

Palmyra Oct. 25th A.D. 1835

Dear Brother, yours of the 22nd Sept. was received a few days previous to our Election and up to this time I have not been able to answer you satisfactorily. The power of attorney which Robert sent me I forwarded in a letter to Fisher who mislaid it and it cannot be found. And if I had it, it would be of little use to me, for I do not know what the name of the township is, in which my land lies nor have you given me the name of the Rail Road Company all of which ought to be particularly described in the letter of Attorney to make it lawful. For the present I have concluded to answer your letter and relieve you from any suspense about the matter. The proper plan would have been for you to have had one drawn and sent on as was done with that deed which you could have had done correctly having all the facts before you, and I could have acknowledged it and sent it on without delay. As I am situated I cannot come in person or I certainly would. I am tax collector and have done little or nothing at it as yet, but must shortly and am summoned as a Juror for the second week of Nov. and worse than all that. The Lawyers exasperated with the partial defeat I have given them before the Supreme Court, have made a fresh attack on me. I am cited to answer them in both Dauphin & Lebanon counties in the latter on the first week of Nov. and in the former on the 3rd. So that for three weeks of that month I cannot leave here. At the last Court of Dauphin county I took my counsel's advice and the one you now sent me and staid at home, doing nothing. The Lawyers however attended and when they found I had done nothing and did not win attend at Court, they asked the Court for an Attachment for me and the Court had actually granted one when Fisher who had been attending to something else happened to hear what the Judge was saying interrupted him by asking by what authority he acted. He said the Judge Wth Fisher you ask a strange question. Well sir I do ask by what authority you wish to drag Goddes here by force. His Honor then asked him if the Supreme Court had not decided that I shall account. Fisher said he would like to see it. When the decree of the Court was called for, when lo it was no where to be found, it not

having been brought down from the Supreme to the Orphans
Court of course there could be nothing done, One of the parties
having to bring the record down before I could file an account
or the Court below had any Authority to act and compel me
to do so if I neglected or refused it. I had been counsell'd not
to do it and their Lawyer had overlook'd or perhaps not thought
it necessary and were caught in this blunder to the shame
of themselves and the Court. Fisher and the other attorneys
~~then present laugh'd heartily at the mistake and Lawyer~~
me were very mad at being bothered in that way. The record
with the decree of the Supreme Court was then brought down
read and they were not a little mortified to find that it was
not what they wish'd or thought. The decision below was reversed
and was doubtfull from the words of it whether they would
not have to pay costs and begin in the new. The only ^{fault} ~~fault~~ they
had on me was that the Court above said I would
have to file an account, but did not say when how or where.
Both Courts have decided that no administrator can escape
from accounting at some time and Lawyers are determined
I shall so that I have no alternative and intend to
do so next Court, when the tug of war will again be waged
with a vengeance on both sides. Fisher says that by what fell
from the Judges when speaking of the trial that I will
be allowed to take credit for those costs incurred by
Father in defence of the will, which is all I ask or
Father ever asked for that will sweep at once all the money
that ever came to his hands and put the whole matter
to rest forever. It appears when Father settled with Lawyer for
Isabel, Lane and myself he took a mortgage from him and
has never entered satisfaction on the docket in the Recorder's
office and until that is done Lawyers can't make a title to
their purchaser and an executor can't enter satisfaction
so that they petitioned the Court to do it and they Court
has notified me by the Sheriff to show cause why they
shall not. It is of no consequence to me about the mortgage
but still I must attend and answer when I am called that
I was present. Call on the Rail Road agent and tell him you

