

THOMAS RODNEY.

BY SIMON GRATZ, ESQ.

(Continued from Vol. XLIII, page 367.)

*Thomas Rodney to Cæsar A. Rodney.*

Washington Misisipi Territory July 27<sup>th</sup> 1804.

My dear Son,

We have now passed through the warmest Period of the Season, from the Middle of June to the Middle of July has been very warm, the Mercury here generally from 88° to 90°. indeed seldom be'ow 90°. The old Inhabitants say they have never seen such a Continuance of such warm weather but it has now much abated and the nights have become pleasantly Cool and refreshing—Not having received my Carriage yet however I can only ride for Exercise in the Morning and Evening for the Middle of the days are still warm & therefore I Keep in the Shade where it is generally pleasant and I Continue in perfect health—Tho I have an arduous time in My double Capacity of Judge and Commissioner—The Board is open every day when I am not at Court and M<sup>r</sup>. Williams being away I am obliged to give Constant attention to the business—& the other Judges being in the uper part of the Territory and much out of the way Most of the Court business of Vacation falls on me—Last week all the Principal Lawyers were here to argue a Motion for a New Trial in an Important Case before me which as they had not time to argue it at Court they had agreed to argue it before me on Vacation and Yesterday and today again the Principal Lawyers will be here to argue a Case under the Land Law before the Board and a

great Crowd are attending—This is an Important Case and respects the Walnut Hills one of the finest parts of the Territory Claimed under a Brittish Patent and Sundry Donation Men &c.—What has become of Williams we Know not for we have not rec'd a line from him since he left Orleans for the Federal City but we have heard that he & Briggs the Surveyor landed at Newyork and thence went by Stage to the Federal City—but I suppose you were at the Courts or must have seen them as they passed through Wilmington for I wrote to you by M<sup>r</sup>. Williams—They were Expected back by the first of June and have been Constantly wanted Ever since as the labor of taking all the Testimony falls on me Chiefly, and Briggs is much wanted in his own Department—I heard from Fisher that little Cæsar has been Ill again with his complaint poor fellow I have Explored the western Country to find the Dennitris the Sovereign cure for the Gravel but have not yet met with it and fear it is to be found no where but about the mountains which are distant from here—Something must be done for him—I wish you would try what keep us all healthy here the Sweet balsam, made of the Vegetable Salts and Oils—This Balsam, is Easily made—It is made by Dissolving *Pearl Ash* in Cold water, by putting in as much Pearl ash as the water will Dissolve and Shak<sup>s</sup>. it well and then letting it Settle till the water becomes perfectly Clear, then pour it off into a Decanter & Keep it for use. Equal quantities of this Solution and Sweet Oil poured in a tumber or other Vessel & Shook or Stirred makes a Sweet Milky balsam—then add cold water to make it thinner like Milk—but the proportion of Salts and oils may be Varied at pleasure so as to answer Various purposes—No Medicine can be better than this for Children in almost any Complaint—The Vegetable Salts are greatly used now in Medicine but none of the Physicans use them in this Sweet Safe Manner.

Since our using it has made it known here I am run to as if I were a Physician, & have given a way many bottles of oil in this way but have learned the Major & Young Men how to make it. have just time to write this and no more—

Thomas Rodney.

*Thomas Rodney to Cæsar A. Rodney.*

Washington M. T. Aug<sup>t</sup>. 3<sup>d</sup>. 1804,

My dear Son,

Yours of the 16<sup>th</sup>. of June Came to hand by the last mail and also one of Each of the Little Ladies Mary & Eliza, which I have answered in one directed to them both, by the present Mail—Since you have Consented to be run again I wish you may succeed and as there is no reason to suppose the republican Interest has Increased since last Election the prospect is not unfavorable—As to the Conduct of Cap<sup>n</sup>. Hunn let it be what it may let it Injure your manly feelings, let it not provoke to do or Say anything Imprudent, for if he should deviate from Prudence the disadvantage will return on himself if you preserve a firm and upright mind, nor can he say any Evil of you now without Contradicting himself in much that he has formerly said—I make no doubt but the breach that has happened is distressing to Susan and renders it difficult for her to Conduct herself in an unexceptional Manner and Capt<sup>n</sup>. Hunns saying or insinuating that you and myself have always thought you above her is deviating from that prudence and Candor which I always thought him possessed off and can only tend unnecessarily to disturb the mind of Susan; and I think he must be Candid Enough to acknowledge that no such Insinuation or any thing like it were dropt from me, and I am well convinced since as well as before your Marriage that your affliction for her has always been such that it never Entered your mind. I had been long

