

Aun arbor, September 27<sup>th</sup> 1834

Dear Brother, We received your paper just a week ago. Your July letter some time ago. We received a letter from Uncle James dated in August. He was called upon in May to give an opinion on different plans proposed for improving the navigation of the River St Lawrence particularly that part of it past the Long sault which they pronounce soe. He was gone twenty five days. The Province of Upper Canada (hoping to be seconded by the Lower Province) have engaged in the stupendous undertaking of making a navigation for the largest sized Steam Boats—Canals past the rapids of 100 feet bottoms, 140 feet water surface and depth of water 10 feet. Locks 55 feet wide & 200 long calculating to have Steam Boats pass from Quebec into Lake Ontario. Wages 1. per day, for Graders, reapers, and Binders all of a price. Wheat 97½. He has a grand daughter 7 or 8 weeks old when he wrote. Here is what he says about real estate "The price of real estate rises slowly, 18 or 20 dollars per acre would purchase our best woodland (that is back from villages, or salt works where wood is bought) and where improved farms are sold, the buildings never bring what they have cost. I know of no place where land is better worth what it will bring than in this County particularly in the vicinity of the Canal." "They were all well" "I have no late accounts from Campbelltown, Newville or Dumfriesburgh" I sent him a letter yesterday and gave what news you sent in your last. I think you had better write him a letter this fall news or no news. Uncle James certainly feels an interest in the prospects and welfare of the Geddes. Notwithstanding Aunt Lucy<sup>s</sup> starched up cold in difference I wrote to him that you were much pleased with your visit, <sup>to Newville and Dumfriesburgh</sup> and that Aunt Betsey was very kind. Uncle does not write that he is coming to Michigan next summer but I think it probable he will. He cannot content himself a whole summer doing nothing, after being so active all his life. That scourge of mankind the cholera made its appearance in Detroit about the middle of July and has carried off in Detroit and vicinity about 400 persons it ceased about the first of September. M<sup>r</sup> Curo and family stood their ground and escaped. We felt some anxiety about them, and <sup>thought</sup> that Isabel at least ought retreat to Washtenaw. But Lane has not fairly recovered her health since the last severe spell of sickness a year ago last July, and as it would be impossible to get a girl those terrible times, Isabel had to stay and assist about the housework. This is conjecture as we have had no particular intelligence from them since the Cholera commenced. M<sup>r</sup> Curo has occasionally sent us word by some of our neighbors who saw him, that they were still well. I have not been in Detroit since I left you there. I still think I dont have time to go. In Aun arbor Anson Brown of the firm of Brown & Co died of the cholera, some admit but two deaths by cholera in Aun arbor, and some count as many as ten. Our country this season has some claims to the epithet sickly. Robert, Maria, and John, have been in good <sup>health</sup>. The two children and Maria sister, hind man, and third girl have had the Ague

By an order from the War department an Engineer was sent to Michigan to examine a route for a contemplated Rail road from Detroit to the mouth of the St Joseph. He commenced his examination about the first of September at Detroit. He was instructed by the Chairman of a Committee in Detroit to accommodate Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor, <sup>if possible</sup> and then take the range of the County seats of Jackson, Calhoun and Kalamazoo to the mouth of the St Joseph. The Ypsilanti folks were very unwilling he should go to Ann Arbor. Had another route provided leaving Ann Arbor five or six miles to the North. But he paid no attention to them. When they found he would go to Ann Arbor. They ardently strove to find some other way to go <sup>their</sup> up the Huron but could not, and I feel pretty confident there is no other practicable way. No thanks to them. Admitting a rail road was made up the Huron our Mill privilege would be as much worth here as if it was at Ypsilanti or nearby. It will advance our property much more than it will theirs. It will be more benefit to County to follow the Huron than through dry land. The Huron is the backbone of Washtenaw.

We feel pretty confident that the route will be quite practicable and are in hopes that in a few years (say three or five) we will see steam cars flying past us.

