little Rock or elsewhere. If any changes have to be made she can request him to look after her trunk. If he is the right sort of conductor he will watch over & take care of her & hers. Let her tell him she is inexperienced in railroad travelling & she looks to him for all necessary information.

Our uptrain from Memphis reaches Scottsboro about 11 o'clock in the fore-

noon. Now if you can count up just how long it will take you to go from home to Russellville & will write me accordingly & then work precisely to that time, I will know to be at Scottsboro to meet her.

Be sure now & let me know when you will leave home, precisely when you will get to Russellville. I will know pretty well ..... will get to the end of the journey & will be there to receive her.

I live five miles south of Scottsboro on the public road from the place to Caldwell's fairy on the Tennessee River.

Your Uncle Rufus Bond has been out here visiting relatives. Staid in my house from Saturday till Wednesday. We were all glad to see him. We have a letter from his son Jimmie telling us he got home safe & sound.

I will give no more news as I write hurriedly hoping to see you soon. May God favor you both with his special good providence & bring you in safety & health to see your father.

E. J. Stockton

#### Letter 5

Scottsboro, Ala. March 23rd, 80

Dear Joe

Kannie says the pen's so bad she can't write with it, but bad as it is I thought you could read, though it might cost you some trouble, what I write. It is such a pleasure to have Kannie & May with us that I feel like writing thanking you every week for sending them. And I do thank you from my heart of hearts for the pleasure it affords us to have them with us. She is the first of the children to visit us. Still the pleasure would have been much greater if you could have come along, for I do want to see you so much & be with you.

We have so much rain & high water that farmers are very much behind with their work. It is now clear & beautiful weather & farmers are putting in full time.

Pogue & "Sam", negro man we have hired, are sowing grass & ridgeing up for cotton. We bought 1/2 ton, will put it on 8 or 10 acres, rather old & worn land. We are aiming to put in about 25 acres in cotton, 12 or 13 acres in corn - pretty good crop you see for two hands. We'll hire some hoeing of curse. We have about an acre of corn planted. Will plant 5 or 6 acres more this week if weather keeps good. Everything indicates that spring is really here, timber & vegetation generally are springing up rapidly.

There has been some sickness & scattering deaths in the country. Colds have prevailed generally, amounting to almost an epidemic as spring opens up & the weather improves I hope & think health will improve.

We are looking forward & hoping that Providence will open up our way so that we can come home with Kannie & May. Certainly it would afford us a great deal of pleasure to visit you & our friends in that country. Mr. Brown married a niece of ours & they live in our backyard. Mrs. Brown's health has been poorly for sometime. She is worsening rapidly. If she could get well, she can take care of things & cook for Pogue & Sam. This is one of the conditions of our coming. Another one is our health. These are the two important things upon which our coming depends. We want to come, & hope Providence will open the way.

I am truly sorry that you are separated from Kannie & the sweet babe so long. Love to Mrs. Williams, .... & Jim & all inquiring friends.

Yours in love

E. J. Stockton

### Letter 6

Your Ma sends you a piece of her new dress picked by ..... by Minerva. It cost 15 cents. I will write Joe about wagons next week.

Neosho, Mo. July 14th, 1880

Dear Joe & Kannie:

How strange to write you from this place! Nevertheless we are here at Jimmie's in the town of Neosho. Having arrived here on Monday morning between 9 & 10 o'clock very much worn & fatigued & not very well either of us. And when you learn of our trip more particularly you will be surprised that we are able to get here at all. I was not well enough to write Monday, but thought and hoped to write Tuesday. Company came in - 4 lady friends - especially to see us, spent entire day & therefore I could not write without treating them impolitely. Jimmie is in the office, has been every day since we got here, as it is crowded this week with business. Minivera, though poorly indeed, is out in town on business & I am writing in her sitting room, & sweet little Maude is sleeping quietly & innocently on her little pallet - Ma & me on the floor. Now for our trip. We got within a mile of Carrollton that night, all went well with us. Started out pretty early, the horses seemed fresh & Jimmie let them go pretty fast. Five miles from where we started brought us to Dry Creek. We were going pretty rapidly down down along the slant beside a field, just as we past the corner of the fence, the road smartly sideling & a curve in it, the buggy as we turned the curve, turned over suddenly broadside, mashing the top, jirking the dish out of one hind wheel pitching us all out on the ground. I was on the outside of the curve the way the buggy turned. The ground was hard & gravelly, the first place struck was my head, bruising & gashing my forehead just in or above my

eyebrow, knocking my knee nearly out of place, bruising my hand & jolting me terribly all over. Jimmie fell on me, though was to his feet in a moment, holding on to the horses & stopping them. I heard your Ma crying for help, I got to my feet, though full of agonizing pain, as quick as I could, found her & Eddie both together somehow in the hind part of the buggy, succeeding in getting them out, found they had no bones broken, but your Ma was considerably jarred & a wrist severely hurt. Soon I turned deathly sick, sand to the ground, panting for breath. What a moment! Finally I got so I could speak, told them to get our trunk open & bring me the whiskey good "Poll" Crump had sent us. I drank of it freely and had them bathe me with it. Your Ma drank of it & bathed her arm. By & by I got better & got on my feet, and was able to hop about a little. Some men can along, helped us with the buggy, worked on it awhile, and after an hour & a half or two hours, we resumed our journey, all more or less hurt, but thankful to God it was no worse. Praise his holy name that none of us was killed. Jimmie, poor boy, will have a heavy damage bill at the insistance of the Stable man he took the buggy to the Shop & when repaired will foot entire bill both for the use & the abuse of it. As yet he doesn't know what that will be; heavy I have no doubt.

We have been no where yet. I have not been to the Neosho Times office yet, but will go to it perhaps this morning. Mr Sevier was over from the office to see us soon after we got in. In the evening he and Mrs. Sevier & Eddie came & staid till 10 o'clock. They are very friendly & pleasant & intelligent withal. We will visit there tomorrow as I understand. Think & hope we'll have a pleasant time with them through the day.

Well, little Maude is sweet. She is rather delicate in make, black eyes & long fine black hair, with fine features & beatiful skin. Notices & laughs frequently. She is good. Kiss sweet May for both of us.

Your father,  
E. J. Stockton

### Letter 7

Scottsboro, Ala. March 13, 1881

Dear Joe & Kannie:

Yours of the 26th of February, mailed however the 8th, to hand yesterday .... and as your Ma was writing today & would only fill one leaf, I thought I could fill another, slip it in with hers in the same envelope & thus save postage. I do not know what she has written but will simply write as I usually do.

Very much obliged for the information about your nursery. It looks like it would certainly be profitable. I hope you'll realize your fondest hopes in money. I

forget about May's walking, suppose, however that she's running every where. How I long to get her picture. I think I wrote you that I had Maud's likeness. It's so sweet & pretty. She's beginning to walk - can say "howdy". What a treat in the way of pictures I got day before yesterday in a letter from Rebecca Jane. They were her's & Dona's. At the sight of them I couldn't restrain my feelings, unbidden tears filled my eyes & remained a long time, while my big heart would seemingly come into my throat & almost choke me, & yet, after all if was their shadows I had & was looking at & weeping over. It is a great deprivation to me to be so far away from my precious children. But would you believe it? Dona has much of the expression & make of sweet Laura. She is just blooming into womanhood & looks like she is a very pretty girl. How do I want to see them & press them to my bossom! "Sis" says they are all well. Misfortune still pursues them & hangs about them. Very recently they lost their last horse with staggers. Necessity then compelled them to dispose of their unpaid house and lot & with the surplus bought them a team. Now they have not a board to shelter their heads. As for the present month, in a rented room, but don't know where they will go, nor what they will do. How it stirs my feeling & wrings my heart to learn of their ..... troubles. I shall be so uneasy till I know what they will do.

Letters are due me & I am looking for them from Donnell, Lorenzo & Jimmie. I certainly wrote you that Lorenzo was at Eureka Springs, yet you said nothing about it

I am glad Bros. Rudolph & Ewing are going to the Assembly. What will become of Mrs. Ewing & Mrs. Rudolph in their absence? Mayby they will go with them?

We have got a negro hired & if not disappointed will get another hand - white man - this week. We will cultivate 30 acres in cotton & 15 or hardly so much in corn. No oat seed in the country & oats shipped in. These cost high, though quite amount has been brought in & sowed as corn is very scarce & hard to get. There will be lots of poor horses in the country this season. We have sowed only a little over four bushels of oats. People in this neighborhood are .... of their farming interests. Most of their corn land already broke & some corn will be planted this week if the weather..... open. We want to plant 5 acres this week. The report has been circulated that the peaches were killed in the bud, but I see my trees, so far as examined, are preparing to bloom. We planted Irish potatoes 3 or more weeks ago. Have mustard & lettuce & peas up. Want to .... corn, sweet potatoes Tuesday. Love to all my good friends. I'll look for the picture.

(Written in the margin: By the way send me ..... of yours)

E. J. Stockton

## Letter 8

Scottsboro, Ala. July 27th 1881

Dear Joe & Kannie:

Yours to hand last night. I am sorry that our long silence has caused uneasiness, for I am sure that I don't want to be the cause of any. But it is not your Pa's fault. I wrote you soon after my return from Texas, and was thinking of getting an answer soon. So you see you must lay the blame some where else. Charge it I suppose to "Uncle Sam".

Tommie & Rebecca Jane I think ought to leave where they are, as I think it is sickly in Grand View & vicinity, from the amount of sickness in the place while I was there and the size of their graveyard. Tommie's family are nearly always sick, i.e. some of them. They were running the "Georgia House" when I was there. I staid nearly three weeks with them. They had rented "Grand View Hotel" and were to take possession 1st of July, which they did as Sis wrote me, but she was so much dissastified with everything about it after she tried two or three days that they left it & are living in a private house, she is running her sewing machine & Tommie his wagon. They talked of going to Eureka at the close of the year to keep public house & in view of the amount of sickness they have I rather advised them to do so, as they have a fondness for keeping public house, and perhaps some turn for it. However long before that time they may choose something else.

Donnell, you remember, lost all of his money on his way to Texas, so when he got there he was completely destitute. He has made a living & has a half..... wagon & a very good ..... of horses. He is not satisfied with that country, and I don't wonder. Year before last he made nothing on account of drouth, & this year his corn is ruined from the same thing. He looks discouraged but I could not advise him, only not to go back to .... Blinn. He sometimes talked of going to Eureka hoping for better health for himself & family. Donnell is one of the best men I ever saw. The Lord will bless him surely sooner or later.

I will now say a little about myself. I am trying to rent my place out, reserving a couple of rooms. Whether we will remain here or go some where else, we will do something but just what I can't tell at present. It would be pleasant to spend the summer with you & at Eureka next year. I'll write you by and by what we will do.

I am glad you have good crops in Boone. Ours have been seriously injured by the dry weather. We had a tolerable rain a few days ago, but not enough to make our crops safe. Health is reasonable good. Pogue has been sick a few days, but is now up. Our own health is only tolerable. I have not been to see your Uncle William since I got back but learned that he is in common health. Bill & Willis talk of leaving Texas. Love to all. Your ..... E. J. Stockton

## Letter 9

Scottsboro, Ala. Aug. 31st, 81

Dear Joe & Kannie:

Yours of the 17th ult. to hand in due time & as I expect to leave for a protracted meeting in Madison County in a day or two to be absent perhaps a week, I thought I had better write before I left. Our health is not very good & on that account I may not go to the meeting.

I have charge of two congregations - one here at the Pond & the other at Bellefonte. My protracted meetings at these are just over. At the Pond we protracted 12 days with 6 or 8 professions, a good meeting & at Bellefonte we protracted 9 days with 6 professions & also a good meeting. There have been some good meetings elsewhere in our bounds & some yet to come off. Oh, how we need them in our Presbytery!

You say a third less of crops by dry weather. We think we have half crops here both corn & cotton. We have not had full crops here in 3 years. Hence we are in a poor fix to meet half crop. What else people are to do I don't know. Every body nearly is in debt & that too more than they can pay unless cotton should command high figures so as to compensate for the loss by dry weather. As yet there is no price established for anything. Consequently, I can't give you prices.

Well, I am not certain that I understand the situation of things between you & Jim. Have you bought the property - house, etc. where Jim & your mother were living when we were there? Did you sell that forty that you were going to build & settle on when I was there last summer? Is that where Jim is going to live? You say you gave \$250 for the house. What did you get for your 40 acres? Will Jim & your mother still live together? What's Jim going to do now that you have rented his entire place for the next 5 years? How much rent do you pay him for the place? Have you no land now but the improved 40? How is your nursery coming on? Can you sell trees next year? Do you think it will be a success?

I got a letter from Belle - Donnell's wife yesterday, she said Donnell had been absent most of the time at meetings for the last two months, that's not good. I reckon when he gets back he will write me. I think likely he'll be licensed to preach. He is so devoted I think he'll do good. Belle said she had a letter from Rebecca Jane & that they would be down in their neighborhood in two weeks for the purpose of picking cotton for a time & then would leave for Eureka Springs. She did not know yet what Donnell would do. I am inclined to think likely he'll leave too, & perhaps for the same place, but I am only guessing.

Much obliged indeed for your invitation to come as you will prepare for us. No one could appreciate such an offer more perhaps than I do & whether we ac-

cept or not God will bless you for it. We may come in the spring, it is too far off yet to say what we'll do. I want to rent my place out & quit farming myself.

Your Father, E. J. Stockton

(Written on top margin: Kannie, Mrs. Frank Kelly living on our old place died ten days ago.)

### Letter 10

.....boro, Ala. Sept. 20th, 1881

(corner portion of letter torn off)..... rite these lines from the chamber of death. While I write your Ma lies a corpse in the room. How bereft, sad, lonely, desolate in my feelings I can not tell you, yet it would be some relief to them if I could, but such as they are, and they are too big for utterance, I must bear them alone. Every heart knows its own sorrow & grief. It seems like I already know & feel mine, and yet I am sure that the end is not yet. I already see the pathway, at least, in part of loneliness that lies out before me. It may not be long - doubtless, will not but it is mine individually and without company the balance of the way. What a relief to have some safe & trustworthy bosom to whom one can confide the deep pent-up feelings of the inner life, things that do not belong to the public, but to the private ear, but it is not mine to enjoy even this privilege. But with God's grace I trust to be equal to the trial & prepared for every emergency. Oh! Joe & Kannie, I need your sympathy largely & a great big warm place in your hearts, as well as in your prayers! Oh! Pity me my children, for the hand of Providence lies heavily upon me!

Now for the history of the case. I left home on Friday week before her death yesterday the 19th ult to attend a protracted meeting in Madison County. Was not well at the time. Staid at the meeting until Tuesday & left. Had the mountains to cross. It was exceptionally hot, fever came ..... to walk. No house..... the settlement. What .....it seemed as if I could go ..... by the ....side, surely I could ..... down I reached Bro. Abe Grosse's .....Next morning I sent home & Pogue brought my buggy to me & I made out to get home. Was confined all that week bilious fever. Your Ma was not well when I got home having fevers every day or every other day. She wore herself out waiting on me day night. Sunday morning she was vomiting, fears camp up! Could .....properly controlled. Dr. Clopton - an old friend & excellent physcian came & exhausted his utmost skill. Sunday morning hemorage of the bowels took place & yesteday evening ..... twenty minutes she passed away without a struggle or groan. We are preparing this morning to consign her to her last resting place beside Mr. Sanford her first husband. Unless..... in some way she will be buried at 2 or 3 o'clock this evening. I have sent ten miles to Larkinsville after Bro. J. R. Morris to preach her funeral. Inturn I prostrated myself waiting on your Ma for she suffered a

great deal & scarcely ever had a minutes ease till her death. I am just able to sit up & write these lines. Your Ma could not talk for 24 hours previous to her death & seemed to lose pretty much all connection in the ..... world. They waiting for this letter to take to Scottsboro. I know you will write at once.

Your father in deep affliction,  
E. J. Stockton

### Letter 11

Scottsboro, Ala. Oct 29th 1881

Dear Joe & Kannie:

Yours of 19th ult. to hand two or three days ago since, and was read with interest, & I could have read a great deal more if it had been there. Are you still living in the cabin on the creek? When will you go to the other place? You said in your letter sometime ago that mother would live with you. Now is it not too much for Joe & you to take care of two old people instead of one? I don't want to impose burdens upon you that will be greivous to be borne. I want to do just what is right, looking to your pleasure & interest as well as to mine. I fear it is too much for you both. Yes I remember the promise & am glad you do, and am ready to meet it but don't want to impose on your kindness & good nature. I don' know what .....  
...possible I might be to you & Joe, because I can't tell what awaits me in the future. I think it is better to call attention to these things now, think them all over, & govern ourselves accordingly. You & Joe write me freely upon these things without any ....  
..... whatever.

Sis & Donnell wrote me last at ..... having started on Tuesday the 18th & got to Waco that night. They were just 100 miles from Waco, keeping the Sabbath. They were in tolerable health & getting along finely and would be in Paris on the 25th. I thought they were going to Eureka. Do you mean they were simply coming by, or would stop for good in Boone? I don't think they'll be on before the middle, indeed, the last of November.

I have sold out the most of my little property, but still have some hogs, a few up & some out that are bothering me. Those that I have up it will be sometime before I get them fat and I don't know what I'll do with the others.

We have not sold our cotton yet. We have five bales put up & three others at the gin waiting to be put up.

Two or three years ago I fixed Mr. Sanford's grave, your Ma lies beside him. I already have the lumber to enclose it in the ground. Will get cedar posts soon & want to make a strong substantial fense around it.  
will send shortly to Chattanooga for a nice marble slab for your Ma, with the following inscription on it, "Ann G., wife of Rev. E. J. Stockton, born June 3rd,

1816, & died Sept. 19th 1881. 50 years a member of the C. P. Church, & 20 years a Life Member of the B. M's. Blessed are those that die in the Lord." When I get this up & the ground enclosed, I will have.....(balance of letter lost)

### Letter 12

Scottsboro, Ala. Oct 18th, 1882

Dear Joe, Kannie & all the children:

I am writing this morning from <sup>Pogue's</sup> Eugene's. I was taken down at Wiley's with bilious... fever on 7th inst. and after 8 days was able to sit up. Though weak I came down to Mrs. Gam's(?) on Monday, went & saw Charlie Reed & Mrs. Kate ..... yesterday and in the afternoon went to see dear Ann's grave. Look at me as I sit at it's head..., still being sick & scarcely able to be out of bed, no where to go to shelter my head that I can call my own no human voice to comfort my poor, lonely bleeding heart; the cup of sorry to my lips is all my own & exclusively mine & there's none to share it with me, how lonely, how sad, how desolate - a lone wanderer indeed! From this silent, lonesome city - and how silent it is, no friendly voice greets me welcome, though we have been separated so long, dear Ann does not greet me as she use to when I would return to her, she does not even speak to me, though I call to see if she knows I am sittng by her - I am sick & weary. She does not ask me what's the matter, or offer to rub my head as she use to do. I can't stay home! O where shall I go from this, from this loneliness, this scene of buried hopes & living desolation. O where shall I go? Is there any place that offers human comfort? Can I think of one - just one? Yes, just one. I sit there and look this way & that way, but all is solitude. I must go. Can I leave without any precious solitude .....! without any sweet embrace? God pity me for the world does not. I ..... my way down to see Mary & Lonnie, I sit ..... in their presence till I rest just a little, then I walk over to Pogue's. Still the dark shadow is over me. I must take more medicine. I'll soon be in bed if I don't - perhaps will be there anyway. I took medicine. How long & dreary the sleepless night! I am able to be up this morning but not to go around. My medicine is doing well. Think I'll be better soon. I know when you read this you will weep so great will be your tender sympathies. Well, my eyes blind me with tears while trying to write. Who could refrain from tears with my class of feelings? They come unbidden, but still they are welcome, yes thrice welcome, as they seem to be friendly to me, and afford some temporary relief to the deep sorrows of my heart. It has its own pangs & bitterness.

My sorrow is great enough for now, too much if I could help it. I was in sight of my old place yesterday. I can't bear it. I can't go there & yet my heart yearns & longs to be there. What will I do? I can neither stay away nor go there. I could wish myself a thousand miles away.

But I will command my pen away from this gloomy channel, though pleasant just now for it to .... in & turn to the enterprises of this busy world.

Through the press I learn of a great trunkline of railroad now currently in contemplation & perhaps ..... already made for its construction, beginning at Norfolk, Va. on the Atlantic coast & running west to Lynchburg, then to Knoxville, thence to Nashville, thence ..... the Mississippi river at Cottonwood point below Point Pleasant into ....iscot county through Dunklin across St. Francis into ..... Arkansas, and due west through the Northern tier of counties to Fayetteville, then to Ft. Gibson & thence to the Pacific Ocean, making one grand trunkline across the whole continent.

My information is that capitalists from the east were trying to negotiate with Directors of certain portions of roads already in operation so as to become part & parcel of this line. This .... then the balance of the line would be built .....working orders.

From Cottonwood point to Fort Gibson there is not a single mountain to tunnel and 68 feet is the highest grade on the whole route, as they way has once been surveyed and thus the grade ascertained.

..... will be a grand road when completed ..... to which any one would like to be permanently settled. Such a continuing grand trunk line as this will have sooner or later feeders or ..... that will simplify & ..... any part of the country.

As to the ..... with me it is all dark as to what I'll do or where I'll go. I may go to Mississippi and spend a month or two I may not. Since I got back from Presbytery I have been sick and have no plans before me. If I .... get any up I will advise you of them.

I know I live in your affections. Will I also live in your daily prayers?

Your Father

E. J. Stockton

### Letter 13

...pelo, Ala. Oct. 24th 1882

Dear Joe & Kannie:

Yours of the 16th inst. received last Saturday morning and every line & word devoured greedily, so anxious was I to hear from you all.

I wrote you last week from Pogue's, a very sad letter indeed in reference to my bad health & to visiting Ann's grave. Perhaps I ought not to have written you all a letter so sad, but then why should you not know my sorrows as well as my joys? .....cious, when I left there I forgot the letter, may be Pogue will not mail it and so you'll ..... its contents.