have no authority to settle with the Company for the damage it was
likely to do me, but that I requested you to call and see what they were will-
ing to allow me and if it was any wise near what I thought I ought
to have you would write to me to send on the requisite authority to close
the matter but if not it was useless to go to any trouble or expense about
it, and that as a citizen of another state I would not leave it to men at
least bring a suit against them in the District Court of the United States in time
enough to have satisfaction. If I recollect right my best timber is on the
south end of the tract where the road is to be made and that my south line
is a half mile long or 160 perches and they claim six perches width and
course fit would occupy my whole acre of land and it would be as if
they it runs out a triangle off of four more which makes a top of ten acres
of land with all the timber on it and that the very best I have. I don't know
exactly what timber is worth in Michigan but I should think what was
worth an acre and especially if there was not a great deal of wood on the tract
worth more than three thousand dollars itself. The land may not be worth
twenty dollars per acre at present but I am confident in ten years more that
it a acre of wood land might be worth 30 or 40 and if it is taken now it
will be lost forever. And then is a yet greater loss to be considered which I have
along our Rail Roads, viz. when there is dug cutting without embankments
close at hand to use the excavated earth and it has to be thrown on both
sides of the road on the adjoining land, covering as much more land
as the road itself, burying up the soil and destroying the timber. To remove
which from off the land again would cost three times as much as you seem to
think the whole damage may be. If the Company would confine themselves to
the 100 feet and do no other lands no injury. Then the damage would not be
so great and would not exceed at present 500, but as the damage or loss
of my lands will increase as my other land becomes valuable that
ought to be considered also. But if they are determined to cut 100 feet
width and 3 feet deep I wish the devil had the road and I
am confident that it will some day be a loss of 1000 to my tract.
I really do not know what to say for or against it the more I
on it the worse I hate it and would much rather have
than twice the amount they will be willing to give.
plantations through which the Rail Roads run do not sell much as
well as those a mile or two off. The Cars frighten the cattle and
the steam engines burn down buildings and the woods and
even strip down fields on fire. I see a calculation on the probable
profits of the Cumberland valley roads by what the owners receive. I think
it was 10 if not 20 per cent. and if that is the case why should they
rob the landholders, and pocket such great profits. Their profits will
increase with the business and population of the country and my loss will
be forever also increasing. But as I have hate and still have law-
suit upon lawsuit since father's death and not a standing I have
beaten all my enemies so far I am quite tired of it and sooner than
go to law I will take 500 which I really think is only the half of the
damage that will be done me. The money must be paid right off
before they commence operations on the premises. But this condition
must be agreed to. That is after the road is done I shall have a right
to have men to view the damages actually done and which were un-
avoidable and if they report a greater amount than I received they
shall pay me two thirds of the excess with costs and for any unnecessary
wanton or malicious or even accidental damage done, one or more
hereafter be done, the Company shall pay me double the amount.
If the men report the damage done to be less than what I received I shall
not be required to refund but only to pay the costs. Without such a
condition being in the agreement there is no knowing what damage might
be done me for there would be nothing to restrain them from say-
ing me and if I was to complain they would laugh at me and tell
me I was paid for it and that they would do as they please.
Robert S. Graydon is at Dartmouth College in the state of Connecticut. It
appears Alexander has found a cash enough to send him, without
calling this second time on me, which I am glad of for I would have
hated to refuse or not refuse for I know if all his children would
bring him as much as Robert he could well afford to College educate
them. Wheat sells at 1.65. Rye at 1.40. Corn 90 cents. Oats 60. Potatoes 1.00
Apples 2.50. Cider 2.50, per bbl. Beef 8 Cents. Pork 8 Cents. From brothers in Illinois
I have heard nothing nor have I from any of our other relations. Our old
School fellow Joshua Hollingsworth was to see his native place. He is a first
good looking fellow but too fond of a glass and a poke to ever be rich or
respectable. He has a wife and 3 children in Philadelphia where he has
been living these 8 or 10 years as a clerk in an extensive drug establishment.

The last news was that our amended constitution had passed
We have lost the Governor by 7000 & thousands.

Palmyra Pa
Oct 25th

Mr John Geddes

Spokane

Miss Morgan

1838

25



Write directly after you know what the company is willing to give and if it
is worth receiving. I may send me to come after my attendance at court and if
I will come and make an agreement with them. But I will never consent
to take any sum of money much less what you mentioned and then let
them cut and slash away and do as they please it would be much better
to say nothing until they were done and then the company would be
careful to do as little injury as possible knowing that it would have to
pay for it.

All are well. Farewell

Mr John Geddes

William Geddes

carried onto