acquainted with him Capt<sup>n</sup>. Hunn & his family before your Marriage and had always felt a friendly respect for him and his Sister who I always thought a worthy woman and I have no doubt but he will remember that when he spoke to me respecting your marriage, that I mentioned no objection but that I had understood that Susan was sickly and weakly and therefore I feared your Children would be Feeble &c. and that I wished you to have a good healthy stout girl as it was our only prospect for Continuing the family—whereupon he represented to me that tho Susan had lately then been sickly she had recovered and was naturally nervous and active—then I think I said something to this purpose that as I had never seen Susan I could say nothing in other respects for that I could not Judge of a book I never had read or Estimate a Jewel I never had seen, but that as you were more Immediately Interested than I was that it was a principle with me that in a Case of that sort I should leave you at liberty to Chuse for yourself, and this you always Knew tho you dutifully solicited my approbation—but I never dropt a hint at any time of any difference of quality—for I Knew that Hunn's family had been long respectable in the Country—and my Cousin John Rodney at Lewes, had long before selected a wife from it, and I knew her to be a very valuable woman and always felt a great regard for her and her Children—But as to Susan herself since I have been acquainted with her I have never seen a single thing in her Conduct or Manners to object to, far from it for I have long thought her one of the finest women in all respects that our Country produces, Indeed there is not one in the Circle of my acquaintance to be preferred before her—and as she is raising you a numerous flock of fine Children that only objection has long vanished and the Truth is that I feel as great affection for her as if she was my own daughter—So that the Captain must have heard something

of that kind if at all, from some other source not from you or me, nor can it be of any advantage to his family or yours to propagate such an absurdity nor should I think he would listen to any thing of that sort unless at some unguarded moment and I am very sure if he says anything imprudent in his unguarded Moments that may injure the peace of the family he will on reflection be Sorry for it—and the worst that I can wish him is a restoration of that rashional mind and happyness he long Enjoyed, nor do I wish Maria less. If she has been a little more eccentric and wild than some of her friends thought prudent, the cares of a family and her domestic affairs will have a natural tendency to Correct it. So that my advice is for you and Susan to attend prudently and diligently to your own Interests, Intermeddling as little as possible with others till the family return of themselves to their old good humour—You express a sentiment that Indicates some thought of leaving the State but this I would not wish you to incourage till you see an oportunity of doing it to advantage, perhaps an opening may happen in this western Country which Indeed presents Many prospects but as yet it would not answer for a rising family because the means of Education have not yet arrived, in the mean time Cultivate your Interest in the best manner where you are and as to a pleasant and fruitful country none can Excel it—

as the mail is waiting so that I must Close

Thomas Rodney.

*Thomas Rodney to Cæsar A. Rodney.*

Natchez Aug<sup>t</sup>. 9<sup>th</sup> 1804.

My dear Son

I wrote to you and also the Dear Little Girls by the last Mail—I am now here tending the Superior Court and am in good health tho the weather is very warm I have a room in a red House that stands as it were on

one of the Hills of this place alone. There are other Gentlemen in other rooms but distinct from mine for I have only such Company as I invite or Acquaintances that Come particularly to see me and my provisions are brought to my room from a Tavern some little distance off—The hill is high and pleasant and affords a prospect of the City and Great River—The Court House stands on a nother Hill in the middle of the City 300 yards from this.

I forgit, as I was much Engaged last week whether I mentioned in my last letter a Murder Committed in the wilderness 80 miles beyond the last House of this Territory on the post Road to Nash Ville—The person murdered was a M<sup>r</sup>. M Canpen of Georgia & supposed to be murdered by two Robbers—There were two other Men travelling with him that we have not heard of since—This Information was bro<sup>t</sup>. by the Post rider.