I came up to Wiley ..... on Friday evening. Saturday morning I left for Maynard's cove, got to Mrs. Holland's by dinner, where ..... lives, had a cold spell as chill, took fever & lay up most of the evening. Sunday morning I was a little better but quite unwell, went to church, preached & returned with another cold spell on me & a severe headache, & again went to bed & lay there till night. Commenced taking medicine & have continued till the present, am feeble but think I am breaking up the disease & will be all right in a short time.

I must leave here this evening or in the morning as ..... Stockton will be after me with his buggy at Wiley's tonight or tomorrow to take me to his pa's as I have not been there yet. I will come back to Wood's cove next Sunday to preach & take in some members into the church.

My future is unplanned. I know not what I'll do. Since I got back from Presbytery I have been sick all the time, & of course, it was useless to lay plans till I would get well, which I hope to do ere long.

I received a letter from Mrs. Hunter of Guntersville to come - begging me to come - and take charge of the work on that side of the river. They have this church in Guntersville nicely finished off & ready to occupy & are very anxious for me to come & fill it. If I get well soon I may go down & look at the prospect. I have left one other appointment for this place on the fourth Sabbath in November. I have no other appointment out after next Sabbath.

Charlie Reid is no better, or at least he is very ..... He has been sick in his bed more than three months, thinks his sickness was brought on by his great ..... with Sally Pierce, who, you know remember is his sister & went ..... sometime in the spring and was taken by Charlie Tom Pierce to the asylum.

Mrs. Reid who is staying with ..... family & keeping house for them, got Dr. Story to write to the Superintendent of the asylum over his ..... .. inquiring after Sally's condition, as he was one of the physician, so that her real condition might be known. He wrote back to Dr. Story that really her condition was no better in mind.

..... Reid is in good health & his boy six months old. Kathe ..... is able to keep up but not well. Mrs. Broadaway is in usual health. Old Mrs. Brandon - Aunt Polly - is in pretty good health, so are Mrs. .... & Mrs. Cass. Mrs. Weaver is at Mrs. .... expecting Jimmie to come & take her to Cornersville in Tennessee where he is employed as pastor for the next year.

Everything is going on at the Pond about as usual. None of the special friends have died or moved away. Alex Finney has rented his old place, the ..... 's place where the gin is, and my old place & wants Wiley Frazier's place another year as he has had it for this. He will move to my old place and make that his home. What a man! I have not seen him yet. ... his family have all been sick.

Dr. Clopton, as soon as he heard that I was sick at Wiley Frazier's came immediately to see me & was so kind.

I got a letter from .... a few days since & a card from Donnell & one from Rebecca Jane. Not a word as yet from Jimmie. He will, I reckon, ultimately.

I got a good letter the other day from Dr. Routh in Saint Louis. He gives a glowing description of the Fair. Says the pleasures and temptations of the city are perfectly disgusting to him. That now he is fixed in his faith & practice. He also stated that Eddie .... was at the medical school as a student, took my address & said he would write to me soon. So I am looking for a letter from him.

I got a good letter sometime since from Sallie Spence. She is a good correspondent & wrote to me also about the sickness of Bro. ...lough & that Prof. Suckey was filling his place.

Joe, please gather my corn nicely & crib it up carefully. It will be worth something by & by. If Donnell is there, I mean at home, get him to help you. If he is gone, then get somebody else & pay them please for me. My fodder also .... for it will bring something sometime.

Tell sweet little May to have the cabbage stock for me when I come. Tell her also that grandpa expects she will know the Lord's prayer when he comes back, to mind her pa & ma & be a good sweet little girl. Kiss them many times for me. Give love & howdy to Laura, ... & ...., also a howdy. Still write me at Scottsboro.

Your father E. J. Stockton

#### Letter 14

Scottsboro, Ala. Easter Sunday, March 25th, 83.

My Dear Kannie:

Your letter has been to hand a week last night, and I have wondered what I should write to you in reference to my plans for the future, and positively I have none - can have none at the present. Just wait, my precious child, the openings & workings of Providence, as I am doing & will have to do. I cannot see my way in the future sufficiently clear to even guess as to what I'll do. I would tell you if I could. So far as I can see now, if in the flesh at all, I'll remain here his year. Beyond that I have no plans - can have none. I would that I was among & with you all. O how pleasant, how enjoyable. Maybe Providence will open up the way for me to come back to you all again. If so, surely I'll gladly embrace the opportunity, and hasten to embrace you all again.

Love me and pray for me constantly and I may yet live to see you all again before we go hence and meet over the river under the shade of the trees. Dear baby child, I can't stay much longer here as I am now on my last stage of the journey of

life, and more than half way over it, as you know day three weeks ago I was 65 years old.

Such an Easter Sunday! So dark, so dismal and raining straight from the heavens. Last night the wind howled all night & when it was not raining, it was sleeting. It is now ten o'clock with a cold rain from the east and so dark that I can scarcely see to write these lines, though near a large window. The weather has been cold and dry with heavy frosts & high winds for last two or more weeks, until I suppose all the fruit is killed. The spring promises to be very backward & vegetation is very slow in putting out.

Our Presbytery meets at Goosepond next Friday. I hope we'll have a pleasant & profitable meeting.

There has been a good deal of sickness here this winter - mostly pneumonia & very fatal. Five grown persons - two women & three men have died since I have been here. Charles Reid, A. Holland, Will Clark and Mrs. Wiley Finney & Miss Ottinger - all right in the neighborhood. I preached Mrs. Holland's funeral last Thursday, at the graveyard.

As Joe told me about his horse trading so you can tell him that I too have been trading a little. I bought a pony with saddle, bridle & blanket in the winter for forty dollars cash and sold it & outfit yesterday on time till 1st of November with a pair of ..... throwed in, for sixty nine dollars.

Cows have been greatly diseased here this winter and have died all over the neighborhood until the people are nearly ruined about milk & butter. We had two here giving milk and one died & the other has been complaining most of the time. They act somewhat like they were poisoned & die right off.

We have had more excitement about mad dogs than a little, though the thing is quieting a little just now. Sometime ago we had smallpox excitement like wise but that is gone.

I received a card the other week from Mrs. Wallace of Bakersfield, Cal. inquiring after me. Of course I answered.

Since I left West Prairie I have not had as bad health as I have since last Oct. Am better now. Have preached 3 times since Nov. Have no charge. Will take none at Presbytery.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

## LETTER 15

Parks Store, Ala. Dec. 14th 1883

Dear Joe & Kannie:

Yours of ..... 4th inst to hand last night and news noted. Glad to know you are all well.

I am thankful that I have the present comfortable shelter to protect me from the wintry storms and cold blasts of the season and pork to do me without having to buy either; will therefore be content where I am, as I have been heretofore.

The whole neighborhood was terrible shocked on Tuesday morning last by the news of the tragical death of Bro. James W. McRay, a prominent elder of the Goose Pond congregation of the Cumberland Church. Such a gathering together of people at a burying I have not seen for many years as was present when he was buried. In the afternoon, Monday, he left home for Scottsboro with his wagon and a bale of cotton. As he returned after dark along the big road not more than 1/2 mile from our house his team became frightened as the signs showed and started at full speed, ran about 40 or 50 yards, struck a large stump and pitched him out with his head against root of a tree, fractured his skull and unjointed his neckbone where it joins his head. By the wagon striking the stump when in such speed the team was instantly loosed from it and ran on a half mile and was found next morning .... against a ..... sapling by the breast yoke. Of course he was instantly killed and lay there all night where the hogs might have eaten him up. He was found very early next morning and the news spread rapidly in every direction. Maggie and I were there among the first where he lay cold and stiff in death just as he had been thrown from his wagon. Such a sight! He was about 40 years old and having a large and helpless family, having 8 children, all girls but the two youngest, and very much embarrassed with debts. What they'll do I know not. God care for and pity them!

Kannie, I wish you could see your pa with his nice new suit of dark gray mixed ..... coat, pants & vest. Maggie spun the filling, dyed it, wove it, cut it and made the entire suit with her own hands. How proud I am of it.

In conclusion, I am sorry it hurt all of you, but Lorenzo, as it did, perhaps even offending you, but not withstanding all this, your own sainted mother was no kinder, more gentle, affectionate and domestic than Maggie. A cross word has never fallen from her lips, not a sour look has ever been seen on her face since our marriage, now more than a year.

A letter from Rebecca Jane informing me of your condition. How uneasy! O do write to me at once! God bless you. Kiss the sweet ones.

Your father in anxiety, E. J. Stockton

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Your father in anxiety, E. J. Stockton

## LETTER 16

Parks Store, Ala. Feby. 10th 1884

Dear Joe & Kannie:

It is the Sabbath day. I have no appointment and am therefore at home. It is His will that I have no appointment for I could not fill one if I had it. Nearly two weeks ago some kind of risen commenced coming on my back or near my side, and still there is no appearance of it coming to a head. It is swelled in a large ... around as large as my hand and small pimples or blisters formed on it and they run a little. What the end will be I cannot tell. I suffer a great deal with it both night and day. I fear that it is a carbuncle.

A gentleman came yesterday morning to tell me that your Uncle William Stockton on the day before was at the point of death; that he saw a man trying to get here to tell me but could not for the high waters. As he is a relative of the family he said he would try to get across today and see him, and would come or send me word about him. I fear he is dead already or if not yet that he will die. He has been very feeble for some time. I can not possibly go to see him in my condition, if the waters were out of the way.

We have had a remarkable winter so far. Cold before Christmas, yes, freezing bitter cold, such as rarely ever happens in this country, till first of this month, then warm, cloudy and raining, yes ..... for the last four days nearly all the while, and still cloudy, warm and threatening no prospect of it clearing off. The "back water" was just beginning to leave, now the headwaters are booming, and the earth so full of water and the ground so soft that it is with trouble people can travel at all. How high the waters will be no one can tell.

A letter from Jimmie two or three weeks since informed me that he had sold out his interest in "The Times" to Mrs. .... For the present he is at sea not knowing where he will go nor what he will do. I can but feel sad.

I have been looking for him some time to visit me. In his letter he said he might not get off till after court which would meet second Monday - tomorrow - in this month, but he thought he had to stay till court. In a previous letter he thought on account of some light symptoms of consumption in Minerva that if he sold he would likely go to California. I somehow interpreted his contemplated visit to see me as looking in that direction. If he should go to California and place the Rocky Mountains between us, I shall see his face no more in the flesh. Such thoughts make me feel sad - oh so sad!

A letter from Lorenzo sometime since informed me of a new boy at his house - all doing well. He owns three cows and has rented six more, making nine, that he is milking. Says he is making simply a living at the present, can rent as many as he

wants to when spring opens up, thinks it is the best thing he has struck to make money.

Whiskey is till doing its work of ruin and destruction in our country. On last Saturday evening was two weeks ago, three brothers named Wilborne, having finished putting a raft of saw logs into Santa Creek on the southside of Tennessee river, went up to a grocery on the bank, and with others got to drinking, fell out as usual, pistols were drawn and the fight commenced. When it ended the three brothers were all laying in a pile together shot down by one man named Webb. They were all put into a wagon together and hauled home to be greeted my a mother and a blind father whose head has grown gray in preaching the gospel of peace and good will to men. Next morning two of them lay corpse in the same bed, and the other said to be mortally wounded. Since I have heard he was better. Old Aunt Polly Brandon has been sick for weeks but is improving. Maybe before mailing this I'll hear something from your Uncle William.

E. J. Stockton

#### LETTER 17

(Written across the top margin: Mrs. Hill will be at Bro. Floyd's as this reaches you. Maggie & I saw her on Friday before she started. Floyd did not write to me to come with her as you wrote he would. At least I got no letter from him. Go & see her when you can.)

Parks Store, Ala. May the 22nd 1884

Dear Kannie & Joe:

We generally think our way is right, and would be glad others to do as we do. Now it was two months from the date of my letter to you before you answered it. Were I to copy your example, it would be the 4th of July before I would be due you a letter. And you know example is of greater force & speaks louder than words. Taking your example as my guide, it says pa, don't write to me so often. Sometimes I conclude to do as you and Jimmie do about writing - for he is perhaps more careless than you - i.e. wait as long as you before answering my letters, but I get so restless that I must break through the rule; write I must and write I will. So here I go right over your example.

But while on the subject I will take the liberty of emphasizing the thought that as parents get old and advance in years they perhaps become more sensitive as to the filial respect and duties of children toward their parents. So they feel the frailty of life and the infirmities of age gathering about them; consequently their dependence

upon someone to look after them, that naturally they expect their children to be more and more interested and concerned about them. Persons of my age and infirmities naturally begin to look for someone to help them in their growing helplessness, and of course they look to their children as props to stay them and brace them just in proportion as they feel that they are declining in strength. If the above be true, and ..... it is, the least seeming neglect or indifference of children to their parents is calculated to hurt and wound their feelings. Whether they express themselves or not, the sting is there as a thorn in the flesh. I know that I am sensitive, but I do not know that I am too much so. I know that as a parent I have the greatest concern for my children, never a day passes but my prayers go up in their behalf, and they have a large place in my thoughts, and still larger in my great warm heart. It seems therefore to me that my children ought to have the greatest respect and filial regard for me. From this standpoint how can I help smarting and groaning when it's two months before they write to me. It is generally that long before Jimmie writes. I believe that I have worried more over his seeming carelessness and neglect of me than any of my children, and frequently no apology is offered. I write this not to complain but simply to state facts.

Your good letter was to hand the last of last week, and I did read it with a great deal of pleasure and was but too sorry when I got to the end of it. It was too short. I am glad to hear of the improved condition of Tommie and of their prosperous way of getting along. May it last forever! I got a long letter, perhaps a dozen or more pages from Rebecca Jane not long since. It was full of hope and good cheer.

Yes, we have salad plenty, have been having "greens" since the first of April. Glad you think of me at the dinner table. Glad you thought of my birthday. It impressed me I think much more than usual. The fact forced itself upon my mind that I have had many birthdays, and it was equally clear to me that there would be but few in store for me in the future, perhaps none. I know the margin is growing less, indeed is already narrow with me. My pen will not write much more about my birthdays. Long years have passed since you had a mother. Soon you will also be without a father. Then you will feel more lonely and desolate in the world. But God will take care of my baby child. Just now my health is seemingly better. But I was not able to go to Presbytery though in Scottsboro, and so it has been with me since soon after leaving your house, up and down, better and worse until I have come to the conclusion that my blood is full of poison, and that unless purified, my general health will not improve. To be able to do anything, I take medicine every day & generally 3 times a day. If you remember I complained of my side being .....

with a carbuncle. It does not yet get well, it heals up and then breaks out again. It has been sore now for two weeks, and I do not know what the end will be. In my present condition I dare not count on much health.

Your silence about your Uncle William Stockton's death would imply that you did not know of it. Surely I did not omit so important an item as that in my letter to you. He went to rest on the 28th of Feby. I was sick then and not able to go to seem him, know little of the particulars as I have seen Hun..... but once and then only a few minutes.

There is more highhanded wickedness going on here now than ever has been since the country was settled. Our county jail has 27 prisoners in it now and nearly all, or the most of them, for murder. Some are so outrageous that the people are about ready to lynch them. Court will meet in a short time and if something is not done to satisfy the people and quiet their feelings, no one will be surprised if the law falls into the hands of Judge Lynch and is executed without further delay or trouble. I wrote you perhaps about 3 brothers all being shot down in a pile together by one man. Since then 2 or 3 others have been killed just in the upper neighborhood. I am sorry that I have not something better to write to you. Bless the sweet little children kiss them all for grandpa. As to my future whereabouts I cannot write you just now. I would love so much to be with you all. Maggie sends her love.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 18

(Written across top margin: Donnell had written me about the whoopingcough among the children. I was very uneasy about them. Glad they are getting along well. I would love to see them.)

Parks Store, Ala. June 16th 1884

Dear Kannie:

Yours of the 7th inst. to hand Friday and I hasten to reply. Yesterday, no, Saturday, we had whiteheaded cabbage for dinner, not Early Yorks, but a new sort. We have the best sort of lettuce this year I ever had . It heads up like cabbage and so brittle and well tasted that I want you to have some of it. We Call it "ice" lettuce and when the seed gets ripe we will send you some of them.

Well, will, Sallie be married at last. Dangerous as was the leap, she has taken it at last, risky as it was. I think a great deal of Sallie and hope she has done well.

It has been raining nearly two weeks and the crops are getting in a terribly forced condition, and it is still cloudy and threatening. The spring was .... backward and

the crops are very late, though they look tolerably well and hard up with the weeds and grass.

Our circuit court just over Saturday. Five men were sentenced to the penitentiary for life. Three were sentenced to be hung on the 1st of August next. The court adjourned to meet again in a short time for the special purpose of trying nine other criminals whose cases are as desperate as those already condemned. I have never known so many desperate deeds of blackest crime in this county. Public sentiment is running very high and demands at the hands of the court that justice should be meted out to the criminals. The court could not get through with all at its regular term, hence will again shortly be convened to finish up its work. The people, maybe, will wait patiently till court meets again, when the same demands as before. Should the court fail to meet public expectation & the demands of public sentiment, then I fear it that the inflexible court of Judge Lynch will be appealed to. Report reached us today saying a man - a cattle buyer - was found with his brains shot out on Sand Mountain, particulars not known. It is apparent to the most casual observer that something must be done to check the deeds of violence and bloodshed.

I have not had a letter from Rebecca Jane in sometime, hence had not learned of Sallie's marriage. Congratulate her for me.

I just don't know what to say about my corn matter. Your report is so unfavorable and yet it was so large & fine that my disappointment is considerable. What does Joe think it was worth to him. Maggie will write on another leaf.

Your father E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 19

Parks Store, Ala. Aug. 5th, 1884

Dear Joe & Kannie:

While in Scottsboro yesterday at the election I saw three men closely guarded marching past where I was sitting in company with others. I asked who they were and learned that it was Ab. Wallar and two of his sons going from the jail to the depot to take the train for the penitentiary, having been sentenced by the court a few days ago.

Two or three months - perhaps more - ago old man Wallar three sons and three other men went to a house occupied by a man named Eppard from Kentucky, engaged in getting stove timber, a peaceable, quiet and industrious man, and murdered him in cold blood. They were arrested and put in jail, last week they were tried, one acquitted, two fined \$50 each and costs, one sent to the coal mines for 12 months, two others sent to the penitentiary for a year and the old man for four years. Think of it! The cold blooded murder in a man's own bed at the silent hour of mid-

night, the highest sentence for four years! The plea put up by the party was that they went to scare the poor man and accidentally killed him! The lawyers seized upon this hobby, and in pleading before the jury made such an impression on their minds and so ..... this judgement that they brought in the above verdict. In this case justice was set aside and public sentiment outraged.

Tom Moody some 3 or 4 miles from here on the south side of the river, got on his horse, took his double barreled shot gun, road down to Langston a mile distance & filled his stomach with alcohol under the name of "bitters" then went to his field and without provocation shot one of his tenants at his plow handles, rode up to the dying man's house, called his wife out & told her he killed Charlie her husband . The man's name was Charlie Counts. Last week Moody had his trial before the Circuit Judge to see whether or not he could get bale. As I went to town yesterday I met Moody and his wife in Rosebury Creek going home in a buggy having been turned out on a bond. Public sentiment was again outraged and a monster turned loose on society. This is the second white man he has killed over there and report says a Negro before he came there.

Last year we sent a Negro woman to the penitentiary for life and in the same year hung a Negro man.

At our court in June a Negro man was sent to the penitentiary for ten years and three white men sentenced to be hung on 1st day of August. Accordingly last Friday they suffered the extreme penalty of the law. They were all hanged together from the same gallows, though privately, yet there was a vast crowd of people. What morbid & vitiated taste! Does it not show everything but a tender, delicate and refined element in the nature of such? Some others yet in jail for murder.

The morals of the country are over run, truth is trampled under foot, public justice is set aside, and religion at a heavy discount. Human life is of little value, and hence no one feels safe in person or property. I am so sick at heart because of these things, and so out of heart, that I could now wish myself away from here. I have well nigh despaired, and almost ready to sit down in hopeless despair. God pity the country!

I was so glad you sent me the little wisps of hair of the sweet little girls. They are so long and beautiful and withal so soft and fine. Kiss them both for grandpa. I wonder why the little man was forgotten and neglected. It seems like he ought to have been represented to have made the thing complete. Does he have no hair?

As I have said before I could gladly come and be with you all, if I could see the openings of providence in that direction. But as yet I am shut in and hedged about in such a way that I cannot see my way clear to leave this country at the present. I wish the way was open.

Tell dear Joe therefore that I very much need the money for my corn also which is due me besides.

You requested me to do without it last year if I could. I let myself suffer therefore rather than to hurt him. You would be surprised indeed if I were to tell you some things that I have done to favor you and him by not calling for that that is due me. I hope now that it will not hurt him to send me the money and it certainly will be a great favor for me.

While I live, and that may not be long, I will certainly look at the indications of providence with an eye of watchfulness, for an opportunity to be with you.

To show you how much I am in earnest in what I say about coming there, I feel that the ties which bind me here are being severed and that fast too. Please don't keep me waiting to hear from you too long.

Your father E. J. Stockton

(Written on the top margin of the last page: I have long contemplated writing a little book. .... "The Lost Brother" I have 73 pages of legal cap already prepared in manuscript. Think I will be able to finish it in this month. as there will be less perhaps than 100 pages. As to publishing it I cannot now say about that. How much rain we have had this season. Your letter came indeed ..... Did you know that Jimmie was in the Methodist Church? Such is the fact.)

## LETTER 20

Parks' Store, Ala. Aug. 23rd, 1884

My Dear Kannie:

A letter from Donnell yesterday evening contains the following as the first paragraph: "We are at a great loss to know just what you mean. Your letters of late have more or less mystery connected with them. Why treat us so? Why not tell us just what is keeping you in that country? Kannie is so troubled about it she don't know what to do."

