

Palatka, Fla., April 11th 1889.
Return to Mrs. Patton Anderson
Palatka, Fla.

Mr. Earle:
My dear sir,

Yours of the 27th came only a day or two before I was taken with quite an attack of bilious fever from which I am still too weak for the undertaking before me, if indeed I am not too late for your purpose. Before I begin I must ask one or two questions, lest I may forget. My sons ask where their father graduated in his class? & will it be possible for them to procure this sketch that you prepare? & where? & at what price? Now in regard to Mr. John Douglass Moore. In watching the papers of 1878 of New Orleans, I often saw Mr. Moore's name on the distributing committees of that fearful scourge of Yellow fever. I got the idea that he was then a commission merchant in N. Orleans. Whether he was so announced - or how I received the impression I cannot now remember. I had lost sight of him for some years & though I would write as soon as the epidemic was over. But I lost so many dear friends & relatives with it that everything else was driven from my mind at the time. I do not think the family have lived at Point Gibson since the war. I think some of his older children married & lived near Bardstown, KY. Mrs. Moore I think is dead. All this is like a dream & too uncertain to be relied upon. We were very intimate during my husband's term of Congress, as they were living in Washington at the time for the purpose of educating their children, the two daughters & a niece were at the Georgetown Convent (Mrs. M. being a strict Catholic.) The older son (a boy of 14, I should think) was at some Catholic school in W.C. the youngest J.T. Jr. was too young to go to school. As well as I remember, he was about four years of age, & the youngest child. The eldest was a son, then I forget whether they had two or three daughters. Any way, they came next & then J.T. Jr.

When my husband was at home severely wounded, the latter part of 1864, he wrote a sketch of his life for his children. Of course I valued it more than any book I had & indeed more than almost any article I possessed. A lady asked to be allowed to read it. I felt anxious to allow it out of my possession, but did not feel that I could refuse. She was living in the same house with me. Imagine, if you can, the surprise & grief when I asked for it, she declared that she had never seen it. I tried in vain to recall it to her memory. I was in my delicate health at the time & it worried me sick & does almost every time I think of it. I advertized for it but of no avail. She did not mean to be untruthful or to take the book, but was so forgetful & I knew it at the time, & so should have had the firmness to say no, & seemed unkind. However it was afterwards returned to me and I know have it (1901) all that avails nothing now. I cannot condense & so will write as matter come to my mind & allow you to use your judgment in selecting what you may desire from it. I will say here - I do not believe it possible for any pen to do justice to his private character for brilliant, good, and pure as his public life was his private life excelled it in every respect. We were married 19 years in April he died the following Sept. In that time, as son, brother, Husband, father, and master, I never saw him do or say anything I did not admire or approve. It seemed to me every day I saw something new to admire & love. Every member of his household idolized him. He never spoke out of patience with his children or his servants. He required obedience but he ruled with quiet firmness. His plantation was conducted with the same system that his command

was in the Army. He had no trouble to control. He seemed on entering home to leave his business "outside the gate" and to enter fully into the amusements of his children. Sympathizing with them in their joys & their childish sorrows, directing, guiding, and instructing at the same time every little pleasant occurrence through the day was "kept to tell Father when he came." Don't you see how utterly impossible it would be for me to write a sketch that would do to publish? I knew him too well. And since I have lost him & have been thrown around on the world, the more perfect he seems & the further I come from meeting any like him. In an extract from a letter from a cousin Adair Pleasants of Richmond, Va., received a few days after his death he says "There is this at least to cherish in your memory & that of your poor stricken children, that he left not an enemy behind him, & that his name will be affectionately remembered & widely honored for many, many years." Genl. John Adair had 11 children!! All lived to be married. He had 9 daughters & 2 sons. The two youngest children were sons & my father was the eldest of the two & named William H. Adair. My maiden name was Henrietta Adair. My husband's mother Margarette [Margaret] was grandpa's fifth daughter. We (my husband & myself) were as you see first cousins. We never met after I could remember until the summer before we were married. He was more than 12 years older than I was. Grandpa Adair was born in Chester Co., SC. His parents were Scotch Irish & descended from Sir Robert Adair, a diplomatist under the ministry of George IV. Grandma was a Palmer – her mother Ann Benoist of France. Grandma was born near Charleston. Was a near relative of Genl. Manion. From the family record I find my husband's family on the Anderson & Patton side were born John Preston the 1st of the family in Londonderry, Ireland. Though his parents were English he, John Preston, married a Patton from Donegal. Sister of Col. James Patton they all came to this country in 1740. They are the same family as Wm. C. Preston of SC. My Husband's grandfather William Anderson married a widow Buckhanan (*** Miss Margaret Patton) her father settled Pattonsburg County VA. Her father in law settled Buckhanan on the opposite side of James River. By her first marriage she had five daughters. The eldest married Wm. Floyd from whom came the Floyds of VA. After his death she married a Breckenridge from whom came that family in KY as well as VA. By the last marriage my Husband's grandmother Margaret Patton Anderson had but two children sons. The elder James Patton died a bachelor. The other my Husband's father was Wm. Preston Anderson Col. U.S.A. His parents & self were born in Botetourt County, VA. My husband volunteered the first call for troops to go to Mexico. I think in 1846. He was at once elected Lieut. Col. Of a Miss. Battalion (the 2nd) was said to be the youngest man of his rank in the Army. Was 21 yrs of age. I do not know his service there. Think he was mostly on picket duty or reconnoitering. I know he was not in a pitched battle, for he was annoyed that he was not. He was mustered out at the close of the war. With his command, at Vicksburg, his health completely shattered. All this was in that sketch of his life - & who he reported to, etc. but I forget. (I have wondered if I might not get this in as a plea for back pension – on an increase. I get \$8.00 per month.) His health was so entirely gone, his physicians said they had done all they could & nothing but outdoor life & great change would save him. He had not know Wm. Prince personally at that time, but had taken an active point in the campaign he went on to the inauguration & our uncle John Adair persuaded him to go to the Pacific coast for his health. The territory of Washington was just organized & he decided by the advise friends to apply for the position of marshal. He was introduced

