Darling Mother,

I have just received your letter of the 16th inst., & Monday one from Mrs. Calvert, & an other one from you. It is such a delight to get your letters, & I look so anxiously for them. Though there is not such an immense variety of news in them, you need not feel that you have nothing to say, for every little trifle sounds like a great deal, when one is away from home. I am really sorry you are suffering so much from the heat. We have had some hot weather, to be sure, but the nights were so cool, that we did not mind it. Though rain is wanted, still there is no appearance of drouth yet.

I hope you received my last letter. It was exceedingly long, & interesting (I always was modest, you know.). Today I have not so much to say. Yesterday afternoon we drove to Hollidaysburg, to spend the evening, & night, at Dr. Lander’s. There are three pleasant young ladies in the family. There was a kind of a party (wing [?]) and we had a merry dance. One of the daughters of the house sings splendidly. We walked over that extensive city, this morning, in search of birthday presents for Luly. I got her the “Arabian Nights.” We reached home by one o’clock. Carry went with us, or rather took us, as we are scarce of horses yet. The evening before last, we returned some visits, & spent the evening out. On our return we found visitors; among others Mr. Collin, a Sweede who told me much about his country.

Our Niagara trip still holds good. Cousin Sarah, Luly, cousin Anna, Sady Sterritt (her cousin who is still here) & myself, are all going under the shadow of uncle’s wing. My only fear is that his wing will not be large enough to cover us all, & I do wish we had an other gentleman or two with us. Do tell Mr. Lee to join us, he will be such a pleasant addition & I do not think we will see a thing with uncle, he is so decrepid, & always wants to gallop through night, & day. Then I think a trip will do Mr. Lee good &c. &c. We will probably go by Pittsburg, & Cleveland, & get left at our respective homes East, on our
way back. Cousin A. is to make a stay in Phila. to attend the wedding of a friend. So Mr. Lee could take me home, without taking uncle so far. Then the party don't want to come down but by the side of the Hudson, or sail on the lake, nor nothing else. I suppose Mr. O. could not go with us, as we will not probably start before ten days, or two weeks. Urge Mr. L., & tell him I wont bother him, or say a word to him, if he goes. Wont that do? It will be so agravating, disappointing, vexatious, & stupid to make the trip, & see nothing, but gallop round. Uncle & cousin S. are both away, but will probably return toward the end of this, or the beginning of next week.

I am getting very fat, & well, & have still the same reports to make of kindness & considirateness. I am so happy Charleston still holds out so well. We have not heard from the Clemson's again, but expect them daily. Sallie is not to be one of them, I am sorry to say.— Thank you for correcting my letters & your good opinion of them.

What a fist Emily Wood does write! It dont pay. I some how dont do much of anything but enjoy "dolche for minte." I am sorry Mr. Merrick has left the city. We will have no one we know there soon. Are my gladiolis in bloom, they are nearly over here. They have had no tomatoes yet, is that not late? Remember me to Mr. O, Mrs. C. & all enquiering friends. I will write to Laura I think. Aint aunt B "one of 'em"? All send love to you. I dont because you have all mine.

Yours devotedly,

Floride Clemson

I will write to Mrs. C. soon again.

PRIVATE

Now my darling mother, I want to tell you something I have been thinking for some time, very seriously on religious subjects; for, as I have often told you, I could not be satisfied with what seems quite sufficient for you, and many others. Still as you say, one's religion must fit as one's cloths, & every one must have religion and I think

23 Emily Wood (age 21), daughter of Elizabeth D. Wood, a Bladensburg neighbor. MS. Census 1860, Washington, D. C.
24 William M. Merrick (1818-1889), associate justice for U. S. Circuit Court for D. C., 1854-63. He later served in the U. S. Congress as a Democrat from Maryland. Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1949, p. 1557. The Merricks were close friends of the Clemsons.
I need something more tangible. Since Mary Latrobe was at our house, I have had many conversations with Mr. O. on this subject. Without my knowledge, she spoke to him about me, & as the ice was broken, I sought the topic. He very kindly made many points clear to me, but I was still undecided, when I came here. Cousin Sarah has been kind enough to help me, & I feel now as if I should really like, & feel it my duty, to be, baptized.

