

489 West End Ave.

Dec. 15, 1895

My dear Fred: I went to see  
Gillman this week, partly because  
Dennis wished me to, partly because  
I wanted myself to find out how  
things stood as far as G. knows. I  
learn from him that Dennis has had  
all but - about - six hundred dol-  
lars of Aunt's legacy to him. The  
precise state of Dennis' affairs I don't  
understand.

G. thinks it would be wisest to  
divide the Palisade property as soon  
as possible. He says that Dennis

1) if he must raise money, can do so more advantageously on his third after division, than upon his third part in the joint property. Further, he says, as I think truly, 2) that Dennis, wanting money and being what he is, may, or rather might, go raising money <sup>outside</sup> on his undivided third, which in the hands of some creditors might much embarrass us as part owners.

3) I think Dennis is already inclined to a division. I am going with him, and when I do shall state 1 (above) as a reason important to him to weigh. 2 of course I shall not mention. Let that be between us.

4) Now, assuming division made, there are certain considerations for you and me to weigh. First, Dennis is our brother, and though he can act independent of us, and may very probably act with folly, we can't ignore the duties of blood. We must try, as quietly and unobtrusively as we can, to keep him ~~strong~~ and safe in his business matters, for the sake of himself and his family. Second there are strong reasons of policy to compel us to the same course.

5) Dennis's pay and family conditions - invalid wife and female child - we know. His prospects of increased pay by promotion are slim and distant. The only increase of income possible, and the only provision for wife & child in case he dies, is this

Pahside property. If he could at once get  
\$25,000 for it I should hope that even he might  
exact control enough to live on the interest. What  
I fear greatly is that, current income not  
meeting expenses, he may raise a little  
to day, and a little next year, using  
the loans up in current expenses until  
the whole disappears

6) Then is, I fear, little chance of  
getting even \$20,000 now, and what  
I also fear, and gather from his letters  
is that he has some thousands - say  
\$3,000 - indebtedness now, the in-  
terest on which would still more  
embarrass his small income. I  
may be mistaken in this, but I  
must reason on the belief

It occurred to me therefore, as a possible solution of the present difficulty that if his present debt - to an extent not exceeding \$3000 - could be placed on his share of the land, when divided, you and I might assume the interest of that sum for a period, say, of five years, upon the condition that no more money should be borrowed upon it (or by him) without our know-  
<sup>and consent</sup> ledge. This would clear him of debt, and although we might not be able to make the condition legally binding, we should be giving him freedom from debt, and an annual payment of interest of near \$200, which

we could discontinue if the conditions  
were broken.

8) This might tend to bring his pre-  
sent embarrassment, and keep him within  
bounds until the property might be  
sold to advantage

9) As a matter of mere policy,  
we must remember that if he dies  
we must support his wife and  
child - for there is for them no  
possible provision except this  
land and our pockets. The same  
catastrophe, only worse, might  
ensue, if worry got him back  
to drinking, and drunkenness  
got him out of the service

The Navy & day is keen to make  
vacancies, and he has had one or  
two narrow shans already. Worry  
might readily upset again a tempera-  
ment of so little stability

10) If you will turn this over,  
and write me what you think, we  
may get matters in train by the  
time you come north. If you  
will, write your reply with refer-  
ence to Gillman seeing it; for  
what we do must have all legal  
sanction & binding force it can.

As I think we had best

keep this quiet to ourselves, I send no  
message to Mary, but if you think  
best to consult her give her my love

Affectionately

A. J. Mahan

I shall of course say nothing to  
Emma about all this, except to  
recommend immediate diversion

Arrangements for D.  
1895-

Major F. A. Mahan

U. S. Engineer Office

Montgomery

Alabama