I have Read Lately the Travels or rather Military Expedition of *Ferdinand De Soto* in Florada, as the Spaniards then Called all this Country—De Soto was then Governor of Havana with the title of General of Florada—And for the purpose of Conquest and to find gold landed in Florada, in 1539. about a hundred leagues to the Eastward of the Harbor of Pensicola—and travelled westward to within two leagues of that Harbor—Then turned N. E. and pursued that Direction 430 leagues but ramb<sup>d</sup>. much about on his way—In this rout he Crossed this Territory, to the East ward of Mobile, and Tennessee, and Kentucky, & the Ohio, into what is now the Ohio State, as wou'd seem from the distance and the Countries he discribes—He then turned westward and pursued that Course till he Crossed the Great River Misisipi somewhere between the Ohio and Misouiri, and travelled westward to the first ridge of Mountains when meeting with a river run<sup>d</sup>. a long the foot of the Mountain, presumed to be the Arkansaw, he rambled down it to the Mouth, where

it Empties into the Misisipi and there died—The River and several Lakes near the Mountain are discribed as affording Great Quantities of Salt which the Indians near them manufactured in Earthen Vessels & used as an article of Trade with their Neighbors & there was the first place they met with salt after they passed from the Sea—So that Salt was not made then anywhere in what is now Tennessee, Kentucky or on the N. W. Shore of Ohio—Yet a former account in one of my Letters to you shewed that it had been made at the Saline Spring long before De Soto was in that Country tho by some revolution of the Country it is supposed the Knowledge was then lost—After the death of De Soto Moscoso, was Invested with the Command (for De Soto took 400 foot & 200 Horse on his rout with him) and Travelled S. W. ward pass<sup>d</sup>. through several Indian Nations till he reached a River that fell towards the Sea beyond which the Indians were Savage & lived not in Towns nor could any of their Neighbors understand them, & then their Country was too poor to afford subsistance for the Spainards and therefore they returned to the mouth of the Arkinsaw built Vessels and decended the Misisipi to the Sea and then went to Mexico—In all this ramble they fortified many Camps for their own Safety & also found manny Indian Towns fortified in like manner with banks & Palisades set deep in the ground & strongly & neatly wrought—so that this perhaps may acc<sup>t</sup>. for the old fortification in the western Country as they seem to be near the ramblings of De Soto—but he says Nothing of the Mounds we see in this Country but he speaks in one place of searching the Tombs for Pearls where he got 14 bushels—but no articles have been discovered To be buried with those persons who are laid in the mounds—Bones only are discovered in some in others Even those are dissolved or Decomposed to dust again—Corn Rice, Peas & beans were plenty in some nations, and

also Cucumbers—and they found plenty of Nuts & wild plums—& once only met with Honey but never saw any Bees—Their Object was Gold but in all their ramble found none—The Troops with him were clad in Armour—This accounts for the Coat of Mail found some years ago in Tennessee—De Soto, had been an officer under *Pizaro* in the Conquest of Peru and Evinced many of his Traits of Cruelty among the Indians and laid most of their Countries waste as he went on, tho many of Nations he passed through were then very populous & their Land pretty well Cultivated, which he often laid waste and this may in some degree account for the more Savage State the Indians have been in Since—

This Little book being a Naration of facts Affords much useful information—It was Printed in English 1686, and Sent by Doct<sup>r</sup>. Bartan of Philad<sup>a</sup>. to M<sup>r</sup>. W<sup>m</sup>. Dunbar of this Territory, who lent it to me, to discover the Tracks of De Soto, & the parts of the Country through which he rambled—M<sup>r</sup>. Fitz, one of the Young Surveyors is now deliniating his Tract on a Map of the Country for me and when finished I shall send you a Copy off it—Our Doq<sup>t</sup>. Contains to this Count 100, actions at Issue, so that you see there is plenty of business here—

we have heard this week of the Duel of Burr & Hamilton and of the death of the latter & speeches made about it, The Feds here have Copied those of N. Y. in puting on Mourning on the Occasion—we observed too a Change in the Brittish Ministry & a New Struggle to make Bonaparte Emperor of the Galls &c.—All things are quiet here but at Orleans the French Inhabitants are making a great bustle to obtain An Admission into the Union and all the Advantages of American Citizens &c. &c. as you will see by their Memorials in the papers—Some are alarmed at this bustle but I view it as no disadvantage or danger to the Union. It



may tend to disseminate american principle more rapidly among them and therefore may tend to advantage without danger for they are too few if Even their designs were Evil to do much Injury.

Understanding that despatches arrived some time ago from Madrid we have been desirous of & Expecting to hear that West Florada is relinquished to us, but nothing on that head has reached us yet.