I do not pretend to say I am a bit better than I was before, or that I have very strong faith, yet I want to believe, & have been convinced of the truth of most of the important points for some time, the rest will come I hope, & pray. I have always felt I needed something of this kind, perhaps because I am weak, though this weakness may prove strength, but still it can do no harm. Do not think that I have been converted, as they say, “all of a sudden,” but ask Mr. Lee & Mr. O. if I have not thought about it for some time. I did not think of making up my mind so soon when I left home, for I was uncertain which I liked best the Episcopal, or Presbyterian church, however on investigation, I find the latter does not suit me, & I had rather join the former. Their faiths are the same nearly.

I wont take any step till I get home if you say so, though I think if Mr. Hall comes here, while I still remain, it can be done quieter. I feel very badly about it, & hope you wont object. I dont expect to get any better right off, but perhaps it may help me to become so. However I have long felt as if I should like to do it, & ought to, & I can not rest satisfied without it. Shall I take both, or only one name? Perhaps better both. Now mind, if you had rather, I will wait, but I see no use, for cousin Sarah, who is the only one here to whom I have spoken about it, has used no influence, but just told me what I wanted to know. I do not pretend, to understand many things, but I feel as if it were in the main right & true, & I want to believe.

I spoke to Mr. O. about this matter, which I really feel all important, & whatever I have left unsaid, he may be able to tell you. Write as soon as you get this, & tell me whether it would be better to get uncle Baker to baptize me. Perhaps it would. I do hope & trust I shall be in time, all the better daughter to you for this, & more of a comfort to you, but I know I am weak naturally, & this strength may

26 Mary Latrobe and Henry Onderdonk were married on Dec. 17, 1868. McGee and Lander, A Rebel Came Home, p. 124.
27 Floride was named “Elizabeth Floride” but had customarily been called “Floride” since childhood. See ibid., p. 1.
not make as much change as it should, but it is such a help & comfort to those who earnestly believe & trust. I will say no more, but will wait anxiously for your reply. Indeed mother I do love you so I wish you would think as I do.

Yours devoted daughter
Floride Clemson

(Dont show this)

*   *   *

In her letter of August 20 Mrs. Clemson again expressed pleasure that Floride was enjoying her vacation and that her relatives were so kind. She hoped to be able to welcome them agreeably in The Home.

"As to your aunt's letter [Mrs. Barton], it is simply an impertinence. I see the idea. She would like again to get a foothold, for herself & daughter, in the comfortable quarters she lost by her conduct. *Dont write her.* Answer thro K., that you thank her for her kind invitation, which you 'cannot possibly accept,' &c.&c. Not much — only enough for politeness. *Dont go either to your uncle B[aker].'s.* When you return home you 'have been so long absent you cannot possibly stop on the road' &c . . . . Be cautious what you say before them. You *don't know where your father is.* Your uncle is very *black.* Old Mr. Latrobe is a nuisance with his letters. When you write Mary put in a kind message for him. Your time can always be too occupied to write such a letter as you would like to send him, &c.&c."

As to events around The Home, Mrs. Clemson told of neighborhood visitors, the weather, the flowers, the canary, and that Mr. Lee, "a curious compound," sent his regards but could not join the Niagara excursion. "*Dont break your heart!*" she significantly added. As usual she had no news from Mrs. Calhoun.

Lastly, Mrs. Clemson discussed at length Floride's queries about baptism. As she believed her daughter needed "a deep & abiding faith," she advised her to be certain that her judgment agreed with her actions. The mother gave her approval of the Episcopal Church, of Mr. Hall to perform the ceremony, and of the use of only the name "Floride." She saw no need for delay.

On August 23 Mrs. Clemson repeated her advice regarding Floride's religion and again warned the daughter not to visit certain relatives. As was her custom she spoke briefly of Mr. Lee, how quiet and uncommunicative he was though still pleasant, and of the other
neighbors and doings around The Home. She asked Floride to buy her $5 worth of woolen yarn.

There was not even a rumor from Washington, to which she had not recently been. Pouring out her true Confederate sentiments, she wrote: "Even Charleston affords 'nothing new.' Thank God! That is the best of tidings for us. I strictly kept day before yesterday hoping the earnest faith of a whole nation might speak for us. If truth, & justice, can avail, our cause must succeed, but the ordeal is a dreadful one, & my heart aches for my people. I am very anxious about your grandmother. Mrs. C. had a letter from Ella, two days ago, & none from her enclosed — this makes the third, since I have heard, showing she does not write. Something must be wrong, & I imagine everything possible. Perhaps it may be only accidental — I try to hope so. No letters from 'the travellers' [Thomas G. and Calhoun Clemson] either. I cannot but feel this constant suspense."

