

Anne Arbor, July 12th 1842

Dear Brother, Your letter, and Oracle of Health, arrived in due season. The last three months have passed away in regular order. We were suffering by drought when I last wrote, now the ground is wet enough. May was a very dry month here, in Philadelphia it was a wet one and probably with you. June with us was a cold and rainy month. The wheat was some injured by the drought of May. But the rains of June revived it greatly; and the prospect now is an abundant crop. We had a frost the morning of the seventh of June an another the eleventh both of them made ice the last was the heaviest which cut down the Corn and Potatoes, and injured the Wheat some but not seriously. Those frosts injured the Rye considerably, what was of it? There is but little Rye sown in this country. Rye is not so rank and stout here, as in London derry. Occasionally (I am told) (for I never saw any,) there has been a good field of Rye: but generally speaking Rye is poor in Washitaw, not more than half a crop. Why, I don't know. Robert never sows any. The prospect is that corn will be scarce next fall. Potatoes good. Oats but tolerable rather poor. The extraordinary drought of May injured the spring crops greatly, and then the frosts of June pretty much destroyed the early planted corn, the later planted took an other start. The two frosts of June were quite out of the ordinary course of things. They exceeded anything I ever saw in Michigan or elsewhere. The Oak, and Hickory, grubs, in places were dried up so that they appeared as dry in the leaves, as if they had been girdled. Low ground was more injured by much than high ground. The grubs have pretty much renewed their bushes again. Apple-tree, Cherry, Pear, Plum, leaves, were not injured which is so abundant here was not injured. Large trees did not suffer from the frost. Grape vines were twisted down. Harvest has not commenced yet and probably will not before the 20th of then. Wheat is .87 $\frac{1}{2}$ now. In September I think it will be .75 to .62 $\frac{1}{2}$ in October .62 $\frac{1}{2}$ to .50. And .50 all winter. This is my opinion. Some who have wheat to sell pretend it will be 1.00 and will not fall below .75. Wages in Harvest will be 1.00 for day for rakers and binders, and 1.12 $\frac{1}{2}$ & 1.25 for Bradlers. I intend to turn out in harvest and Rake, and Bind; I am not much of a Bradler, and so will not try it. You will not get as much Wheat for a days work as I will: probably about half as much. Wages is too high for the farmers, and indeed for all that have to hire here. Business is dull in Michigan more so than ever. And John Tyler must veto the little Tariff bill, which of course must make business still more dull. That John Tyler is a mean Scoundrel for not carrying out the principles of the people for party as you please that elected him. If it was not that consoling reflection that his four years will be out before long. I do believe some one would shoot the knave, or fool; I have made up my mind for the worst, and expect nothing of him. I was not startled at his third Veto. It is nothing more than a matter of course. I don't know a man in this country that would vote for John Tyler. None of our Newspapers have run up the Clay flag yet but they will when the time comes round. At present the leading Whig paper which is in Detroit prints the U. S. laws by authority, and so does not want to offend

In your last letter ~~you~~ these words "you are the only hard party man of fathers & sons and it made me laugh when you came out Anti suspension, anti Bank" I will endeavor to set you right on these matters put your Locomotive on the track again ~~you~~ have got off. As to the "only hard party man" You are correct. But that I am Anti Bank is incorrect. I always have been and still am in favor of a United States Bank on the old principle of Discounts, and Deposits. And as a matter of course I am in favor of States incorporating Banks, and am in favor of the latter Banks issuing notes of as small a denomination as one dollar. But I am opposed to Bank suspensions. And so are you. Whenever Banks suspend they fail in an important point to fulfil their obligations to the community, or in other words they do not as they agree. Their promises to pay on demand is no longer true. it is false. It is a disgrace to any community to permit falsehoods to circulate in their midst. Like many other falsehoods, they do make a substitute for truth, and for a time do answer a tolerable purpose. But in the very nature of things, these promises must be redeemed, or things must proceed from bad, to worse. If the Banks have a right to suspend. So had Witmer. He could set up the same defence that they do. Hard times, an Impoverished country. Mal-administration &c All these things operate alike upon Individuals and Corporations. Its true Witmer's obligations are not Currency. But if we must have the money his obligation would have to be sold for what it would fetch. Just as your Country Bank bills have to be sold in Philadelphia. In this particular there is no difference. We have one great advantage. We are amply secured. The holders of the suspended bills are not. All the security they have is the Capital stock of the Bank, with the hope (in these rascally times) that the officers of the Bank are honest. I will tell you what I think of Bank Suspensions. In an extraordinary and unforeseen ~~accident~~ and very difficult state of things, Banks may have no other alternative (or all things considered its thought best to suspend) In such cases it may be well enough to tolerate a suspension. But at the end of one year it is certainly hoped that they have made such arrangements as to have met their engagements. If they have not but still want more indulgence, it may be policy and all things considered for the best to grant another year. But if at the end of the second year they still plead inability to meet their engagements. There is reason to suspect that something is "rotten in Denmark" So with Witmer he had one year Suspension on the contract, now he has taken another which will be submitted to without much grumbling in this quarter. But should he want another year, we might think he was encroaching on our good humor and forbearance. But how much more noble than all this is it to see Banks and men do as they agree, and be punctual. Martin Van Buren, Ex-President of the United States of America, was in Ann Arbor to day (July 11th) came there one quarter before eleven and left one quarter before three. I have ^{had} up to see him. He is not an extraordinary man. They paraded round some and halted before the Courthouse where Ex Lieutenant Governor Mundy addressed him five or six minutes. Van replied in a short address of two minutes, spoke soon, then the Ex President went to the tavern where him and his friends were to dine. Quite a number of people were

