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Frank [Illegible] to Jim, 18 February 1958

(Author Unknown)

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RESEARCH STUDIES INSTITUTE
AIR UNIVERSITY
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

424 Lynwood Drive,
Montgomery, Alabama,
February 18, 1958

Dear Jim:

At the moment, I don't want a thing.

Instead of asking anything of you, as is my usual bit, I would like to tell you that I considered your article in the current Journal of Southern History to be a fine contribution and a heartening breath of fresh air in a publication which is far too often concerned with the Civil War, the Old South, and Reconstruction.

Although I still hope to finish my study of trade during the Civil War, I must confess that the present flood of books and articles on this period of history is doing much to turn me against the "American Iliad." I fear that our generation is getting a fixation on the period of the Civil War, with a consequent neglect of the years since 1900. After all, it has been fifty years since the turn of the new century, and this period really is not "modern" any more.

I particularly liked your use of interviews. Why don't you put some of your graduate students to work studying and recording interviews and source material on such challenging subjects as the depression in Mississippi, the changing role of agriculture in the state, or the Balance Agriculture with Industry Program?

Thanks again for a splendid article which I hope will serve in some part to get Southern historians back into the field of the more recent and more important past.

Sincerely yours,

Frank Futrell