I write this morning, dear child, baby child to relieve your tender and watchful care over me, as far as I can from anxiety and trouble. God knows that I would not cause one pang of sorrow in your bosom, or the rest of my precious children's, intentionally. So, let me suffer, rather than impose suffering on them. Therefore when I wrote last to you, it never entered my mind that I was stirring up trouble in the tender and sensitive feelings of my child, or then my pen would have been silent. A thousand times would I rather it would not move at all, than by its moving, it would cause sorrow and trouble. I am almost in sight of the port, would that the

balance of the voyage could be on calm and smoothe waters; nevertheless, not my will but thine be done. Did I nurse, watch over, and press you tenderly to my bosom in infancy and in childhood because I loved you with all the tenderness and affection of a fond parent? Surely that love has never grown less because of the lapse of years, but if possible, it has increased with the increase of these years. And I have kept many a trouble pent-up in my bosom, & endured in silence rather than to cause you so suffer by revealing it to you. Is that enough? No, I'll write more.

With your delicate health and strength, and tender babies to care for and constantly look after, your pa thought it was too great a burden imposed upon you and dear Joe to have the care of his mother and your pa both on your hands at once, and therefore he left to try once again to battle on with the world for himself. The choice may not have been wise or prudent thus to throw himself out again into the great battle of life. Whether the step was wise or unwise, it was taken, and all the care and responsibilities of life are around and weighing upon my shoulders as they used to be and I meet them the best I can.

Now for my encumbrances: In the first place I have a shelter here for the present and I have none there. Secondly I have never been able to get a title to the land upon which I have paid taxes for more than 25 years. I still hope to do something with it. Maggie has 20 acres of land in the woods, which as yet I have not been able to sell. She will have 40 acres more after the death of her mother, that so far I can see as yet, it is best for us not to leave Mrs. Carr and Annie cannot well be left by themselves. We all live together in perfect peace and harmony, but the care of the whole family is upon myself. We have an old and dilapidated place, very much worn, and gone to ruin, upon which to make a living, and to run this and keep it up imposes a heavy task upon me. Coupled with all this my health has not been good since I came back. I take Simmon's powdered Liver Regulator generally three times a day, or then I could not go at all. I made a poor out collecting what was due me here, of necessity had to go in debt, failing to collect, of course, I failed to pay and am therefore still in debt. The Lord being on my side, as I trust he is, believing that he always helps those that strive lawfully, I must pay my debts right away. This is the reason that I wrote you, dear Joe, that I needed all that was due me there. As I wrote you, I denied myself last winter and also subjected myself to hardships that I was not used to rather than call for the money when you wrote me that Joe was hard run to get along. Some day when we see face to face I'll tell you of some of my hardships.

I cannot tell when, nor where I'll be, when the Master calls for me. But if he delays this call for a few years, I hope to be with you. Yet how feeble the tenure by which I entertain and express that hope. Whenever I can let loose, or wind up my business here I want to come. But I have gone back and forth enough. I think it is

best for all of us that, if possible, I make a final wind up of my little matters here before I leave this country. Things have gone so adversely here in the way of morals and religion, that well-nigh the last tie that binds me here is severed. If I could I would leave with but few regrets never to return again.

It will not bring trouble to your heart, I trust, for me in conclusion to tell you that I am beginning to feel that my stay this side of the river is very precarious indeed. I am therefore admonished to set my house in order and keep it so in the future in reference to my worldly business. I want to get out of debt and keep so.

I am not able to work. Dow Pinkston has just left, says he will be back in a few days to live with me. He is your Aunt Jinny Shell's grand son & I am his great uncle. His father & mother are both dead. He may be no account & he is 20 years old. If there is anything left out that gives you trouble, write me.

Your father E. J. Stockton

## LETTER 21

(Written across top margin: Who has charge of your place and is Mrs. Williams going with you?)

Parks' Store, Ala. Sept. 2nd 1884

Dear Joe & Kannie:

I have just received and read your letter of the 25th of Aug., and as you request me to write immediately, I hasten to do so according to your request. I have another reason for writing right-away and that is to give expression to my deep pint-up feelings of sadness and grief, because you are going to break up and leave, God only knows where, likely to Texas. If I have been sad here often as you think from my letters, how shall I be in the future? How shall I find language to express the sadness I feel now? At the reading of the first sentence of your letter informing me of your moving, a dark portentous cloud gathered suddenly, indeed, fell down upon me, and has settled over me with no prospect at the present of being removed. I therefore write in gloom. I sit in gloomy silence, not knowing what to write. I look all around to every part of the horizon but no light appears. Forgive me therefore for this sad and grief stricken letter. You say write immediately and how else can I write but gloomily? I wish I could feel in a different way, indeed I do.

Donnell's letter induced me to write to you again and in that I explained some things and stated that my health was poor, and life with me was very uncertain and precarious. I also stated that I was not able to work on account of the presence of sixty six years and my poor health. Notwithstanding all this, hot as the weather was the last week of August, I took my axe, and with a hired hand, I went to clearing

land, and am still at work, doing what I can. How else can I live but in sweat & toil?

I also wrote you that Just as quick as I could get my business wound up in this country I would leave it. But now where shall I go? Oh where! Donnell and Rebecca Jane are not settled there but likely to pick up and leave at any time. Donnell thought for a time of going back to Texas, then again of returning to Dunklain, and in his last letter he thought of homesteading a place in Oregon flat, and what next I know not. Amid all these uncertainties and constant changes what calculations can I make?

You ask why I do not leave this country where there is so much wickedness and danger? My dear child, where shall I go? I had thought till I got your letter this morning that I began to see my clear as to my future course. But since reading it, I feel like I am again at sea; drifting I know not where. Such are my feelings this morning while I sit preparing these lines. If the reading of these should make you feel sad in any degree, how much more sad the pen that writes them? But it was useless to beg you and Joe not to move, otherwise I would importune with you both.

You say direct you what to do with my things? Indeed what can I say? What to write I know not! And yet you say hurry and write immediately what to do with them for you will be gone in four or six weeks. Well, something must be done, I know, but what that something is to this moment I know not. What shall I write?

Were Donnell and Rebecca Jane settled, it would be no trouble to give direction. For, of course, I would have no other choice than for them to get them; or rather for one of them to get all as I would feel better if they were all kept together, but as I have said they have no permanent home, and I regret the thought of their being pulled and hauled around from place to place. They are more than goods and chattels to me. They are sacred relics and mementos of the past, with a thousand precious, though very sad reminders clinging to them. I wanted to keep them intact - all together carefully while I lived. Some of them have belonged to me and to another of those loved ones who have gone on before and now rest under the shades of the trees in paradise. If I dare, I would wish the storm was over with him who now pens these line. But like Job, "All my appointed time will I wait till my change come". It may seem to you as nothing but a whim of mine as to the sacredship of my things which you have. Be it so. I have not a word to say to change your mind. "What I have written I have written." I regret that I am separated from them. How glad I would be to have them back again where this trouble would be my own, and where their care would be my pleasure. They are sacred to me, they are my keepsakes, and part of my earthly treasure. All I can say at this writing it to do with them for the present whatever you think best. I cannot now advise at all.

Yes, you are more than welcome to the dinner bell, take it and think of me. Keep it sacredly in the family. If properly cared for it may go down to generations yet to come and be a sacred reminder of him who writes these lines on Tuesday morning of September the 2nd 1884.

How glad, dear Kannie, to give you dear Ann's large picture, but----not now! No, not yet, but by and by. How my heart runs out after you, my sweet baby child these blinding tears are witness! Enough - perhaps too much.

Your Father  
E. J. Stockton

## LETTER 22

(Written across top of margin: Tell Joe his money order came to hand alright. I kept the entire fifty three dollars. Bro. Beudine did not need it at the time. His wife & sister both died last summer & he has broke up housekeeping. That article in the C.P. brought him in more than \$200 & then the rent of his place is worth something.)

Parks' Store, Ala. Jany. 15th, 1885

Dear Joe & Kannie:

Yours of the 6th to hand last night and read with deep sympathy because of your great afflictions and sufferings, and yet with great surprise at your statement in the first sentence in your letter, viz. "I have waited and waited so long to hear from you, I have concluded to wait no longer." Your language is applicable to myself. All your letters that you both wrote before leaving for Texas came to hand promptly. I answered in about 2 weeks so that my answer would get there about the time you did, requesting an answer immediately giving all the particulars of your route! "I waited and waited" till my anxiety could bear it no longer, then in desperation I seized my pen and wrote a postal card, addressing both letter and card to "Joe & Kannie Williams", as is my habit, and addressed them to Gainsville, Cook County, Texas, with some degree of care as it was a new office, but still no news from you. My sufferings and anxieties drove sleep from my eyes and peace from my troubled mind. Twice last week I went to the office with great trepidation of mind only to come back in the midst of disappointment and gloom, and thus for nearly two long months I waited. About a week or ten days ago I went to the office and got a letter from Rebecca Jane which I broke and read as I rode my horse and she said she had never received but just one letter from sister Kannie and they had all been sick. The inference was that I had received, as she supposed, as many and I knew all about their afflictions. My poor heart was too full to bear up any longer,

I just broke down and wept like a child. She had received but one, while I, your only parent, had suffered all that time with never a single line from my precious baby child, whose very life & happiness are as tender as the apple of my eye. All been sick & suffered a great deal somewhere in Texas but did not say where, when, or with what disease, supposing of course, that I knew all about it. Well such is life!!

I got this far and stopped to reread you letter again, and now with tears in my eyes I am ..... my pen along these lines, while it is one of the gloomiest days we ever have and raining most of the time. What pleasure if I could see you all & talk with you about your afflictions. How I would love to see "Ginnie", as you call her, and tell her what a warm place she has in my heart for her kindness and sympathy to all in your sufferings. Bear to her my warmest love & tell her I do thank her so many times and that God will bless her for such acts of kindness to the afflicted. I know she's a good woman, love her as your own sister.

We have not been riding on a smoothe sea either. Maggie took violent cold more than two weeks ago and it fell on her throat, it rose on the inside, threw her into high fever, and for some time it seemed her throat would close up entirely, giving alarming symptoms of diptheria. But now she is able to be up and stir about. Annie has also been sick, likewise Mrs. Carr who is now in bed. Last of all, violent cold settled in my left breast near my heart & for some time I could scarcely turn myself in the bed. I am better. Hope we'll be well soon.

Much obliged for the sweet lock of hair. It would be a pleasure to send you the pictures of Mag. & me both for your new album, but I lack the money. I must think my letters are in the office in Gainsville. Write soon.

Your father,

E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 23

Parks' Store, Ala. Feby. 23rd, 1885

Dear Joe & Kannie:

Your letter of 1st inst. was a little slow in getting here but it was to hand some days ago, and this cold Monday morning I will answer it. Since first of Dec. we have had winter in earnest, sometimes raining, then suddenly freezing, then again snowing and so on till the present, so that little or no work has been done this day two weeks ago. I went to Scottsboro, while there the clouds turned dark & threatening & it commenced thundering. I started home, the rain poured upon me & I got home with my outer clothes wet. That night it turned cold, bitter cold & continues clear & cold to the present. The .... seems both to let loose.

My first letter to you in Texas was written about the middle of Oct. & reached Gainsville the 28th, lay there one month, was advertised, then sent to Washington, opened and returned to me. So, my dear children, that letter lay there one month without being called for, as I suppose, & then was sent to the dead letter office & returned to me. My card must have been missent or delayed on the way. However it is all passed & gone with many other troubles which have come & gone. Of course you were all so sick & so long that you could not go to the office. We have mail at our office every other day except Sunday. I go, as usual, Wednesday & Friday in the evening, if I have mail written, I take it, but of course it has to lie there two days, & if its on Friday, three days before it leaves. This will account for the difference between the date of the letter & the mailing of it.

We have had more violent colds this winter than common, almost amounting to pneumonia, none have escaped, sometimes nearly all at once. Mrs. Carr is in bed now, the balance of us better.

Our Legislature passed an act allowing the people to have an election and to vote for or against prohibition, closing all the whiskey shops in the county till the vote was taken. There has not been an arrest nor row in Scottsboro this year. Our election comes off next Thursday the 26th. The friends of prohibition are hopeful but not certain of victory. We have had some of the finest prohibition speeches by different orators ever made in this county - Benson, Beauchamp & today ex. Gov. St. John from Kansas is to speak in Scottsboro. The fates have been against me, for I have not had the opportunity of hearing any of them. In this part of the county the powerful speeches of these men have drawn large crowds to hear them and have pretty well silenced the batteries of the enemy, but I still tremble for the ark. I feel sanguine however that if we lose it now, we'll gain it by and by.

Whiskey is still sold & given away on the sly. This night was a week ago a drunken man by the name of Whitfield went to Tidwell's house not far from Scottsboro, sat down by Mrs. Tidwell & commenced blackguarding her, whereupon Tidwell seized an axe and knocked him into the fire breaking his skull in two places and Tidwell & his wife then fled to neighbors and gave the alarm. When they got to the house Whitfield was dead and his shoulder & arm nearly burnt off. Another whiskey tragedy added to the many in this country.

In November I came out in a new suit of black ....., instead of the gray which Maggie made me the year before. I feel proud of such domestic wear.

Maggie sends her love says she has nothing to write more than I what I have said, was glad to get a page from you.

I bought a horse the other day for \$70 paying \$40 down & the balance due next Monday. I have plenty owing to me that is due, but feel a little uneasy about raising

it. I will try to get along without calling for yours. I think I can. I hope God will prosper & bless you abundantly.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

#### LETTER 24

Parks Store, Ala.

Sept. 16th, 1885

Dear Joe & Kannie:

Last Friday I went to the office feeling sure that I would get a letter from you unless you had failed in getting my letter as had frequently happened before, and sure enough when Miss Lizzie handed me my mail there was the well known penmanship of Joe's own handwriting on the back of the envelop.

Old "Aunt Polly" Brandon asked me if I had got a letter from Rebecca Jane or from Kannie, and as she nearly always does, asked me to read it to her. I did so, much to her gratification. She is now in her 86th or 87th year and always takes on over your letters and Rebecca Janes's when I read them to her & frequently sends her love to you & "Sis".

Katie Brandon lost her oldest son some 4 weeks ago - "Lankie" as he was familiarly called. A great big stout hearty man, always well & in good humor, taking the world fair & easy, and one of the best hearted creatures you ever saw. But withal he was not religious; he left a wife & 3 children. Poor Lankie! he looked like he might have lived always! How unexpected his death to every body & to himself too. Truly in the midst of life we are in the midst of death. His body was laid away to rest at Goose Pond beside poor Jim McRay that was killed by his horses running away with his wagon two years ago. These, as yet, are the only two buried at the Pond.

I am glad that you had a good meeting at your church. I am also gratified to learn that old Brother Rogers has a son in the ministry so useful. I am glad to hear of Henry Trip's embracing religion. I hope he will never go back to the world, but that he will persevere faithfully in his religious course and make a good & useful member of the church. Tell him for me that next Tuesday week will be 46 years since I embraced religion, and that as an old soldier of the cross I bid him Godspeed on his way to heaven.

Bro. Morris will begin a meeting at the Pond next Saturday, though the blightness & curse of Wordison have been on the place so long & are still there, that its doubtful as to there being a good meeting. Many good meetings have been in the country by our people and also by the Methodist. In Stevenson, in the upper end of this county, and in the vicinity around in our area of 10 or 12 miles, there have been

from 150 to 200 professions of religion. God seems to be clothing the means of grace with great power in the conversion of sinners. I am sure it has been wonderfully needed. Maybe he will speed his work!

The evangelist Gibson from Georgia is to commence a two week meeting in Scottsboro next Saturday. He is a Methodist & is said to be almost a second "Sam" Jones. The Scottsboreans have, as I learn, already procured the great gospel tent used by Sam Jones in Nashville some months ago. I trust great & lasting good will be done.

Health for the time of year reasonably good. Crops better than last year.

This closing paragraph will be in reference to ourselves. And first Maggie says tell Kannie we have cornfield beans in abundance. She wishes you had some of them, they are so tender and good. We had fine prospects for turnips, some of the tops already grown & right smart turnips. With the exception of one day's work Maggie and I have by ourselves pulled & saved between 900 and 1,000 bundles of nice fodder. I have also nearly a ton of good hay. I do not know what is in the future for me. God knows I would be glad to be near you in my last days. Maggie sends love.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

#### LETTER 25

Parks Store, Ala.

Oct. 11th, 1885

Dear Joe & Kannie:

Last Thursday was two weeks ago I came home from assisting in making boards to ..... our Goose Pond church and lo! I found comfortably seated .....? I'll venture you can't guess. Well, it was dear Jimmie. I had received a letter the Friday before informing me that he would leave home on Thursday evening following for my house. I came in from work at noon for the purpose of going after him in Scottsboro to meet him at the arrival of the 2 o'clock train. But he beat my calculation & came on the morning train. .... I simply leave you to draw the picture of joy that filled my heart on our meeting. Thank God that we had both been spared to meet in the flesh again, after years of separation. For the uncertainty of life with me is not only immanent, but is constantly growing upon me as life slowly ebbs away & my infirmities, incident to my age, constantly increase.

Jimmie looks well but has really never fully recovered from a serious & dangerous sickness he had last winter was a year ago. He staid two weeks lacking one day Last Wednesday morning just after daylight, with a gallon of chestnuts & nearly as many muscadines, a bunch of beautiful wild moss and the root of a musca-

dine vine, he left for his far off home in the great West. The leave-taking was at home as I was not well enough to go to Scottsboro with him. The parting was sad indeed! My own heart was too full of grief to say much, and his was so much so as to forbid his saying anything. Will it be our last meeting? Yes, in all probability our last. How it wrings my heart! God bless the boy! God bless my dear baby son!

Nearly two years ago the team of Bro. Jim McKay ran away with the wagon just after dark, threw him out & killed him, his head striking against the root of a tree & he lay there by the roadside all night before he was found. "Doc" Burgess, the brother of the widowed wife of McKay, about two weeks since was killed by his mule team running away with him. How wonderful & mysterious the workings of Divine providence! A strange fatality seems to hang about that family! Is the end yet?

I turn to a more pleasing subject. There have been a great many precious revivals in this country this fall. Hundreds have made professions of religion in this county. The people of Scottsboro procured a gospel tent, stretched it on the public square, got some evangelist and held a meeting of ten or twelve days, about 100 made professions of faith in Christ. Through ths meeting the tone of public sentiment has been greatly improved, and the morals of the people in town & vicinity made a great deal better. Yet in this neighborhood there has been no special revival yet. I think good seed has been sown, which sowing of later, will produce a good harvest. Oh, how we need ..... of this neighborhood ..... month? To me how and ..... about his. God grant that ..... through ..... & do well! ..... Donnell I learned that the milk taken away from Tommie. The letter ..... was making money fast at it.

Pogue is all right, lives over the river, is doing well, has two bright children. At his request I went over recently & baptized them - James Stockton & Maggie Lou. His father has moved to Charleston or thereabouts, & as usual old Mr. Hogin with him. He is no account.

I will be very much obliged for that money, as a few days since I bought a wagon on 60 days time. Your letter was to hand in due time. Maggie always reads your letters with pleasure.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

LETTER 26

Parks Store, Ala.  
Dec. 14th, 1885

Dear Joe: Your card to hand last night. I rejoice with you and Kannie on the gift of a fine son, and that dear precious Kannie was brought through in safety. Hope she will continue to do well and soon be up again, be herself and take care of that large fine son.

But dear Joe, bad as I hate to write to you for more money, yet my necessity compels me to do so. Next Monday I am due R. S. Shelton of Scottsboro \$55.00 for the "Harrison" wagon for the sale of which he is the agent. The wagon is put up at the Grand Rapids, Mich. .... to responsible persons on 60 days time and immediately on collection forwards the money to the Manufactures. I hold two notes on a man here - one for \$50.00 and one for \$75.00, and when I bought the wagon I was sure less note would be due 1st of this last November when I came to look at them they are both due the 1st of Nov. 1886. So you see my trouble. How I ..... made the mistake, I know not. If it was an ordinary debt perhaps I could manage to beg time on it, but as it is I can get none.

First note		\$42.70
Second note		<u>5.00</u>
		47.00
Credit by		<u>9.00</u>
		38.70
Corn		<u>55.00</u>
		93.70
Credit by money order in 1884	53.00	
Credit by money order a short time since	<u>20.00</u>	
	73.00	<u>73.00</u>
Balance due		20.70

Your father, E. J. Stockton

## LETTER 27

Parks Store, Ala.  
Jany. 17th, 1886

Dear Joe & Kannie:

Quite a time has elapsed since I received your last letter. I have delayed writing because we have had no mail at our office now going on three weeks, owing to high waters and then ice, and I do not know when this will get off.

Such weather, O! such weather! On the morning of the 8th it was raining at daylight & continued till about 12 o'clock when the wind suddenly changed to the north blowing with a fierce gale accompanied with snow, and everything at once commenced to freezing and continued till the whole earth seemingly was one solid sheet of ice, and there it remained till the following Friday, just 8 days from the commencement, when it commenced a slow rain gain and freezing and so it continued all day, rather finishing up one of the coldest spells of weather ever known in this country. We could neither keep warm by day around the best fire we could make, or by night with all the covers we could put on us and a hot sock at our feet besides. What a time I had doing my little feeding and trying to keep the fires! My blood is thin and sluggish in its circulation and therefore the cold hurts me a great deal, but we have weathered the storm through and yesterday and today are moderate. Upon the whole we have had so far a disagreeable winter. The first part was not very cold but a heap of rain.

Again I have had a erysipelas on my leg just above my ankle. In chopping wood weeks ago a stick rolled down from the pile & striking my leg, cutting a small place & bruising it a little. I paid little attention to it, but in a few days erysipelas cropped out giving me quite a sore place on my leg. Now however it is better, indeed about well. This time it did not incline to spread but was altogether local, yet hard to cure up being very stubborn.

I presume, of course, that you have long since learned of Dora's marriage to Mr. Stiedly - I believe it is. I have not received a line from them upon the subject but learned it through the Boone County Banner. Probably you are acquainted with him, if so has Dora done well? How I do hope she has married a gentleman who will make her a good & pleasant husband. Their school in Harrison numbers near 300 scholars and Dora is second only to the President himself. Truly her position in the school is an enviable one as there are five teachers in it. She deserves great credit for having won such distinction by her own industry in so short a time.

I have had no news from any of the children in quite a time. Hope to get letters soon as the mail starts again. Tommie was clerking for some firm in Harrison and getting a dollar a day. All seem to be doing well at present.

Well, I got out of my tight in money matters for the time being by borrowing from a friend a 20 dollar gold piece, promising him that the money would be paid back before long. So I am now easy knowing that dear Joe will send me that in next month.