to Wm. Prince by Mr. Jefferson Davis & through his influence obtained it. Returned to Memphis where I was spending the winter concluded to give up his lucrative practice of law at Hernando & bright prospects in Miss. & go at once. We were married in a week. 30th of April, 1853 & left immediately for New Orleans. He was the first civil officer in the new territory [Washington] arriving at Olympia the 4th of July & made a speech on that day. His health was partially but never entirely restored. They wanted to return him to Congress as their first Rep. but declined to allow his name to go before the convention lest his health might not be officially established he was returned in Oct. 1855. Before we left, he went to the eastern part of the Ter. to see what his constituents would want in the way of legislation (that part is now Idaho.) He saw the Indians were making preparations then for war. Gov. Stevens was now in the mountains making treaties. He (Genl. A.) returned to Olympia & begged the Lieut. Gov. Mason to allow him to call for volunteers & with a hundred picked men, he thought, sent at once he could quell them. The military posts were scattered. He thought if he waited to call out the soldiers, the Indians would be prepared & give them a bloody fight. The Lieut. Gov. was timid & would not consent. His (Genl. A's) time was up. It was time for him to leave for Washington City. The first news that met us on landing in New York was that the soldiers were called out, met by the Indians, and repulsed. Many citizens & soldiers were killed & the war lasted three years! We loved Washington Territory. The scenery [scenery] is grand lovely & the climate splendid. Genl's McLelan (a great favorite with us) Grant, Auger, and many other officers were our friends there & let me tell a little thing that for his (Genl. Grant's) children's sake will be kept between us. While my husband was taking the Census way up near the Dalles, on the Columbia River, Genl. Grant, then a Lieut. pay master with rank of Capt. was suffering with mania portua [?] got away from his soldiers. They were all camping on the bank of the river. My husband had Indians with him. The soldiers woke him & told him of Grant's condition & that he had gone. He woke his Indians, made them understand, & put them on the trail. They tracked him but the pieces of his outside woolen shirt on the bushes, found him hunched down under some bushes, ready to plunge into the river hundreds of feet below. One false step & both would go down to certain death. The banks were solid rock hundreds of feet high the water so cold they could not live in it a moment scarce [scarcely] without cramp. Genl. A was strong and active. He climbed carefully until he was between Grant & the river - gave one spring - against his breast, forced him back on the ground, & caught to the bushes near & held him fast [fast?] until the soldiers came & helped to secure him & take him into the camp. Patton rarely ever spoke of it. About the time of the fall of Vicksburg, it got out through some officer, writing to one of his staff, & his staff & insisted on knowing the particulars & were much amused. He was offered the position of Gov. both by Wm. Prince & Mr. Buchanan. We knew & loved Wm. Prince very much during his term in Congress & the appreciation seemed mutual. He showed us many kind attentions. My husband would not accept the Governorship because he said the country was divided then & if the worst came he wished to be in the South. Besides, the Aunt with whom I lived after Mother's death was an invalid & needed us, so we made our home on a plantation near Monticello, where he was just as successful as a planter as he had been in all other efforts in life. The people of Washington Territory said they would return him to Congress without his going back to the Ter. if he would serve them, but he declined. I should perhaps have said before, Col. Wm. P. Anderson (my

