Summerville May 10th /61 (Mobile)

Friday Night

It is now 8 o'clock but I intend writing
your Aunt Ann before I retire to send by this
mail — so do not read this letter to her

My dearest Helen

RUBINSTEIN

As Mary and the children have gone in town this evening to have their hair cut — and see the Military — I take this opportunity to write a few lines and tell you how very much I am disappointed not to be able to see my dear absent daughter Helen, as soon as I anticipated — but this terrible War has changed the aspect of all things — and it is really dangerous for a Lady to attempt travelling these perilous times — Yesterday a lady arrived in this City from Boston — she speaks of the outrages and insults offered to Southern travellers along the line of road at one place her trunks marked for Mobile were cut open by a posse of men under the command of the Sheriff, and all her clothing pulled out and minutely and insultingly inspected before a vulgar jesting crowd — on asking why this rude course was adopted she was answer'd that she was suspected — and again she was told that her trunks may contain arms! this rude search was being prosecuted to an extent bordering on downright vulgarity — when the superintendent of the road stepped up and interfered — I mention this as an instance of several similar indignities offered to ladies and gentleman coming to the South —

x but perhaps I am mistaken at least I hope so —

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taken off — but her heart failed her — She found Mrs Bingham very busy making sand bags — The Ladies here are becoming very patriotic and are offering their services to go where they can be useful at a moments warning —

The country air agrees with the children they are now in perfect health and have excellent appetites, they do not fare quite as sumptuously as they did in the City — but are now very well contented with a piece of corn bread — which is much better than feeding them on dainties — I wish my dearest Helen you were again with us; how rejoiced we should all to see you among us once again — of course you prefer being with your Parents and Sisters in these troublesome times — your friends all sympathize with you, well knowing a person possessing your kind feelings would not stay away from choice, but stern necessity compels it — Give our best love to all our N. Hampshire friends — tell them I perfectly long to see them — and sincerely regret my inability to do so — Anns letter was an answer to mine of the 27 ultimo she seems to think that I can come on by the way of Mississippi and it is not considered unsafe — but your Father thinks differently that no lady can travel now without being subject to every kind of an insult — but if I could get a Gent to escort me I would venture on the perilous journey — We are having a great deal of trouble with Matilda — she is one of the most impertinent Darkies I ever came in contact with — will not mind one word, unless inclined to do so — when Mary tells her to do any thing — she answers by saying do it yourself if you want it done for I shant — Mary told her Father that he must dispose of her even at a great sacrifice — for she could

x nor would not put up with her impudence any longer — your Father gave her a good scolding this morning — but she gave him back ten fold — said she was not afraid of him nor no one else — new never would be

I thought Betsy was bad enough — but she is a perfect angel compared to this one — Mary is very anxious to get rid of her — thinks Belle will do very well with her assistance — for she seems willing to learn and is very obliging — I like her very much — but the other "Oh Lord deliver me" Do you not think those lines I enclosed in my letter — "Reclined always" are beautiful and very appropriate please send them to your Aunt Ann — I shall write her before returning — as this by all accounts will be my last opportunity x

Not one word from your Uncle Young for some time past — have you had from Polly lately? dreadful times these — the departments in that City wear the aspect of armed citadels —

Hon. J. M. Withers tendered his resignation as Mayor and has been elected Col. of a Regiment of Alabama now in Virginia. The Spring Hill Road Company numbering 90 men organized on Wed. F. S. Blount Capt — Stocker Ensign — Livingston Lieut. &c and so on — They drill every day near here and at night a certain part as night guards — to catch all Nig's that are strolling about — one caught a runaway here the other night and took him to the guard house. This dreadful War has ruined your Father's business as no vessels are allowed to enter our Ports — sad — sad times at present — His health is very good with the exception of erysipelas occasionally — All your friends send their very best love and want to see you as we all do very much — The Musquitoes are now in full blast — is it not delightful — they are now round me by dozens — do you not envy me? The children are delighted with their books. Jake sent them — Woodward is very fond of learning to read.

