

[Transcriber's note: *This letter has been transcribed as written: I have kept the original spelling, punctuation, spacing, etc. However, I have added, in brackets, my interpretation of certain words that were completely misspelled or very poorly written. Endnotes have been provided to identify the people mentioned. If the reader is interested in seeing a copy of the original letter, please see: [Mary R Crawford to Joseph Travis Fincher](#).*

Mary Crawford evidently lived for a while with Joseph Travis' mother, Mary Perry Horn Fincher, and was enumerated with the Fincher family in the 1860 Federal Census, Pike County, Georgia.¹

Georgia Pike Co

February the 15 1864

Mr J T Fincher²

Dear Friend it is
with the gratest of plesur that I seat my
self this beautiful lite night to let you
know how wee all are a geting along wee are
all well but ant polly^{3,4} an Mat⁵ an francis⁶
is not well ant polly is mending very fast
she is abel to go from one hous to the other⁷
I think it is cold that aldled [ailed?] Mat and Jeannay⁸
ant Luizer⁹ has just receved a letter from
Mr. Carter¹⁰ he rote that his Coumpnay was
orderd off to florida and him and William¹¹
was both well he roat when he was
at Savannah Mr. John Lifsey¹² famlay is very bad off
with the mezeles nune of your famlay has got
it yet and I hope thay want [won't] Uncel Joseph
I told you when you was at home I was agoing
to write to you and I thought I rite to let
you know how ant polly was for I know
you want to hear for I know how you ar a
bout any of your fokes when they ar sick
I hope this cruel war will soon end and I
do hope you will live to get to come home
then and live in pese the rest of your
dayes give my love and best respectes to
Tommay Fincher¹³ we have had avery nice rain
a man from your Compnay was hear to day he
said that you hadent heard from home sence
you left ant Martha¹⁴ has rote sence and I
dont know how many of the rest of them
has rote[?] my pen is so bad that I
cant rite I dont expect you will ever read

my letter Martha Rucker has got home
with James¹⁵ they say he lookes very bad well
I will close for this time so mathing [nothing]
more at present only I reame [remain] your friend
untel deth

Mary R Crawford

To Mr J T Fincher

ENDNOTES

1. 1860 U.S. Census, Pike County, Georgia, page 24, enumerated 18 June 1860, dwelling & family number 154:

- Mary P. Fincher, age 54, born in SC, farmer, property worth \$900/\$1900, cannot read or write;
- William Fincher, age 15 (youngest son of Mary P. Horn Fincher), born Georgia, attended school within the year;
- Martha A. Fincher, age 9 (daughter of Mary's son, Joseph Travis Fincher & his deceased first wife, Eliza Barrett: i.e., Mary's granddaughter), born in Georgia, attended school within the year;
- Mary R. Crawford, age 16, born in Georgia (her relationship with Mary P. Fincher is not listed).

2. Joseph Travis Fincher, son of Joseph and Mary Perry Horn Fincher, was born 1 June 1823 in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. The family moved to Pike County circa 1824. At the time of the Civil War, Joseph, a prosperous farmer in Pike County, had 10 children, five by each of his two wives. His first wife, Eliza Barrett, died on 22 October 1851, two months after the birth of her fifth child, Martha A. (called Mat or Mattie). Even though J. T. married again less than three months after Eliza's death, his daughter Mat always lived in his mother's home. Joseph enlisted in Co. D, 2nd Regiment, Georgia State Line, in the summer of 1863. His oldest child Thomas was already with this company [See Endnote #13].

3. Mary Crawford's use of "Aunt" and "Uncle" in this letter could have been mere courtesy titles or could indicate a familial relationship which has not yet been discovered.

4. "Ant Polly" refers to Mary Perry Horn Fincher, born 12 August 1805 in South Carolina.

5. Martha A. Fincher, born 12 August 1851, was the fifth child of Joseph Travis and Eliza Barrett Fincher. She lived with her grandmother, Mary Perry Horn Fincher.

6. Louisa Frances Fincher, born 10 October 1849, was the fourth child of Joseph Travis and Eliza Barrett Fincher. She lived with her father and stepmother, Martha Jane Brooks Fincher.

7. Mary probably meant that "Aunt Polly" went from her own home to that of her son's which was on an adjacent property.

8. I am not familiar with a family member called "Jeannay"; perhaps this is a nickname given to Frances or one of J. T.'s other children.

9. "Ant Luizer" refers to Louisa F. Fincher Carter, born 13 September 1828, the second child of Mary Perry Horn and Joseph Fincher.

10. "Mr. Carter" refers to Thomas Meredith Carter, born 15 February 1823 in South Carolina. Louisa Fincher and Thomas Carter married in Pike County on 16 October 1845. Thomas is listed on the Muster Roll of Company I, 32d Regiment, Georgia Volunteer Infantry, Army of Tennessee C.S.A. Upson County, Georgia, Woodson Guards (<http://files.usgwarchives.org/ga/pike/military/civilwar/rosters/i32.txt>):

Carter, Thomas M. - Private May 7, 1862. Admitted to General Hospital #3, at Greensboro, North Carolina, March 1865. Surrendered, Greensboro, North Carolina, April 26, 1865.

11. William refers to William Jonathan Fincher, born 28 December 1844, the third and youngest child of Mary Perry Horn and Joseph Fincher. He is listed on the Muster Roll of Company I, 32d Regiment, Georgia Volunteer Infantry, Army of Tennessee C.S.A. Upson County, Georgia, Woodson Guards (<http://files.usgwarchives.org/ga/pike/military/civilwar/rosters/i32.txt>):
Fincher, William - Private May 7, 1862. Surrendered, Greensboro, North Carolina, April 26, 1865. Joseph Travis Fincher often referred to him as "Brother Billy."

12. Mr. John Lifsey was a Pike County neighbor of the Finchers. He is listed in the U. S. Census of 1860 on page 34, dwelling 238, house 236. In the household were John Lifsey, age 36, farmer; Nancy age 36; and 7 children, ages 1 to 14. It's interesting that also in the home was "Sarah A. S. Crawford," age 21, domestic.

13. "Tommy Fincher" refers to William Thomas Fincher, oldest child of Joseph Travis Fincher. Tom enlisted in Co. D, 2nd Regiment (Story's), Georgia State Line, at its inception in February 1863, several months before his father enlisted in the same regiment. The State Line was organized by Georgia Governor Joseph Brown to act as guards of the state-owned railroad, known as the Georgia State Line Railroad. They were later joined to the Confederate Army and fought in the Battle of Kolb's Farm, the battles around Atlanta, and the Battle of Jonesboro. (For more information about Joseph and Thomas' war experiences, see [*Civil War Through the Eyes of a Common Soldier: As Told in the Letters of Joseph Travis Fincher of Pike County, Georgia*](#) by Linda Fincher Wood).

14. "Ant Martha" refers to Martha Jane Brooks Fincher, second wife of Joseph Travis Fincher. She was born 5 November 1831 in Henry County, Georgia, the daughter of Thomas and Prudence Story Brooks. She and Joseph married in Henry County on 15 January 1832. Joseph, who had just lost his first wife, had five small children. At the time of the War, Martha was at home in Pike County with three step-children and five of her own children (as explained in the above notes, J. T.'s oldest son was serving with him, and his fifth child Mat lived with his mother).

15. 1860 U.S. Census, Pike County, Georgia, page 87, enumerated 23 July 1860, dwelling 622, family 595:

- Martin H. Rucker, age 43
- Martha Rucker, age 36

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- James A. Rucker, age 14
 - Martha A. Rucker, age 13
 - John T. Rucker, age 5