* * *

Allegany Furnace. Aug. 24th. 1863

Darling Mother,

Uncle Baker, Mattie, and Mary, arrived here Friday evening. I was very glad to see them, & they seemed to take equal pleasure in meeting me again. I can see no kind of difference in Mary, except that she is a little stouter, & more womanly, she is still quiet, firm, "little Mary," & has just as little to say. She is not pretty, but has such a good, sweet face, that she sometimes looks almost so. Mattie looks older, and thinner. She is not at all strong, and has a more vague, weak, undecided look, than ever. She seems rather more steady than she was, & Mary says she is much more so. I dont think she takes here, though every one likes Mary. Uncle Baker is very pleasant, & takes particular pains to be kind to me, almost affectionate. He wears a very long beard (none of the thickest) & does not shave at all, which gives him rather a rabbinical appearance in the pulpit.

Mattie in her off hand, foolish, way, is the only one that mentions politics, & even she says nothing unkind, so I must say I think every one wonderfully considerate. I myself have not mentioned politics, & to their own kind feelings, & this, I suppose I owe the wonderful considerateness I have met with. Indeed mother, from what I see in my hasty glances in the papers, & hear, I feel very uneasy about our noble city [Charleston]. Would it not be frightful if it fell? I can not bear
to think about it. The times are indeed dark. It seems to me as if I
should give a good deal to hear, & have a good Southern talk. Kate B.
from what I hear, seems still to retain her moderate feelings, & they
say she will in no way work for the soldiers, according to her promise.
Every one speaks so highly of her, & the improvement, & change she
has undergone. I thought she was earnest. I really feel a deep respect
for one who has struggled so hard to do right, with such temptations
as she has had, by nature.

Uncle Elias has not yet returned, but we expect him home to day,
or tomorrow. Cousin Sylvester we also expect daily. The Clemsons
have gone up to spend to day at Cresson, as they got an excursion
ticket, for half price, for that place, & they must get it signed there.
It only lasts ten days, so they will have to return on Thursday. Friday
morning I went to meet Mr. Latrobe, according to his letter, but was
happy not to find him, so I wrote to Mary, & told her of my doing;
but made no appology for not writing. I also had my traveling dress
tried on, by an Altoona dress maker. It will be done tomorrow. I had
the body made plain, with long sleeves, & a point in front, & behing;
I had to get cousin S. to send me a couple more yards from Philla. to
finish the French sack. It is all trimed with rows of bra[ds] so wide
[diagram] half an inch.

I will write to Kate B. today, & make all due excuses. As the
Clemson's seem so freindly, I may stop there on my way home, for a
day or two, as they press me earnestly to do, & get Kate to meet me
there, which will straighen all that matter. I think the breech may as
well be healed. Uncle says you are "one of the very finest women he
ever knew!" Uncle Will, & aunt Sue are away. The former sent me
most affectionate messages by Mary, who says he is devoted to me!
"The ways of this world are passed finding out," I think. Cousin Anna
B. is not at all well. She has constant, & dreadful sick-headaches,
which last longer than mine. I still continue fat, & well. Kate Russel, a
second cousin of mine, is now staying with Carry. She is a small dark
girl, about nineteen, with a fine (not handsome) face, full of character,
& energy. Remember me to Mr. Lee, & Mr. Onderdonk. It seems much
more than a month since I left. We will probably leave for Niagara
next Monday. We will wear hats, which is customary all over the
North. Break up the canarie's nest. She will kill herself setting to no
good. Take away the eggs. Love to Lizzie R. Mrs. D. & F. With
oceans to yourself I am, (All send love)

Your devoted daughter

Floride
P. S. We will have to hurry through with our trip as cousin Anna will have to be in Philla., at a friend's wedding by the 20th of next month.

Altoona
(Private)
August 24th.

As Mrs. Calvert wrote me that Dr. Hall had given up coming to Altoona, my dear mother, & Mr. Onderdonk wrote me a short note to the same effect, in accordance to my request that he should; I thought one Northerner was as good as an other, and as you said nothing to the contrary, I got uncle Baker to baptize me yesterday. I do not know that I would have spoken to him about it, but he seemed so kind when cousin Sarah did, & so heartily glad of my determination, that I thought it would be better than an entire stranger, as I had to be questioned first. Then Mr. Buck can not feel offended at my not applying to him. Altogether I thought it was better.

