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Letter, Hallie Cruse to Maria Walker, September 3, 1861

Hallie Cruse

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Huntsville Sep 3rd / 61

My own Dearest Sister

It has been both my
desire and intention to Write to you for some time,
as long and newy^a letter as these troublous war times
would admit of. but many things, and numerous
interruptions have transpired since my letter to Kate.
to give me a good excuse for not Writing. and
then too I thought you would much prefer my
Waiting until after Sister Mary & Mrs Rice should
arrive, as this would be one item that would
prevent my letter being prosaic to you. I can
scarcely realize that it has been my lot to see them
once more since their grand European tour, and
I fear now though heretofore insignificant, I will
be more than ever thrown in the shade by my
travelled Sister. What is to become of me? is there
none to pity? None to Compassionate? I feel smaller
in my intellectual Calibre than ever. do in Mercy
give me some recipe, give me something, to cause
me to be somewhat selfopinionated, Poor Mrs
Rice from my very soul do I pity her instead of

of a pleasure tour to Europe it has been one of racking
Mental agony. unceasing anxiety. and uninterrupted
suspense ever since she ^{During} went over. Her summer
tour through England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales,
Switzerland, Northern Italy, & Germany. John enjoyed
apparently good health. but immediately upon their
return to Paris his hemorrhages commenced &
for one year she says she has not known what
it is to get a whole night's rest, without being
called up to administer to some of his wants.
She is so much changed from her former self
that could you see her you would scarcely
recognize in the present heart-broken, despairing,
countenance, the same cheerful jovial & ho-
rrie of olden times. I wish that it were in your
power to come and see her. for your presence
would do her so much good. for she loves
you most devotedly, in which I most heartily
join her in affection for you. As for John
I think his days on earth are numbered and
I am daily looking for his death. In my opinion
he is drawing very near his end, and not
one ray of religious hope to enliven and brighten

his declining Moments. his Case is lamentable,
and heart-breaking; and as for her I think she
has indeed drained her Cup of sorrow to the
very dregs; and. Withal she is the most beautiful
example of child-like submission. She said
herself that "With John's death every prop will
be removed, every link broken, that binds her
to Earth and yet she folds her hands meekly
and says with the utmost Calmness "Faster
thy will not mine be done". 'tis all for some
good Providence, hidden from Mortal Vision
that I have been called to go through deep
Waters, and through a fiery Furnace of affliction
teach me faster, to abide my time with patience
until it is thy will to call me hence. I fear
Darling Sister that I have saddened your
heart by a recital of trouble for what is Mrs
Rice's is also my own. and my whole life
seems now to be one of impenetrable gloom.
The President of our Confederacy has made it
a Camp of instruction and you can't imagine
what a nuisance it is but at the same time
you cannot help having pitiable feelings in
their behalf. Knowing constantly what they

are suffering from Wounds or disease, there is
scarcely a house within our little burg when
there is not one dead. For in the Manassas en-
gagement the gallant 4th Ala Regiment was
formed of several Companies of our choicest young
Men. There are several houses in town closed
whose families have been called to the sick
and dying bedside of their families Charlie
Mashins life is despaired of Chris Donegan
John Warden & Albert Russell are all extremely
ill with typhoid fever. The Measles, pneumonia
and jaundice are playing the wilds with our
troops in Virginia, and altogether sad, sad,
heart^{are} throughout our little town. We have a
hospital here and also much sickness and
I fear through this medium many Contagious
diseases will be introduced that we have
never had before. A great many Sisters of
Charity passed through here en route to
Virginia the other day and I hear daily
of ladies offering their services as nurses
to the sick. it would really interest you to
see the soldiers Crowd to the church every ^{Sunday}
Mr Bunister gives them a plain Comprehension

Sermons every Sunday Morning while we are in
 Sunday School. about the different parts of the
 Church, and what they are emblematic of.
 For instance last Sunday he talked to them about
 the Spirit and told them all about it. and
 you can't imagine the interest manifested
 or the crowds that flock to hear him. Mrs
 Mosely Hopkins has really moved to Hunterville
 and lives in our neighborhood. I am constantly
 on the qui vive so afraid am I that she will
 send for me to hear something about Mr.
 Hopkins' departure. She made me laugh until
 I cried not long ago at a message she sent
 Mother proving conclusively to my mind her
 utter derangement. She sent her word to get
 down on her marrow bones, and pray for
 Mosely that he might be delivered from
 the hands of the Philistines" meaning you
 call in Hobbs. I saw Wacker and Tom the
 other day the latter enquired very affectionately
 for you all. the former said "Hurry word."
 I don't know when I have been so surprised as
 when I met Bob. last Sunday on my way to church
 he delivered your message and I must confess

Made me blush with shame at my apparent neglect
of one that I so devotedly love as I do you.
I suppose of course you have heard
of our sad reverses at Forts Hatteras and Clark.
and I am afraid that with such a beginning
they will soon make sad inroads into our
much loved Southern homes. 900,000 men
are indeed a vast number to lose when
we have so much disease to fight against.
I am daily expecting to hear of a tremen-
dous engagement at Fort Pickens, and it
seems to my shortsighted judgment a very
injudicious move to call Bragg from Pensacola
but I hope that his place may soon be
filled by one as good as himself. Father
received yesterday from Mrs Pope Walker by
Express a present of a pair of hand-cuffs
taken from the enemy at the late great
battle of Manassas. She writes that the
Government could realize an immense
amount of money by auctioneering them
to the highest bidder. As many persons had
bid as high as \$40 a pair. They wish
to exhibit them and arouse the feelings

of every Southerner. against such Vandalism
Gaster had his for exhibition at the Bank
and a Kentuckian offered \$50 to obtain
possession of them. but I am afraid that
Kentucky Cannot be aroused from her
lethargy to her shame be it spoken. Now
My Darling Sister let me close my effusion
by a request for a quick response and
in future I will attempt better things Please
give my devoted love & kisses to Miss Sus
& all the children Nellie, Mr L. Mary, Mr B
Bro John. Kate, Leigh & yourself. have you
seen "Good Morning Mr Gay" lately. please
give her my best love and tell her I
will wash her feet with the greatest pleasure
my next visit. Good Bye God Bless you
and put into your heart the desire to
Come up is the Constant prayer of your
ever devoted Hallie.

All the family join me in love to you
Good Bye