There is daily a great increase of population In this Territory by imigration from other Places and many persons of Caractor & Fortune are flocking here—Last week I, as high Priest, joined Gen<sup>l</sup>. Matthews of Georgia who was Govern<sup>r</sup>. of that State when the Yazo Grants were made to a M<sup>rs</sup>. Carpenter, a few miles from Washington. Apropos, last Evening I walked up to Major F. L. Claiborn to see M<sup>rs</sup>. Poindexter a young Lady I had lately Married to the Att<sup>y</sup>. Gen<sup>l</sup>. but the Ladies were out at M<sup>r</sup>. Wallaces in the next Square, and on hearing I was there M<sup>rs</sup>. Claiborn was sent by the Ladies to Invite me over there, and when I went, found an Assembly there of Ten or a dozen of the finest Ladies of the City and Territory—where they had met to spend the Evening, Shields & other gentlemen were there & Shields's beloved Miss P. Dunbar, &c &c They were mostly young Ladies and young married Ladies, and spent much of the Evening in selling Pawns &c and would not Excuse me from Entering into the Amusement with them—the pleasantry Ended with Music; and then a flock of the Ladies, & some of the Gentlemen, Conducted me nearly to my Lodging with a Lamp carried by one of the Ladies who walked with me—I mention this merely as a Trait of the Chearful and pleasant Manners of the place and tho I sit here on the hills of the Misisipi distant, far distant, from my friends, my sweet friends of Delaware, yet that my Situation is not altogether solatory—the young people as well as the old seem pleased with my Company and

I am often told that I am the only person that Ever was in the Territory that no one has ever said a word against—Yet I have done nothing more than Endeavor to Conduct myself up rightly with placid and good manners to all—

Thomas Rodney.

*Thomas Rodney to Caesar A. Rodney.*

Washington M. T. September 7<sup>th</sup> 1804.

My dear Son,

By the last mail I rec'd. Letters from Mr. J. Fisher, Mr. Witherad, Mr. Maxwell & Mr. Higgins of Delaware—Mr. Fisher informs me you had passed on Down to the Chancery Court in Sussex Mr. Witherads in a friendly Communication, which I shall answer in due time—he states your family and other friends about Wilming being well &c. Mr. Maxwells & Mr. Higgins are addressed to me in favor of a young Mr. Armstrong of Delaware, which I shall respect & answer in due time—but have not lezure yet as I propose setting off tomorrow on a Visit to Col Ellis, President of the Senate or Legislative Council of the Territory he lives on the Buffalo about 20 miles below this and perhaps I may go 50 or 60 miles further to see the Country for we can do nothing till after November but take Testimony which now Can be done in my absence as all the Board have now become acquainted with the mode of doing it & the business hitherto having Chiefly laid on my hands they are willing I should take a little rest tho Williams has not yet returned nor have we heard from him—In respect to Armstrong the assist<sup>t</sup>. Clerkship is still open—but I rec'd. a letter also by the last mail from C. R. W. Dated Wilkes barre Wyoming where he informs me he is acting as Clerk to the Commissioners for settling the Claims of Land there and that he expects that business will End in Novemb<sup>r</sup>. when he proposes Coming here—I shall write to him on that head as my letters

heretofore held out the appt<sup>d</sup>. to him—It is however but a small object and living here very expensive & I have thought his Chance better in Pensylvania than here yet and have generally advised him to stay there or at least not come here till a more profitable appointment offers—I hear too from his friends that C. R. W. has become Idle and dissipated which I am very sorry for both on his own account and his friends particularly his mother who if he was to behave well he would be soon able to assist—and who stands in need of it but this in the meantime I shall not forget to do—Shall order some money next fall & Expect she will not be in want before that time—In respect to our business here— Williams being Absent a suggestion from the Sect<sup>r</sup>. of the Treasury has stoped the Register from agreeing with me in Issuing Certificates till after the last day of November which will lengthen the time of our stay here very much & leaves no prospect of returning till the Winter after next we might with Propriety Issue 5 or 600 Certificates before December next which would greatly forward the business—and I fear this delay will make the People very uneasy, tho' they are very quiet yet, but this is founded on the expectation of our proceeding and when they know we stoped till all the Brittish Claims Come in they may Change & git alarmed, for already it has been reported (no doubt without foundation) that M<sup>r</sup>. Gallatin is buying up all the Brittish Claims for his own use—but if there be any ground for such a report it must arise from his being authorized by the President to make Compromises with Claimants of that Sort, to a Void trouble and disputes with them &c. Gov<sup>r</sup>. Claiborne and wife have both been Ill at Orleans and she expected not to recover; it is said to be sickly there—If Munro does not accept of the Government of it is Expected here that Claiborne will be Continued tho' it is said by many he has become very unpopular there. His brother

Major F. L. C. told me that whether he is Continued there or not he had wrote to the President that [seal covers it] would not return to this Territory again—So that [seal covers it] governor must be appointed here—but this Perhaps will not be done till Congress meets—There is a good deal of party dispute here about their Legislature &c. &c. which I do not meddle with—but Continue an impartial Conduct which appears Essential to the Land Business, and is approved by all—Present my affectionate regard to Susan and the Children and my respects to all enquiring friends and I request Susan to present my affectionate friendly regard to our Cousin Miss M Vining, whose lonely situation requires the attention of friends to Chear her Mind and Enliven her Spirits. She is an Excellent and lovely Woman and I wish the Little girls to visit her often.