I do hope you & the dear babe, indeed, the whole family, are doing well.

Dear Kannie, I believe I will close this letter by telling you that Maggie is so good to me. My will expressed, implied or anticipated, is her pleasure and the pathway of her life. She does all she can indoors and out to relieve me of my burdens. I know that you will be a glad to learn how good she is to your pa. I want you to love her, she deserves it.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 28

(Written across the top margin: Dade county joins Lamar on the South. Pogue has not written to me so I don't know whether he is pleased or not.)

Parks Store, Ala.

April 10th, 1886

Blessed Baby:

Your good affectionate letter of the 21st ult. lay in the office more than a week before I got it. Tennessee river is from Mountain to Mountain, and lacks but a few feet of being to the high water mark of 1867; then it was 9 feet above the highest water mark ever known before. Nearly two weeks ago the mail stopped, and at present I do not know when it will start. I will send this letter to the office today so it will be ready when the mail does start again. When the high water first came up there was one mail came after I stopped going to the office and in that mail your letter came, hence it was there so long before I got it. But it was just as good and tender as if I had got it at once. It was so full of tender regard & affection that when I read it my eyes filled with tears, and I said to myself, "God bless my dear baby child"! I did want to take you in my arms and press you to my great big warm heart. But alas! my arms were too short! What a joyful sadness that filled my bosom; glad in my heart that God had given me such a baby child - one so full of love and filial tenderness; sorry that we were so far apart. Will we always be so? I trust in God that it will not be so. O, I want to be with you so bad. If I live long enough, dear precious child, God willing, I intend, according to my present mind, to be with you and dear Joe. I want to spend my last days with you, my heart just runs out to you. Get somewhere & settle yourselves on a house of your own, and then if you are not encumbered, I want to come and bring dear Maggie with me and live with or near to you. It seems like I don't want to live away from my children much longer.

The older I get the more I want to be with them. You speak of going further South; where do you think you will go? What's the matter with where you are?

I am sorry that Jimmie & Lo do not write to you. A letter from Lo not long since said he & Rose were working very hard but did not say what they were doing. Bee had him a horse & cart & was doing jobs of hacking in town, while May was playing the organ in the Baptist Church for \$2.50 a month.

Jimmie intended going into the cattle business but Mr. Sevier took sick & lay for a long time, so he turned his attention to the business of mining 20 or 30 mile from Neosho. When he last wrote me he had considerable work going on, but had not advanced far enough to realize any profit or to know much about it. Lo thinks mining is a very uncertain business. I gave Jimmie your address some time ago as he wanted to write to you. I think he'll write soon.

Our Presbytery was a failure at Goose Pond on account of the high water. It is now appointed to meet on Friday before the 1st Sabbath in May in Scottsboro.

My pig was very fat and finely flavored and weighed 149 pounds. How I wished you & Joe had one of its nice hams.

Mrs. Cass has been sick for two or three weeks with something like ..... in her back, though now she is little better. Maggie was sick with throat disease for two weeks. It swelled very much on the outside and sore on the inside & swelled till she could neither eat or drink & had spells of strangling. Finally it broke & she got better. She is not well yet - but improving. My own health is tolerable. Sometimes I work too hard & am sick. I cannot stand much but do the best I can. Yes, I pray for you and yours daily. Am glad you pray for me. Maggie sends her love.

E. J. Stockton

(Written in the left margin: If I ..... able to get Maggie's picture I'll send it to you.)

### LETTER 29

Parks Store, Ala.  
Sept. 17th, 1886

Dear Kannie:

Yours of the 9th inst. to hand day before yesterday and some of it read with pleasure, while the balance was read, with pain and grief. From your letters it seems that you had already employed Capt. Pace to begin work on investigation, with the intention, as I infer, of prosecution, if your brother was liable in law, whether just or unjust, before you ever asked or had time to get my council or advice in the matter. Why did you ask it at all, my dear child, if your course was al-

ready determined and at work? It was so new and so unexpected, and the matter was so long ago that I could not, and fondly hoped that it would not be necessary, to call up the facts in the case, or at least, many of them at the time I wrote you. The idea of litigation and all its attendant evils between brother and sister, and both of them my own precious children, and both from members of the same Church, is so painful and so distressing to my feelings that I have slept little since I read your letter, and do not feel now either in body or in mind, like writing to you upon a subject so painful to me. And yet, painful as it was, my pen, though in a trembling hand, must not be silent. May God's Spirit guide it.

The beginning of lawsuits is easy, but who can forecast the end, both as to the suit itself and the strife, bitterness and bad feelings? Paul says, "Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because you go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?" In my long life I have had many provocations but never a lawsuit. If you had reasons to believe your brother had wronged you, or was in anyway responsible to you for money, why, as a sister, did you not with your own pen sit down and tell him the fact and give him a chance to make explanation? But alas! upon the other hand, as I suppose you do not give him the least intimation of your intention, much less an opportunity to explain or to vindicate his innocence. The very first thing he knows of any dissatisfaction, he finds a lawyer on his track like a bloodhound, and put there by his own sister, who drew life and sustenance from the same mother long since in heaven. God forbid such a thing! Can he be otherwise than pained in his heart, deeply aggrieved and offended?

I beg of you, dear precious Kannie, spare your father, and your only parent, and that too with the palpable fact that he too will soon be taken from you, the pain and mortification of such an unhappy state of things. Write at once to Capt. Pace to stop the proceedings till further orders, and in a good tender sisterly way open correspondence with your brother, tell him your grievance, and that without explanation you feel that you in some way have been wronged, and as your guardian explain please what became of your interest in dear Green's estate. Don't press a lawsuit upon your own dear brother till all other means have been exhausted. Indeed, don't bring suit at all. If Jimmie has wronged you make him sensible of it, and he has got manhood enough about him to make restoration without invoking the strong arm of the law to bring him to a sense of duty towards his sister.

Upon my sleepless pillow I have called up a few things which I will state for your information, some of them perhaps you never knew and some to have lost sight of. According to your letter you claim \$730.00. In this estimate you loss sight of the fact that as a minor you had to be fed, clothed and educated out of this \$700.

You lived with Jimmie, except while at Cane Hill, three years. It was just after the war when board, dry good - indeed everything was very high. You say in your letter that board is from 10 to 16 dollars a month where you live, that would be an average of 13 dollars per month. Now you lived with Jimme Walker three years. He had a legal right, as your guardian to charge you board. We'll say he charged 13 dollars a month, 12 months would be 156 dollars, and for three years it would be \$468.00. Your clothing at that time would have been perhaps 50 .00 a year, 150.00. Then your books, papers, ink & tuition \$30.00, making a sum of \$640.00. I do not say that Jimmie charged in his settlement with the court the above amount. I know nothing about it, but he had a right to charge for all those things, and the court no doubt would have allowed him to make liberal charges, and probably his records, whether at Fayetteville in Ark. or at ..... in Mo. would show his charges for everything they ought to.

If you were originally entitled to \$730.00 so was Jimmie, so was Lorenzo, for you were all minors under Jimmie as guardian, making in round numbers \$2200.00 that he held in his hands for the benefit of you three, for your support, clothing, books and education, and whatever was in his hands, if any, as each of you came of age to pay to you and take your receipt as voucher to the court in his final settlement. So much for the amount of money you three had in his hand in 1870. Now for the land. Tommie and I agreed to be equal partners in the purchase of the land. We bought the land for \$1200. I paid \$600 out of my own funds. There was some trouble about the deed we got & we employed a lawyer to get another deed. Sometime after I came to Ala. in 1871 he sent to me for money & I sent him \$100.00, making \$700 that I paid while Tommie paid \$600 dollars, & of course he paid it out of the \$2200.00 instead of paying it out of your part. That would have given each of you 200 dollars interest in the land. Miss Wilson wrote me for money saying she could get more elsewhere and I paid all her charges for you & Lorenzo. When I got to Tommie's in 1872 to my astonishment all the Cane Hill indebtedness, except Miss Wilson's was unpaid. Hence we mortgaged the land & borrowed 400 dollars to pay the debt. These are facts to the best of my recollections. Now do you think Jimmie owes you anything?

Your father. E. J. Stockton

## LETTER 30

Parks Store, Ala.  
Nov. 14th, 1886

Dear Kannie:

When I returned Jimmie's letter and said in my note that I would say nothing and signed my name I did not mean that I would quit writing to you, my dear baby child, but that I would quit saying anything upon the subject of our former correspondence. No, indeed, I had no thought of stopping my pen from talking to you and dear Joe as long as it could move or as long as we were separated from each other. By getting no letter from you since I sent Jimmie's back, I fear you thought I had ceased to write to you. I did not intend any such thing, and if I had, I am not sure as a dutiful and affectionate child, that that should have stopped your pen from talking to your father. It is almost needless to inform you of the fact that you will not have a father, at least on earth, very much longer to write to. I have expected a letter from you for the last two or three mails, but have been disappointed. I have had no paper for some time, but yesterday I was in Scottsboro and supplied myself, and this Sabbath evening after coming back from Sabbath-school at Goose Pond, I thought I would wait no longer.

I have been quite puny all summer and fall, my complaint has been trouble with my bowels inclining to run off by the least exertion in the way of overheat. And though I have had to work all that I could, and many times in pain and weakness, yet I have had to be cautious and prudent in what I did. But I was not able to pull but a little fodder. I commenced with the intention of saving plenty but got sick and had to give it up, and was doomed to see it all burn up while I lingered around unable to help myself. I toiled on through the summer the best I could, sometimes scarcely able to drag one foot after the other, praying and working and working and praying, and thus with the help of a hired hand I made about 22 wagon loads of corn and nearly two bales of cotton, besides plenty of potatoes and turnips. I know this is as nothing in the sight of Texans, but for the old land of our county and for me, it does pretty well. Thank God for enough for another year. I have 23 loads of corn in the crib - two for rent of a little piece my neighbor cultivated. I also put up 50 bushels of thrashed oats. We have 200 or 300 pounds of cotton yet to pick. I have also sold 15 dollars worth of hogs this year, putting all therefore together God has greatly blessed us in trying to support ourselves. I owe 16 dollars and 45 cents, we have on hand nearly 20 collars in cash, and 1,000 to 1,200 pounds of unsold seed cotton on hand and 15 dollars that I will collect between this and spring. Praise God from whom all blessings flow. I have got yet to get up any winter wood, and then my years work in the main will be done. Day before yesterday I lost a milk cow with a calf 3 or 4 months old, the calf will have a hard struggle to make it

through the coming winter. I also lost a nice heifer in May from hydrophobia. So you see I lose as well as others. Just what we will do and how we will do another year I cannot now tell, but if we live, with God's help, we will do the best we can. We will pray and work and work and pray another year as we have this, and I trust God will feed and clothe us as he has in the past. To this end pray for us, precious ones, that God's blessings may rest upon our labors.

A card from Donnell this last week says Bell was not suffering so much as heretofore, but was no better, could scarcely speak above her breath and was slowly sinking into the valley of the shadow of death, though very patient, just waiting till her change came. God be praised for the Christian religion. Poor Bell, how I sympathize with her in her long and intense suffering! May God's grace still be sufficient in the dreadful fires of long continue afflictions through which she is passing to her home in heaven! O how precious heaven will be to such sufferers. God grant that the Saviour's voice may be soon heard saying to her in sweetest accents, come up higher. I greatly pity poor precious Donnell. God deal very gently with the quiet, trusting, patience Christian child, and provide for him in the future, and make him useful in the work of the ministry.

A letter from Jimmie recently says all well except little Archie who was suffering some with his old disease of the throat. Nothing from "Sis" or Lorenzo lately.

In a long letter from Dr. Roseth of Boonesboro, Ark. lately he states he had just been to Harrison, made the acquaintance of Capt. Walker & his wife and how much she favored me. What a favorable impression she made on his mind. Also stated that friends there greatly besought him to move back to Harrison and aid in building up the church there.

We have had a very warm, open and dry fall, among the best we ever have for gathering crops, and people have improved the opportunity very well and are well nigh done gathering. For the last week or 10 days the weather has been threatening and changeable. We have some heavy frosts but beyond that not much cold weather. And while we have had no general sickness yet there has been scattering cases all over the county and a good many of them fatal - flu has been rather prevalent.

In October our Presbytery held its session and was one of the very best I ever attended. There were 15 ordained preachers present and some 20 elders. The report of the Committee on State of Religion showed in the six months 157 professions and 102 accessions to the church; nearly or quite all the congregations are having monthly preaching. Upon the whole the outlook of the Presbytery is indeed prosperous and hopeful. Also quite a number of new church houses have been built in the bounds of the Presbytery recently. God continue to bless and prosper this dear old Presbytery.

Maggie joins with me in love to you both and the sweet children. God bless you.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 31

Parks Store, Ala.

April 20th, 1887

Dear Joe & Kannie:

Your letter to Maggie of the 10th inst. came last week and was received and read so eagerly and with so much pleasure. You said at its close it was pa's time to write next, so with pen in hand, though quite unwell, just able to be out of bed, yet as I can do nothing else and it affords me pastime as well as pleasure to use my pen in holding sweet converse with you, I will write you this Wednesday evening.

I was quite poorly Sunday night, and Monday morning between 3 & 4 o'clock such a storm burst upon us as does not often visit us. We had considerable hail and rain, but the dangerous and damaging part of the wind did not last more than a minute. Trees however were uprooted and twisted off above ground everywhere in its pathway. Perhaps never as much fencing blown down before. When daylight came I found 300 panels of fence scattered on the ground, so, unwell as I was, Maggie and I started and put up 150 panels that day, and some of them heavy new rails two of which had to go on top of each panel of a ten rail fence. I could do no more and have not been able to do anything since. I have a heap more to pick up but they are inside fences and will wait. I think if the hard part of the storm had lasted five minutes everything would have been blown away. But God rides upon the storm, has his way in the whirlwind, and the clouds are the dust of his feet, and he knows just how to temper the wind to the shorn lamb.

We had a very pleasant session of Presbytery, ten preachers out of of seventeen were present with as many elders.

They have just finished a beautiful house of worship in Larkinsville and by the kind request of the pastor Rev. J. R. Morris, I preached the sermon of dedication at 11 o'clock Sunday to a large and intelligent audience. The following notice of it appeared in the county paper of that week: "Rev. E. J. Stockton the well known and able minister and the oldest in the Presbytery preached the dedication sermon of our new church on Sunday at 11 o'clock, and those who heard it pronounced it the greatest effort of his life, which was saying much." This notice was from the regular weekly correspondent of Larkinsville, who being a Dr. was professionally absent at that hour. I feel like begging your pardon for writing such a notice in the public prints of myself, but thought it would be a source of gratification to you both.

I am in no regular work now as a preacher except superintending a Sabbath-school at Goose Pond. We are to celebrate our 1st anniversary Saturday two weeks at the Pond. How I wish you could be all be there, the little girls are all to be dressed in white, oh if sweet May or Berthie could be among them. We are to have a big dinner on the ground, all the old people are specially invited to be there and three or four speakers. I want to roast half a hog for the occasion. I wish you were here to eat some of it.

We trust God will be present to bless the Sabbath-school and all that may be present. We are praying for it daily. Join in with us & help us pray that it may be a success.

Yes, I could preach to a congregation if I lived in or near it. It hurts me to travel far except by rail.

What do you mean, dear Kannie, by saying Joe with the three oldest children has gone to church? Have you the fourth and have I lost sight of it? I can't remember but May, Berthie & Albert Vance.

Remember me to everyone of Perry's folks and himself too, also to all the balance of my kin. Maggie sends big love to you both & the sweet children.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 32

Parks Store, Ala.  
May 25th, 1887

Dear Joe & Kannie:

Your good letter to hand last week and read with usual interest.

I trust all Texas has been blessed with plenty rain, and that the drouth-stricken portions will soon be on foot again.

It has not been too wet nor too dry with us, but so far a reasonable good season, and crops are perhaps a little above an average.

I put compost under my cotton, it did not come up well, and that that did come up most of it died, so late as it is for this country I am planting over today.

Well, we had a pleasant time at our celebration at Goose Pond. It rained nearly all the fore part of the day. We had a house well nigh full notwithstanding just before noon, it broke away & people came, even then in crowds. We had two table nearly 90 ft. long each. They were filled with persons standing except the old persons who were placed at the head of the table sitting in chairs. The old people being seated at the head, I marched the Sabbath-school in double columns with the least in front, & so tapering back in size to the other end. When we came to the foot of the table we divided the double line, one taking one side of the table, & the other

line taking the other side & marched them down on each side till we reached the old people; then with the parents & others we filled that table and the other one, as they were parallel with & near each. Then after grace said at the head of each table, we refreshed ourselves with an abundance of good things.

The balance of the day we worked outdoors. Here is the program of our work:

Opening exercises as usual and at 9 o'clock after song service, "The Lord's Prayer" rendered by Clay McRay, on his knees with his little hands lifted above his head & clasped. 2. "The Child's Creed" by Master Vernie Brandon. 3. "That Sweet Story of Old" by Lou McRay, 4 or 5 years old.

4. What will it Bring? by Sallie McRay - quite small

5. "The Five Loaves" by Prissie Pierce

6. "Our Mission" by Ida McRay

7. "Return of Israel" by Ella Pierce

8. "What Says the Clock" by Sallie Finney

9. "Books of the Bible" by Beulah Reed

10. "Remember the Creation" by Celia Broadway

11. "Temperance Recitation" by five little boys, each having his part - all the foregoing small.

12. "Who Is On the Lord's Side?" by Richie McRay

13. Speech by Rev. J. S. Weaver, Fayetteville, Tenn.

#### After Dinner

14. "Give us a Call" (A Saloon keeper's sign) by Amanda McRay - grown

15. "The Rumseller's Dream" by Miss Janie Walker

16. "The Dying Infidel" by Miss Nanie Walker

17. "Work for Jesus" sung by Jimmie & Sallie Finney - both blind - tears were shed

18. "Temperance" by Arthur Pierce

19. "Catechism" 8 pages of my own make by 1st & 2nd class of the school

20. "Temperance Recitation" by 4 little girls each saying her part and then all kneeling with their hands clasped offering a beautiful prayer for the downfall of intemperance.

21. "The Lord's Prayer" by a blind little boy, not big enough to talk plain. And then the services of the day closed with benediction.

In a few days after Bro. Weaver published the following in Cumberland Presbyterian, viz. "It was my happy privilege to visit Goose Pond the home of my childhood on 7th of May. One year ago the Rev. E. J. Stockton organized a Sunday-school at this place under very unfavorable circumstances. But noiselessly he and his devoted wife moved on in that even, systematic way that ever characterizes the successful worker, and today Goose Pond can boast one of the best organized and most intelligent Sunday-schools in all the country. I am no longer surprised that God has thus long preserved the life of dear Brother Stockton. He was fitting him for one of the grandest periods of his long and useful life." I know the above will be gratifying to you & dear Joe. Forgetting your dear child is but a sample of my faulty memory. On my birthday Rebecca Jane wrote me - not a word from since. But O her letters are so good!

Maggie sends big love to you all. Love to Perry's folks. Kiss the sweet children for us.

Your father E. J. Stockton

## LETTER 33

(Written across the top margin: Tell me about Joe's trips, where he went and what he saw. Tell me about your crop what it will make and what you will do. Maggie sends love to you both and all the children. Much love also to all the connection from us both. A crochet needle from Maggie.)

Parks Store, Ala.

Aug. 9th, 1887

Dear Joe & Kannie:

I will commence this letter this evening but do not know just when I will finish it. We have had company all day and that it is gone I thought I would use what time I had in writing to you.

Your letter was received last week bringing the sad intelligence that your crop was well nigh ruined for the want of rain, though your previous one seemed to have been written just after a good season and all was then hopeful, but when your last one was written all was in gloom. I do hope you have had rain since then and that your crop is promising.

I perhaps wrote you in my last that on the night of the 4th of July the safe in the office of the Probate Judge of this county was robbed of 2,000 dollars, leaving no clue to the guilty party. On the following Sunday night week, or rather before day Monday morning, Duke Campbell, son of Judge Campbell of Scottsboro, 21 years old, was murdered with an ax in one of the rooms of his father's house while asleep. The Judge heard the noise, sprung from his bed, rushed into the room and saw the man leaving, overtook and seized him, but he made his escape. Thinking he was simply a burglar, cried for help, his wife & son, older than the murdered one, came too late to help, and so the man got away. Then with lamp in hand they went through the kitchen and into the room to see what was missing when Mrs. Campbell saw, as she thought, a piece of red flannel lying on the side of her son's face & head who was sleeping in that room, went to the bed placed her hand on what she thought was the flannel and lo! it was blood. He was still alive but died that day.

This terrible tragedy seemed enough to break the hearts of the parents, especially the mother. A jury of inquest was summoned and though it was in session for days and days yet no positive clue could be obtained as to the demon who perpetuated the awful deed. But still a greater cloud of sorrow overshadowed and still hangs over the Campbell family when the investigation by the jury clearly indicated that the murdered son was one of the safe robbers or in complicity with the crime. God pity the parents of the unfortunate son! The whole matter has been turned over into the hands of the grand jury now in session, and it is to be hoped that they will suc-

ceed in ferreting out both the robbers and the murder. Such a deed had never fallen out in the annals of crime in this county.

My nearest neighbor M. A. Winn was stricken with total blindness more than two years ago. Though usually in good health, on the 11th of July in the afternoon, he complained of a pain in his breast and in less than 40 minutes was a corpse. He was a member of the Methodist Church, and I think a Christian. He was 63 years old.

We have had a great deal of heavy thunder and dangerous lightening this summer. Some two months ago my neighbor Wiley Finney had two milch cows killed at the same time with lightening. And on last Thursday evening in the midst of a thunderstorm, a family by the name of Tatum, living on the big road below Santa creek were sitting in their house eating watermelons when some person passed on horseback and Mr. Tatum, and his wife and a little boy of Miller Risby's who had stopped in out of the rain, went to the door, when suddenly a thunderbolt struck and killed all three of them instantly. The man and his wife were buried side by side in the same grave. They left 4 little helpless children. God pity and take care of them.

