

Lamartine¹ V^a

Aug 18th _63

My Dear Sister

After so long time I can
not refrain from writing, as we have been
disappointed in having you with us; & I
feel a desire to go over these sad impressions
& solemn scenes which are still fresh in
my mind. How much did I wish for you,
when I first learned our dear father² must go,
for though his protracted illness had caused
him much suffering we had never thought
him near his end until the Sunday before
his last. I had the privilege of being by his
side a good deal, particularly the last 6 or
8 hours. He talked but little, but when he
spoke he clearly evidenced that his comfort
had not forsaken him_ that his faith was
firm & unshaken__ I shall never never
forget those looks full of tenderness & love
which he cast upon us, as we stood

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around his bed. But here was our only
comfort- "Jesus is with me_ He supports

¹ Lamartine was the Laidley family home in Huntington, WV.

² John Osborne Laidley was a prominent Cabell County lawyer & politician. He died April 14, 1863.

me." "It will not be long now, I am ~~almost~~
almost there." I had never witnessed a
death; but I was given strength to stand by
& receive his last words & to administer
to his last earthly want_ and with my own
hand close those dear, dear eyes which
had never looked on me but in love_ Oh;
my Sister, I too, have lost one of the best,
and most beloved of parents, & friends.
That hour & the feelings that almost over_
whelmed me can never ^{be} erased but we are not
called to mourn for him-, ^{but for ourselves} he has fallen like
the shock ripe for the harvest. He is
safe in the ~~hxxxx~~ haven of eternal
rest, where the storms & troubles of this
life can never approach or disturb him
and if we follow in the example he has left
for each of us, in humble submission & reli-
ance upon that dear Savior in whom
he trusted the separation cannot be long. h
How could we bear the trials & afflictions

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of this mortal life, but for the faith
which points to a world where parents
and children, brothers & sisters, husbands
& wives, shall meet again where there
shall be no more parting and sin & sorrow

can never enter.

Our dear father talked to me several times very tenderly, & affectionately of you, during his illness. I went in the roome [*sic*] several times and found the stand drawn up to him, with your ^{last} letter lying on it__ he seemed to be waiting for strength_ which never came. He seemed to expect you down__ He was noticing the boats more than usual_ & he once remarked to me, "I thought Ama might be down." But my dear sister if you had not the privilege of being with him as we were, you do not now miss his presence as we do__ from morning, until night, this strange sad feeling_ around the fireside, at the table, at the family after_ Oh; this sad missing him

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Oh; Sister Ama, he has been so kind to me, always so ready to sympathize in joy or sorrow__ to instruct, to counsel, to comfort, & to my little ones, who come around me saying, ma, where is Grandpa. Ah; little do they know, what they have lost. forgive me Sister Ama I fear I add to your sorrow__ I could not restrain.

Amacetta L Summers from "Sallie," August 18, 1863

Mother³ says she wishes you could come
down__ but if you cannot you must
write to her she feels very anxious to
hear from you__ I heard Lou⁴ had left for
school _ I feel for you in the separation
I know you miss him sadly.
I suppose it will do no harm to say
brother A⁵ has been at home recently.
his health is good__ though he looks a good
deal broken. He seems but little discour-
aged by the late disasters__ still looks to
the bright side, or think there is a brighter side
but Oh; there is nothing bright to me, but the
end, the end of this cruel war._ Please
remember me aff^{ly} to the Judge.⁶

Yours in much love

Sallie⁷

³ Mary Scales Hite, Amacetta's mother.

⁴ Amacetta's son, Lewis Summers, was a student at Marietta College in 1863.

⁵ "Brother A" could be Albert or Alexander Laidley but is more likely to be Albert; Alexander is called by his middle name, Ulysses, in several public records.

⁶ Judge George Summers, Amacetta's husband

⁷ While Amacetta did have a sister named Sarah who was nicknamed Sallie, she was already deceased at the time of this letter. Possibly written by Amacetta's sister-in-law, Sarah (Sallie) Chewning Laidley, wife of Amacetta's brother, John Laidley.