When the time came, I must confess I felt very badly, but I thought it was my duty, so I did it. I wanted the ceremony to take place in the evening, but uncle said it was not customary, so I had to go up right after the second lesson in the morning service. It nearly made me sick, & I cried like a baby. The church (St. Luke's) is a very small one, & the congregation still smaller, & as few knew me, I did not mind it so much. Cousin Sarah, & Mary, stood as witnesses. Uncle, & indeed all, were very kind, & I got through pretty well, though I had to go to bed with a headache as soon as I got home. None of the family were there, as there was communion in their church. Auntie advised me to become an Episcopalian, as my family were, & there was no great difference; and then I found I liked that church best after all. I am very glad it is over, & am equally glad to have done it, for it has worried me for a long time. I took but one name, as you said. I was so much obliged to you for your kind letter, & cousin S., & uncle, thought it beautiful. Please tell Mr. Onderdonk, as he has been so kind to me, also Mr. Lee, Lizzie, & Mr. Buck. Indeed I dont care who knows it.

Tell Jennie King that Mr. Oliver, the minister, here enquired after her, & sent his love, or something.

I have not taken this step rashly, for I have been thinking about it ever so long, & you know I was always inclined that way. I trust I shall

---

28 Virginia King (age 18), daughter of U. S. Army surgeon Benjamin King, a Bladensburg neighbor. M.S. Census 1860, Washington, D. C.
improve more now. I hope you do not mind that Uncle B. performed
the ceremony. I think it was more suitable, & I believe he is a good
man, though prejudiced. He really gave an excellent sermon in the
evening. Do write to me soon again, & tell me how you feel about it.
I should be sorry to do anything you would not like. I do not know
why it is, but I had rather do anything than make up my own mind. I
trust you will find me a better daughter for this.

I do wish we could hear from grandma. — My love to all friends,
I am as ever your devoted daughter

Floride Clemson.

P. S. I believe that adult baptism is equal to confirmation. See Prayer
book.

* * * *

Mrs. Clemson's next letter, August 27, complained about the
horde of visitors that day, including the tax collector "to whom I paid
the sum of $15 very unwillingly." Among her visitors were Mr.
Onderdonk and the McMeney family. The latter had recently lost
sixteen hands but seemed "to think they must not complain, as others
have lost many more." Mr. Lee "is pleasant enough for him, & I
believe wants to be agreeable." She reported that she had been into
Washington to see a number of friends, but the clouds of dust had
almost made her sick. "By the way, the bath house has been again
broken open, & robbed of the soap, & soap dish, & two towels."

Turning to the war, Mrs. Clemson dismally confided: "I feel,
with you, that times are dark with us, but not, I trust, desperate. As to
Charleston, I fear more than I hope. Not that I think that the destruc-
tion of Ft. Sumter ensures, or begins even, the taking of the city, but
the position is so without natural defences, such as Vicksburg had, that
I fear, in time, it must fall. It remains to be seen whether the vandals
are willing to pay the price for it. I hope they will get nothing but
ashes. I also worry much about your grandmother, father, & brother,
but in these dreadful times we must all bear, with patience, the share
of suffering which falls our lot."

Finally, she added: "Dont go to your uncles or any where else.
I dont wish it."

* * * *
Thursday 1863
Altoona. Aug. 27th.

Darling Mother,

I received your Sunday letter, the day before yesterday, & was glad to see you were still passing your time quietly. I have had the dumps ever since, on account of Charleston, which seems to me, to be in a bad way, by the headings in the papers, for I never trust myself to read more. Yesterday I took a good crying spell over the news. They are so kind, & considerate here, that for the last day, or two, they have kept the papers out of my way, & merely say: "nothing official," when I ask for the news, which I suppose pretends nothing good. I am so uneasy.

I received a nice letter from Laura to day, in reply to one I wrote her last week. She never received my last letters, & seems much hurt about Mr. Lee, but I will send you the letter. I also wrote to Kate, merely thanking aunt B. for the invitation, & saying how much I should like to see Kate, and in no way committing myself.