I got a letter of ten pages from dear Rebecca Jane last week, and O, such a newsy and good letter! She reported that they get letters often from Dora living in Paris, Texas and she hopes Dora will do well. Tommie is sticking close to business and making money. Lorenzo drove up to their house a short time before in a hack, staid all night and till after dinner next day, was in fine health, excellent spirits and full of conversation. He is traveling in the interest of a company and selling organs. He had come to Boone county for the purpose of canvassing it and would perhaps stay or make headquarters at Tommie's, and, if so, they would take an organ. Sallie and Ivy were both studying music and were, of course, both anxious for the organ. I hope they will be gratified.

Our mail was brought in sometime since and Maggie after looking at the "Times", handed it to me pointing to an editorial headed, "A Frightful Runaway". A Mr. Stewart, wife and little daughter had driven over in a two horse carriage to Mr. Seviars, Jimmie's brother-in-law on a visit on Thursday evening, tied the reins of the horses to a post without unhitching them from the carriage. After a bit Jimmie's three little girls & Mr. Stewart went to the carriage & all got into it, when little Maud took the whip & commenced playing with it, when the horses became alarmed, broke loose & started at once in full speed, must have been 2 miles along different streets before they were stopped and none of them killed, little Maud & Stella was thrown out but not hurt seriously. What an escape!

Surely I have written enough unless it was better. But in conclusion, I did not write to you, dear child, as a beggar either presently or prospectively, but simply the facts as they were. O how I wish you had some of our cabbage.

E. J. Stockton

## LETTER 34

(Written across top margin: Yours of the 29th of Sept. was to hand in due course of mail. Kiss the sweet children for grandpa.)

Parks Store, Ala.

Oct. 17th, 1887

Dear Joe & Kannie:

It is now raining slowly, and is a good time to write. We have .....  
..... dry here since first of August, and water is getting very low and scarce for this country. Many wells have failed and springs gone dry, yet I heard a steamer whistling on the river a few minutes ago thereby showing that dry as it is and has been, still the river is not so low as it is sometimes, for almost ..... summer and fall it gets too low for boats to run.

Crops have been very much injured by the weather both corn and cotton, very much to the disappointment of the people, as the prospect was better than common up till the drought set in. It had been seasonable up till first of Aug. or rather last of July and the people felt assured of good crops. Hence their disappointment, yet there is an abundance to supply the home demand and still leave a surplus of corn for shipping off. I think the cotton crop is too short to pay the indebtedness of the people, perhaps it will not lack a great deal.

I received a letter sometime since from Rebecca Jane saying that you would be back at your old home in Boone in two weeks. How great her disappointment! I never once thought of your coming back to Cook to your old neighborhood. It seems like it was a great pity you did not stay there at first, for I presume the country in Cook is no better now than it was when you left it. How I do wish you could find a place that would give reasonable satisfaction and settle permanently down upon it and be satisfied. Will you?

Donnell has moved in the neighborhood of Ozark in Franklin county and taken charge of three congregations which promise to support him in his ministerial work. I do not know what the promise is worth. I hope they will do it.

Lorenzo is engaged as a traveling agent for a company to sell organs, he seems to be well and to be satisfied with the work. He will spend most of his time this winter in Boone, making headquarters perhaps at Harrison. What a pleasure to be with his sister so much. He writes me that Tommie & "Sis" are doing well. Rebecca Jane writes that Seibly and Dora are in Paris, Texas, but doing no good, that Tommie had written to Dora if she would come and spend the winter with them he would send her money to bring her back. I am truly sorry in my heart that Dora threw herself away. How strange that children will do so!

I got a letter from Minerva not long since inclosing one from dear little Maude to grandpa. She wrote that Jimmie was suffering very much with ..... in his head and she wanted me to urge him to do something for it. I see however he was well enough to go to St. Louis to see President Cleveland.

Now something about my poor self. I am again in the work of the ministry. I preach Saturday night and Sabbath in each month to a congregation some 12 or 14 miles off, and two Sabbaths in each month at home to the Goose Pond congregation. Our presbytery appointed a committee of two - Bros. Shook & Morris to attend to my appointment at Goose Pond on first Sabbath and Saturday before in November for the purpose of regularly installing me pastor of that church. Nearly 48 years ago I joined the Cumberland Presbyterian Church at this place and now I am to be installed its pastor, and it will be the only one with an installed pastor in the presbytery. How strange!

Your father, E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 35

Parks Store, Ala.

Dec. 26th, 1887

Dear Precious Children:

Christmas is over and this cold morning while the snow covers the earth and every thing without is frozen I seat myself near the fire to respond to your letter, long since received, but the answer delayed until now from various hindrances which, if I were to name them, would fill my paper and would still be of no interest to you.

I will first say to you that my general health has been better for the last two months than common, except two weeks of severe cold.

I am sorry to have to write you that four men have been killed in our county since the middle of July last, three white men and one black. We used to think well nigh all the bad men were in Texas or on their way there, but the tables seem to have turned upon us, so that we have more bad men in our midst than you have in the Lone Star state. Whiskey with us, in the main, is at the bottom of all these outrages, and still the masses, with all these alarming facts before them, are for whiskey, don't want their liberties curtailed or taken away from them. The cry is, give me liberty with whiskey plenty and just let them kill and be killed.

While our crops were greatly injured by the drought, still the year, now so rapidly closing, has been more prosperous than for many in the past, traceable more than to anything else the care the people have taken in not going in debt so much as heretofore. Of course many are still behind but not so much as common. Many owe nothing ..... (balance of letter lost)

## LETTER 36

(Written across top margin: I must add that tomorrow our Church will be 78 years old.)

Parks Store, Ala.

Feby. 3rd, 1888

Dear Joe & Kannie:

Yesterday was a pretty day and I was busy hauling rails, but today there is a cold rain from the East and it affords a pleasant opportunity of responding to your welcome letter which was to hand in due time.

You write of cold weather in Ark. and Jimmie of a terrible blizzard in Missouri and the North and Northwest generally with great loss of life by freezing to death. But strange to say our winter so far has been rather open & warm with a great deal of dark cloudy weather and cold rain from the East.

I am sorry to learn of your trouble about your land in Arkansas as I always felt sorry that you left it.

You must be in a good country for turkeys, and also very fortunate in being invited to three dining's and a turkey to grace each table, all during Christmas holy days. Your pa did not even get an invitation to one, much less three. He however did get a nice cake on the Christmas tree and appreciated and was very proud of it.

Your trip to Texas, you say, has been rather an unfortunate one. The Psalmist says, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delighteth in his way". Again, A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked. I comfort myself with these and similar passages of Scripture, believing that my steps are ordered by the Master and that I enjoy the little that I have, knowing that he is too wise to err and too good to do wrong. I trust therefore that both of you draw comfort from the same source.

About a month ago I married Hunter Stockton to Madella Gross, old squire Gross's granddaughter. This courtship was of more than ten years standing. Jim McCanny married about a week since Miss Mary Manning after a courtship of sixteen years. Old as I am I never knew two such cases. You perhaps remember Mrs. Broadaway who lived in sight and right west of us when you were here in 1880. She died last June, and it fell to my lot to marry him, the first of last month to Miss Holland, a niece of Ann's, you may have seen her when you were here.

I am sorry that I have to write to you that killing still goes on in our country. The first of January our Sheriff, Capt. W. H. Dycus, killed Hugh Garland, a solonist in Scottsboro. The affray took place on the sidewalk, and from twelve to fifteen shots were fired killing Garland outright, wounding the Sheriff and a young man standing

near by the the door of a business house who was simply a spectator to the tragedy. Whiskey as usual, was at the bottom of it. This is the sixth man killed in our vicinity in less than six months. And still the people cry out for liberty and whiskey. This I think is liberty with a vengeance.

Tomorrow one month, if I live to see it, I'll be seventy years old. Three score and ten years is the appointed lot of man and then his time on earth is out. Will I live to see it?

Maggie was ~~forty~~<sup>Forty</sup> nine years old last Sunday, and your pa presented her with a small nice Bible as a Birthday present.

Donnell writes that his health is very poor indeed. I feel uneasy about him. He says your Uncle Rufe & Aunt Polly Ann are poorly. Kiss the children for me Maggie sends love.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 37

Parks Store, Ala.  
May 31st, 1888

Dear Joe and Kannie:

Your letter was to hand a good while ago but you added a post-sript at the office, I suppose, saying you had just got mine, consequently I have been waiting for you to write, but having received nothing, I thought maybe you were doing the same thing. So while we are having a blessed gently rain this morning and breakfast is just over, I thought I would enjoy myself writing to you.

1st. My health has been poor for ..... three days, in bed most or part of the time. I did more than I was able last Sunday in one of my churches. I preached Saturday night, lectured the Sabbath-school half hour or more Sunday morning, preached hard to a fine congregation at 11 and then administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It was too much for me, as it was very warm indeed. I am now better and improving.

2nd. We have a splendid garden, have had Irish potatoes since the 8th inst. had beans for dinner day before yesterday, have fine cabbages, some beginning to head, and as to mustard we have given away all that we could and then had to plow up a great quantity to make room for our winter collards. We had plenty all last winter, so we are scarcely ever without vegetables. We have had a favorable spring, except it has been too cold for cotton. I have started over my corn with the plow the fourth time. My cotton is beginning to grow, will have squares in a week or 10 days, my oats are beginning to head, and my crop prospect is tolerably good. God has dealt very kindly with us this spring for which we thank him daily.

3rd. We had a splendid celebration of our second anniversary of Goose Pond Sabbath-school on Saturday before the second Sabbath in this month. We had recitations by the school, public speaking and a splendid dinner. We had prepared two tables nearly 90 feet long each, and more than 200 people stood at these tables, each headed by a minister and when all was quiet, graces were offered. God presided over the all the exercises and honor was done to his blessed name. Better order I never saw. O! that you both and all the little sweet ones could have been with us! It would have done you good to have been there. The school has gone on now for more than two years without a break in it, and ..... more than 70 names are on the roll, not one has died in that time.

4th. A letter from Rebecca Jane not long since says they have bought a nice home and are now living in it. Maggie sends love to both & the children. Will you go back to Ark. right away?

Your father, E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 38

(Written across top margin: I see your Uncle John Benson every month as he is an elder in Center Star congregation. From all that I can gather, I think it was a mistake about your Aunt Catherine being dead. Last week I go a letter of 12 pages from "Sis". O such a precious letter! All was well. "Elbridge Fielder" such a name! Love to all the children, & kiss them for grandpa)

Parks Store, Ala.  
July 20th, 1888

Dear Joe & Kannie:

In due course of mail your letter of 25th, ult was received and gladly read from first to last.

I am glad to learn of the fine prospect you have for corn, as portions of Texas have heretofore suffered so much by the drought.

I do not know from your letter whether you have cotton or not, but infer that you have not. Did you plant any?

I am so sorry that you have no vegetables. I make war upon the rabbits both with my gun and steel trap, so they don't bother us much. We have had an abundance of vegetables - onions, beans, beets, mustard, lettuce, tomatoes and cabbages, as well as Irish potatoes and now our sweet potatoes are coming in. Day before yesterday we counted sixty (60) white headed cabbage, which, if they do well, will afford us, in part, a good living by Fby.

I have kept my turnip patch well plowed all the season, it is clean and mellow as a plant bed, and with a good season still on till fall, I hope to raise plenty to do us till spring. I propose, at least to do my part faithfully and then be content.

I have a good ..... crop for our old and worn land. Have worked it well and layed it by clean and nice, but have not depended upon good working, but have coupled my prayers daily with it for God's blessings upon our labors. Thus I work and then I pray, working hard so as to do our part well and depending upon God to bless our efforts often quoting in my prayers, "Trust in God and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed". Will God's promise fail? So far with me it has not.

I am not only working what I can on the farm, but I am trying with all the strength that is in me to "do good". I preach two Sabbaths at Goose Pond in the month besides being superintendent of my school, then 14 miles above me I have charge of Union Chapel congregation and generally lecture the Sabbath-school every appointment, then 17 miles below me I have charge of Center Star congregation, and also lecture their Sunday school..... .., besides I have extra appointments every fifth Sabbath. Sunday week I am due at Bolivar two miles above Stevenson. The hot weather is very oppressive to me. After getting home, I am generally sick to or three days and sometimes longer. But strange to say, God raises me up ready for my work on the next Sabbath, so that I have not missed an appointment so far in my year's work. God be praised.

I have always felt that I incurred the displeasure of all my children, except Lorenzo, when I married again. I have not a word to say, only that Maggie is as good to me as ever your sainted mother was. God is good to me too, bless his holy name. The thought of their displeasure did hurt me. O so much! But I love you all just the same. My great big warm heart ..... constantly & my prayers go up daily for you. Precious ones, do you do the same for him who pens these lines? Maggie sends love.

E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 39

Parks Store, Ala.

Oct 23rd, 1888

Dearest Joe & Kannie,

I am so glad that you are back again at your old home, and that I can write you, as of old, at Elm Wood, feeling assured that you are already there to receive my letter.

How I wish I could have been with you when Rebecca Jane & Lorenzo with at least a portion of their families visited you at the old homestead. Our cup would have surely been well nigh full. Will we ever live to see such a time. Surely I never

did want to see you all so much, and Maggie seems to be just as anxious to see you all as I do. She has said to me two or three times lately, could we not go and see you all next spring or summer. I have not seen my way sufficiently clear to make a definite answer. My age and scant means to use in that way are forbidding.

Recently I staid all night down in Marshall with three nieces of your Uncle Perry Clarks. One of them - Mrs. Cowley - lives in Logan county, Ark. and is here visiting her sister. I think she saw you when here in eighty. She said she did not see how anybody could keep from loving you and she intended to visit you and others of my children sometime next year. If she should come, receive her kindly. She is a sweet & good woman. I have no better friends in this country. I married their father & mother, both of whom are now dead, and one of their sisters is now lingering in last stages of consumption, which is the cause of Mrs. Cowley being in this country. Three better women are hard to find.

I stay with your uncle John Benson every month as I am preaching to his congregation. Your Aunt Eunice is in poor health. Nervous disease has been praying upon her system for more than a year, sometimes able to be up, then again confined to her bed. Mary & Matilda are still at home with their parents, and nice as ever. Eliza who married Dilworth and went to Texas long years ago is dead, leaving some children. William Benson - your Uncle John's oldest son died more than a year ago, leaving a widow and four children. James & John are both married, leaving their father & mother and two sisters alone. Elizabeth, the oldest married a Nichols in Madison county, who a short time since was stricken with paralysis, and the last news was that he was helpless. Your Aunt Jane Woods was in good health the last time I heard from her.

My own health is pretty fair for my age. I have not missed an appointment in the last twelve months. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." Maggie sends love. Kiss the children.

E. J. Stockton

#### LETTER 40

Parks Store, Ala.  
March 15th, 1889

Dear Precious Kannie:

This beautiful Friday morning while everything is so clear, calm and beautiful I lift my pen to write to my children.

Maggie has been very sick all week with measles, I reckon, though she had them in a very light form long years ago. She has been sitting up nearly an hour but is now just gone to her bed. She is still broke out very much, quite sick at her stomach, bad taste, but not much fever, if any, though she still has no appetite and is

very weak. Measles are everywhere in this country, though as yet, no one has died from them.

We have had a beautiful open winter, splendid for outdoor business, and so far March has been beautiful, clear weather, but a little cool.

On the 29th of January Maggie was fifty years old and last Monday was a week I passed by 71st milestone, and though clumsy and seemingly of little account, yet I am a very busy man. I work in the Sunday-school and preach every Sabbath and as a consequence have a great deal of mental labor to do to keep myself prepared for the work before me and on my hands. But what my hands find to do I do it with all my might. And besides all the odds and ends on the place necessary to be done, I have 4 or 5 acres in oats, 5 acres I want to plant and cultivate in corn and one acre in sorghum, besides my patches and nobody to do these things but your pa. So you can see how constantly busy I am, and what prospect lies out before me of taking any rest and ease in my old age when the evening of life is not only on me, but far advanced with me. What will the end of all this toil and labor be? Surely I never was more busy in my life. I could not, and can not, do any more. I plowed part of this week. How it does tire me.

When I fell sick this last time, it seemed like I could not get well, even after the disease was brought under control.

Dear Rebecca Jane - God bless the precious child - sent me a beautiful Birthday present, it was a book called "The Beautiful Story". When I opened and saw what it was and who .... sent it, my eyes filled with tears. Oh I was so glad that I was remembered by my precious sweet child! You never will know how much good such things do me, unless you live to be old & have your children to send you tokens of love. I want to see you so bad, and still more when I am sick. Will I ever see my precious children again? God bless them.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

#### LETTER 41

Parks Store, Ala.  
June 28th, 1889

Dear Joe & Kannie:

Yours of the 9th inst. was gladly received in due time and read with interest.

I am sorry to learn that the children have poor health, especially that baby Elbridge - curious name - is so puny. I do hope he will get all right and live to make a good and useful man - live to bless you both and make you happy as well as to compensate you for your anxieties and trouble in raising him.

I hope your move to Harrison will be profitable as well as pleasant. It seems to me that it will be a pleasure to both for you and Rebecca Jane to live near each other and have the pleasure of a good Sabbath-school and church every Sabbath, as well as many other advantages, but at the same time it seems to me that you surely will get tired moving so much.

Yes, it would be a great pleasure to me, indeed, to be with you both to enjoy your company and your offers of filial love and kindness now that I am old and well stricken in years.

I came in one day last week from plowing, it was very hot, Maggie took my horse watered & fed him for me. I got into the house and got down on the bed exhausted and almost fainting. When dinner was announced I went to the table, took a few bites of bread and butter, drank a gulp of sweet milk, left the table for the bed again. When I got up to go to plowing again Maggie had poached me an egg, broiled me a piece of ham, had me a glass of good sour buttermilk, all setting on my little writing table on the porch and said I must eat or I could not work. Her thoughtful kindness encouraged me to try to eat, and so I did, and went back to my work plowed till hour by sun and gave out, and so it is pretty much every day I have to plow. I have been very poorly for more than a month, had a real bad spell with my bowels some two weeks ago.

Crops are very backward and very irregular in size, and the prospect for good crops is by no means flattering. There is some tendency in the country to have flux and measles still linger among the people.

I saw in The Cumberland Presbyterian the obituary notice of your aunt Katherine Clark. She died on the 8th of May. A card from Donnell sometime ago stated that Polly Ann Bond was at the point of death, so I am listening every day to hear of her death.

I enclose a letter to little May which I hope will make her proud.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

#### LETTER 42

(Written across top margin: I always expected to come to my things or bring them to me. They belong to the dead rather than to me, and I hold them rather as custodian and as sacred mementos of the tender past. Hence my great interest in them. Perhaps I'll send for them in the fall, and I hope they'll all come up intact. E.J.S. I am still poorly)

Parks Store, Ala.  
Feb. 12th, 1890

Dear Daughter:

Yours and dear little May's letters to hand in due time and read with interest. May's letter was very good for a child without experience in letter writing and with but little practice. Tell her I am watching the "....." for her little letter and hope to see it in print.

A letter from Donnell last week tells me that Kannie married a McAlister, that they had moved off several miles and the children had all gone with them; that he was at Bob Benson's and would probably visit Boone before a great while; that he was rapidly improving in appetite and strength. I hope he will soon be all right.

I wrote to him what a drawing of soul I had in my rapidly declining years to come to my children. Silence was the only response he returned in his letter. I have written the same to Lorezno but as yet have no reply. I have not written to Jimmie upon the subject as yet as he is in an unsettled state.

You and Rebecca Jane were together in consultation in reference to our coming to Boone, but want to know just our situation before saying, "Yes, with all our hearts we say, Come, whether in pauperism or otherwise. The more destitute and the more pressing your wants and necessities, the more anxious and ready are we for you to come to us, that we may minister with our own hands to your every want and smoothe your pathway as much as possible to the grave." Without writing further upon a subject to me so tender, so delicate, I simply say that my way is not clear to come. Long years ago God gave me children without consulting me as to whether I had money or was able to take care of them or not. .... as the years came and went, one after another was committed to my charge faithfully. As I could I fed, clothed and took care of them, till they were able and willing to take care of themselves. Long since they have all gone out from my home and left me, oh so lonely and desolate, and when in my loneliness and desolation I write that I want to be with them, they write to know just our "situation". It seemed tome that there was an unpaid debt-----

I took a lease on this old place for six years. My time is out this year. I am not able to run it longer. Will do something this fall. I wrote to Donnell to send me a list of my things in his possession, please show this letter to Rebecca Jane and let her kindly make out a list of all she has of mine and send it to me. I had two beds & a lounge, quite a number of good pillows, sheets, blankets, quilts, counterpanes, coverlets, bedstead, nice table clothes, towels & trunk of books & .... I shall be sorry & hurt if anyone destroyed.

E. J. Stockton

## LETTER 43

Parks Store, Ala.  
March 18th, 1890

Dear Kannie:

I received your letter and one from Rebecca Jane last week, both the same day, and perhaps was as much surprised a you were when you received my letter. It certainly is no pleasure to me to "hurt" or "rend" one of my children. I simply wrote as I felt after receiving your letter. A brief history of facts may not be amiss. I had received a letter from you, and many from Rebecca Jane, inviting me & Maggie to come and spend my last days with one or both of you. I never saw my way clear to accept your filial invitation until last winter. My health failed last August, sometimes I was in bed and sometimes able to be up and drag round, often not able to chop a fire of wood nor put it on the fire after it was cut. For six months I thus lived, most of the time having a desperate cough till sometimes I would well nigh lose my breath. I felt that I would soon have to give up my congregation and cease my work in the ministry. The question then came up, Where shall I retire to close the evening of my life. My children, Oh! my children were first and uppermost in my mind. And from the kindness always shown me when with them, and from their many letters, I thought a mere expression of wishing to come to you would call forth the warmest invitations to come with ..... that we would be received with open arms and warm hearts. In this state of feeble health and dependence I wrote to Donnell then in a short time to you and Rebecca Jane the drawing of soul that I had to come to my children. Donnell wrote me a newsy letter but was silent upon the subject that interested me so much, by and by your letter came informing me that you & Rebecca Jane had consulted together about my coming, but in all the letter, as I now remember, not one word was said in the way of an invitation to come, neither was there one word said as to how I wished to be furnished, either with some of you or to ourselves. I was disappointed & pierced. My letter was a fair type of my feelings. Dear Kannie I could not know your feelings or your intentions only as I gathered them for the letter. If I misunderstood you it was not intentional, and without deception I could not write otherwise than the way I felt, and my feelings certainly came from the tenor of your letter. If my letter hurt you, dear child, think of the feelings of that heart whence it came when it was penned. I have been able to take care of myself so long, that when I begin to feel that I have to look to others to care for me, I feel that I my dependence upon them will be a burden, and, of course, I feel very tender and sensitive upon the subject.

