

A Letter from Liberia

Mars Lucas to Townsend Heaton, his former owner

June 19, 1830

Caldwell, June 19, 1830

Liberia

Dear Sir,

I again take up my pen, to my satisfaction. In communicating. to you a few lines, letting you know, that I am still in the land of the living. and injoying reasonable health. I. am. glad to send. that I have almost. got clear of. the fever, I. had a very severe, attakt of it. I. am able to work a little now. but. very. often has to stop. on the account. of. My. headacks, Jesse and myself to be house keepers, since the Decease. of his Wife, his family is on a bettering state, Except his young child, who remains very Weak, it is almost gone to nothing. We do. all our. own Washing. Dureing our illness we had to hire a woman to wash and cook but. we say that, it would not. suit Us, So, we have not. hire'd any one since, I. may state to you. that I. am much deceiv'd, with, this Country the reports, is all a lie, nearly to Encourage people. to come to this Country. Times is very Hard. out here. every thing is very Dear. and not to be had. The scarcely will allow us as much provision. is a halfgrown Child can eat, a man can eat up all his meat. all in one day. We only draw 1 lb. of meat. per. week. 3 qurts meal 2 quarts of rice that is weeks allowance. I. really. think' that. the Socity don't, know, about their, Usage here, we might get. more allowance but. the. give and take themselves I have nothing very Insteresting, worth relating. hope by this time you have received, my letter, that was sent, by the return of brig "Liberia" the account, that I, sent you, I. hope you will Excuse, for owing to my short arrival, in Africa--I. could say but little, about it. I am not. able to say much, this time, but I. may say more, this, time. I. shall try to give to you, an account of the produce, and agriculture. I am sorry to say that, the people, has, not been, so, enterprising, as the might have been, since, the came out here,--in fact--the are too much giveing to the trading buseiness, their is some out of houses to put their heads, in They has, no land Clear'd nor. nothing' in the ground. their main food is Cusadoes, plaintains, Rice, bannoos, and so forth. Cusadoes grows like pine roots, it is the main food, it makes very. good bread, and very good fl'our. it is good to roast' or boil. the also make flour out of Rice, but our people raise very little Rice, the depend altogether on the Natives raising, it is very ease raise'd. If. our. people was industrious and interprising, the might raise rice. enough for the whole, Colony. But. the. people. get. above their trades after the. come. here, the won't work but live from hand to mouth--but that would not. suit me. if I. stay in the Country long, I. try to say, something better, if their is any thing to support a family, but i. an glad to say, I. am a Single man--

Their is a great talk of Coffee raise'd, but the coffee treas is very scarce I. have seen about 10 or 12 coffee trees here, but I don't call that raising it if the don't get Coffie before the rains it the will never drink any.

Tobacco, is the main treade, here,. Camwood and Ivory in Return. beads is another Chief article for trade at this time. Tobacco can't be had for neither Love nor money. I mean the

leaf tobacco. Sugar. sells for 25 cts per. lb. coffie the same, butter 37 1/2 Cents and can't be had for that--The Merchants sells their goods, at 200 percent.

Jesse and Mars,

sends their warmest Love to, their old Mrs. and family. If you please to let my My Father and Mother and brothers and sisters know that I am almost out of the fever--also my best Respects to all inquiring friends--I. may state to you that we have not drawn any land yet. but soon will. We have to go to Milsburg, that is about 12 miles from this place, 21 miles from Monrovia it is a place that I don't want to go, too. I. would rather stay in Caldwell, But. it is the orders of the Governor. Mr. Mecklin.

Yours with Respects,

Mars Lucas

N.B. please to answer this by the first opportunity that affords--
(To) Townsend Heaton, Esq. Leesburg L. Cty, Virga.