

August 17 1817

My Dear Virginia

We are returned from the national
bridge more anxious to see it again than we were at first,
because in the first place it far surpasses our expectations,
and in the second we saw it under many disadvantages which
will be removed when we go again, & grandpapa has promised
that we shall, our trip was attended with disasters & accidents
~~from the time~~ we set off untill we returned again, the morning
we were to go when we got up we found it was a damp cloudy day
grandpapa decided at breakfast that it would not rain & sister
Ellen and myself rejoiced that the sun did not shine & that we
should have a cool day for our journey we set off accordingly
after Gile & Issac had made us wait two hours but we had not pro-
ceeded many miles before it cleared up the sun shone out & we had
one of the hottest & most disagreeable days for traveling that could
be then came over the ~~mountain~~ ^{mountain} in going over a high bridge
one of the wheel horses broke through & sank up ~~in~~ ^{nearly half way} in
the hole we all got out as quick as we could & found that the
bridge was entirely gone to decay & not only several of the logs
but one of the sleepers had broken through & that we had been in
great danger of going down carriage & horses & all, the horses were
all loosened & poor Broom pulled out by main strength, for he
seemed so overcome with fright that he was incapable of resisting
himself & lay quite passive & let them do what they would with
him, he was hurt in no other way than being much shaken & bruised
his side was very much bruised now he walks a long tedious red hill
we then pursued our journey in the carriage without any other

where that old man was ~~the~~ the other today great
said answered to was Colonel Jefferson "then said the first
I know where time, he lives near ~~some~~ ^{Clay} in Bedford" but the
other one said no he did not live there he lived in ^{Albemarle}
I only ^{visit} his place in Bedford call'd poplar Knots sometimes, that
he had possessions in both these countries, & that Randal used to
have land in Bedford too. they said a good deal more about ^{grand}
~~grandpapa~~ a great deal to us the first not even honouring us with
the title of ladies, but calling us young ~~girls~~ ^{gentlemen} how they knew
so much about grandpapa I can't conceive for he never had
seen either of them before. we left this place on ^{horse} ^{back} after
having refreshed ourselves with ^{some} apples which they gave
us & began so ascend the mountain, we cross'd it at ^{the} ^{gap}
which is near the place above James river passes the ridge, we
ride three miles before we came to the top where we dined on
cold bacon & chicken, & then descended three, three more we had
to go before we got to the place where we spent that night &
the succeeding grandpapa's farm. the mountain is the richest &
most romantic looking piece I ever saw the trees remarkably large
& tall & no underwood that you could see for a great distance a
round, we saw there oaks, Chestnuts & poplars, & spruce pine, &
which I never saw before it is a beautiful tree I wish we had
it at Monticello. I've found there a raspberry which is better sea-
son than the garden raspberry having a fine flavour & the seeds
being so small that you scarcely perceive them, the bushes were
quite full of fruit tho' it was so late in the season, they are a
bright scarlet & the bush has no thorns, the people in the neigh-
bourhood call'd it the mountain raspberry, & grandpapa remem-
ber'd that they had ^{had} them at ^{Shadwell} for many years and the
name of the mountain strawberry, but they had never been there.

August 19 Grandpapa means to hurry I away off so soon
that I have not time to say any thing more of our trip

To the Natural bridge particularly as I have written down
three pages & have not got to the end of our first days jour-
-ney, but if you are not tired already I will go on with our
travels in the next letter, & will try to get a little better
pen ink & paper that the reading of them may not be such
a task at present. I must answer the principle articles of your letter.
I have not wanted Gonzales but shall probably be ready for it by the time
Johnny comes again, I find Paris much harder than it was at first
I do not come on very fast with any thing for I have not got over
the fatigue of ~~the~~ ~~travelling~~ & am so drowsy & stupid that I can scarcely
keep my eyes open & when they are open it is with as much difficulty
that I can understand what I am about as you must perceive from
my letter. I wonder you do not persevere in attempting to draw human
figures it is so much more agreeable than flowers, since I have been
these I have attempted several in frieze which I spilt after com-
-pleting the figure by trying to draw the rocks & failing in the
attempt for landscapes as what I never could make anything like
in my life. I am now drawing a Ferdinand & Miranda, but they both
have a great deal of expression in their countenances & I have
not succeeded very well in that either you have not said a word
of Aunt Prudence I suppose she has not arrived yet till
Elizabeth I shall expect her certainly to render a faithful
account of every thing she sees in her travels. Mada & Mrs
Epper were not with us when we went to the natural bridge
but we expect the former & Francis every day. Adieu My
Dear Virginia I will write to Mary & Harriet by the next
trip of the cart if I get over my torpor, but I do not think
I shall write another letter if I write it no better than this
I sister Ellen desires to be remembered to Aunt Hester & to
Aunt Hackly & her family particularly to Cousin Jase, Also to
Aunt Rose, I am delighted to hear she is recovering, give my
love to all the above mentioned persons & bid dear mama
& my sweet little Jim for me once more adieu C.P.

Elizabeth I suppose will be at the springs when I write to
the other gentlemen & you get a new one I shall