For the last two weeks my health has been better, thank God. Another milestone has been passed on my journey.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

## LETTER 44

Parks Store, Ala.  
June 24th, 1890

Dear Kannie:

Joe's card was to hand a few days ago announcing the safe arrival of a new comer at your house. It did not take me unawares. Rebecca Jane had written me long since of the expectation of such a stranger. I felt greatly relieved and very thankful that all had passed of will and that both mother and babe were doing reasonably well.

Dear children, another immortal is committed to your hands, and the responsibility of caring for and training it for heaven rests upon you. May God help you train it and all the balance for God's glory and their enjoyment for ever.

Dear Jimmie has been on the wing for the last two months: first to the Northwestern Pacific coast, the round trip being a distance of 4,500 miles and costing him \$130.00, then in the second place to Marshall, Kansas City and St. Louis, prospecting at all those places except St. Louis for a home and future work, but still had found no place for the sole of his foot to rest upon; left proposals at most of these places, but up to the last letter, nothing definite had been done. How restless it makes me.

A most sad thing happened to Bro. Morris, one of our best and most faithful preachers, not long ago. His oldest and grown daughter at home was hoeing cotton with her brother on Friday evening, and when midway of her row she proposed to him for them to go to a big spring to get a drink, he told her to wait till they got out and he would go. She dropped her hoe, went after water, but did not return. When he hoed his row out, he went to the spring, found her shoes on the bank and her bonnet floating on the water. He at once raised the alarm, search was made but without success. Next morning great numbers gathered at the spring and at length found the body several feet under the water with her arms locked around a limb. Aberration of mind had been noticed for more than a year cropping out at times, but for the sake of the family little had been said about it. Several years ago a grown son of his went deranged and is now in the asylum. Such is our world. God pity & comfort Bro. Morris.

Dear grand children, grandpa has no name for little brother.

Your father,  
E. J. Stockton

## LETTER 45

Parks Store, Ala.  
Aug. 30th, 1890

Dear Joe & Kannie:

Maggie and Ann have been sick for two weeks with grippe or deep-seated cold attended with bad cough, fever and agonizing pain in the head, though at the present time there is a little improvement and I hope the worst is over. Mrs. Carr has been quite puny, and last of all I have been almost down with my lungs, violent cough, fever and general disability. If there is any improvement it is so slight as to be scarcely discoverable. I have been thus poorly for a month. So you see our house has been like a hospital for quite a time.

You stated in your letter that "sister" had again been very sick. I have been waiting and waiting to get a letter from her telling me just how she was but not a line from her pen has reached me yet. When I know any of you are sick and delay writing me, I do suffer so much uneasiness, and such a state of suspense could be avoided so easy if some of the family would just drop me a line. Some of them kindly send me the Boone Banner and I watch its pages, but not a word about her sickness or about the family do I see.

I have been anxious to know something about Sallie's marriage. I presume that it was not agreeable by her marrying away from home. So tell me all about it. Everything will be news to me, as to what sort of a man she married, his habits, moral or religious character, his property, where they are living, why her marriage took place away from home. I am so anxious to hear from you, Kannie, and the babe, how you are ..... and the little stranger's name.

Donnell seems to be doing well in Texas and in his last letter stated that the children would move to Texas soon. The tendency again seems to be that of scattering instead of living near together, for Jimmie is only held where he is because he can not sell out. I don't suppose he has made a dollar since he sold out his paper, but has spent hundreds in traveling besides supporting his family.

Bro.. Weaver wrote his mother while she was staying with us that they would all board with sister at \$35.00 per month, five of them. That will about finish her up, besides it is too little. She can't afford it.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

## LETTER 46

Parks Store, Ala.  
Dec. 30th, 1890

Dear Joe & Kannie:

Your letter was to hand Christmas Eve just at twilight; also a box from dear Rebecca Jane containing a beautiful "Tidy" for Maggie and a nice "Watch Pock" and surely as beautiful a "Paper weight" of transparent glass as my eyes ever looked upon as pleasant Christmas gifts to us both. How often she remembers her pa with precious mementos of her thoughtful kindness and tender affection and filial love. On opening the box, "God bless my precious child", went up from a full heart. A note from her hand was in the box explaining the presents, also telling of her house full of boarders with Tommie in charge of eight prisoners in his room-jail - and saying she would write after Christmas. With so many to cook for and wait upon her hands must be full indeed and her cares many. I wonder if it pays for all her labor, responsibility and care. I think she wrote me sometime that Tommie was allowed by the court 75 cents for each prisoner per day in county scrip. Is it worth 100 cents to the dollar? What was the board the scholars at per week for each one?

Two or three weeks before Christmas two men were drinking in Scottsboro late at night when about midnight some trouble came up when in an instant one drew his pistol and shot the other's brains out and made good his escape. The murderer is 20 years old, while the man he killed leaves a wife and a house full of children. So the world goes.

It seems to me that there is a great difference between your last two letters. One excited my curiosity to know how you came to be so poor, and my sympathy because you were so hard run and embarrassed with debt. How could I think of increasing that burden already so heavy on your shoulders, as my presence maybe would do. I would rather suffer myself than in anyway to add one iota of suffering to anybody and especially to my dear and precious children. But your last letter places the thing in quite a different light. Now what am I to do? Be guided by your last or by your first letter. Maggie is not only willing to come but even anxious. Dear Joe & Kannie, I don't want to come embarrassing you, if our presence will do so either in your feelings or condition. I beg of you not to be hurt because I thus write. I think it is best for me to do so. We are thinking much about coming next fall, & if we come we want to work to that end.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

## LETTER 47

Parks Store, Ala.  
May 19th, 1891

Dear Joe & Kannie:

More than two months ago I wrote you but from some cause I have received no answer. I leave you to imagine my state of uneasiness and surprise without trying to describe it. I am satisfied that you would not of choice give me so much trouble. What is the matter?

I am very poorly, indeed sick this morning. I got up out of bed and drank a cup of coffee, returned to bed again, but so uneasy am I that I determined to try to sit up long enough to pen these lines.

We have written long enough to each other about our coming out there to spend the balance of our days. I feel, dear children, like something positive and definite must be done upon our part, and must done this year. We want to live to ourselves, and have something that we can call our own. When I am have gone - and that will not - can not be long, I want to leave Maggie a little home of her own where she can live also the balance of her days. We don't want to be paupers if we can help it. Now we want to be with some of the children. My ..... done, what a pleasure, what a joy, to have some of my precious children by and around me as my sun goes down. Next to having my very dear and precious Savior with me, now that life is ebbing away, I want the presence of my precious children.

In the first place, are you going to stay where you are? If you are not permanently settled, it is useless for us to come. But if you are, then one more question. Will you deed us a lifetime interest to say ten or fifteen acres of land that we may improve and have it .... our own? It doesn't seem to me, dear children, that this is an unreasonable request, that is however for you to say. Consider it, and write me frankly and fully so that we will feel and know just what we may depend upon. I am so impressed with the wish and importance of fixing a comfortable little home for Maggie to enjoy when I am gone, that I will be restless till that place is located & fixed if it's God's will. Please answer at once without equivocation.

Dear Jimmie is near Neosho on a farm of 100 acres in a mile & a half of town. Donnell is in Stevens county, Texas & Breckenridge is his post office. We have had drought of nearly seven weeks. It is raining now. Write soon. God bless you.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

## LETTER 48

Parks Store, Ala.  
June 6th, 1891

Dear Kannie:

Yours of May 29th to hand yesterday morning and read with much interest.

From the time I wrote you making the proposition I did, of course, I could but wait anxiously for your reply. You can therefore imagine with what interest I broke open and read every line. My disappointment I will lock up in my own bosom and bear it with Christian resignation. I know when I wrote you of the embarrassed condition of the old homestead and therefore did not expect any part of it. But from your letters away back I learned that Joe had bought some more land and it was on that that I hoped to get a home in the quiet evening of life. But you say "the dower is over all his land", and of course that settles the matter as to donating I never thought about the dower covering the land he bought. Of course I have no right to be hurt at you for not giving the land thus embarrassed. But I had it in my mind that the dower only covered the land that you lived on when I was there.

"We must do something. I feel that it is my duty to try to make some preparation for Maggie when I am gone. God helping me I will do it. But how to get it, is what gives me so much anxiety, for I know the time is short in which to make in which to make preparation. We'll do something this year. The older I get the more anxious I am to be with my children, and the more I want to see them. But we want a dear little spot with a cozy little house that we can all our own, but that little spot we want near by some of the children. We don't want to feel like we are paupers and in a "poorhouse".

I can but regret too that you are so unsettled. It worries me so much for my children to be wandering about with no settled home. I thought you and dear Joe had had enough of such a life.

But in conclusion you say "we want you to come & stay . . . and then go with us. We will make it as nice & easy and pleasant as we can." but close this offer by saying "Joe says he will not stay here any longer than he can help it." That seems a little like cold water thrown on the proposition. But enough of this. We will do something.

Jimmie bought 100 acres & paid \$2200 for it one and a half miles from Neosho with a splendid spring on it.

Our crops are well nigh ruined from want of rain. We have not had a season since March. Old as I am I have not seen the like before.

Your father E. J. Stockton

## LETTER 49

Parks Store, Ala.  
July 4th, 1891

Dear Kannie:

Yours to hand yesterday, and, as you request, I answer immediately. Allow me first to say, dear child, that I think you make trouble where there is really no cause for it. Maggie and I consulted together and determined to do something before the close of this year. The next thing to determine was, Where will we go? Finally we made up our minds to go to my baby child, because I have always expected and intended to case my lot with her to close my life's journey. Thinking you were settled permanently in Boone by coming to you, we would have a chance of seeing all my children except Donnell. Full of these thoughts, hopes and expectations I seized by pen and wrote you our intentions. How anxiously I awaited your answer. When it came, down went all my found hopes and pleasant anticipations. Do you wonder now at my "disappointment". I could have cried heartedly is tears would have done any good, as my only hope of seeing and being with and near my was suddenly and I Might say forever blasted. You never will know the depths of the sorrow of that hour, unless perchance you should live to have a similar experience. As I now remember you had never said a word about moving, but having recently bought more land of course, I took if for granted that you were settled. You know, dear Kannie, that I am too old to be moving round, not knowing where I am going, without a board to shelter my white thin locks, as you have never said in your letters when you are going, beyond the vague and indefinite expression of going West. Hence it did not seem to me in the midst of my great disappointment and sorrow that cold water was thrown upon me. I felt like you could have written more encouragingly than you did, told me where you were going, etc. But not a word as if that was nothing to us and in which we had no personal interest.

You say also that Tommie & Rebecca Jane will leave as soon as they can sell out, but not a word as to where they are going. Now, dear child, what inducement have I to come in view of all these facts?

I am old with the frailties of age constantly increasing upon me. According to the course of nature I will soon leave Maggie. I am so anxious to have a little comfortable home for her when I am gone. I am perfectly restless and will be till I get some place and settled down as my own little home. I think this right and am determined to work to this end, and I hope and pray that God will help me. As yet however all is dark and the way is not made plain. When I get up a plan disappoint-

ment is the result. I pray every day for the Lord to direct my steps. I want to do his will. O Lord, guide the tottering steps of thy aged servant whose work is well nigh done.

In conclusion allow me to say that dear Joe has always been kind and respectful to me. Indeed I remember how kindly you both treated me when I lived with you for a time. You know why I left yall.

E.J.S.

### LETTER 50

Parks Store, Ala.

Oct. 1st, 1891

Dear May & Berthie, My own sweet grandchildren. The good news of your profession of religion at your recent meeting reached me yesterday through your dear mother's letter. God bless your young and tender hearts. I love you more than ever, because there is now a new tie that binds us closer together than ever before and I cannot refrain from writing you both this letter this morning: Dear sweet girls, professing religion and obtaining it, is not all of life's work. Indeed, it is just the beginning of our life work. Your mother said you had not joined the church yet but promised you would. Go into the church of your father and mother the first opportunity you have. The precious Savior says, "Go into my vineyard and work today" In the vineyard church, and not out of it, is the place for every lover of the Lord Jesus, and when once in the church begin an active and persevering life of Christian work and duty. You are now newborne infants in the lap of the gospel, feed constantly on the sincere milk of the word that you may grow thereby. Praying and reading your Bibles ought and must be a part of your every day's business. When you sit down to read your Bibles silently but devoutly ask the Holy Spirit ask the presence of the Holy Spirit in your hearts to help you understand what you read., for without his presence you will read to little profit. Daily you ought to pray for his constant and abiding presence in your hearts. The prophet says, "It is not in man that walk to direct his steps". God never intended for man to go alone no more than mother intends her tender babe to learn to walk by itself. As she takes it by the hand and leads it step by step so the Holy Spirit will lead you in every step you take. O, he is so previously tender and his feelings so find and delicate that you must not grieve him away from you. Ask him to fix up your little hearts as a constant abiding place for him, so that he will shine away all of your distress and light up whole life inner life, and thus dwelling constantly in you, you will always live and walk in the light.

Begin your new life as a devout and consecrated Christians and with pure hearts and clean hands hold on hold on the .....of your way all through your life's journey. Oh, how your heavenly Father will pour out his blessings upon you! You know but little of the trials that await you, but through them all God will carry you safely as long as you have the Holy Spirit with you to guide your steps. Strive to daily cultivate your religion, just like you care for & cultivate you beautiful flowers. Think more of it than anything else. Love your father and mother very dearly, but love your Savior more. Be careful to mind your parents in all things, but be still more careful to please the previous Savior. Watch over temper, keep it in perfect subjection, never let it get the better of you. Watch over your tongues, control them in spite of everything everywhere and at all times. Guard constantly and always your actions. In doing these things you will constantly grow in grace, live happy lives, be bright and shining lights in the church, do a great deal of good in the world & lay up treasures in heaven. God bless my sweet & precious children.

Your Grandpa, E.J. Stockton

#### LETTER 51

Parks Store, Ala.  
Nov. 14th, 1891

Dear Kannie:

This beautiful Saturday morning I write this letter, though it will not leave the office till Monday. Since August I have been in a very unsettled state of mind, sometimes thinking I scarcely could not stand it away from all my dear children any longer. I must certainly go to some of them, yet in all my correspondence with them, for I wrote to you, Rebecca Jane and Jimmie in reference to coming to some of you, yet nothing was sufficiently in inviting, as I saw it, to break up and spend what little means I have to come to any of you. I certainly would have come to you, dear child, but for the fact of your unsettled condition which, I must say, hurts me very much. O! why are you and dear Joe not satisfied with your home and country. I know the country and think you ought to be contented. But for me to come there in your unhappy and discontented condition, with the possibility of your breaking up next fall, or maybe sooner, and going to .....Texas, did not seem to me to be very encouraging to me to come and be with you so short a time for surely at my advanced age I did not feel like venturing such a long trip n search of an early burying place, even if I lived to get to Texas. If I could have found a permanent home with you in Boone I would willingly and most gladly have come to close the evening of my life with you; then I would have been so near all of others, except Donnell, that I could hope to see them. But alas that hope is gone.

Rebecca Jane wrote me that Tommie would write me soon in reference to a home with them, but not a word from him so, of course, I must know what that silence means.

Well, I wrote to Jimmie also about my great desire to be with some of my children if I could not be with them all, asking some land upon which to spend my remaining days. He answered readily that I could have the land but he had not house for me and just then he was not able to build one for me. Now, dear Kannie, I have written all these facts to you that you may know why I have been so unsettled in my mind all these months and that you may see with your own eyes why I am still away from my children. It is true that my church clung to me and refused to accept my resignation, but so anxious was I to see & be with my children that I would have broken away anyhow but for proper encouragement. With these facts before you, you will see at once that is no fault of mine that I am still here.

Last Friday was a week ago I bought 40 acres of land lying one quarter of a mile west of where I was living when you were here, and Maggie and I will move to it inside of a month.

A few weeks ago at the close of my sermon at the Pond when I went to dismiss the congregation that I announced my deep impression that somebody belonging to the congregation would be dead in a short time and wondered who it would be. Last Friday night was a week ago Mr. Pender went to bed as usual & was dead in a few minutes. I am poorly today.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

## LETTER 52

(Written across top margin: Settle yourselves where you are and if I live and am not too feeble, I'll come to you as Jacob went to Joseph in his old age. I may be too feeble to travel so far in a year from now even if I am living then. In another I will tell you something of my place.)

Parks Store, Ala.

Dec. 15th, 1891

Dear Kannie:

I went to the office last Friday evening and found two letters waiting for me, one from Jimmie and the other From you and I take this opportunity while it is raining this morning to answer yours.

Jimmie writes that is was suffering with a rising on his hand, and that Maud had been sick for more than two weeks with something bordering on scarlet fever, that her throat broke both inside and outside, that she was now better. The other children had had the same disease but in a lighter form.

I have suffered with rheumatism for six weeks, a part of the time I was so bad that I would frequently cry out when I would move, and Maggie would have help me on and off with my clothing. It was all through my system but worst in my back and hip. I blistered with croton oil besides other medicine from the drug store. I am better but not well. With rheumatism all through my system how I am to get along and make a living I can't tell. God will provide some way for me, but by what means at the present time I know not.

You cannot possibly, dear child, want to see me worse than I ant to see you, for the thought has often pressed itself upon me that I loved my children better than they loved me. In this I may be wrong "I cant help but think you are more childish than you should be about our way of writing to you to come." This may be so. Surely I am old enough to be childish, and so this frailty is common to old age. Why should I claim freedom from it, and why should you expect anything else? Still in my childishness allow me a word: I have always confessed to having a very tender and sensitive nature and I have tried most of my life to cultivate purity of heart and the tender and finer feelings of human nature, and hope that in this my life had not been an utter failure. For fifty two years the grace of God has reigned in my heart and, may I say it, the presence of the Holy Spirit in my inner life has been the light of my life and my pathway. Have all these things made my feelings and life more obtuse and coarser than that nature with which I was born? God pity me, if such is the fact! But, dear baby daughter, let me say that when people are old as I am they are timid and afraid to venture, for if there should be a failure in any way, they feel

that they have no strength of their own to fall back on, but in their frailty, they are helpless. If you live to be as old as I am, you will see & feel things differently from you do at present. God bless my child! Never a day passes that my prayers do not go up to God for you. How I love you, want to see and live with you!

I am not in my home yet. Do not know when I will move as there is a family in it that is going to be slow in getting out. I am not forever settled. The rigor of winter was just before me and in my perplexity in which I had been for months this place offered and I bought it, seeming to be the best thing I could do. I prayed on it much.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 53

Parks Store, Ala.

May 1st., 1892

Dear Baby Child:

This is Sunday four o'clock wanting fifteen minutes. I am so weary, so uneasy. I went to Sunday School this morning, opened at 9 o'clock, worked in it till it closed, took recess, then preached one hour, walked home one mile, pretty nearly given out by the time I got here, could not relish my dinner, as I was so tired and prostrated that my appetite was gone, then lay down upon the bed to try to rest and recuperate. After lying on the bed for a while, feeling my loneliness in my prostrated condition, my thoughts turned to my children, as they always do when I am this week and feeble, and particularly did I think of dear Kannie and her request to hear from me right away. So I got up and am now penning these lines.

Dear precious baby, I still feel a degree of hesitation in coming square out and saying, "I'll come", unless I know you would stay where you are. It will require all the courage and strength That I can possibly command to travel there and then the thought of being left again by myself, or picking up myself and starting perhaps on another long journey, seems to be more than I can do. I am certainly too old and infirm to wander much longer. Such will hurry me to my grave.

Jimmie insisted on my selling my land for just money enough to take me there and live with them till we could make better arrangements. But he has mortgaged a portion of his land to build him a house in which to live. Also Mr. Sevier is dead and Mrs. Sevier is left will nigh destitute. Considering all these facts it seemed to me that the load he was already carrying was just as much as he was able to bear. I wrote him that it was not the land that broke the camel's back, but it was the added straw, and that we might and probably would be "added" straw if we were to come.

He still however insists on our coming and sharing with him such hospitality as he can afford. Dear Kannie, it is no secret among the children that I have always desired to be with or near you when I started across the river. Knowing that my departure is near I am truly anxious to get nearer my precious children. Jimmie is settled and would it not be better on that account for me to try to go to him, than to come to you unless you were settled? We both like the kind offer, so plain, so fair, so candid, and feel disposed to accept it, but I think before answering you positively that you had better write us again as to your calculations in the future. We will therefore wait patiently for your next letter. So far as I can see now the whole matter is in your hands.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

LETTER 54

Parks Store, Ala.  
May 19th, 1892

Dear Kannie:

Your letter to hand last Monday evening. I supposed you would answer my letter promptly and was therefore expecting it. It was all satisfactorily enough except the possibility of your selling out and moving away. That in itself throws a great damper over my feelings, and should it take place would hurt me so very much, and is one of the great drawbacks to my coming. You say you have the first claim upon me. I now you do, but to think of breaking up here and moving so far at my time of life to get to be with you, and at the very first opportunity sell and move so far away from me there as I am away from you here, seems enough to throw a chill over my feelings. Feeling a great desire to with my children, as at least as near to them as possible, I am going to offer my land for sale preparatory to going somewhere next fall or winter. I repeat again that if you were settled I would not hesitate for a moment in saying, "I will come, if the Lord permit". To have you and dear Rebecca Jane so near together and two others not very far off would certainly be a great pleasure and satisfaction to me the short time of my stay on earth, for I am conscious that the last sands in the hour glass are rapidly wasting away, and the narrow house appointed for all the living will soon be the home of this frail body that has now reached its seventy fifth year. God willing, it would be so pleasant, such a satisfaction to have my children with me when that hour comes.

However anxious I may be to come everything will depend on my selling out. If it is a hard matter for you to sell it may be just as hard for me to sell. Money is so hard to command here because so scarce that it is exceedingly doubtful about my selling. I have however determined to make the effort and will do the best I can to accomplish my purpose.

