

At 2 for Mattie and I, we are out here in Old Virginia, enjoying <sup>the blessing of</sup> good health, and are about as good company for each other, - in comparison, as the perusal of an old Backelore soliloquy, in print would be interesting to himself.

I will now answer several questions of yours (The River that I am on is the Rappahannock we are about 15 miles from its mouth; are cutting white Oak; - no live oak quite so far north; - haul with 5 yoke of oxen, land on the same river haul from 3 to 4 miles, and then raft or liter it from  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 mile further, to where a vessel can lay and load. (understand it is all haul'd on wheels, have no snow here of any account if all we have had this winter had fallen some time it would not have been more than three inches on a level. yet it has been a right smart, uncommonly cold winter, as the natives say, for this climate. — My acquaintance with these Virginians is not very extensive I presume I might have been much more familiar with their customs and laws, but of their prejudices and their habits I have seen enough already. you asked what I thought of them - to answer you in short I should say that I don't think much of them at very best. But it is getting late in the night, and I must postpone the conclusion of this till tomorrow morning.

good night

Sunday Morning, I now resume my pen to finish this letter. It is a fine morning. Oh how glad I should be, to be in the state of Maine this fine day; if I was I would go and see. — But I will not murmur, as it will be but a little while ere I hope to have the privilege of seeing all my friends again. And how glad I should be to see you my Dear Almon I cannot tell you by way of writing, and I hope the time is not far distant when you will conclude to leave those northern regions and come a little further south. Now Almon I wish you would tell me what you intend doing in the future, are you determined to remain where you are, all your life time? I hope not. but as I know but very little of your situation or your attachments to your present home, I cannot advise you.

As for myself I intend to make my home in the town of Camden (Me.) but I may change my mind yet, and settle some where else. altho I think that I shall not find another so pleasant a location any where else that I know of. I intend to buy for my place as soon as I can. I shall probably have a wife when I get married; and I hope a good one. I mean to be prudent and industrious; but as for being temperate, I do not know whether I can call myself so or not for I never drank a glass of any kind of intoxicating drink in my life and I hope I never shall. Tobacco and cigars I never have had any use ~~for~~ of. So you may judge whether I am temperate in those things or not.

March 3, 1855

I did not intend to intrude on this blank page but I shall have to now, to finish my epistle. You asked how Ephraim was getting along, but I cannot tell you much about him, I have not seen him for nearly two years! I think he is not doing much.

I must now draw to a close. Please write me again as soon as you can, and don't forget to direct to Concord Me for I expect to be at home before I should have time to get a letter from you. You must excuse this hurried writing and if there are any words that you can't find out, just tell me what they are (as the Pat said) and I will explain. So no more at this time, but more anon.

I am Affectionately  
your Brother  
Almon S. Richards  
Master V.B.

M. V. B. Richards  
March 3, 1855

Middlesex (Co) March 3<sup>rd</sup> 1855

My Dear Brother

Your kind and highly interesting letter was rec'd in due time, and deserved to have been earlier responded to; but I hope you will excuse my negligence and not think that I am indifereant, or feel it a task to answer your letter. I commenced writing to you last Sunday, but did not finish, ~~finish~~ but as it has been so long I thought it better to begin anew, than to undertake to write the conclusion of such an answer epistle. Dear Brother; I was very much pleased to hear from you; glad to hear that you and your family are all well, but am really sorry that you are not more prosperous in your business operations. I hope you will be more prosperous in the future.

I rec'd a letter from Father this evening; I have not heard from home before for a long time; he has been lame this winter, but is better now. Mother's health is poor; the rest of the family are in a tolerable state of health.

Father writes that times are hard, and business dull this winter; and that it is very sickly round about, that many are dying in and about that vicinity.

March 3, 1855