

“A letter to Emily Maria Fisher from her sister in Indianapolis, Elizabeth Benjamin, about the death of Maria’s son Robert De Forest Lee from measles/typhoid fever December 1861”

Indianapolis Jan 25 1862

My Dear Sister,

I feel that I must write to you, but what shall I or what can I say, this much I know, that when I was in affliction Robert asked you to write and comfort me, I can sympathise with you but I am a poor comforter when my own heart is almost broke, Maria when my little boy died I expected to follow him very soon I felt as if I could not live without him, and little did wish to, but I lived and live on but my heart met with a shock that it will never recover, and now your Robert and mine is gone for I feel that he was as near to me as my own child, I regret very much that I could not been with him it appears to me that I could have done some thing for him, but his Uncle says that he done every thing that could be done, had we known sooner that he was sick, and could got him with us, but he is gone, and we mourn for him, we received a letter from him the 17th of Dec stating that he was sick with the measels and wanted money for his clothes were all dirty they had

<new page>

received no wages, and the boys were all as bad of as he was, D.O. sat rite down and answered and sent him what he ask for but it seems the poor boy was so sick that he never got it, A man called here the 24th from Ogden and said that one of the Boys had been took home that morning a corps and that he was going down to Louisville to bring home his brother that was sick, I was so glad that he called we thought it would be a good time for Robert to come home, and we sent money and wanted Robert to get a furlough and come and stay untill he got well, and on Chrismas morning Mr Sears come back with the sad news that he was to sick to come, but he was much sicker than they were willing to tell us, but I was very much alarmed as you know by letter I wrote you, I wished Clary to come and see him I did not think about his taking the measels or anything else but the satisfaction of seeing each other you must excuse me for being so anxious that I looked for him and I wished to go down to Louisville with him, D.O

<new page.

promised to send for me if Robert was dangerous but he was in good hope of saving him w untill friday night when he was taken very bad and give up pretty near all hopes, and wrote to me on saterday morning but I did not receive it and did not know of his death untill D.O. brought him home. on friday he was so much better that he sat up and talked, he tooked his Uncles hand and told him that he was going to die and that he wanted to be buried by little Charley he said he knew that it would be expensive and wanted Uncle to get

his wages from government and take it out and the rest sent to his brothers and sisters and his box of tools was for Clarence, he was flighty the most of the time, his mind was on his work that is drilling and calling the Boys and horses, on saturday night he sang the , Brides farewell, and wanted Uncle to sing with him and then he would hum to himself, the boys remarked that if ever a young man went to heaven Robert had we all went out to Ogden to the funeral and

<new page>

he had so?? sincere man?ners, and he looked very natural, but looked as if he had suffered, and now Maria do try and bear up under your affliction and if nothing happens I will visit you in the spring and I will tell you all as far as I know, my heart aches for you and had it been in my power I would have been with you before now that we might mourn together, if you feel as if you could write to me I wish you would if not tell Clara to, what makes Lee ask if Robert was married I am sure he would be apt to have known it if he had been, we received all the letters but thought D.O. wrote answered them all, I hope they will forgive me if it did not, and will certainly do my duty better another time. and now my dear Sister

good night

I hope to hear from you soon

Elizabeth Benjamin

give my love to all

I like to forgot to tell you that Theodore has got home he came home the 17th fifteen of the band was sick, and one had died, the rest disbanded and come home EB

Emily Lee

<written over top of last page>

Robert trunk of clothes is here I will take good care of them untill returned to you