

I am ashamed to have kept your letter 3 weeks, unanswered dearest Ellen but it requires some time for me to get settled and to learn to do any thing in a family of such unwieldy dimensions, and where 6 of them are small enough with Jane's management or rather want of management to cry & make a noise they are children of the best natural dispositions I ever saw in my life or the house would be a perfect bedlam, but the elder girls are sweet amiable useful girls who take much of the trouble of the little ones off of their mother's hands, and the younger children are friendly & good tempered with one another so that Carrie excepted there is very little crying and no quarrelling. I have resumed my music lessons with Jane's four elder girls & two of my old scholars not for profit this time but to repay the trouble ~~the~~ addition of my large family gives, by rendering my self useful in the only way in which I can be and also from the interest I take in the family. the two others I teach for "auld lang syne" and that they are good affectionate girls. I have not heard from George yet but Mr Hodgson said he would make him write from Gibraltar, he received your letter only the day before he sailed but in his last letter by the Pilot he said he would answer it very soon. I am truly grateful to the President for his immediate attention to our wishes and above all for his berth in the John Adams, whose cruise will be one of so much interest & to a healthy station. there were so many applications for that station that nothing but a determination to befriend the family would have obtained it. Mr Ponder has been in the neighbourhood & he told Jefferson that they would try to get a township 50,000 acres of land and also to get the location turned over to the President who being well acquainted with that country by locating the grant ~~not~~ all in one body but in different tracts, it might be chosen all good and would be much easier to sell, and would sell to greater advantage. if we succeed my plan is to divide it in 12 shares retaining 2 for my self and one

a piece to each of my children receiving Monticello in lieu of Jefferson's if it is less than \$10,000 which he asks, binding my self to give it up to any purchaser who will give his price, retaining from the purchase money the advance I had paid. spending the summer there and keeping house with O. in the winter. as long as the union of the two families is advantageous to them. when ever that ceases I will if I can afford it rent a casita in Washington, where I should prefer to spend the winter, as Monticello is a very expensive & comfortable winter residence. in talking over these plans with Jefferson he expressed a wish to see us living at Monticello in case of the addition talked of. advises improving the Mountain which is all that remains, turning it into a grazing farm, & growing no more grain & than would be necessary for the maintenance of the farm which he would superintend. but all these are bright visions like any other waking dream, the only feature that I can not relinquish is the power of assisting my dear children and that, even if I get the land, will depend upon the good fortune with which each individual may dispose of their share, which I should propose to have numbered & drawn (by lot). Mr Poindester seemed very sanguine and I think as far as I can learn a friendly disposition towards the family seems to prevail in Congress. George seemed pleased with his prospects, talks jestingly of taking ^{you} Tom & Jeff under his patronage as midshipmen thirteen or fourteen years, hence I dare ^{say} our Navy will be a desirable situation and a certain provision for a great many of our young men. with George I am sure it is the best thing that could have been done for him the only danger John Nicholas wrote to Sarah was of his being spoiled by too much attention. being the youngest he was becoming very much acquainted with the officers. the Captain is a perfect gentleman & a very good man but a strict disciplinarian: the first lieutenant the only one of the officers that did not bear a good character has been exchanged for Lieutenant Carpenter a fine officer & an acquaintance of ours.