How far is the place you kindly offer me as a home from your place? Is there water on it? To me now everything is very dim up and down on that creek. I remember the Sam Wilson place but don't remember just how far away from you it is, but it seems to me like it is nearer to Harrison than it is to you.

If I should come I wonder if dear Joe would haul again across that big mountain.

But enough about moving at the present.

We have not had a favorable spring and people are backward with their crops. We have had Irish potatoes for a week and have our sweet potato patch more than half set out.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 55

Parks Store, Ala.  
June 27th, 1892

Dear Kannie:

Tell May and Berthie and all the balance of the children that grandpa has half a bushel of great big wild goose plums in a basket while Maggie is doing something with some in the storeroom, great big blood red ones, most as big as small apples. We have a fine healthy tree with bushels on it. We don't pull any but just pick them off the ground. How I wish you had the basket sitting before me. What a feast you little folks would have and how you would enjoy it.

I have my corn laid by except two days plowing and two small late patches. Except 5 short rows I have my sweet potatoes laid by. They are beautiful. I have just four acres measured in cotton just ready to begin blooming and as pretty as I well could desire. There is not really a bad spot in it. No part of my crop has ever suffered an hour for work. I have in I suppose about 14 acres, besides a patch of good oats that will have to be cut this week. During the season I have hired a girl four and a half days to chop cotton. My crop is clean and nice and is promising so far. The Lord has been so good to me I know not how to praise him enough. I did not see how it was that I could make a crop. But I trusted in God. I went to work looking to him for strength and health. Every morning before getting out of bed I ask most fervently that he will give me health and strength to do the work of that day. Sometimes, indeed often, I give out and can hardly get to the house. I rest a bit; eat supper; then I am so weary, so tired, so sore, I just have to get bed without prayers and try to rest and sleep the best I can, but that is not very good. Amid this toil and suffering my general health has been reasonably good for my age. I have been puny however for a week not able to do but little. Yesterday however I was better. This morning I took hold of the plow handles, plowed two hours. It was

close and sultry. I gave out could hardly get to the house, have been in bed most all day. Late this evening I am trying to write this letter. A little while ago a man rode up to the gate for me to go to a burying and hold services. Though sorry I had to tell him I was not able. A neighbor woman had a cancer cut out Saturday and died yesterday. The Lord has blessed every lick I have struck, for my crop prospered all the time. Hence I repeat, "The Lord has been so good to me." I know not how to praise him enough. Daughter, join with me in praising him.

I am living just west of Broadway's. December was a year ago, I married his son Charlie to a Miss Gayle. They live near me. Saturday was a week ago Charlie was carried to the asylum to be treated for insanity. What a world! Is it possible to go through such a world and at the end find a heaven of bliss? Yes, thank God. Bless him, O! my soul! Not a word from Jimmie since April 3rd.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 56

Parks Store, Ala.  
Sept. 7th, 1892

Dear Kannie:

This beautifully bright Friday morning I am pleasantly seated in the back porch, while Maggie is making me some shirts on the sewing machine in the house. My health is good as usual, except I have been suffering with ensyphilas on my right hand for the last month. I have more or less fever all the while besides the pain I suffer with my hand. Sometimes I have it partly under control and sometimes not. I have not done anything scarcely for the last month on account of it. Gathering time is nearly here and I am in a poor fix to meet it.

My crop is hardly as good as I thought it was when I wrote you before. My corn has a great many barren stalks, they are large enough but nothing on them.

The wet weather or something else has materially injured my cotton. I do not write this in the way of complaint but to correct what I wrote you before in reference to my crop.

The pension act became a law on the 27th of July last and pensioners will draw from that date. I made out my application for a pension on the 13th of August and forwarded it to Washington but have heard nothing from it since, and know not when I will make my first draw. The proof I made may not be satisfactory, and I may have to make other proof and more proof before my name is entered on the pension roll. I have no fears but what I'll get it sooner or later.

The fogs and mists of uncertainty as to my coming this fall still obscure my pathway. Money is so scarce, indeed there is almost none in circulation among the common people and will not be till the new crop brings it in, and then it will take it

all to pay the debts of the people. I among the balance, am in debt, and then it will take considerable money to take us there. But if we could succeed in getting enough to pay our debts and take us there. What then? Sit down there with nothing? Nothing to eat, nothing to wear, nothing to do anything with? If I could sell my property for money then I could live there as well as here, but to do that is the "tug of war". I will just have to wait for opening events before I can answer you positively. Your suspense cannot be greater than mine, and I am sure that I want to see you as bad as you want to see me, but I cannot control events.

Jimmie writes me that hard work on the farm is telling so upon his constitution that he will be compelled to turn his attention to something else.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 57

Parks Store, Ala.  
Feb. 21st, 1893

Dear Kannie:

Your good affectionate and interesting letter to hand sometime last week, accompanied with the birthday present, the work of your dear hands, Rebecca Jane's and dear Ivy's. What a surprise!! How unexpected! Yet it is just like you all. God bless every one of you. I had a good deal of mail laid on my table, saw a great bundle, thought it was sample papers, or something of the sort and paid no further attention to it, but went on reading my letters, and even read yours and still thought the birthday present had not come but was on the way. Finally I picked up the bundle and commenced unrolling it, still wondering what it was and whose it was from, and who could have sent it. Hence you can imagine my astonishment when I saw what it was. My eyes filled with tears. My precious two daughters do not forget their only parent, as these kind tokens abundantly show. Again I thank you all for your tokens of filial tenderness and affection. Maggie joins me in thanks, because these tokens do so much good.

Our waters here are now very high so that we have had no mail for nearly a week, and it is raining today and threatens to continue, so I do not have any prospects of getting this letter off soon, unless I can catch somebody going to Scottsboro.

No news from my pension for months. I hoped all the while that I would get it and thereby keep out of the field from work myself, but the prospect now is that it will be just as it was last year. I thought I now could work another summer, for of course I will be less able this year than I was last. But I will not complain.

How anxiously I look forward to Saturday week. It will be not only a great day because Cleveland will be inaugurated president of the United States, but if I live to see it, I will be seventy-five years old. How wonderful that I have lived so long. Dear precious child, you have some reasons at least to be proud of your father: He never got drunk, he never swore an oath, he never gambled, he never had a fight in life, not even in boyhood, neither is there a living man that can say truthfully that I ever cheated or defrauded him. But I have tried to live an honest, truthful upright life, and for more than fifty-three years I have tried to live a Christian.

Pray for you, my child, yes every day of my life prayers go up for you & every child I have got. Don't be despondent and gloomy, but believe in God with all your heart, and these seasons of gloom will finally pass away & sunshine will be yours forever.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 58

Parks Store, Ala.  
March 26th, 1893

Dear Kannie:

I am quite unwell today, have read till my eyes hurt, rested myself on the bed a while and now by way of another change, I am penning this letter to my baby child. It is a beautiful day, a little cool and the last Sabbath in March. As you know I am now turned into my seventy-sixth year and while my general health is reasonable good for my age, yet I have not the strength to go, or to hold out to do anything, that I had a year ago. I seem to be heavy with no spring or elasticity about me, and if the day is a little warm and gray I am filled with lassitude, but still am thankful for the health and strength with which I am blessed.

Through Rebecca Jane's letter I learn that you have again moved and that you are now near to her in the midst of the town. What was the object of the move? Will the rent be higher? Has new business sprung up for you both by which you can make more? I hope the change will be for the best. I hope some of you will write immediately as I am anxious about Rebecca Jane and will be while her health continues so bad. So many now together that can write, and can write intelligently, that surely you will not let me be uninformed as to how she is getting along. Don't wait for me to inquire or answer letters but keep me will informed as to her health.

Your experience, dear child, in trying to train you children for usefulness and for heaven is not peculiar, at least it is very much like my own. Oftentimes I would get into such straits or butt up against the wall as I sometimes called it, that I would not know what to do and so it is perhaps with most parents who strive con-

scientifically raise their dear ones right in the sight of God. Don't be discouraged. Don't get out of heart. Don't lose faith in God. They are yours. Heaven has committed them, as precious jewels to your care. He looks to you as a mother to come to Heaven and bring all your with you. Pray, train, live the very best you can and God will do the balance.

Pitiful sight the other day in our court room, father and grown son at the order of the Judge was brought before his honor handcuffed and with a chain locked together before a large audience for horse stealing. Pray for yourself & children every day & God will bless you and them.

Your Father, E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 59

Parks Store, Ala.

May 3rd, 1893

Dear Kannie:

This dark rainy morning just after breakfast the first thing I do is to write to my precious baby. Though the spring has been cold, rainy and backward so far as farming interests are concerned, yet the wild vegetable world does not seem to be affected by it; and the foliage is beautiful and the leaves are full grown and look slick and oily. April is just passed and gone. It was a stormy month, and although we had no cyclone yet we had some very threatening clouds and four storms during the month though without damage. Dave Austin of Scottsboro and another gentleman riding in a buggy along the big road near Larkins Landing had a limb to fall from a tree mash the buggy down, knocking Austin's hip out of joint and bruising him otherwise considerably. It was several days before he could be hauled home.

Typhoid fever has been clinging to the neighborhood below Santa creek for a year or more with very fatal result. Quite a number have died and two more cases reported last week. This is one of the strange and mysterious diseases, seemingly no more cause exists there for it than elsewhere and yet it is no where else in the whole country.

If you take the Cumberland Presbyterian you have already learned that Jimmie is commissioner to the General Assembly at Little Rock. A letter from him states that he was not an applicant, but without his knowledge received the appointment. He is very proud of it and is preparing to go, he is anxious to be a member of that great body.

A letter from Donnell recently informs me that he is preaching a great deal and that success attends his labors. That Johnny would be in school at Buffalo Gap and doing well. That in that portion of Texas they were suffering for rain.

I suppose I wrote you that Lorenzo had left for the present Eureka Springs, and was on a large plantation owed by Mr. Vantrease and he and Bee had gone into the business of farming. May is still living with her grandparents. Masionville, Mo. is his post office.

Now a letter in reference to myself. I have rented out a portion of my land, have a small crop for Willie and myself. I still have to do all the particular plowing as I cannot pick up a hand for a day or two whenever I want one, though I am getting along pretty well. My personal health all winter and spring has been reasonable good though I frequently have giving down spells. .... Rebecca Jane since you wrote.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 60

Parks Store, Ala.  
July 11th, 1893

Dear Kannie:

I received your letter in due time, surprised a little to learn that you had moved again, hope it will be for the better. It would be a source of satisfaction and comfort to me if you could and would settle down permanently somewhere and be satisfied. Ordinarily prosperity and success do not attend such restlessness. I still keep thinking and hoping that providence will open up some way by which I can myself come to Arkansas, but I have little encouragement to do so when you are so restless and always on the wing. With this restless unsettled spirit, giving way to it and perhaps cultivating it. Should I finally succeed in coming to Boone, you might very soon leave and get as far away from me as you are at the present. I want to come, indeed I want to come badly, but for no other reason than to be with my children. You see the point of discouragement. I want to be near you and Rebecca Jane, but my feelings are greatly chilled until I hardly know what to do for the best. My time of life bids me not delay, but to do something and do it quickly.

I have but one horse and I have had him scaffolded up for the past four weeks by the side of the stable. I have no idea that he will ever get well. I think it is a spinal affection. He has but little use of himself from his loins back, otherwise he seems to be reasonably well. Mrs. Cuperton - Mary Frazier it use to be - still has my old "Bill" horse, now in his twenty-eight year, and I plow him.

I do not remember in life that I ever saw a harder year in which to make a crop. It has been too wet & too cold all spring and the early part of summer, and crops are very unpromising indeed, indeed corn and cotton both, and then sometime in June we had a heavy hailstorm that riddled our corn blades into shreds and beat our little trifling cotton to pieces. I can make but little corn or cotton. I lacked fifty dollars of paying for my land, I also failed to pay only in part some other debts, but my pension came to my relief, by it I will pay all of my old debts. I mean last year's - when I make another draw in next month. I owe twenty dollars - old score - I will draw twenty four. I will still have this year's account to meet.

Jimmie was seeking an Indian agency at Quapaw in the Nation, but will not get it. A letter from him, 3rd inst says they are suffering very much for rain and that his crop is very depressing. He also said that the wheat market opened in Neosho the 2nd inst at 35 cents per bushel. I keep up but do not have much appetite to eat. We are all up.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 61

Parks Store, Ala.  
Aug. 15th, 1893

My Dear Kannie:

While Maggie & Willie are at the well washing and I am a little lonesome I will keep myself company by talking with you and the family with my pen.

Donnell says in a letter April 10th "Johnnie is still in school at Buffalo Gap, he is doing fine, he is getting to be quite proficient in languages in Greek and Latin as well as English. He has, I think, the intention of teaching. I want to get him in as an assistant somewhere. It will cost me about \$500 for the two terms he has been in school. I have kept it all paid up promptly until the last two months." It gratifies me very much to send such a record of Johnnie. I hope he will make a man of himself both mentally and religiously, In his last letter Donnell writes that five congregations petitioned presbytery for his services and he accepted and took a young preacher in to help him in the arduous work.

I have got letters from all his children except Jimmie, nothing from him since July 3rd. I am looking every mail for one. Surely I will get one this week.

I believe I wrote you about my horse being sick, he died some two weeks ago so I am left without a horse. If I travel it will be like the animals on foot, being old and not used to that mode of travelling I surely will make little progress. I have a very poor crop indeed, the poorest I think I ever made. So far this year I have lost two good hogs, a milch cow and the only horse I had. Although I write this from the "Blue Room", yet I am taking it very cheerfully, relying on the promise "That all

things shall work together for good to them that love God." I know that I love him, therefore I cling to the promise, as well as to many others.

Scottsboro has recently had a great moral shaking up by Rev. J. B. Culpepper of Georgia, a travelling evangelist with a large gospel tent covering 800 or 1,000 people at once. He has a large circular moving chair. In preaching he sits for a time and then stands, as he is a feeble man. Many promised to do better, many promised consecration to the Master for the future, many professed conversion and about seventy joined the churches. His style is sensational, but he is a good man and does great good. I went to hear him once. I liked him. The reason I did not go more I was sick. I have been poorly all summer, was quite sick for a week or ten days, so was Maggie and Willie, a part of the time none of us able to bring a bucket of cool water and therefore suffered for the want of it.

As you wrote about potatoes, I have a fine patch of old fashioned yellow ones. I am poorly today & must quite.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

## LETTER 62

(Written across top margin: I have always wanted to leave Maggie with or near you when I am called home but now that hope is gone.)

Parks Store, Ala.  
Sept. 11th, 1893

Dear Kannie:

Saturday evening I received yours of the Sunday before and read it till I got to where you had sold out and would soon start to the Nation. My heart sank within me, I passed the letter to Maggie, I could read no further. Dear child, you are far enough already from your only parent without adding hundreds of miles more, and that too among the Indians. I felt lonely before I got your letter, but you cannot tell how much more so I feel this Monday morning. My tears are had to restrain while I write. I can hardly control my pen. For the last twelve months I have been watching every opportunity to sell my land so I could come to you and be near Rebecca Jane, and not from Lorenzo and Jimmie, but when your letter was read, in a moment down went all my fond hopes. For years nothing has hurt me so bad.

I am old and infirm, my health has been worse this summer than common. Everything indicates to me that my days are well nigh numbered, and that I am nearing my end. I had hoped you would be present when it came but of this there is

You ask, Will I buy a horse or what will I do? The long dry and hot weather has well nigh ruined our crops here, both corn and cotton. I am not able to buy a horse at the present, and am not able to feed it if I had one. So, I am so completely hedged as I cannot see my way in the future. I know not what I'll do, only I'll still trust God as I have done all my life. I am so anxious to leave Maggie without debt or embarrassment when I go home that I must use all the economy I possibly can in my humble living.

But again as to your moving: Neither of you is stout, you are going with what means you have got among the Indians there. You cannot buy you a home. You will spend most, or all, of your money in settling a place and in feeding and clothing the family, depriving yourselves in the main of schools, of churches and of society, and in a few years one or both of you perhaps taken away from your children, thus leaving them without a home of their own and orphans. Weakly as both are these things could happen without anything being very strange about it. It seems to me that the wiser plan would be to go when you could get a home of your own and be thus prepared for the worst if it should come. I do not want to discourage you nor fill you minds with fearful foreboding of the future. God knows I pray for you every day and wnt you to do well. Will you pray for him who pens these lines in sorrow?

Your father still, but sad, E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 63

Parks Store, Ala.  
Nov. 27th, 1893

Dear Kannie:

How I did wait and watch the post office for your long delayed letter. Friday evening I went to the office thinking surely I will not be disappointed this time, and lo yours of 19th was there in waiting for me, all the way from Indian Territory. When I got to myself you may imagine how eagerly I broke it open and devoured its contents from the first line to the last one. How strange to get a letter from my baby child from the extreme western portion of the Chickasaw Territory as if the further away the better. Somehow there seems to be a "Bable" among us as a family. No two of us now together. Think of it. Donnell in Texas, Lorenzo at Masionville, Mo., Jimmie at Neosho, Rebecca Jane at Harrison, Ark., Kannie at Marlow, Indian T. and myself at Parks Store, Ala. Was there ever a family more scattered according to numbers? The more I long for them to gather together in one place and hope and long to be in their midst the further apart they scatter until now I am hopeless of such enjoyment. I feel now so lonely, so sad. I feel now like the trunk of an old tree looks when it stands alone in the forest; shorn of all its branches

and has been scathed in a hundred storms until all the branches are stripped off and gone and the old stump stands alone.

Well, earth is not my home. I have wandered long and much. I started at the cradle, my journey will end at the grave. I am already nearly in sight of that house. My body will soon fall asleep. And then my history will close, my earthly pilgrimage end, and with it all my deep yearnings and anxieties for my previous children. God bless them forever!

I wrote to Jimmie in October that I felt so sad and lonely since you left. I would go to him if I could get money enough to take us there but I cannot get the money. So I have settled down in my feelings again to remain here, and perhaps my journey will close here.

I am glad you got through your long and tiresome journey in safety, and that from present appearances you are well pleased. But I have lived long enough not to trust or rely too much on first appearances for sometimes they are deceptive. I hope and pray that you may be satisfied and do well.

A letter from Rebecca Jane not long since states that she is in better health and still teaching.

Jimmie as you know when to the General Assembly last May. At the fall session of Neosho presbytery they made him moderator. So you see they crowned honors upon him. I am so glad that he is taking interest in the church work. Write soon. Where is Mary Ewing? Love to "Jim's" family.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

#### LETTER 64

Parks Store, Ala.  
Jany. 2nd, 1894

Dear Kannie:

Yours of the 24th ult. to hand late Friday evening and devoured every word to the last one. I was in Scottsboro yesterday on business and went over to the depot to see the agent to learn the price of a ticket but did not find him, so I can not tell till I see him. I would have written Sunday but knowing I would be in town Monday I have waited till today to write. I am sorry that I cannot tell you how much it will take to bring us there. Guessing at it I expect it will take \$75 but it is only guess work. Next time I am in town I'll try to find out.

Is Marlow a railroad station, if not what is the nearest station to you and how far is it from you. How far do you live from Ardmore, that is a railroad town is it not. Give me that the name of the railroad nearest to you. Then perhaps there is another difficulty, being in the Nation you have no civil laws or officers to execute civil laws. In making out my blank vouchers upon which to draw my quarterly pen-

sion it must be filled out by a civil officer who has a public seal to his office. Away out there I perhaps could find no such officer. What do you do for laws to govern the people? If this difficulty can be obviated and the money can be furnished the conclusion with us is to come, but I fear they will not be removed. I am afraid to do anything towards trying to get ready till I know these things. Write as soon as possible so I may know what to do. Life is exceedingly uncertain with me. What is done ought to be done at once because of its uncertainty. When I am gone I would like for Maggie to be left with you. She of course will draw my pension when I am gone. And therefore will not be a burden to no one. I would so much like for her to be left with you.

She received a nice dress pattern and your pa a beautiful silk handkerchief on Saturday evening before Christmas from the hand of dear Rebecca Jane. Tears filled my old dim eyes when Maggie opened them and I heard the accompanying note read, and involuntarily I said, "God bless my child".

January has opened with two beautiful days - cold nights with heavy frosts and clear bright days.

Mrs. Carr we learned this morning was quite sick and Maggie & Willie are gone there and though it is now 1 o'clock yet have not returned. Yes I have known redroot nearly all my life. It is a good astringent.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 65

Parks Store, Ala.  
Jany. 23rd, 1894

Dear Kannie:

This beautiful January morning I take my seat to write you in answer to yours of recent date though I have nothing encouraging to write you. We are so panic stricken here that we can sell nothing for money and people are slow and reluctant to buy on credit. I have a reasonably good 40 acres of land where I am living with 25 acres cleared and a splendid well of living water that I am offering for about two hundred dollars cash or two hundred and sixty dollars on time and so far I have failed to make a sale.

As to raising money outside of selling my land there is no hope of that. But enough of this for the present.

Donnell writes me recently that Johnnie is still in school in Buffalo Gap College and doing well; that he has changed his address from Strawn to Rising Star, Texas; that he would take Wallace and Eupha to keep house and they would live in the parsonage in Rising Star at least for this year.

No news from the other children since I wrote you last. I am uneasy about Jimmie because of his long silence. I am looking for a letter from him every mail.

On one of my visits back from the West while living there I stopped at Larkinsville and while spending a part of a day with friends there I met up with two young lady friends of long acquaintance just back from school in North Carolina. They were beautiful, refined, and highly accomplished. How bright their future. I thought but how little we know of our destiny. They soon married. One married a fast young doctor who lived a few years and died leaving his young widow with three children. After the mourning season past she put on ribbons and gewgaws generally lived a fast and high. Finally she met on the train a nice gentlemanly looking doctor, he made love to her, she bit at the bait, they married, he took her to his pretended home in Arkansas, when the train slowed up in the town, he slipped off and she never saw him afterward. She started back to Alabama, took yellow fever and died on the way.

