

Londonderry April the 11th 1829

Dear Brother. I received your letter of the 17th of February on the 14th of March and have through unavoidable circumstances and the thought that I would have time enough in three months to make an answer arrive in time, and another thing I have had a notion to leave my place of residence which I have at last done the 6th of April] neglected or rather delayed writing. I have left the mill that I was in and if I don't get employment in the milling business pretty conveniently I will not do any thing at it untill after harvest. The reason that I left it was the too great quantities of Rye and corn that was grinding for the distilleries for I would have staid untill the first of June; I considered it worse than doing nothing the work being hard and the pay trifling and nothing to be learned at it for any person can chop. The only chance that had of learning was the country work was middling good and the grinding of between six and seven hundred barrels of superfine work which was all for Shenk but a boat one hundred and twenty. I have made pretty good progress in learning notwithstanding the chance that I had my ^{master} being very unwilling to let me go: but I told him it was all owing to my own application not to his care or the chance that I had any other thing he was making 65 dollars per month and was not willing to give me more than 5 dollars after making me do the three fifths of the work which was sufficient for two common men. The other mills on the creek having each of them three hands and ours but two; and we doing as much work as any of them: he at last gave me six dollars. Agreeable to my promise I will give you an account of the profits that arise from mill driving. We ground from the 1st of January to the first of April 16193 bushels all kinds of grain taken together; and the amount of the tolls in cash for the same time is 643.12 and took but the 15th of the Rye that was chopped for the distilleries and the 12th of that that was ground for the farmers and the tenth of all other kinds of grinding. Wheat, corn, oats and Rye for flour. And I would not be afraid but that with the same water power that I could make a mill situated in a wheat growing country earn 2000 dollars counting on doing but half work in the summer for four months, June July, August, and September. And then to set down the driving of her at the one third which my master gets and the drivers of Shenks two other mills also; would leave the owner in the possession of 1333.34 clear profit: repairs not considered - they might possibly reduce it to 1200. I made some enquiry about the cost of building saw-mills; and one mill-wright told me he got 200 dollars for making one making the frame work and running gears; with an undershot wheel. He said that saw mills with flutter wheels were much the cheapest and best adapted for the purpose: as well as some others that have had experience in the business. you have not told me upon what plan Robert and you have built yours upon: Shenk has an undershot wheel so as to be able to drive a pair of stones to grind plaster, which if your capital is too small to venture on to build a grist mill, at present: would have been your best plan so as to enable you to start a distillery which cannot help but be profitable for at least give a six years ~~at least~~ and could be altered when the first running gears were worn out. Shenk's grist has between 8 and 9 feet fall and has an undershot and a breast wheel which is considered to be the best qualified for a weak and fluctuating stream which the chiques is being almost dried up in the summer and fall. The breast wheel is calculated to take just as much water as will drive her with a slow and steady ^{motion} and keep the head at a certain point and the undershot is when the water is sufficiently strong to take a great quantity of water so as to do a great deal of business in a short time so as to lose as little of the water when the stream rises as possible. When the full gate is drawn for both wheels the undershot will nearly grind twice the quantity of grain the other will. The mill that I was in ground about 4 bushels of wheat per hour that is one pair of four feet stones, and about 15 bushel of Rye into chop and 10 of corn - the undershot. The prices for produce are at present for Flour 7.25 for Wheat 1.50 Rye .50 and Corn 40 cts. 25 cents. All that I know of our relations is that William the painter was in Hanover and Harrisburg and neither called on Alexander or us, and that one weakly is going to die with the consumption.

