

Grenada, Sept 29<sup>th</sup> [1872]

A week to-day my beloved friend since you laid your loved one at rest & not an hour during that sad day, nor since, in which my heart has not gone forth to you in love & sorrow. If deep, lasting, loving sympathy could in any way alleviate such sorrow as yours, I know that felt by my husband for you & your dear children would prove a balm to your sorely stricken heart. But alas! it is only given for mortals to weep & sympathize with our loved ones in their sorrow. Alleviation is the boon of higher powers than ours, & it is only time then that can bring to our finite sorrow any healing balm. I would that I could be with you to mingle my tears with yours, for I feel a right to sorrow for one so noble good & true as your dear husband & his death is a southern loss. Ever since the telegram brought us the sad intelligence of his death we have talked of & thought of but little else. We had not heard of his illness and had it been in my husband's power he would have been with you to have aided in the last sad rites of his cherished friend. It is a sad & painful task to me to write to you. I feel so utterly powerless to lighten the burden of your heart. Such grief as yours is so deep & sacred that I have delayed from day to day writing hoping for some composure of thought but I am not willing to wait longer, for I want you to know that my heart, love, and sympathy is with you in your distress. I know so well what your husband & you were to each other, what he was to your children – indeed how true & upright he was in every walk of life & how he will be missed by all who knew him, but oh! the loss to you – to your fatherless children. I tremble to hear the effect his death has had on you. Delicate [?] at best, with a heart bound up in your loved one, I dread the effect that such a sorrow as yours will have on your health & strength. God grant you strength & faith to bear up under it all.

I scarcely know what I am writing. My heart feels too much to utter what I fain would say. I can only offer my heart full of love & deep loving sympathy. I have drunk too deep of sorrows bitter cup not to feel for those I love as dearly as I do you & yours. God bless and sustain you is ever the prayer in my heart for you.

I hope when you are sufficiently composed you will write to me. Tell me all of the last days of your loved one & oh! bear in mind that you have not on Earth friends who love you & yours more dearly than my husband & self & who would more gladly lighten the burden of your sorrow than us. I will write you again soon. Kiss your children for me in love & sorrow.

Your friend,  
Mary D. Walthall

My husband desires to be most kindly remembered to you & yours. He has been very ailing for the past four or five weeks & I have been very concerned abt. him. He is now improving. He was confined to the house some 12 days for the 1<sup>st</sup> time in six or 8 years.

Transcribed by Christopher A. Baker, University of Florida, 2008.