husband's father) was Col. of the 24th U.S. Infantry & died from the effects of wounds when he was quite old. His wounds never healed. When my husband left Cannonsburg, he entered at once the "Montrose Law School" at Frankfort, KY under our Aunt's (another Miss Adair) husband, Judge Tom. Monroe. I should have said he was prepared for college in this same town by Mr. B.B. Sayer. After his law course moved to Hernando Desoto County [Desoto County] Miss. was admitted to the Bar at once & at once began the practice of his profession. A San Francisco paper at the time of his death said "He was an able lawyer, a man of sterling integrity, an accomplished gentleman." The Frankfort Governor at that date says "In this brief tribute to his memory, we express not only our own estimate of his character, but the testimony of all with whom he came in intimate contact. His life was one of singular diversity, both as to pursuits and place of residence; yet in every relation & wherever he made his home, he won the respect of all his associates. He was born near Winchester, Franklin Co. Tennessee, Feb. 16th, 1822." He represented Desoto Co. in the Legislature. I do not know how often or in which branch besides filling other officers in the Co. & state. Washington Territory was settled almost entirely by New Englanders. The only thing that could be urged against him (my husband in his canvass) was his being a "Jeff Davis Democrat" & "a slave owner." Notwithstanding he was elected on the strict Democratic ticket – by a large majority – over his opponent Judge Strong, an old line Whig & a know nothing. We moved to Fla. in 1857. Genl. A. was chosen to represent Jefferson Co. in the convention to take Fla. out of the Union. He was an out & out secessionist. Was elected almost unanimously to the provisional Congress & was elected to the Confederate Senate but declined as soon as Mr. Davis was inaugurated & the constitution signed. The first call for troops from Fla. he resigned his seat and returned to his home – raising in Co. the next day & repairing at once to Chattahoochee, was elected Col. unanimously of the 1st Fla. Reg. Infantry, reported to Genl. Bragg at Pensacola, his first fight was near Santa Rosa, where he was much complimented. There he went to Shiloh, where he commanded a Brigade man distinction & was promoted in the Autumn of 1862. He alone was in command at Farmington (which was a severe fight & brilliant victory for the Confederates.) He was in several skirmishes before Corinth. On the reorganization of the "Army of Tenn." for the KY campaign, Genl. A. commanded one of the four Divisions of Genl. Bragg's Army. He participated with much distinction in the battles of Perryville, Murfreesboro, and Chickamauga. While temporarily commanding Hindman's Div. in front of Chattanooga, he was promoted to the rank of Maj. Genl. and assigned to permanent command of that Div. after the Battle of Missionary Ridge (in which he of course took part) & the retreat of the Army of Tenn. to Dalton occurred. The Federal invasion of Fla. the condition of affairs in this state caused Genl. A. to be transferred in 1864 in March to the command of the Department of State. Arriving there he took command of a gallant little Army of ten or twelve thousand men with which he for months held a largely superior Federal force beleaguered in Jville [Jacksonville]. In the summer both governments began to deplete their Armies in Flor. & finding no field for his energies, Genl. A. telegraphed to Richmond to solicit the command of his old Division in front of Atlanta, which was granted. He took an active part in the operations round Atlanta and in the battle of Jonesboro commanded a temporary corps of two Divs. - his own & Clayton's, riding alone close to the Federal lines to reconnoiter, he was honored with a regimental salute by the enemy. Then a halt was ordered, & while riding to rejoin his

