

Londonderry July the 22<sup>nd</sup> 1828

Dear Brother your letters arrived in as short a time as formerly. The precise time of their arrival I do not just recollect. This answering two letters at once feels rather weighty on me at present; for I feel as one always do after harvest: that I cannot or rather should not work, at least at any wearisome task and that letter writing has always been to me. We took in the most of our Oats yesterday and to-day not being suitable for to take in the remainder; I thought I would do as well to answer your letters. We commenced mowing on the 17<sup>th</sup> of June and finished on the 27<sup>th</sup> and harvesting on the 30<sup>th</sup> and finished cutting on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of July and haying on the 14<sup>th</sup> having made 42 loads of hay off 28 acres and took in 698 dozens of Wheat 511 of Rye off 34 acres of the first and 18 of the last. The wheat and Rye on some farms was as good as that of last year but not generally so; nor nothing like it as you may know by ours. Present Prices are Flour 4.75 Whiskey .20 cents, Wheat .85 Rye .33 Corn .37½ cents Oats 25. The weather during the fore part of the spring was very favourable: being warm and pretty wet, but towards the latter end proved rather cold: the frost killing all the peach and cherry blossoms particularly on the limestone lands, and pinching the Rye before it was shot to such a degree that the Rye fields looked fairly white and made some <sup>see</sup> farmers think their Rye was partly destroyed: but it affected it but <sup>not</sup> fatally. During haymaking the weather was past common fine being dry and altho, but in harvest cool and somewhat rainy. Wages per day .50 to .69. Paul's son John was with us two days, the 3 & 4 of July he was on his way home having come from New Orleans to New York and from thence to Philadelphia he left William and family well, and was and has been in good <sup>health</sup> for a considerable time past: he intends leaving home about the first of August to go to Cincinnati, for to follow his old business of trading down the Ohio: for a year or two more ~~so~~ that he may acquire more wealth and then be in a better condition to settle himself and take a wife. He is of all Uncle Paul's sons the best endowed by nature either in body or in mind. Of the rest of our relations I know nothing; except of Cousin Eliza Weakly and husband who I called to see when I was in the spring going to Shippensburg with the moving of the Widow Wilson and family: they were in good health and have two of a family both daughters: they keep a tavern a thing they are noways qualified to do. I think very little of either of them. Your acquaintances are all or nearly all as they were when I wrote last: no marriages have taken place: the Betty Richard affair has driven Mr Curdy from the parts, and left all the girls behind; a thing I wish he had not done for we are all heartily tired of Miss Mc Clure. The Doctor had Miss Sawyer and Miss Carr and a number more of the ladies of the country in the fidgets about his lovely person. another person I must mention.

that is the honorable Doctor Wilson who was expelled from College for disorderly  
conduct: and dare not show his face among decent people at home having sown  
two grass widows some of that ill brewed <sup>arish</sup> mentioned by Burns that make women  
take a second growth: and one them as ill looking as any street trolper. This I  
might have let you know before but forgot. In your operations you must be  
careful not to overstep your ability to pay all demands that may be brought  
against you at any time: you ought not to proceed with your grist mill any  
farther at present than is absolutely necessary to the fixing of your saw mill  
in its proper place: so as that it may be no hindrance to the building of the  
grist mill; at least no farther than to the erecting of the shell and <sup>that</sup> should be  
with the superintendance of a mill wright least you might have to tare down  
some of it to make the inside works suit properly. The reason that I caution  
you against going on too rapidly with your mill building is that I think you  
are not altogether aware of the great cost of Mill gearing I think it will cost  
you and Robert about as much as you are worth to erect a mill from first  
last with but <sup>two</sup> pair of stones which is too few in any mill; especially in a mill  
that has as much water at command as yours will have: no mill ought to be less  
than three stories high, having the nether millstone standing with its upper face  
level with the second floor. You and Robert can and may do as you please but I  
would recommend the plan of building your mill shell capacious enough to  
<sup>have</sup> receive two water wheels and four pair of stones and I would recommend  
one or both of you to go to New York and see some of the newly constructed  
grist mills and then with the assistance of the operative mechanic you might build  
yours correctly. And another I dont wish that you would lay too much  
my coming to Michigan: ~~but~~ I would rather you would proceed on  
independent of that consideration; not that I dont Intend to come <sup>if</sup>  
and health will permit but that from this that there is so many ups and  
downs in this world that the thing might not come to pass: which might prove  
prove a loss to you <sup>which</sup> will be avoided by proceeding otherwise. If Uncle James  
offers his assistance I would make him do it so that you would be in-  
dependent of his heirs or assigns; making the <sup>money</sup> refundable only when you are  
in a condition to do so without a sacrifice of any interest or advantage what-  
ever: lest his heirs or assigns <sup>have to be</sup> none of the generous. You have paid Botoford  
well for the water right. J. Stouffer paid J. Wilson 300 dollars for a com-  
plete water right. J. Wallace is broke down to the ground with 10,000 dollars  
debt on top of him. The Union Canal is doing well and I think will continue  
so to do. The presidential question agitates the public mind greatly and I  
think Adams is gaining ground. Father and I are still Jacksonians  
and a majority of County and township or so. There is and has been consid-  
erable noise made about the Morgan affair this six months past: a yobly  
number of Morgan pamphlets are circulating and it and Freemasonry  
is becoming the subject of newspaper controversy. I saw the first number  
of a newspaper entitled the Anti Masonic Herald printed in New Holland  
Sancaster County a short time ago, and I make no doubt it will receive