Thomas Rodney.

*Thomas Rodney to Cæsar A. Rodney.*

Town of Washington M. T. Oct. 13<sup>th</sup> 1804.

My dear Son,

We have not heard from home for several Weeks; Suppose you have all been busy, about the Election but is now over and we are anxious to hear the Event tho we are not without some doubts of general success—I see by the papers that Spain insists on holding west Floraday from us. That Part of the Cession is very important to the U. S. on account of its situation and the Influence it must and will always have to interrupt the Trade of the Western Country—But it would soon be obtained if war should take Place between Spain & the U. S. for the Spirit of the western people is very high on that Subject—Indeed they would rejoice perhaps at an Opertunity of not stoping short of the City of Mexico. The Spainards however are preparing to hold on—they have lately as we are informed sent 6

Schooners with 300, Troops and Provisions with arms and amunition to *Battan Rouge*.

A spunk has been made in some papers about Kemper and his party but that was a More private quarrel with a few Individuals who were obliged to leave the Country and when I was at the line had relinquished all further attempts—Yet I observe that the President is accused of underhandedly encouraging that insurrection; but if any Encourage had been given from such authority, it probable the Spainards would have been Driven out of that Territory in a few weeks—Clai-borne we hear is to be Continued in Orleans and that Daponso of Philad<sup>a</sup>., Hall of S. C. & Kirby, are appointed Judges & some Person of N. Y—also—Yet have not seen this yet announced by authority—M<sup>r</sup>. Dunbar & Doct<sup>r</sup>. Hunter have gone off to assend part of the Red River and thence up the Washataw &c to Explore that part of the Country—Briggs & Williams have not returned yet and as we Issue no Certificates we only sit every Monday to take Testimony—I continue in perfect health and so does the Major and Shields, Indeed since the middle of September the weather has been as pleasant as could be wished—Give my love to Susan and the Children and my respects to all Enquiring friends—as the mail is Waiting I must here Close this letter and perhaps may have more lezure when I write again—

Thomas Rodney.

*Thomas Rodney to Cæsar A. Rodney.*

Town of Washington M. T. October 20<sup>th</sup> 1804,  
My dear Son,

Expecting this will meet you at Washington I shall direct it to you there—I see in the Papers that the Spanish minister has been detected in attempting to Engage Major Jackson in his service to advocate their

Claim to west Florada and that the President is charged of incurraging the Insurrection which lately took place there—I informed you heretofore that I had been down to the Hights and as far as the line of Demarkation—at Pinkney-Ville I saw the two Kempers and the two Cobbs, and a number of their associates after they had fled from West Florada, and was informed by one of the Cobbs a pretty Intelligent man that they had been excited to the attempt they had made only on their own private accounts for the injustice and Illusage they had received from Gran Pree the Spanish Governor or Commandant at Battan Rouge not a word was said of receiving any encurragement from the President or any other person in the United States; but they appeared to be excited to it merely on the Expectation that the Country would soon be delivered to the United States, and keep possession, or rather to regain possession of property which they said Gran Pree had deprived them unjustly off—and as they asked me of the prospect of the Countrys being delivered up and Complained of the Treatment of the Governor as afs<sup>d</sup>. I advised them that it was not known to me when it would be delivered, and that it had been very Imprudent and absurd in them with a few men to brave the Spanish government, as their conduct could not be justified by the United States, nor could they expect with only 30, men to withstand the power of the Spanish Government; and that it was best for them to remain quiet, untill the Country should be delivered over; for that Complaint would be made against them, in which case they would not be permitted to carry on hostilities against the Spainards and retire into the territory as an Asylum, for this would involve the United States in a war with Spain; which was Contrary to the wishes of our government—they answered that they should not attempt anything further but would remain quiet—but I believe all the american In-

habitants of that Country & all others but the few Spainards that are in it are very anxious for the Change tho' but few of them were imprudent enough to join Kemper—This business has made much more noise to the Eastward than it was Entitled to; and the Spainards probably thinking Kemper was incouraged by the U. S.. have been much alarmed & have been as I informed you in my last increasing their force at Battan Rouge—and I am informed all the Officers of the Floradas are to assemble at Battan Rouge in a short time to hold a grand Consultation on this business—Major S. Minor who lives near Natchez and is still a Spanish Officer it seems is sent for and going to meet them there.