command, under a hailstorm of bullets, he was shot through the jaw, nearly cutting off his tongue. The hemorrhage nearly proved fatal, but was finally arrested near daylight next day. Recovering from his wound partially, Genl. A. was assigned to the command of a Division of Genl. Jos. E. Johnston's army, in the month of March, 1865, with which he took part in the battle of Bentonville. He never recovered from his wound and died from the effects of it Sept. 20th, 1872 at Memphis, the anniversary of the battle of Chickamauga. He always remembered it & would add "how he whipped them that day – poor Lytle." He & Genl. A. were warm personal friends. The last time they met before the war in the Charleston Convention. Talking of the prospects of the war which both believed they would have. As they parted, they agreed if it came & either was in the hand of the other, the more fortunate one would do all they could consistently with their duty as officers to alleviate the suffering of the other. Once Genl. A.'s mother was left in the Federal lines Genl. L. was very kind & attentive & finally accompanied her through the lines with a flag of truce. During the battle of Chickamauga a soldier reported to my husband that a Federal officer had been killed. He rode back & was shocked to find it was Genl. L. & that his own Brigd. had killed him. He secured some articles from his pockets, a lock of his hair, his ring, & pistol, placed a guard over the body, & said his spurs were gone (the history of which Genl. A. knew some way.) A wounded Yankee near said "a Rebel took them & has gone up the lines." My husband rode on overtaking one of his own carriers & asked if he had seen any one with them. He said "I took them myself Genl. & have just buckled them on Maj. Thompson's heels. He is ahead of you." My husband rode on for his duties called him to that part of the field. He found Maj., but he too was dead. His body stripped & the spurs gone. He tried often during the war & after but could never hear of them. He asked a personal favor of Genl. Bragg that he might make the effort to send Genl. Lytle's body to his friends (I think his sisters) with the articles mentioned. The request was readily granted & his body was exchanged for Genl. Adams of La. who was believed mortally wounded, but he recovered & went into the army again & did good service. Genl. A. never sought public position after the war, though his friends attempted to persuade him to run as mayor, Pros. Atto. [prosecuting attorney], etc. of Memphis where we moved soon after the war & test the question of his disabilities not having been removed & several times tried to petition that they should be – but he found it out & stopped it. Said it to him implied a regret for what he had done & he had none & if his life was to go over he would do just as he had unless if possible he would be more devoted to the cause. However with his class by general act of congress they were removed just a few weeks before his death. I quote again from the "Memphis Appeal" of that date, "Genl. A. was the soul of honor and integrity, & few ever lived in Memphis whose personal qualities attracted so many warm friendships. His heart warmed in sympathy for the troubles of others, & his generosity was only limited by his means. He united the bravery of the lion with the gentleness of woman. No one could know him & not love him. In whatever place he has been located, he has contracted the most enduring friendships. He never evaded a personal or public responsibility or turned his back on a friend. A purer man in thought or in action never lived. He would not have accepted the highest station in the world at the cost of his consistency; the wealth of the Indies could not have corrupted him, nor the wheel & rack move him to the betrayal of a cause he had once espoused. His friendship was the purest kind – not rashly formed, but permanent & enduring, & no consideration could induce him to sacrifice a friend. Genl.

A. was incapable of deceiving by false or hypocritical professions, & by keeping faith with all, he gave a beautiful exemplification of a life devoted to fidelity, justice and truth, which left among the living not a single resentment or unkind feeling to be buried in the grave. During a long and intimate acquaintance we have often sounded the depths of his soul; seen the movement, the motive power, of that inner life whose reflection alone, often dim & shadowy, is seen by the world, & yet that inner life upon which the Almighty looks, & which makes the good man, & we have no hesitancy in saying that of all the fallen children of men whom we have known, within the bosom of none beat a more generous heart or purer soul than those which animated the delicate form of Genl. J. Patton Anderson. He did right by impulse, for to do right was the discipline of his life. In his home he was an idol, for in its sweet companionship the grandest of his affections shone out with increased luster, & every wish & feeling of his family twined like the tendrils around him. But this is a subject too sacred to be invaded; for while the universally expressed sense of the deceased's merits must be gratifying to the feelings of the mother, brother, wife, & children, & though in the rich inheritance of his fame, they have an imperishable legacy, of which they must ever be justly proud, they alone can truly appreciate the magnitude of their bereavement." "For cool courage & promptness in action he had no superior, & was idolized by his men & officers. Of striking personal mien, tall & muscular with very dark hair & eyes he was at all time, a singularly handsome man, but in battle presented a figure on horseback which seemed the very impersonation of manly valor." Frankfort Yeoman. Col. W.P. Anderson (Genl. Patton Anderson's father) married first Miss. Nancy Belle by whom he had three children. The eldest married Judge Campbell of Nashville, Tenn., a prominent lawyer. She her husband & children are all dead. Her grandchildren still live near Nashville. The son Rufus married and died young leaving a wife & one daughter. That daughter is living in Ala. the wife of a physician Dr. Payne. You will find a letter from him among the ones enclosed. The younger daughter married a Mr. Fall, also a lawyer from Nashville. She was quite celebrated for her beauty & intelligence. She died a few months after marriage & left no children. The lot on which the Capitol of Nashville now stands is thought to have once belonged to her. Margaret Adair, his [Patton's father] second wife, had seven children. The oldest & only one now living - Mrs. Nancy Belle Murray is living in Greenville, Texas, with her youngest child. Mrs. Joy Baily (died about 1899). The next also a daughter Mrs. P.H. Skipwith was noted for her beauty & talents died early in the war at Richmond, VA. Her children & husband live at Oxford, Miss. The next a son John Adair died at 18 months old. The next James Patton (Genl. Anderson). The next a second John Adair. He was a brilliant young lawyer & I think also graduated at Cannonsburg (Practiced law & served several times in legislature in Ore.) & studied law at the same school with his brother, was in Mexico with him. He died young at Helena Arkansas. His only child preceded him to the grave, a little girl of two years old. His widow lives near Memphis. The next was dear brother Thomas Scott, Col. of the 6th Texas. He was states Attor. for Texas & filled several honorable positions there beside being a lawyer of note. He left no children & his wife followed him soon to the grave. She idolized him. He too was with Patton in Mexico & graduated at the same law school, as did the younger brother Butler Preston, the hero of Grenada during the Yellow Fever of [18]78. He (Butler P.A.) left four children. His wife died 11 days after he died, as a great a hero as himself. The eldest of their children, a Genl., is living at Athens, Ala.

