

1899

New River Depot 1899  
Miss Katherine Ingles  
Ingles, Virginia U.S.A.

Porta de Golfe, Cuba  
Sunday A.M.

Dear Kit,

You will see by the heading that I have again made a move which will in fact account for my not writing for so long for our work at Quernador [?] was rushed toward the last and we had to work very hard and I knew that would soon be finished and I would have to go somewhere else but all the work on the island is about finished so it is hard to get a job anymore so three of us got together and bought a farming outfit and rented a hundred acres of tobacco land and have gone to farming.

I am up every morning ready to plow by five o'clock which I do not like much but we hope to be able to get in about 15 acres of tobacco yet this fall and to do so with the other work we will have to hustle every minute. I made the drive from Havana here which is one hundred and twenty-five miles in five days about eighty miles of it is as fine a road as there is in the world but the other is no road at all, and how we ever managed to get over it with a loaded wagon without some accident is more than I can understand for miles there were no sign of a road and I do not think a wagon has ever gone over it before.

I know we had the first American outfit that camped two nights in the jungles where there was about twenty mosquitoes to every square inch and I never slept one minute either night they worried the mules so that they would wallow about every five minutes to get the mosquitoes off. We have been here two weeks yesterday and have gotten pretty comfortably fixed have four tents and as it is unusually dry and the dry season will soon be on hand we can be very comfortable in tents until we get time to build a house.

We have quite a nice fruit orchard on the place that we are enjoying immensely and the fruit is very nice although the house here was destroyed five years ago and they have had no attention. We have mangos, bananas, oranges, lemons, and Sapods. [?] There was a large crop of mangoes and they are very fine. The bananas and alligator plums [?] are just coming in. Our neighbors are very kind and attentive and I think are glad to have us here but they think our ways of doing things are very curious and they stare at us when we drive by in a wagon with mules and they come a mile or two to see an American plow at work and will not agree that they are better than their old wooden plows just like they used in Biblical times and if you will look in your Bible you can see picture of exactly the same plow that they are using here now.

Well we are living pretty well and have good prospects of living better when we get something of our own growing and I have tomatoes, cabbage, beets and beans up now and as there is three crops grown a year here a garden is coming in all the time – sweet potatoes grow all they year and do not have to be unplanted but just flow up the grounds again and in about two months you have another crop.

That I must close as I have several other letters to write today. I am only four miles off of the RR and twelve miles off from the town of Pinar del Rio so you see that I am not out of the world after all. My post office is Puerta de Golfe, Cuba. I came very near forgetting to tell you about the bad luck that I had just as I was starting down here I bought two mules and went to Havana after a wagon and when I went to lead the mules into a large building one of them slipped on the slick floor two or three times and became so badly frightened that he quickly lay down and died while I was taking the harness off of him so he could get up, poor fellow must have had heart disease. I went and got another one just as good for the money and came on here anyway.

Love to all.

Fondly,

Ban [?]