

6-6-1810

**Letter, J. Maxwell, in Greenville, Mississippi to Rev. James Smylie
in Washington, Adams County, Mississippi, June 6, 1810**

J. Maxwell

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Greenville 6th June 1810

My friend,

I must begin at the first of the chapter - I asked her if I might visit her in the character of a lover - Her reply was "I had no particular objections" - The next time (as I told you) I pressed the subject very much, and she would not decide - on Monday last, I again pressed it, and when she came to explain, said she now gave me permission to pay my addresses, but only to visit her - Her conduct is very mysterious, for when I pressed her so much on the subject the second time, her countenance underwent many changes, and her eyes filled with tears several times - The last time, she was as cold as a whelstone, and appeared to treat the subject with stoical indifference -

On enquiry I found that Houston had been there, the preceding week, and I have no doubt, but that he has either counted on or said some ill natured things about me - Arthur Houston or Harper, loves me, and I have frequently entered the lists against armenianism ^{with} ~~against~~ the Parson himself in his own house, and altho' he has always treated me with the utmost politeness, I could discover that in touching Methodism, I touched the apple of his eye - He is unquestionably a Methodist, and under the influence of his father, and that is enough -

This detail I make to you for a number of reasons -
In the first place it shows how fluctuating are
the minds of girls on the subject of Matrimony, and
that apparently trivial causes and circumstances will
fix their determination - In the 2nd place it shows
how very much biased and prejudiced Religious people
are to their own opinions and orders, and in the last
place, I make this communication, in order that you may
undo, whatever you may have done (relative to the
affair) in the Majors family - If you have given
any hints, the most distant, of my loving or country

I - I beseech you, exert your ingenuity to
place every thing in statu quo, without appearing
to have either interest or design - I would not
for any consideration, the Idea should go out, as it will
essentially injure me in any further attempts of
the same kind with another girl, should I fix on
one - I do not suppose that I experience much
mortification on the present occasion - I really do
not - My heart has not been deeply interested, and I
never did think I - y, a Gem of inestimable Value -
I could nevertheless esteem her, and that is all I ever ex-
pect to feel for any woman before marriage -

I know not what you may think of
the affair, but I assure you it is my opinion that the
principle called Love, enters but little into the composition
of the girls in this country - If a young man has the
crime of poverty placed on his Back, he need not cal-

cutate or must success - I would be willing to bet
a million if I had it, that if I had only half a
Dozen Nappy heads, there would be no difficulty in
getting S - y. or any other girl of my ac-
quaintance - What do you think?

To conclude, whether S - y understood
me or not, she did consent to receive my addresses, and
~~on these express conditions, that unless my prospect of~~
Success was very great, not to give me any encourage-
ment - That she was afterwards very serious on the
subject, and would not decide, stating as an objection,
that the affair ought not to be hurried too fast - That
she did not doubt my sincerity, and of course, it
was very wrong to keep me in a state of suspense
when the delay and want of decision on her part
was calculated to inspire me with hopes of success -

The subject taken all together, is calculated to
wound my feelings and mortify my pride; but
it is like the "Idle wind which I regard not" - I feel
myself as ~~good~~ ^{deserving} as she, or any other girl in the
Territory, and all I have to regret is, that she per-
mitted me to advance so far.

McKay is sick with fever - but not very
ill - as soon as he is able to attend to busi-
ness, I shall be in Washington -

Wishing you all health & Happiness,

I am your friend.

J. A. Maxwell