Support: if it does not interfere with the presidential question which it is thought it  
will and the adamantine <sup>calculate</sup> that it will act powerfully in their cause Jackson  
it is asserted a mass. Let me know what kind of materials you intend to lay  
your foundations with. When I get to understand a little about drilling I will let  
you know as much as I can about it, and the machinery. I intend to leave home  
the 4<sup>th</sup> of August but cannot tell you where to direct it, at present if you write with  
out the receipt of a nother letter you will direct to the old place. You ask my opinion  
on a subject that Philosophers digger widely upon; and it is nothing strange that you &  
Uncle should do the same: your opinion of the origin of springs and rivers is altogether  
original in my opinion or as far as I can learn from that of others. As for the idea that  
ought to be attached to the word stratum I think there can be no dispute about  
it: that the earth may become so either above or below the surface in certain places  
and at all times: is a reasonable conclusion; but that it is so at different depths  
across the whole earth; so as to be the occasion of the formation of springs and rivers  
is a paradox. It may I think be taken for a fact that the streams under the earth  
move in the same direction that those do on it: and that this is owing to there being  
a summit level to all streams or a high point of land where the water moves in opposi-  
te directions; and this summit level or high point of land is where all streams take  
their rise; and that this is owing more to the properties propensities & qualities of water  
than to the earth's being saturated or the adhesive ness of matter. Water falling on an in-  
clined plane will move by the <sup>force</sup> of gravity along that inclined plane if the inclination  
be greater than the permeableness of the stratum of earth that it passes over: if it fall on  
a level plane it will move in two directions towards the centre of the earth from the same  
cause: that is in a perpendicular and inclined direction. A stratum of clay may be sat-  
urated and at the same time water may be passing through it: the particles of that  
stratum may have imbibed as much water as they are capable of and the interstices  
be also filled up; yet if there is a permeable stratum below this saturated and  
a quantity <sup>of water</sup> above it I think it is reasonable that it would pass through and the clay  
remain as it was. This you may set down as a Paradox also if you choose. There is streams  
of water at all depths in the earth and the greatest portion of them are independent of the  
water that falls on the earth: all the water that falls in rain is by Philosophers considered  
insufficient for the support of vegetation; and that the springs and rivers are supplied  
from other sources for the most part. A certain Philosopher speaking of the origin of springs  
and rivers, says this is another theory to account for their origin, which refers this  
to a great abyss of water occupying the central parts of our globe. He asserts that  
all the phenomena of springs are chiefly derived from the vapours veils and issues of  
this great abyss into which they are all returned; and that a perpetual circulation  
and equality is kept up, the springs never failing, and the sea by reason of its commu-  
nication with the subterranean waters never overflowing. It is a fact that a stratum of  
matter that is dry will if it be placed above or below a moister one become equally as  
moist as the other for what one loses the other gains: so is it with the earth, the sun's rays  
falling on it carries off the humidity of the upper strata; which is again supplied by  
those given below and thus a continual action is kept up; the sun endeavouring to  
make the surrounding atmosphere equally as humid as the earth and the earth  
striving to maintain every particle of its substance equally humid or rather the  
water in the earth. The water that is carried off by the streams of earthily according to a  
certain author is to that that falls on its surface as 55 is 27. <sup>3</sup> you have concluded  
from your finding a stratum of clay of so adhesive a nature <sup>in</sup> the digging of a cellar in  
Michigan] as not to be permeable by water that there is at a greater or less distance

under the surface of the earth every where such a stratum ~~every where~~ <sup>at</sup> and that all  
times and places this saturated stratum is above the level <sup>of the</sup> creeks and rivers: so as to  
compel the water to flow or ooze in that direction and form these streams; and in support  
of your hypothesis you ask why then has rivers marshy banks; as if the water coming  
from the most elevated points of your saturated bed of clay to the least elevated one: con-  
tinually as it moved along made the whole quantity of the earth above it moister and mois-  
ter, till it arrived at the banks where it became so moist as to form a marsh: a reasonable  
conclusion truly; you might as well have asked why your water ponds have moister  
clay immediately around <sup>them</sup> than at some distance from them which is the case when the  
pond is on a hill. The marshiness of river banks is wholly owing to the situation and na-  
ture of the soil directly in contact with the water in the river, <sup>and</sup> not owing to the water  
possessing out of a higher body of ground than the banks themselves. If you place a vessel  
of water in the ground or on a table the air or earth that closely surrounds it will be af-  
fected by it rendering it more humid than that further off: which is not owing to a body  
of moisture moving toward the vessel. Perhaps I may write a letter to you shortly about Lad-  
dys matters. We are all well and have been so since I wrote last. Farewell.

To John Geddes

William Geddes

the  
ap  
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25.  
Campbelltown Pa.  
July 24<sup>th</sup>  
1828

Mr John Geddes

Ann Arbor

Michigan Territory