We have put off starting on our trip, until next Wednesday, as Miss Cameron, & some other friends of cousin Anna's, are to come on Monday to stay a day, & night. Uncle got home Tuesday. Cousin Sylvester also returned the same day. Uncle Baker left before either got back, which was fortunate, as he is no favorite with cousin S. at least. Mattie, & Mary, were to have gone to day, but the former was quite sick yesterday, so they will start tomorrow. They are both much improved. The one by getting quieter, & the other less so. A favorable exchange.

We have had a terribly cold spell for the last two days & the much-wished-for rain. I found my "gall body," by no means too warm, & had to put on my flanel. I wish I had a skirt with me. To day I am shivering in my traveling dress, which has just come home, & looks quite nicely. I payed $2 for making. I am too unfortunate about my shoes! The ones I had made here, are too broad, & those I sent for to Hipman, an inch too short, so I will have to send them back, & indeed I am put to it for any to wear. It is too bad to have such a foot!

Uncle brought plenty of horses from Kentucky, & nice ones too, I believe. I have been playing chess a good deal lately, & manage to come out pretty even with my opponents. Mattie (?) & I, have also revived some of our old duetts, to our great satisfaction. Yesterday we had quite a house full of company, to spend the day.

29 Jennie Cameron was probably Virginia Cameron, youngest daughter of Simon Cameron, President Lincoln's first secretary of war. Letter from Mrs. Clarkson T. Hunt, Lancaster, Pa., July 7, 1965.
Cousin S. told me how sorry aunt North seemed not to see me. I must really stop there on my way back, if I can. — Mrs. Siles’ son George, is dead I hear. They say he was engaged to Lizzie W. Mattie heard from cousin Annie last week. All were well. Her youngest child is to be called Louisa, & uncle B. is going to baptize it this fall. They have had a very hard time. — Aunt Hetty is not very well. — We have such a joke on uncle. He was searched, on suspicion of picking some one’s pocket in the cars! We teaze him terribly. I am as well & fat as possible.

I too am most anxious about grandmother. I wish we would hear how she is at least. I hope [?] she is not sick. I hope you got some of the late rain. I want to get cousin S. to take me to a coal mine, if I can. Remember me to Mssrs. Lee & Onderdonk; Lizzie, & Mrs. Calvert. Tell the latter I have not had time to write lately, but will try to do so soon. All continue as kindly, & [illegible] to me as possible, & send love, in which I most sincerely join.

Your devoted daughter,

Floride.

* * *

Mrs. Clemson’s letter of August 30 gave a rather full account of the activities of their friends and acquaintances. Mrs. Stone was going to Baltimore for a day or two (Mrs. Clemson declined to accompany her); both Mrs. King and Jennie had suffered serious falls; Mrs. Calvert was ill; the Robinsons had paid a nice visit; Mrs. Perdicaris had left for Italy; Mrs. Dodge and Mrs. Fone looked better; but the Gallant Defender was “poorly.” She had discharged Moses, who wanted a pay raise, and had secured a substitute hand.

Mrs. Stone had reported that a cousin of Lizzie Giles “got a letter from Mrs. Ould (wife of the commissioner on our side, for the exchange of prisoners,) who says, ‘you will be surprised to hear Lizzie Giles has discarded the General she came down to marry’!!! What can we believe, for a friend of Mrs. Stones, also, saw the marriage of

30 Louisa Clemson, sister of Thomas G. Clemson, married Samuel Washington, a great nephew of George Washington, and lived at Harewood, now West Virginia. During the Civil War the family suffered great privation. “Lizzie W” and “Cousin Annie” were probably Elizabeth Washington and Anna Clemson Washington, daughter and daughter-in-law, respectively, of Louisa and Samuel Washington. See McGee and Lander, A Rebel Came Home, pp. 17, 55, 65.

31 Probably Mrs. Mary E. Dodge of the Bladensburg area. MS. Census 1860, Washington, D. C.
Miss Giles, & Gen. Quarles announced in a Southern paper. Mrs. Stone still believes she is married."

Continuing, Mrs. Clemson wrote: "Yesterday I went into the city, & saw the usual set, who were all rejoicing over the taking of two gunboats in the Rappahanock & the capturing, by Moseby\(^\text{32}\) of forty waggons, & 'from 700 to 1700' soldiers. The Confederates, 800 strong, were over the river day before yesterday, above Georgetown. — From Charleston there is no news at all. I suppose Ft. Sumter is a mass of ruins, but that has been expected for some time. I send you a Federal account of the difficulties yet to be overcome, before the city is taken. If only our big iron clads,\(^\text{33}\) which have, I hope, started from England, can arrive in time, it may yet be saved — If not, I hope they will only get ruins, & even those ruins they cannot occupy, before frost, without certain death. Unfortunately, the islands are healthy. I wish, for their sakes, they were dismal swamps." Again: "Dont stop at your uncles or cousin Tom's,\(^\text{34}\) I entreat you."