When they get through and report I will send you the particulars. I wish you would send some information as to the cost per mile of Rail ways. You must have some knowledge on the subject. I know little, or nothing, and cant depend on what I hear. The Territory has to pay the expense of the hands employed. Except the Engineers and instruments who and which are furnished by the United States. Washtenaw had to raise \$500 to be raised by subscription. Robert and me pay \$15 a piece. I dislike that way of raising money as some will not pay anything. But the Supervisors would not raise it by a tax and so there was no other way to find the means. A census is to be taken by the first of November to ascertain whether we have 60,000 inhabitants or not if that should prove to be the case a convention is to be called forthwith, and a Constitution to be formed, and right of admission <sup>into the Union</sup> demanded of Congress. I was pleased you had so agreeable a visit and found our relations so friendly. I likewise rejoiced with you in the happy feelings of our old friend and neighbor Samuel Harper: with as sincere a joy as you could experience. I could also smile at "your 10 or 20 per cent gain" I never have exacted more than lawful interest (though I have been promised more) and I believe I will not. There is certainly an apparent unkindness in it probably not becoming social beings. I some times think that if I was going to borrow money. I would not wish to call on my friend and neighbor Botsford. Because I would not be willing give him more than lawful interest, nor I would not wish to be under so great an obligation to take money from him for less than he generally received from others. Your tax up to this time is \$13.00 This includes your Road tax this year, which is 7 days work at 62¢ per day. 3.00 of the above is School house tax (that is building a house). Your County and Township tax is not made out yet for this year

We had a goodly number of Locusts this year, here. But I dont think they were as numerous as the were in Londonderry 17 years ago. They were something new to the Yankees as there is none in the New England States. Some were afraid they would injure the country. And some who pretended to know all about it would have it that their return was once in 14 years and backed up their idea with circumstances that they thought could not be shaken. I was as confident that 17 years was their period. Robert had forgot and I could not fix any particular circumstance to ~~could~~ fix the year. Maria who knew nothing about it (having never seen any before) began to think that John was wrong and that the majority inclined to 14 years. But presently the newspapers began to speak out and overthrew all their nonsense. Those who pretended to know generally came from Ohio you can send on Agrippa and I will try him at Sawmilling. I will <sup>give</sup> him ten dollars per month until the first of January then 12 dollars per month for a year, and <sup>3</sup> pay his board. This I think a fair offer. I have still about 125 logs to saw. The dam wants some fixing before winter. These logs and work on the dam; graving and wheeling on clay on the embankments, will be our business until snow falls then the mill must go night and day through the winter. If he should get sick he will have pay his own board while he is sick, and he will stand a great chance to have the Ague next August or September. But he may escape. I feel under no more apprehensions of the Ague <sup>then</sup> you do; but all new corners are liable to take it. Sawmilling is I think a healthy business. But the situation of a mill on the bank of a stream is more unhealthy than off from that stream. You can direct him where to find us. I have put off building my house until next year, and intend to make some preparations this winter. I had little or nothing ready this summer. And I dont mean to crowd myself about such things. Live Bachelor another year. I was in Ypsilanti yesterday no Philadelphian has came this week it may be they have been directed to Ann arbor. I intend to mail this in Ypsilanti this day. The Cash price for wheat is .56 $\frac{1}{4}$  per Bushel wages in Harvest 1. per day. Hay making .75. In the month of August there was a caravan of animals in Ann arbor to show admittance. Consisting of a Lion, a Bengal Tiger, Two Leopards male and female, A great large White Bear, a Black Bear, a Panther, a South American Puma, Two Hyenas, Two Ostriches, an Elephant, a Camel, an Ichneumon several monkeys. The Great White Bear, was allowed to be the most interesting animal of the whole he certainly appeared well. The Tiger, and Leopards appeared well. I tell this for the purpose of letting you know what is to be seen here. Robert thinks I offer Agrippa too much I will pay him according to the way he works

Farewell

John Geddes

William Geddes

Recd. October 10<sup>th</sup> 1834  
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Wm. Geddes  
W. Geddes

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1834

Mr. William Geddes  
Campbelltown  
Lebanon County  
Pa.

