

Jacksonville, Fla. Mch. 5th 1866

My Dear Aunt Leonis

It has been a long time since I wrote you a letter and you will doubtless be surprised at getting one from me now and I must say that you owe it mainly to the fact that I want a paper of yours which I presume you have in your possession. It is the mortgage made to you by father of lot No. 25 in this place a portion of the old residence. I think the mortgage originally included the three lots but that two of them were subsequently released. However that may be the papers which secure your claim against Father's estate is what I want. Send them to me that I may pass them in Louis's hands for suit that the account of indebtedness may be ascertained and the property sold. This is a legal proceeding [proceeding] necessary to be done and it is for the interest of all parties that it should be done at once. As the property now stands it can not be sold; it is bringing in no income and is at as high a value as it will probably command for years to come. It can easily be sold under foreclosure of mortgage and the residue if any after payment of your claim can be used for payment of other debts. Perhaps it would be better not to trust the original papers to the uncertain transmission of the mails. Get Madeline to make an accurate copy of them which send to me and they will answer for the present. When the originals are needed they can perhaps be obtained with safety by mail. Send forward the copies meanwhile with as little delay as you can.

Mother, Henry, & Rosa are still at Col. Hallows's. Edwin, also, went there last week to transmit some business for me in the neighborhood and will remain there a few days. Henry's health is very much improved though from his own imprudence he had an attack of fever recently but it did not return. Louis and Mary are boarding here. The former and Jaquelin Daniel are in partnership in law and doing a good business. Mary's health is still quite bad. Emily is better and stronger than I have know[n] her to be for years before. She and Jaquelin are boarding at Mr. Kipp's. Frank and family are living in the western suburb of town where he has built a small house on the strictest principles of economy. He is about to put up a steam plowing machine establishment. John's family is not here yet being still in Lake City. He himself has just invested with two others in the dung [?] business and is likely to do well. He will bring his wife here as he can get a house. I have been meandering about East Florida since leaving Quincy three months ago until last week I came to a stand at this place and have concluded to try law here for a while at least though I look to a permanent settlement in Fernandina if the expectations of its friends should be realized within a reasonable time.

That concludes the account of the several members of the family of whom, and so far as, I have any knowledge.

Jacksonville presents a very thriving and business appearance. I have never before seen it so crowded with persons as it now is. New houses are going up as fast as the labor and materials can be furnished both of which are very scarce. Steamboats and vessels are all the time at the wharfs taking in or discharging cargoes and nearly everybody except a few idle negroes seem busy. The society of the place is improving. The old citizens are very

generally coming back and rebs already predominate and would control everything if the military were removed. That odious power is still here but interferes as little as possible with our affairs. The rebs and yanks keep apart and have no commingling socially religiously or otherwise as that is as it should be. Self respect and the preservation of even negative harmony demand it.

I hope that you have not suffered by the cold winter of Raleigh to which you have been so long unaccustomed and wish that it were in my power to provide you a home here.

I have hopes within a year of being able to do so. Give my love to Madeline and the children. I told her when she got to Raleigh to pay to you a portion of the money that I advanced her.

What has become of Bradley Johnson [Confederate General Bradley Tyler Johnson] and his wife? Where does he propose settling? Wherever it is I presume he will return to his profession.

With regards to Aunt Anna, Julia & others whoever they may that constitute the household and whom I may know and love to yourself.

I am Yours Truly
E.W. L'Engle

Miss Leonis L'Engle
Raleigh, N.C.

Transcribed by Nicole Milano, University of Florida, 2009