

Synchburg Feb 2nd 1857

Dear Sir

Your letter of the 11th Jan^y is to hand - also a letter for Mr Page which I have left at Evergreen. I fear the task you have asked me to perform will be anything but pleasant to me and not very satisfactory to yourself. If the negroes on your Plantation were constantly employed in the labors of the crop I could judge tolerably correctly wheather they did their duty or not but an occasional visit will not enable me to know anything about the job work that may hinder what should be the regular employment. For these reasons I am compelled to get my information from the servants themselves or from some person who spends more time on the place than I can. I have enquired of Mr Tunnel and he says that he thinks your business is very much neglected. Yesterday evening (Sunday) Mr Page was not at the Plantation and Mr Tunnel said that he had not been there since Friday and on an other occasion he told me Mr Page had left on Thursday and had not returned until Monday. He says that he has not seen Mr Page in the field or where the negroes are at work since he has been there; that the negroes are called up and receive orders at the house, and then they go off and do as they please. He think your interest is suffering in his hands and so do I. I know

Mr Page to come down to Capt Chubb about a week since and to stay there all day with his wife. At other times I have seen him at home or riding about. There is another little matter that it is probably right for me to mention though it is very small. Mr Page has one of his own horses at your place, kept up all the time in the stable, which the negroes are required to feed and groom and which has never been used since he has been thus treated. I am also informed that Mr Page always makes Bob shell a sack of corn to take out home with him when he goes out.

The farm work was so much ahead when you left that it will require but a small portion of the time of the hands to keep ahead for a month or two. Since you left the principal business has been plowing when the weather was suitable and fixing the fence when otherwise. The negroes are all well and have conducted themselves properly. Some of them asked permission to go to the quarterly meeting (on Sunday) which Mr Page refused them and of which they complained to Mr Sumner.

I have now told you all I know about your plantation hands. There is no neighbourhood news, except the death of Mr Wright who was living with Capt Chubb. My family and the neighbourhood are well.

I should be pleased to hear from you

Very Respectfully Yours &c
Benj E Roper