

Michael Rodgers to Elizabeth Rodgers, 19 July 1840

Princeton, July 19, 1840

Dear mother,

When I wrote you last, I thought ere this that I should have seen you in person, but fate has ordered it otherwise. Two weeks ago I was in Louisville purchasing paper and printing materials, and when I left this it was my full intention to have kept on, but when I arrived in Louisville, the weather being very warm, and my business scattered about through the city, and my eagerness to get my business accomplished that I might be able to start up the river next morning, that I overheated myself, which through me into a fever, and confined me to my bed for two days. When I got able to go about I felt so weak and debilitated, and my business pressing my return so strenuously, that I concluded I had better make for home, for fear that I might be taken sick on the road – and further, I had contracted to print a monthly periodical for the Cumberland Presbyterians, and my contract bound me to get a number out this month, so that if any accident had happened to me on the road to detain me, I would have forfeited my contract: and for those reasons I had to forego the happiness and pleasure of once more beholding my only surviving parent-my mother! but I still hope that Providence will enable me to effect the journey next spring.

Dear mother, I cannot say that my health is very

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good at present, I have issued one paper since my return, but last week I issued none, both my boys were sick as well as myself, however we have all comparatively recovered, and I think will be able to issue one this week, which if I do you should receive in four or five days after this letter. Our village is rather sickly at present, more so than it has been since I came there. It is owing to the constant fevers we have had for the last four or five weeks

Dear mother, since my location in this place, under the guidance of our Heavenly Father, who I am convinced had a controlling power in directing my course here, Heaven has smiled so far on my exertions and labors as to give me a fair prospect of being able to lay up something for old age, as my Father often impressed on my mind in his letters. I have now got my office clear, which is worth \$1,500, and if I have my health will be able to clear from my present business, \$1,000 per year. There is one thing still a wanting which my every interest is calling for loudly every day – that is a wife. My expenses in boarding myself and boys and occasionally a journeyman, and making clothes, and mending, and washing, &c. and other little expenses, costs me annually \$500 in cash, which if I kept house, could live on half the money. But I see no prospect of soon suiting myself – the Kentucky girls has not got the right sort of raising for me, they have been all raised among slaves, and know nothing

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about taking care of a house, which would not answer me, but I still hope all things will work right after awhile.

Dear Mother, I believe I have nothing more of importance to say in this letter, please say to brother William that I think he has treated me very bad by not answering any of my letters, and as I said in one of my former letters, that if any correspondence ever again takes place between us, it must be commenced on his part first. I hope as long as you live to hear from you at least once a quarter, and I will write at least as often, besides I will continue to forward you [torn off] paper every week that it is printed, with the word [torn off] well endorsed on it, when my health will warrant Please write immediately on the receipt of this, and let me know how your health is, and all about your condition, and when you heard from sister Catharine and brother James, and how they are doing.

I conclude with my best prayers for your happiness in this world and the world to come

your affectionate son till death

Michael Rodgers

Elizabeth Rodgers