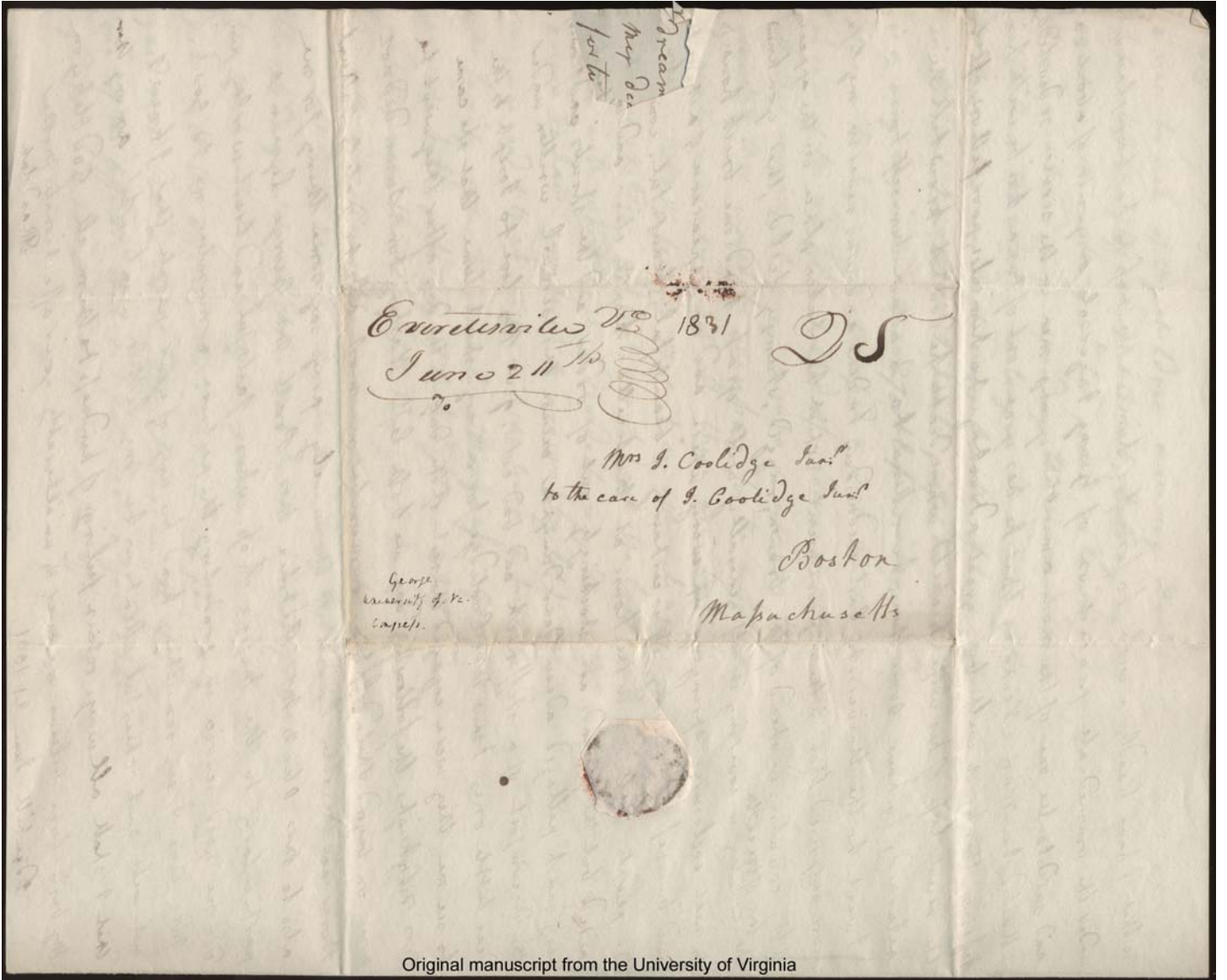
so that I have hardly a wish to form for him. in his maps he has been placed under the immediate protection of young Ingersoll a youth of about 20 and said to be one of the most amiable young men in the service so devotedly attached to Mr Nicholas that he has gone out of town to be with him. Professor thinks it will be a great advantage to him also, poor fellow, after the recent loss of his wife & child whose death he did not know till he returned, to have something to attend to & attach himself to

I went to the University last Wednesday to dine and was never in my life more surprised than in the improvement which has taken place in the appearance of the country. in stead of the brown, ragged, stumpy fields, that you knew ^{the face of the earth} the country is covering it self generally with elegant, handsome brick houses, & neat enclosures springing up every where and an appearance of activity and business so pleasing it is certainly a beautiful, beautiful country. the people who stay in the house at Monticello keep it clean and well maintained but the grounds are shockingly out of order and the shrubs and flowers very much pillaged. adieu dear daughter excuse this scrawl written under the discomfort of a stiff neck and bad cold. give my love to Joseph & the dear little ones. I saw Mrs Coolidge for a very short time that she came to see me, they were engaged the rest of the day & the day after they went to Mrs Fitzhugh. the following day we both left Washing ton. Susan did not come on beyond Philadelphia. remembers me most affectionately Isabella Storer and the other ladies of the family pray say something for me also to Mrs Olin & Mrs Fitchie Mrs Pratt Mrs George Lyman & particularly to the Misses Trip whose faithful and trust worthy services did me good service in protecting the picture remembers me to good Mrs Cox & say something kind to any of your people that I knew. I met with such cheerful attention to my little wants while among them that I shall allways retain feelings of kindness to them all God bless you My best love believe me ever & unalterably your affectionate Mother

Dodge Hill June 21 1831

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