Samuel Mc Clure has been doing little or nothing this winter but ~~has~~
visiting from place to place he was with me on the Cluques bank in the
beginning of December and shortly afterwards went to Buffalo Valley
to spend some time with his mother's relations and then returned to
Londonerry and staid until the first of March when he started
with the intention of purchasing fat cattle to sell to the canal
contractors; as he said: but we were informed that he is at present
with the canal commissioners: indeed I mean acting as target
man; a post that Jacob Hill had on the Union canal and gets
1.50 per day. This information we got from Jacob Early who
was in Peru Valley for his his daughter and son-in-law who are
with the widow Dvinger in Palenya where he keeps a stud horse
He is a complete cripple with the rheumatism - they have no chil-
dren. Betsey Peggy are still single. The marriages that have taken
place are more numerous this winter than for several past ones and
are as follows. Mr Philip Wolfberger Jr. to Miss Elizabeth Stouffer
daughter of Sawyer Stouffer Peter Hocker to Miss Nancy Hutton
William Christy to Miss Betsey Michael or Wolfberger rather
and one of the Mr. Snodys to Miss Mary Clark sister of Walter
Clark. Mr Brown a lame schoolmaster that used frequently
to ride past this carrying a crutch to Miss Corbett of Hanover or
Hugh Sheller to Jane Moore members of the same house. Mr. Robert
Sturgeon to Miss Jane Rutherford. Miss Eliza Murray and
Ellen Shearer have each got an Elder, and Catherine Ann Macan
mon has married a Doctor atough of Sulphoccon. Mordoci Mc
Kinney esq. Associate judge of Dauphin County to Miss Rachel
Rachel Graydon. The deaths are Jacob Schob. John Snodgrass
son. Ann Todd widow. Hugh Wilson has sold his place for twenty
dollars per acre to a Mr Garman who has moved on it this spring
and was married sometime ago to the widow Orth formerly
Catherine Behm. Rudolph Behm I nearly forgot was married
to a lady of Hummetstown - not rich. Hugh and his sisters are
still living in the place and intend as to do until fall James Wilson
has rented his place and I believe intends to act the gentleman
for some time. I have some notion to call on him some day and
ask him to accompany me in a trip to Virginia - He is not in
good health. The Doctor is practicing medicine on the Juniata
canal or in the vicinity; and is acting in accordance with the char-
acter that I gave of him with the addition of hard drinking
he was to see James but none other of his relations; it is said he
looks quite bloated, such is the fate of the lovers of women and wine
who was he and what is he. The Union Canal is in operation but to
what extent I cannot say: I sent bought 15 ton of plaster in Maria
that was brought up the Union canal to Middletown and then loaded
on an ark and taken to Marietta; and paid but 10 dollars per
ton. The Penn Canal various branches are progressing rapidly
but particulars I can give none which is not to wondered if you but con-
sider the way I was situated these seven months past among the igno-
rants of the Dutch where there was seldom a newspaper read and
not only that I had scarcely time to look at one if it did come in
my way; having but five hours of the 24 to rest and ^{that} was to little
for to sleep; We drove the mill night and day; except sundays. The
Rail road is going to be commenced shortly from Columbia to Phila.
Of the proceedings of our legislature I know nothing. There is little or
nothing said about the freemasons no man daring to uphold their
cause and they themselves sensible of their weakness say nothing; which
at any rate is the best plan for the weak, or strong; if their cause is
a bad one - just let the storm roar along like an idle wind. Prosecution
may make hypocrites but it will never make proselytes. Jack Falstaff
would do nothing on compulsion - what a reason on compulsion.
No. That desertion or that trisomy will be gladly received
for not only you but myself am fast approaching the chalked line
which makes a boy a bachelor and besides that the marriages that
are from time to time taking place especially of those younger than ourselves
raises some serious thoughts in spite of us. ^{is dangerous} We left the last in the ditch

The weather has this winter, very cold without intermission from the first of January to the last day of March and still continues cold for the time of the year; we had more snow this winter than for the we had the three former ones, — the oldest inhabitants to say they never had a colder winter: or felt such a degree of cold for such a length of time in their lives: but I think their memories fail them. If I had had an opportunity I would have purchased a thermometer so as to have ascertained the exact degree of cold; which I am certain went beyond what you mention. Our folks are very curious to know how you live whether you have your house finished or not which you may give them if you think; for it is no concern to me how you live provided your healths are not impaired. I wish you would give me an exact account of your sawing; how much you do on an average saw per day and at what price the particular kinds of stuff. The length and width of your head and tail races. A short head is considered of great importance and so is a wide tail race so as to spread the water behind the wheels so as to keep them from wading in it. Mr John Darwin has been teaching school this winter but is at present acting as a clerk for Mr Kingle at a dam that is erecting on the swatara pit to supply part of the Union Canal with water, — his health has been good the past winter. Matthias Blucher has went to his long home. I have had good health since I commenced milking and the rest of fathers house have enjoyed the same blessing. If there is any thing that I have forgotten you will please to remember me of it. Nothing more at present but remain your affectionate brother till death

William Geddes

To John Geddes

Direct your letter
to Campbell's town

Wm
Walker
Pete
May 11
1829

Campbell Town
April 16th
1829

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Mr John Geddes

Ann Arbor

Michigan Territory

Dec
11
1829