The other married a nice young man of property and of a good family, but he became a drunkard, lost his property, abused his wife, brought her down to poverty and want, and just last week in Scottsboro she was inpassing over the railroad, knocked off by a heavy freight train, lived till the next say and died, leaving a drunken husband and a number of children. Such is life in this world. My very heart bleeds at their sad history. God bless you, my children now & ever.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

## LETTER 66

Parks Store, Ala.  
Feby. 26th, 1894

Dear Kannie:

I received yours of 16th inst. last Friday evening. I had been looking for it some days. Yes, Scottsboro has long been a money order office. If you send the money, you can send the money order in a letter to Parks Store, Jackson County, Alabama, then I can take it to Scottsboro and have it cashed. But dear baby child, if you can't spare it without injuring you and dear Joe don't sent it all. Anxious as I am to be with you I would rather not come than to hurt you both in your business matters.

My anxiety however is increased when I know that my life hangs on a very slender and brittle thread. Since I last wrote you I have been seriously admonished of my mortality and to set my house in order to quit these mundane shores. I was suddenly attacked just at night with some kind of lung trouble, either congestion or something like it and came near dying. About 1 o'clock Maggie ran to a neighbor's

for help and for hours two men held me in a sitting position on the bed while Maggie bathed, rubbed and applied mustard, and in spite of all it seemed that my lungs would cease to respire and death was inevitable, but I passed through the ordeal, got better and still live. I knew nothing, or at least knew nothing of it next morning and have not been able to call to mind anything of my sufferings or anything that was done for my relief. You perhaps remember the night that I got to Tommie's in Washington what a spell I had before day next morning and sent for Dr. Williams, this was like it. How long before I have another is known only to him who knows all things and what the result of another attack will be I cannot foreknow. Hence I am anxious to get with some one of my precious children as soon as I can.

We have a deep snow on the ground now.

I write so poorly that I will not fill out the page.

God bless my children,

E. J. Stockton

#### LETTER 67

Parks Store, Ala.

April 7th, 1894

Dear Kannie:

When you read these few badly written lines you will not be astonished at not have heard from me sooner. I have been sick, o! so sick, so sick, down even to the valley of the shadow of death! On yesterday two weeks ago I had another one of my "spells", then Sunday another, and then early that cold Monday morning I took third spell about 8 o'clock and for more than eight hours suffered so that I have no language to describe to you, precious child, the torture, the excruciating pain I endured. I could neither lie down nor sit up. I walked the floor till I could walk no longer. I then was obliged to sit in a chair. I vomited, in addition to my other sufferings, until I could sometimes it seemed like go into spasms. At 4 o'clock a doctor from Scottsboro got to me and in half hour he relieved my terrible agonies by injecting morphine with something else into my arm and side. Then I went through a course of medicine, since which my whole physical system has felt like a wreck. When I will be able to do anything I cannot tell.

Maggie ran and waited on me so much in that cold blizzard that she too took sick with fever and cold spells at the same time, but she is better.

Never did woman wait on man any better that she waited on me. So great was her sympathy and anxiety for me that she peered to suffer as much as I did.

Kannie, precious child, I want you to love her as long as she lives and love and cherish her memory when she is dead and gone.

Your letter came yesterday evening stating that in two weeks you would start the money by registered letter. Again, dear Kannie, if sending the money will embarrass you and dear Joe I would rather you would not send it, for I don't know when I can ever pay it back, unless I could sell my land and at present I see no chance.

We will wait till the money comes before we do anything, then if my health is so far restored that I can do anything we will go to work in earnest to get off.

Should we get there will we have to get permission of the Indian authorities to live in the Nation and pay for such permit? Write everything about white people living there.

Your father, E. J. Stockton

### LETTER 68

Pierce City, Mo.

Feb. 20, 1897

My Dear Pa:

The children and I were greatly delighted at receiving your photograph some-time ago. And especially Archie and I appreciate it all the more highly because of the fact it was mailed on our birthday, when I was forty-six and she was fifteen, and therefore we know it as our birthday present. Yes, I think it good likeness of you both, and it indicates very little change from your appearance when I last saw you in your Alabama home seven years ago last fall. I am very grateful to you for that letter, so you need not close with a half apology for writing the kind of letter you did.

We began a protracted meeting in our church here last Sunday night. Rev. George Harbinger of Mt. Vernon is doing the preaching, and is doing it well. So far no demonstrations, beyond a constantly deepening interest are noticeable. There is a good attendance and splendid attention. We are praying and hoping for a good meeting. It is certainly needed badly enough in this town. A Congregational evangelist held a meeting in the Congregational Church here a few weeks ago, and did what I consider a very dangerous and unsatisfactory work. For instance he gathered the children on the front seats, one Sunday afternoon, in classes as nearly as possible, with the Sunday School teacher in each class, and after lecturing he called for all of them who wanted to accept Jesus as their Savior to come forward and give him their hand. About 75 or 80 went forward and that was accepted as conversion making them fit subjects for church membership now and heaven hereafter. I am sure that numbers of them, from their very actions, did not know what they were doing or realize the important step they were taking.

But then I may be an old fogy in these matters, simply because I never saw it after this fashion before. We are all well. Your son, J.A. Stockton

## APPENDIX I

### Rev. E. J. Stockton Obituary

Rev. E. J. Stockton passed to his eternal reward at 8 p.m., May 23, 1902, receiving the fulfillment of the promise, "Thou shalt come to thy grave in full age like as a shock of corn cometh in his season." He was born in Blount county, East Tennessee, March 4, 1818, brought by a widowed mother to Jackson county, Ala., in the spring of 1820, the youngest of five children. His mother died seven years later, leaving the children to be distributed among the neighbors. He grew up without educational advantages, and in his young manhood served as a United States soldier in the Creek and Seminole wars in Alabama and Florida, 1836-1838. He professed religion in October, 1839, at a camp meeting held at Mt. Ancient, now Goose Pond, in Jackson county, Ala.; joined the Cumberland Presbyterian Church at that place in March, 1840. In the following May he was made ruling elder, and in September, 1842, was sent by his congregation as a representative to Jackson Presbytery, the first one he had ever seen. At the presbytery, being much concerned about a call to the ministry, at his request Father Hunter preached on the call to the ministry, as a result of which, after three years' struggle, he presented himself and was received as a candidate for the holy ministry. He was licensed to preach by the presbytery at its spring session in 1843, near Guntersville, Marshall county. He and Rev. J. J. Burdine rode the circuit together the next fall and winter, preaching at about thirty appointments, receiving as compensation for their services \$7.50 each. He was ordained to the whole work of the ministry by Jackson Presbytery at its spring session in 1845, after a rigid examination lasting twenty-four hours at Bolivar, Jackson county, Ala. He went to school to Rev. W. D. Chadick for six months after licensure, after his ordination for five months to Rev. G. A. Collier. He studied theology and the literary sciences in the saddle and by the roadside as he rested during frequent journeys, and by a dim rush light in an open fireplace by night and thus acquired a good English education. He was married four times; the father of thirteen children, four of whom and his devoted wife survive him. He came to Marlow, I.T., in June 1894, and though in poor health and much enfeebled, he entered heartily into the work of the ministry, traveling long distances, preaching with zeal and power that few young men show. For three years he stood almost alone in this frontier country until the increasing infirmities of his years forced him to retire in 1897, from the active discharge of the duties of the pastorate, since which time he preached at every opportunity. Such in brief is the life story of a great man, but no one save God can recount the history of the ministry covering

sixty years. He touched thousands of lives, and never a one that did not lift toward God. A man of great natural powers, he cultivated them in spite of every adversary, until he became a giant among men; the possessor of a scholarship that had ripened by sixty years of intelligent toil and original research, his knowledge of God's word was marvelous, and as a teacher of truth he was a peer of any man I have never known; but great as were these attainments they tell not the secret of his great life. Towering above all else was his love for God and for men, the love that constrained him to give his life fully and freely for Christ and the church. He loved men and gave himself for them. No slight thing ever kept him from the work that he loved with such passionate fervor. Floods of water, extremes of weather, difficulties that to most men would have been insurmountable, only led him to greater effort. He was known as a model of promptitude. For fifteen consecutive years he answered to every roll call of his presbytery and whenever it was at all possible he was always in his place. It was my privilege to be an inmate of his home for more than a year, a privilege that seems inestimable to me now, for under God it has shaped my life more fully for him and his cause than anything else could have done. I shall carry the memory of that holy home and that saintly character with me always. It is a very precious thought to me that the closing work of that long, beautiful, useful life was the preparation of a young man to preach the gospel that he loved so well, and upon him he poured out all his treasures; loved him, cared for him, guided him, bore patiently and tenderly with him and led up toward God. And so it was with hundreds. Universally loved and respected, hundreds of hearts were bowed down with sincere grief when he left us. We loved him well, and because we did we are glad that at last entered into life. For years a great sufferer, he is free from pain; after a long life filled with labor, he is resting now, and has entered a good and faithful servant, into the joy of his Lord. A true man, a great preacher, a devoted servant of the church has gone home; and in our hearts there is that that tells us that we shall not see his like soon again.

“There is no death, the stars go down  
To rise upon some fairer shore,  
And bright in heaven's jeweled crown  
They shine forever more.

“There is no death; an angel form  
Walks o'er the earth with silent  
tread;  
He bears our best loved things away,  
And then we call them dead.

APPENDIX II  
"Born into that undying life  
They leave us but to come again  
With joy we welcome them, the same  
Except in sin and pain.

"And ever near us, though unseen,  
The dear immortal spirits tread.  
For all the boundless universe  
Is life--there are no dead."

-F. A. Brown

(This obituary was published in The Cumberland Presbyterian in the issue of July 10, 1902.)

(Such details Kansas (Ramin) Jackson Williams died in 1941 in Mexico, O.)

## APPENDIX II

### Mrs. Kannie Williams Obituary

The passing of Mrs. Kannie Williams marks the close of a long useful and richly beautiful life. The youngest child of Rev. E. J. Stockton, well known as a Cumberland Presbyterian minister in Missouri, Alabama, Arkansas and Indian Territory, her long life reflected her early Christian training. She professed religion and joined the church at the age of twelve, and when at the age of nineteen she united her life with that of Joseph Williams in Harrison, Arkansas, where her father was pastor, another Christian home was founded.

The mother of twelve, and the wife of one who was never rich in this world's riches, her life was of necessity subject to much that is rated as hardships, though shielded in every way that a thoughtful husband could offer.

For forty-seven years she walked beside her husband in a beautiful team work, he providing the means for food, shelter, clothing, education and inspirational literature, which to them was one of the necessities, while she strove valiantly to add a touch of beauty to the common work-a-day life. She found beauty in every thing God has made leading her children to see the grandeur of a sunset, the quiet dignity of the stars and the vivid pictures in the floating clouds. The melody of a bird's song, the delicate formation of a flower petal or the individuality of a leaf - all held for her a charm that amounted to reverence as all unconsciously she built into her children and their associates a deep appreciation of the beauty of the simple things in life.

She loved life and joy found expression in lilting song and springing step as she went about her household tasks; or in reading to her family in soft expressive tones, thrilling stories stimulating to high ideals and honest effort for useful Christian living; or at her husband's request in the long evening lifting her voice rich and sweet in sacred hymns and songs of friendship, love and home.

Hers was a quiet life hid with Christ in God. No heralds shouted her passing but rich calm life ran like a deep still river and no life of hers ever touched but is richer for her passing.

So ended thus a rich full life  
Whose sun as it sank to rest  
Shed forth its rays on countless souls  
Who by her touch were blessed.

(Sarah Melisa Kansas (Kannie) Stockton Williams died in 1941 in Marlow, Ok.)

### APPENDIX III

#### Pages from Life's Unwritten History

#### Sick and Fallen Soldier

By Rev. E. J. Stockton

It was near the hour of midnight, when all nature was hushed into silence and repose. The cold dews of February were rapidly falling like gentle showers of rain. Darkness covered the earth. The twinkling stars were shining dimly through the thick, heavy mist, that hung like a cloud near the surface. The air was cold and damp. Naught was to be heard to break the stillness save now and then the quick, sharp bark or howl of the prowling wolf in quest of prey.

Stretched at full length upon the cold wet ground in this still and lonely forest, lay a sick and fallen soldier all alone. No eye sees him but that All-seeing eye that is in every place beholding the evil and the good. Will he not fall a prey to these hungry and ravenous beasts of the wild and desolate woods, as they are full of them? Almost every night they are screaming and howling around the camps of the tented army as if they would devour every soldier in it. He is denuded of everything like clothing save his nightdress, and is cold and shivering from head to foot. If he escapes the bloody fangs of the hungry wold, will he not die of exhaustion and cold? He must have help and yet there is none to help. His mind is weak as is his body. There he lies; he does not know how long he had been there, nor how he came to be there. He has no knowledge of where he is; knows nothing of the past nor of the future. He is sensible of but one thing - and that is that he is cold and suffering. He looks up at the cold, dim stars, and then around at the wild, dreary woods where he is lying. How desolate! O how lonely! He makes an effort to rise, but alas! He has no strength; he falls back again prostrate upon the ground. What is the matter? But he gets colder and his sufferings increase. There is a small heap of pine brush near to him, but how is he to get it? Like a child, he crawls full-length upon the ground and hides himself away in the brush. Of course it protects him from the cold, piercing winds that are blowing around him, but he feels that he is growing weaker, and his sufferings are still increasing. Something must be done, or it will soon all be over with him. God is watching over him and sends him help just in time. Two comrades are passing; he recognizes and calls to them; otherwise they would have passed him by. Blankets are brought, he is gently lifted upon them and borne back to the camp to the joy and gladness of his comrades who had been searching for him so long and with so much anxiety.

This scene is laid in Florida, near Fort Melon, and not a great distance from the head of the "Everglades", in 1838. The soldiers were resting, many of them

sick, and having returned from a long and tiresome march over the glades from General Jesup's army, who was still pursuing the retreating Indians. This soldier had been violently seized with brain fever, and in a few hours became furious and raving like a maniac. Days and nights passed with him in this condition, during which he had to be confined in his tent by strong hands. Finally on the night described, while his nurses sank into a sort of repose, he succeeded in making his escape into the forest. On and on he rushed in his wild and furious condition, as if impelled by superhuman strength, till he could go no further, and weak and faint he sank to the ground. How long he lay there is does not know. But his raging fever is checked. Again he becomes rational, and is now sensible of his suffering. Not being able to walk, he crawls to and hides himself away in the brush. In the meantime his nurses aroused from their short sleep and found him gone. They raised the alarm, and search was made in every direction until found by the two soldiers, wet, cold, and helpless as a child. Of course he will never be warm again. Poor fellow, his body will be laid away in the sands of Florida, there to sleep in the wild and lonesome solitude's that sleep that knows no waking time. So certain of this are some of his friends that letters bear the sad news back to his home and friends that he is dead. But not so. God sees not as man sees. His ways are not our ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts. His exposure to the cold and heavy dews of that night so checks the violent and raging fever in its onward march to death that medicine takes effect, the disease is brought under control, yields to treatment, and the patient lives! What a mercy! O, what an interposition of Heaven's providence! His nurses fall asleep, he rushes out through the darkness into the wild forest, lies upon the cold ground till the fever is stopped, and by this means his life is saved.

It was near midnight again when the same soldier lay prostrate on the ground, and again he is suffering intensely. He is dangerously sick; the symptoms are all dangerous and alarming. His sickness is unto death. Already he is unconscious of his outer surroundings; has reached a point where he is lost to the world. Friends this time stand around witnessing his agonies. They are in deep sympathy with him. Tears are streaming down their faces. His young and devoted wife is holding his head in her lap. In a few moments the struggle will be over, and he still not a Christian. No wonder there is so much weeping and anxiety among this friends. They all have Christian hearts. Prayers go up incessantly in his behalf. This scene is taking place in the altar place at a camp meeting, and God has stricken him down, like Saul of Tarsus. He is powerfully convicted, and there he lies as above described. Not sick in body, but his soul is sick unto death, and he is now dying unto sin, is being crucified unto the world. No wonder he suffers. No wonder he takes no notice of things around him. His extremity has come, the crisis has been reached. In his

helpless condition he sinks down, down, down into ----hell? No, no, but into the safe and blessed arms of Jesus! Glory to God in the highest! He lives! He lives! and he lives to die no more! In a moment he is on his feet; he pressed his fond and now happy wife to his bosom; he rushes into the arms of his friends with joy inexpressible and full of glory! There is joy likewise in heaven in the presence of the angels! The dead is alive, and the lost is found. O memorable night! Its joys may not be written. They are beyond the reach of human pen. The scene is without a parallel. Those, and those alone, who have had a similar experience can understand and appreciate the wonderful transition from sin to holiness, and from death to life. It lives in his memory as of yesterday, and will live on to eternity.

More than forty years ago license was granted to a probationer to preach this same gospel to others, which had been the power of God in his salvation, and he has tried to be faithful over a few things committed to him by the Master.

In the first scene he was saved temporally, in the second spiritually, and in the third he fondly expects, though the blood that cleanseth from all sin, to be saved eternally in the kingdom of his Father in heaven.

Scottsboro, Ala.

#### APPENDIX IV

Erasmus Jasper Stockton married Eliza C. Benson, daughter of William Benson and Catherine Shell, on August 29, 1839. Children born to them were:

Rebecca Jane, born 10/23/42, in Jackson County, Ala. She married Thomas Stockton Walker, son of William Walker and Martha Stockton. She died on 12/4/95 in Harrison, Ark.

Green B. Stockton, born in 1843 in Jackson County, Ala. and died in 1868 in Dunklin County, Mo. He was unmarried.

William Stockton, born in 1845, in Jackson County, Ala. Believed to have died young.

Erasmus Donnell Stockton, born 10/30/46. He married Isabella Walker Agney on 12/24/67 in Dunklin County, Mo. He died 6/6/1926. He was a Cumberland Presbyterian Minister.

Lorenzo Dow Stockton, born in 1848, in Jackson County, Ala. He married Rose Virtrus on 3/19/69 in Mo. He lived in Marionville, Mo. and was a farmer and salesman.

James Addison Stockton, born 9/16/50 in Jackson County, Ala. He married Maud Siever. He was a newspaper editor, editor at one time of the newspaper in Harrison, Ark. He died in Piercy City, Mo. or Walters, Ok.

Laura (or Lora) Stockton, born in 1855, in Jackson County, Ala. She died between 1871-1880, estimated 1873, believed to be buried in Frazier Cemetery in Jackson, County, Ala. She was unmarried.

Sarah Melinda Kansas (Kannie) Stockton, born 8/15/56 in Jackson County, Ala. She married Joe Williams on 1/23/76 in Harrison, Ark. She died in Marlow, Ok. on 12/4/41.

After Eliza Benson Stockton, died E. J. married on 8/19/68, in St. Francis County, Mo. to May C. Love, a widow.

After May C. Love Stockton's death, he married Ann G. Brown on 1/4/71 in Jackson County, Ala. She was previously married to a Mr. Sanford first, and second to Mr. Ira Brown. She died on 9/19/81 and is buried in Frazier Cemetery near Temperance High School, Jackson County, Ala.

Following May's death in 1881, E. J. Married Margaret Carr on 12/18/82 in Jackson County, Ala. She was born 1/29/39 and died in 1926.

E. J. Stockton was the first pastor of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Harrison, Ark. He organized the first Sunday School at the Goose Pond Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Jackson County, Ala, and pastored there for several years, longer than anywhere else. He moved from there in 1894 to Marlow, Indian Territory, where his youngest daughter Kannie and her husband Joe Williams lived. He died in Marlow in 1902 at the age of 84 and is buried in Marlow Cemetery, Sec. 6, Block 21, Grave 5. His son Erasmus Donnell Stockton is also buried in the Marlow Cemetery.

Some information suggest that E. J. and Margaret had a child, born sometime after 1882, probably in Jackson County, Ala. and named Willie Stockton. In some of his later letters he mentions a "Willie" living with him and "Maggie".

His obituary notes that he was the father of thirteen children, four of whom were still living at the time of his death. However if this number is correct, I have found no evidence as to their names or the dates of their birth.

As mentioned earlier Sarah Melinda Kansas ("Kannie") Stockton married Joe Williams in 1876. Children born to them were:

Edna Williams born 10/28/76, probably in Arkansas  
Bessie Stockton Williams born 12/24/77, probably in Arkansas  
Kannie May Williams born 11/9/79, probably in Arkansas  
Bertha Ann Williams, born 11/12/81, probably in Arkansas  
Albert Vance Wiliams born 12/14/83, probably in Arkansas  
Robert Jasper Williams born 11/18/85 in Texas  
Eldridge Fielder Williams born 3/9/88 in Texas  
James Walker Williams born 6/6/90 in Arkansas  
Joseph Donald Williams born 12/4/92 in Arkansas  
Rubie Jane Williams born 12/28/94 in Pickens County, Indian Territory

Margaret Eliza Williams born 3/30/97 in Pickens County, Indian Territory  
Lafayette Guy Williams born 4/23/99 in Pickens County, Indian Territory.

... She was previously married to a Mr. ...  
... She died on ... and is buried in ...  
... near Temperance High School, Jackson County, Ala.

Following May's death in 1881, E. J. Married Margaret ...  
Jackson County, Ala. She was born ... and died in 1938.

... was the first pastor of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in  
... He organized the first Sunday School at the Goose Pond ...  
... and founded the ...  
... He moved from there in 1884 to ...  
... where his youngest daughter ... and her husband ...  
... He died in ... at the age of 84 and is buried in ...  
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still living at the time of his death. However, if this number is correct, I have found  
no evidence as to their names or the dates of their birth.

As mentioned earlier Sarah Melissa Kansas ("Kansas") Stockton married Joe  
Williams in 1876. Children born to them were:

- Edna Williams born 10/28/76, probably in Arkansas
- Bessie Stockton Williams born 12/24/77, probably in Arkansas
- Kennie May Williams born 11/27/79, probably in Arkansas
- Bertie Ann Williams born 11/28/81, probably in Arkansas
- Albert Vance Williams born 10/14/83, probably in Arkansas
- Robert Jasper Williams born 11/18/85 in Texas
- Elbridge Fisher Williams born 3/28/88 in Texas
- James Walker Williams born 6/29/90 in Arkansas
- Joseph Donald Williams born 12/29/92 in Arkansas
- Rudie Jane Williams born 12/28/94 in Pickens County, Indian Territory