

Mobile Jan 11th /61
My Own dear dear Wife as I set down to
write you the guns are sounding in my ears from
all quarters, saluting the secession of Alabama from
our Union it is broke it is gone I fear never to return
it drives all other thoughts from my head I with
hundreds of thousands of other good americans are
heart broke and I still hope that something may be
done to bring us all together again but it appears
like hoping against hope for the settled determin-
ation that I settle upon the face of every southern
man face says plainer than language can speak
that they will have there rights or die in the
conflict and nothing will stop it but god in his
allwise providence and my prayer is that he will
yet keep a guiding hand over us and lead us
safe through this is the hour of need I never thought
that I should live to see this day the city is
nothing but a military depot and the streets
are filled with nothing but soldiers merchants
and clerks leave there office and shoulder the
musket to do military guard duty at the Forts
and in and around the city, it is awfull to
see americans armed against americans and
ready to shed the last drop of blood to defend
there houses and fireside and did I not have
you and those dear ones to look after I would
court a death in this ruin and chaos for now
you are all I have to live for / country friends
and friendships all wrecked for what for nothing
but a few miserable being who have not one
doll at stake and have all to gain from the
ruins May the curses of an avenging god cast

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Date: Jan. 11, 1861

Description: Capt. John Curtis letter from Mobile, Alabama

upon them and there and may there lives be
prolonged to bear them till they have suffered more
than ten thousand deaths and now civil war
is inevitable and My only prayer is that those
that have caused this ruin may be the first to
fall into the vortex but no those lothsome creatures
will now revel for a while in the ruin they have
Made. Your Kind good letters have come duly to
hand and in them I feel consoled to think I
have one faithfull heart to trust yet and I will
cling to and nurs it in my bosom with the tender
care of a Mother for its infant god bless you all
and I would give, what would I not give to have
you here you May Make arrangements to go with
me on my return suit yourself as to them for
if I continue of the same mind I am now and
the country stands in the same state that it
now is our residence is done in B I shall go
North and take you with me and we will pick
out what we want to keep from our stock in B
and put the rest up at auction and then
close our house and bid adieu to america or
the northern part of it untill these troubles are
ended and I want you to let the first and last
before you teach our children to hate and abolition
person as he would be a serpent and point the finger
of scorn at him as the destroyer of this our lovely
union of ours and I pray god that lesson may
be taught to the children by every good southerner
& union man and woman and if we have to part
from a part of our country we will keep those
reptiles before the common gaze of all men and
all nations this town is now full of armed men
and seven hundred more arrives tomorrow [?]
and take the fort from Pencacola which is held

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by the United States it will be
blood shed and the first drop that is spiled will
cause rivers to flow I feel glad oh how glad to know
you are in Europe away from all these scenes it is
heart rending and the heavy and aching heart that is
in this country is awfull to contemplate. Well dear L
I have taken up a full cargo and shall begin to load
in a few days and shall hurry away to get to you and
then we will take our quarters on board of the N.Y.
and there we will stay untill time settels this great
and gloomy revolution Ft's here are now two cents
and a penny to Havre and Liverpool I have all of
my ft at three farthings which is a fine ft and
will pay me well but god only knows when we
will get any thing more to do but hope on hope
ever commerce cannot die if it doze all nations
will be the sufferers I was out to see Mrs Alexander
yesterday and found her very sick Sara K wished
me to send her love and say to you that she got two
letters wrote and was affraid they were not good
enough and she would not send them Mrs Swain
is well and was very much pleased when she got her
lace but has a sad heart for both her boys belong
to a military company and they have forced them
to go to the fort to fight in case there is any
fighting to be done of which there is a great prospect
at present The Bottle house is now full of solders
and a guard of two men are at every entrance
it is a singular looking sight last night there
was a company of as fine young men as I ever
saw came from the country and I was told

by the United States yet and I fear there will be
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that there was a [paper torn] in that company worth
one hundred thousand doll and some worth five
hundred thousand doll the Capt said
that there was not a man in his company but what
could kill a deer at one bound a Hare at two bounds
and a d—d Yankee Abolitionest at no bound at
all so that Will give you the idea of the feeling
here Capt Boutelle had a very narrow escape
with his life here he was on board of his ship
ten days before he left and had to go away
without his papers and had to sleep on board
of a different ship every night whilst in the Bay
one night it got hroumered that he was coming
up town to settel his business and two hundred
men maned the warfh and fifty went on board
of the boat after him and broke into every room
in the boat but he was not there and then they
got up a crowd to go after him down the Bay and
old Merchant sent a boat down on Sunday
Morning and towed him to sea and he got
off clear and I am glad for his family's
sake I hear that Lucy laughs at it but had
they caught him they would have left him
in the house not here any more and it is so
here now that all Northern men have to be very
carefull what they say for fear of being picked
up and nothing short of a coat of tar and feathers
do they get who suport Lincoln or the black
republician doctrin Now dear L accept the
love of your own dear Husband and Kiss
those dear boys for father and love to
your sisters from your John

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