The next J. Patton is in Texas (since dead.) The next John Adair is with us, & the youngest has been adopted by a wealthy family in St. Louis. She has her mother's and her father's name "Jane Anderson Huse." After Col. A.'s death, mother married a Dr. Bybee in Harrodsburg [Harrodsburg], KY, by whom she had one daughter, a beautiful & talented & accomplished woman, a great pet with her brothers. She died a few years ago in New York City & her children, four in number, are still living there. We have five children. I am thankful to say all living & healthy. The eldest, Wm. Preston (died last Sept. 1900), for his grandfather. The second, The. B. [Theophilus Beatty], for an uncle. The youngest son, James Patton, is a locomotive engineer & is running from Sanford to Titusville. (1902 Last May went into the dry goods business in Shawneetown, KY.) We think him extra in his calling. He is the best boy & makes friends like his father. The two older sons are clerks in different departments in the R.R. Service. Stand splendidly in their different departments. The second one, The. has been married little over a year & has a lovely Christian wife. My sons are industrious & steady & with my daughters are a great comfort to their mother. My oldest daughter is Elizabeth Cromwell, my mother's maiden name. My daughters are younger than my sons. The youngest & baby is Margaret Bybee, for her father's mother and his step father whom they all loved & who was a father to them. He lost everything by the war, & with my husband's death all means of support were gone. My sons were thrown out on the world without a nickel, & the girls & myself eat the bitter bread of dependence until the boys succeed in getting positions here together - three years ago & established our home, where we are very, very happy together & for which we feel thankful every day. We have to exercise the strictest economy & the boys work very, very hard. Still we are thankful; & happy. My dear husband when told he could live but a few hours looked up to me & said "What day of the month is it?" I said 20th. He said "the anniversary of the battle of Chickamauga." His sister said, "brother Patton, is it hard to die?" He looked at her & smiled & said "Oh no." Then a cold passed over his face for a moment & he said "only hard to leave Et. & the children, especially Et. in her helpless condition & not even a home." I said never mind God will take care of us - but Oh! how little I knew what was before me. Still He has & amidst all I have had much to be thankful for. Willie a boy of 16 said father, I will take care of mother, I will. Patton looked up at me after saying "Yes, my son" & said "Et. I have perfect confidence in you. Do the best you can with the children." Calling each one to him then beginning at his dear old mother he bid friends & family farewell, blessing his children last, then turning to me he said you never let even the baby forget me during the war. You have good likenesses of me. Talk to them as you did then. Never speak sadly to them of me - but as though I had gone on a journey. Do not avoid my name & they will remember me. In this he was wise as in all else. At first it was a trial but Oh! I am so thankful now. He is as fresh in their memories as though he were with us yesterday & scarcely an hour passes that some allusion is not made to "Father." He then said "Et, is it asking too much? Can you stay with me to the last?" I said I can & will. The Dr. a dearly loved friend said "Genl. we wish to work to the last" he said "well" & almost in an instant he was gone without the slightest struggle. Not even the Dr. said "a contraction of a muscle." I have been three days writing this & now my sons wish to retain it until they make a copy, but as I am afraid it is already too late, I will send it & ask you to return it with their letters when you have made such selections as you may wish. I value these letters very highly & hope you will be very careful with them. Have

you ever tried to get photographs of your class? I send you among the other one or two from Genl. Edmond C. Walthall. He & my husband were devoted friends & very intimate. See him & have a talk with him on the subject. He is now in W.C. U.S.S. from Mississippi. Hoping to hear [from you] again at no distant day. I am very respectfully,

Etta A. Anderson

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