* * *

Sunday
Altoona, Aug. 30th./63

I take a small sheet again, dear mother, for I have very few events to record since Thursday, when I last wrote. I received your letter, written on that day, this morning, & am so glad to think you are well, & getting along comfortably. Must I add all of my selfishness? Well I am not sorry you miss me, for it would not be pleasant to think that I wanted to see you so much, & that you did not care to have me home again.

Dear mother, it is so hard these heavy days of trial to our country, to be away from any one who can sympathize with you, & feel as you feel. Although I meet with real sympathy, & kindness, for my anxiety, yet it is very different when one thinks that, how ever kind they are, still they are overjoyed at what makes us miserable. I suppose Charleston is doomed sooner or later to fall, & I feel miserable enough about it, & also about grandma. Oh dear!

The Clemsons left Friday, & I was quite sorry to part from them. I will do as you say, & not go to see them, as I can easily get off.

\(^{32}\) Confederate ranger John Singleton Mosby.

\(^{33}\) The British government intervened and did not permit the "Laird Rams" to leave England.

\(^{34}\) Tom Clemson, another cousin, apparently lived with Aunt Barton and Kate at that time.
Friday afternoon, I drove Sadie Sterritt to Hollidaysburg, in the buggy, as we had a visit to return & some shopping to do. We started right after dinner, & got home before dark. Our horse was a fat, well kept animal, that the weight of a score of years had made sway-backed & siff, so the whipping, & driving, being too much for one, Sadie did the former, & had the hardest work, by far. We have taken a couple of rides in the new carriage, with uncle's fine horses. Both are most excellent. It is wonderful what good taste the old gentleman has in everything. I had to get some flannel, & make myself a skirt, I was so cold. We had to make a fire today.

We have settled to start Wednesday if nothing happens to prevent. We will go, as I wrote you, & expect to spend near two weeks on the trip, as we mean to take it by easy stages, & slowly; as cousins Anna, & Sarah are not strong. Auntie is still in bed, but as it is only one of her accustomed billious attacks we do not count upon her detainting the party, as she is much better. We will be much crowded for time, as cousin Anna will have to be in Phila before the 17, which is not pleasant.

I saw some of these steel collars & cuffs for ladies, & were they not so expensive (2.50) I would get a set to travel in, they are so nice, & pretty. — We took a pleasant, walk yesterday of about a mile & came home just in time to receive three gentlemen who spent the evening here. One of them played, & sang very well. — I have had such a pleasant visit here, that I shall regret leaving, though I expect to enjoy my trip, & want to see you ever so much. — I went, with cousin Sarah, up to the Sunday school today, where there are 100 scholars all ages, & seizes. Afterwards I took a long walk with cousin Sylvester, to a hill, where there is a glorious view of the surrounding country. On our way we stopped at the family burying ground where cousin Woods lies.

Indeed I do not know where to tell you to direct. We expect to spend next Sunday at Niagara but I do not know at what house. Have a letter waiting at the Leupps [in New York City] anyhow. I shall feel very uneasy at not being able to hear from you. All send love. Give my love to all & respects to Messers. Lee & O. I will try to write as often as possible but dont get uneasy if you dont hear.

I am as ever your devoted daughter,
Floride Clemson

Wednesday.
Altoona. Sep. 2nd/63

You see by the date of this letter my dear mother, that we are still here. Auntie did not get well as soon as we expected, so we put off starting one day, though that is decidedly inconvenient, as we will be still more pushed for time. However it could not be helped, and we confidently expect to get off tomorrow morning at eight o'clock. There is good in all evil for this morning I have been sick with one of my headaches, & though it was not a very bad one, still had I been traveling it might have been worse. Auntie is up and about today but cousins Sarah & Anna, have both very bad sore throats I am sorry to say. I hope there will be no more getting sick once we are started, for we have no time to spare on the road. You must not be surprised at the size of this sheet, as all my larger note paper is done, much to my sorrow. Your Sunday letter came to hand this morning, & as usual was most eagerly read, & reread.

