

Evergreen

Green Bayou P.O.

May 12 " 1883

Dear Mr. Darden,

Receiving as I do by every mail a pile of letters, often ten or a dozen at once, I am as you may well imagine overwhelmed with the labor of writing. They are mostly inquiries about the University and the writers seem to demand reply. I can't employ a secretary for I don't feel able, and no salary is attached to the office of Regent. I mention this matter lest you should suspect your old friend of neglect or indifference.

I start from home in the morning for Houston on my way to Nashville, Tennessee, in order to have a business interview with the gentlemen who have been elected Professors in the University of Texas — it being much more convenient for most of them to repair to Nashville than to make the long journey to Austin. I expect to be absent

some ten days.

Willie Lee received a letter from you today. He said you had not done, or perhaps not able to do any thing with your scrip. I was glad to hear it — for I have been afraid you would dispose of it for much less than its value. And I have been seeking a spare half hour to write to you to this effect. Land is rapidly rising in value. If you can get an honest and judicious person to locate it, the land will be worth several times as much as the scrip — two dollars the acre at the least. Besides ~~Mr Townsend~~ who managed very well, Col Dutton was very efficient. —

How is your health? Is the wound of the operation entirely healed?

I was very much disappointed at not being able to attend the meeting of the Veterans — for I dearly wanted to see B. Bowers.

To your inquiry I have to say that the manuscript history by your excellent father was given by me in its entirety to Mr Drexler. I have two literary enterprises in hand but they are perforce wholly neglected; for the University absorbs all my time. —

I may mention, as I know it will be agreeable to you that Willie Lee is doing very well - he is obedient, good tempered, cheery and fairly industrious - he has surely improved much since he came from the "Home".

His only notable defect is, that judging from my housekeeper he does not think a woman intitled to command obedience.

Evergreen presents nothing new - beautiful as ever in its scenery, but wholly changed in its social surroundings since your childhood. —

I still have hope that I may find opportunity to visit Columbus before many months that you may see that however changed in many respects I still remain as in days of yore

Your friend truly

Asahel Smith