So you see my dearest Helen it would be very hazardous for you to attempt to return at present although we perfectly long to see your dear Self once again—how little I thought when you took your departure that so much trouble would intervene before we met again—but this terrible War is now upon us—Fort Pickens is now in possession of the United State troops which continue to arrive by every train and bloody work is expected The men ~~the~~ at the Fort are all busy erecting batteries in preparation for a conflict—that result as it may, will doubtless carry mourning and sorrow to the hearts of thousands—who would have thought one year ago of this Civil War? of all wars the most dreadful—we know that "God reigns" and it is a comfort to think that right not might will prevail—Hope and trust that by the Fall, all may be at peace—for a number prophesies a short decisive War—the Abolitionists may thank themselves for this—may they feel all the misery of it—

Your Father has this moment brought me a letter from your Aunt Ann—of the 2d of May which is quite acceptable—for it informed me of your whereabouts, which has relieved my troubled mind considerably, as I have been expecting a letter from you from New Hampshire, in answer to mine of the 27th why one did not make its appearance we could not imagine—little dreaming you had sent one on the 18th ultimo with your Daguerreotypes enclosed—which has never reached its place of destination—so long a time has elapsed and it has not arrived we are obliged, though very reluctantly to relinquish all hopes—it is really too provoking, it is quite a disappointment to Mary and myself—it would have afforded us so much pleasure (as we cannot at present see the original) to view our dear absent one as she now appears—Yours that you gave Mary now graces our parlour mantle—accompanied with many others, which makes quite a display, I can assure you—Very happy to hear you prolonged your visit at Cambridge, and intend going to Jamaica Plains—Ann writes you appear to be having fine times there—expect ere this you are with your N. Hampshire friends, if your Father would only give his consent I would soon be with you—I cannot bear the idea of relinquishing all hopes of coming when I have been anticipating it so long—if I could find one person to accompany me I would come, at any rate—I understand all communications between the North and the Confederate States, are to be stopped this week by that vulgar boor who passes for the "President of the United States"—therefore, if he carries his threat into execution, it will be sometime before we hear from absent friends—Mary wrote you a long letter yesterday, and enclosed some interesting items—hope you will receive it—She is now in excellent Spirits, and seems like herself again—she says, she cannot regret Mr B's death—as the Physicians has since informed her that if he had lived, he never could have recovered his senses—as they were gone past recall—and no other prospect for dear Mary than a husband being a Maniac for life—only think how dreadful—that would be indeed a living trouble—and death is far far preferable—She and the children have just made their appearance with their hair cropped close to their heads which is a great improvement—Mary says she came very near having hers

Mary wrote you a long letter yesterday—it is too bad that your letter and Daguerreotype have not arrived yet

I am happy to be able to say that my health is much better than when I last wrote you although I have a very weak back—and the least excitement gives me a violent pain which I can hardly bear—but my appetite is much improved—have been taken English Bitters which has had the desired effect—and I am now always ready for my meals

hope in time to get a little flesh on my bones—for I am now a perfect Shadow—

Eveline Russel has a baby—of course—Alabama Fowler got all ready to go to Europe with her husband—but her prefered being a soldier and she was obliged to give it up—

Is it not strange that Mrs Todd did not tell Mary any thing respecting her Sisters Wedding as she was not aware of its taking place until she saw it announced in the paper—quite a slight from an intimate friend—do you not think so? Anna Marshall will go next—have you rec'd any letters from her recently? I have not heard one word from your Uncle Humphrey for some time—although I wrote him a long letter after Mr Boardmans death—And now my ever dear Child I must close with my best wishes for your health and happiness and a safe return to your Southern home as soon as you can safely do so—Your Father and Mary join with me in our best love to all enquiring friends and Accept a large share from your

Ever Affectionate
Mother
Cath. Tickner