Monday afternoon uncle took us (Sadie, Luly, & I) out a long 25 mile drive in the new turn out [?]. We started about three o'clock, & did not get back till past eight. We passed through eight different towns & villages, & had one of the loveliest drives, I ever took. At one place there was a canal reservoir, which had all the appearance of a lake as it covered some 400 acres of land. It was surround by mountains, & fine bold scenery & had on its banks a place called Cat Fish, at which we got some sugar crackers, candy & apples. Some of the mountains about here look as if they had the mange, as the otherwise thick woods is interspersed with bare patches of slate. The effect is very curious. We we got back, we found Miss Jennie Cameron, Miss Mary Willson, & Mr. Blanchard here & they only left this morning. Miss C. is a fine looking, free & easy girl of 25 or so, who put me a little in mind of Miss Laine\(^\text{36}\) in figure & style, though not half so lady like & elegant.

By the way, I really have not had time to write to Miss L. I received a sweet letter from Mary C. yesterday. It was by far the pleasantest I ever saw from her. Now mind do not expect my letters too hard, for I may not have time to write often. If you get this epistle without a poscript to the contrary, you may know we have started, as I will put it in the post office on our way to the depot.

We went to Hollidaysburg last evening, & in the morning took a walk to the mill where I weight 168 lbs. I am very well & fat you see.

\(^{36}\) Harriet Lane, ex-President Buchanan's niece.
I am sorry about the Kings. Miss Cameron sings splendidly & we had some fine duetts to gather. Last evening we had a good deal of company to bid us good bye. I really have not time to write any more so must stop with much love to all & hopes that I shall see you soon, & as well as I am. Auntie & all send much love. Remember me to Messrs Lee & O. Love to Mrs. D. & all. I have no time to write to Mrs. C.

Your devoted daughter

Floride Clemson

* * *

Pittsburgh
Sep. 3rd. 1863

Here we are my darling mother after a pleasant days travel. We started from Altoona at nine o'clock this morning, & reached this place at a little before two. I am now sitting by the open window which commands a view of the Monogahela River, the suspension bridge, the entrances to several coal mines on the other side, & various manufactorys of iron, glass &c. The river is very low, & exposes a bank which is paved with cobble stones in an inclined plane on which the wagons go into the stream to the boats which lie as near as they can.

Although we have been here so short a time, we have already done the principal of the sights. We have driven through the city, & visited a rolling (?) mill for iron, a glass blowing manufactory, & an iron clad ocean steamer, called the [illegible], which is 250 feet long. It has only the iron shell completed. The glass blowing was most interesting. We saw them making salt sellars, lamp glasses, & pressed tumblers & dishes. The rolling mill was also very interesting. In coming down here we saw the entrances to many coal & iron mines, which seemed to be very extensive. At a small place called Jackson, we saw a good many of both kinds in the side of the mountain, lying in different strata. They manufacture there considerably.

This place is by far the dirtiest I ever saw. Every thing you touch leaves a black spot on your fingers. The mud is black, the houses are black the atmosphere is dark (It has been raining & drizzleing all day) and the smoke hangs in still heavier clouds than the natural ones. There is nothing but dirt, & chimney stacks. However it is very interesting, & I would not have missed it for the world. The ride down here was beautiful, & the scenery, though not as bold as on the other side of the mountains, was fine. The Conamaugh is not near
as large or as lovely as the Juniata, but still very beautiful.

We are a nice party of five, & determined to see, & enjoy all we can. Anna is still weak. We are staying at the Monongahela house, & as I started to tell when I said where we were sitting. We have aching feet (Sadie & I) immerced in a tub of cold water & as we did not have our trunks brought to the hotel, but put all strict ncessissaries in our bags, we are comfortably taking our ease in our night gowns, *en guise de robes de chambres*. We will probably stay at the Clifton house on the Canada side of the falls, which I much prefer, for I long to be out of these United States. I am almost afraid to ask for the news, I am so uneasy. Those ironclads (I saw two) made me feel vicious. Tomorrow we start at one, & will reach Cleveland in the evening. On account of our lost day we will not be able to make any stay there but will spend part of Saturday at Buffalo.

Auntie was much better when we left. I was almost sorry to go, I had enjoyed myself so much. I hope you will be able to read this. In hopes [*several illegible words*] be as glad to see me as I will you, I am

Yours devotedly

Floride