to see him as he passed along; probably half of them Whigs. I had two or three short but sharp debates on Politics, and then started for home about half past twelve.

As I was walking home all alone. I thought I must endeavor to avoid these needless and foolish debates as they do no good and only aggravate, instead of convince. For my part I don't think much of Van Buren. I think his policy is injurious to the Country and himself no better than a leader of bandits and robbers. To lie, deceive, destroy, and plunder is the ruling passion in the party. The Whigs of Michigan are pleased with Apportionment Bill. The district system and the high ratio. And I have no objection to the fractional representation. What a fool that A. W. Dorris.

The popular branch of the Pennsylvania Legislature are about to receive ^{up} of the proceeds of the public lands, and at the same time the State is tremendously in debt, staggering under the mighty load. Such Legislators must belong to that party I have described above. I am somewhat afraid that Pennsylvania will become a proverb, and a byword, in the land. For what confidence can be placed in a state that is ruled by such fellows. A Mr Whaley has been here and wants to know whether you will sell your land on time. He proposes to go in to the land and clear and break up and pay \$800 the fall he gets the first crop which would be the fall of 1844. To pay at the rate of ten dollars per acre, with interest from the time he gets possession and pay the taxes. If he should fail in paying the \$800 to have the use of not more than 80 acres for five years for clearing and fencing and building a log house, and paying the taxes. Something like this is his proposal. You can let me know what you think of it, and what you think of doing with your land here I think that the land might and ought to pay what tax is levied on it. The offer that Mr Whaley makes is a good one for these times. I am not acquainted with the man, and so know nothing about his honesty. He would have to be restricted and kept within due bounds until you got the first payment and then some more latitude might be given him. Wheat I was told to day is .94 in Ann Arbor. The Assessment of Ann Arbor ^{Township} in 1841 was \$84,600. In 1842 \$121,000. Washtenaw County in 1841 was about \$2,840,000. In 1842 \$2,440,000. Ypsilanti in 1842 is \$352,000. Pittsfield \$133,000. I assessed land at about half its value. Robert's farm at \$6 per acre. Your and my lot 4 per acre I would put .25 per acre lower if had not owned a share. I think I assessed too low but no lower than the County averages. Pittsfield is said to be the highest in the County. The Townships of Lindsborg (Madilla on your map) 47,000 not $2\frac{1}{2}$ per acre, Salem 96, Northfield 91,000. This Assessing is next to Legislating the most dishonest business I was ever in. Last year the Commissioners of the County struck off the Ann Arbor assessment \$20,000. When if justice had been done, They ought have strucken off \$134,000. Consequently Ann Arbor paid 13 or \$400 more than she ought. This year the old assessors were dropped and a new set put on the course. And I for one was determined that I would assess at about half what property was worth. And I am satisfied that we have had a fair average with the rest of the County. But still it is not right in itself. But it is right in respect to others. We are all in good health. If it could be convenient to inform the proprietor of the Weekly North American without expence to you or me. I wish he would send my paper by the way of New York in the season when navigation is open from first day of May to first day of Nov. The New York Tribune a first rate Whig paper is dated Saturday and comes not always but generally on Tuesday. The Weekly North American is dated Friday and gets here generally Thursday just to ready for my paper regularly. Robert was up to see Van Buren. He thought very little of him. This is a worn out day. Nothing more farewell

John Geddes

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