



answered.

10
2
12

Miss Eliza V. D. Dolbin
No 150 Royal St
New. Orleans
La



Fort Smith May 12th 1848

My dear Eliza

I received your very friendly letter about two weeks since, and it would be impossible for me to tell you how much gratification it gave me, indeed it had been so long since I had written to you without receiving an answer that I really was surprised to get one from you, thinking you had forgotten there was such a being in existence, well, now it seems to me I have so much to say to you that I do not know where to commence first, but I want to tell you now that I am giving you the preference in answering your letter first, before five others now don't you think you have the decided preference in my mind, but I wish you to receive it before you leave New Orleans.

If my time was not taken up so much with pursuits (that I shall ^{tell} you about) I would think nothing of writing letters, but I have a small school that takes up a great deal of my time, as all schools necessarily must. a teacher, my school is select and averages 15 pupils, I am very pleasantly situated indeed, could not be more so, my school is inside of the Garrison at one extremity overlooking two rivers the Arkansas and Poteau, my home is three miles from here, but I board in a very pleasant family whose children I teach, I teach the Officers children with a few others. It is Doctor Bailey's family that I reside with, he is now

in Mexico went there last February, his wife is a charming woman very amiable in her manners and kind to me.

I teach her children, General Arbuckle's nieces, Major Maclean's two boys ~~he~~ is the paymaster living at this Post.

I will try to describe to you how Fort Smith is situated. It is on the left bank of the Arkansas, separated by that river from the Cherokee Nation, and just at the line of the Choctaw Nation, the town is separated from the Garrison merely by a fence and stone wall, enclosed within which are three large blocks of brick buildings for the accommodation of Officers and men there are very few men at present stationed here, and only three Officers since Doctor Bailey's departure, June 6th

Now do not think me negligent for not writing or finishing this before, although it is nearly a month since I commenced this. Now I shall direct this to Perry supposing you have left New Orleans by this at any rate you will get this if I direct it as you tell me.

One of the reasons that prevented me from writing before was that just about the time I received your letter one of my sisters was married, the preparations consequent upon that will be some apology with ^{you & hope} she is several years younger than I am, and has married a gentleman that has been attached to her for 5 or 6 years ever since she was a little girl, he is a Doctor in good practice and good circumstances, on the day of his marriage unpacked a new and handsome carriage and every ~~thing~~ person thinks she has married well. I went riding with them this evening out home. I make you thus familiar with my family affairs

supposing that if you are like me you will prefer such communication, as it always makes one better acquainted with the ways of one another,

I was very sorry to learn of your kind Uncle's death - it must have been a very great grief to you a loss by no means easy to replace, but the will of the Lord is such that we are obliged to bear them and that too with resignation, since I have been living with Mrs Bailey there has been a very afflictive case occurred in her family, she had scarcely gotten over the Doctor's departure, who started for Vera Cruz 13th Febry when in the 20th just a week after his third son (a little boy of 5 years a very promising child and a smart one too, for he could read very nicely, and say a number of speeches) took sick with a chill his fever rose to an alarming height on Sunday night it proved a congestive chill and nothing could save him he died on Monday night following, the best Doctors attended him too, it was as you may be sure a great grief to us all to part with an interesting child so suddenly I am glad to hear that you have enjoyed yourself as well as you have done, and that you have not suffered from the effects of the climate as nothing breaks down the constitution ^{more} than to go through a course of sickness at the South for I have tried it. You often think you say of the pleasant time we had in the Alhambra I am sure I do, and hope we may meet again some time in the same way

but I think it is a chimerical hope.
I was much pleased to hear of Miss Virginia Pyle
and if you see her before you leave the South
give her my love.

I was much amused with your account of Miss S.
I have no doubt she felt lonely after she left
Vicksburg that night, when a person has been used
for and attended by another for a time and
suddenly to be deprived of those little attentions it
must be half killing) to be separated don't you
think so. On looking over your letter again
I find you will not leave New Orleans till the
last of June so I will direct this there, hoping
that if you get this you will be sure to answer it
soon for I am very desirous to hear from you
and get another of your charming letters now
don't think this flattery (for it is not) so that you will
answer my letter soon, not at all,

Present my regards to your Aunt I quite sympathize
with her and hope she feels more resigned to her loss
we should always remember that the Lord gives and
takes of his good pleasure, and that we
should meet his laws and purposes contentedly.
write to me after your return home you must have
so much pleasure in anticipation in the hope of
again rejoicing your near & relatives, when
among them is a Father a Mother I can have
some idea of your feelings when I think of my own
on arriving at home after an absence of three or four
two years. well I have written this so badly that
I am afraid you cannot read it, but hope you
may be able to do so, but if you should get
tired I would advise you to lay it down.
It is now past eleven at night and I will
not spin this out any longer for fear of trying
your patience. that peace and happiness
may be your lot is the wish and prayer of
your attached friend Elizabeth Armour
direct as before