Except the Island of Orleans West Florida is of more importance to the U. S. at present than all the rest of the Cession of Louisiana and therefore I trust that the U. S. will never relinquish their just Claim to it—tho I hope the Spainards will not be so foolish as to oblige us to demand it by force, for if war was once Commenced between the two Nations Even the American government afterwards could not prevent the americans from overrunning both the Mexicos. Every person of Consideration have waited patiently not doubt<sup>d</sup>. that when the matter was discussed with the Spanish Court they would deliver up that part of the Cession peaciably; but their rejection of this is heard with the more indignation by such—and altho' they would very reluctantly resign the wand of Peace, they would rather enter into an open war than relinquish that important part of the Cession—This is the Temper of the western country but they rely with Confidence on the Legislature & Government of the United States to do what is best—Send my love to Susan and the Children and present my respects to all my friends in Congress and at the Seat of Government, and Espe-

cially to our friend Nicholson, to whom I shall take pleasure of writing perhaps by the next mail.

N.B. I still continue in perfect health.

Thomas Rodney.

P.S. I inclose one of the Poison tusks of a large Rattle Snake which Shields and myself Killed as I went below, which I took out and left with Mr. Dunbar as I went along and he prepared it for me against my return, in the Manner you here receive it—They have 5 or 6 such on each Side the uper jaw—

*Thomas Rodney to Cæsar A. Rodney.*

Washington M. T. Oct<sup>r</sup>. 20<sup>th</sup>. 1804.

My dear Son,

I have wrote a letter to you of this day Chiefly respecting west Florada &c. This is to give you some account of the boiling springs at the foot of the Mountains on the west side of the Misisipi and near the head of the Washataw River which is a branch of the Red River Mr. A. Ellis, Mr. King & Mr. J. Forster three Respectable Planters of this Territory have been over into that Country and have lately returned from the Springs where they went for to recover health &c. I have seen King and Foster & received from them the information I herein Communicate Ellis was in an Ill State of health and was affected also in some degree with the palsie which rendered particular parts of him in sensible—he recovered in every respect only the parts so affected did not recover sensation—yet thinks they would also have recovered if he Could have stayed long Enough. King was far gone in what the Doctors called a Consumption & was beside nearly blind—he got perfectly restored to health & his Eyesight—& says he can see now as well as ever he could. Foster was troubled with rheumatism & has got also restored So that the waters of those springs have the Virtue to heal both the lame and blind &c. the water flows in



great abundance from the Chief Spring and is boiling hot & will boil Meat or anything of that Sort, and take the Skin off the hand if put into it; a great steam rises from it where it first breaks out into the Atmosphere in this they set on a stone or rock and it soon throws them into a profuse persperat<sup>n</sup>. Then they run out into the Cold air and so repeat this process frequently and lastly plunge into a Cold Stream just by immediately on leaving the Smoke of the Spring. They were taught this mode of using the Spring by the Indians who brought one of their sick Chiefs there who could not walk and after being placed in the Steam of the Spring and in the Cold air, three or four times alternately he was able to walk back & forward, & Continued the process Eleven times always fanning to expedite the Effect of the air till the last time and then coming out of the Steam in a profuse sweat he plunged into the cold water stream; and after this King & Foster followed his example and found it Effectual—

There is a spring of Cold water not far off which by its Killing one of the people that went with them they thou<sup>t</sup>. a poison spring but probably he only drank too much being very warm & thirsty for they brought home some of the water of both Springs and Doct<sup>r</sup>. McCrery has tried them and finds nothing in Either but pure water yet his analysation perhaps was not perfect for I tasted the water of both—that said to be poison has no peculiar taste but that of the boiling Spring has a strong calibeat taste—King was to bring me some of the water of each but I have not received them yet—He gave me however a number of Fosil productions that seem Allied to the water of the boiling spring, which shew the Cause of its heat & Enables one in some degree to Judge of its qulaties—Some of these Fosils are Transparent Cristals purely white like duble Flint glass—Others are Metalic—Doct<sup>r</sup>. Hunter says the Cristals are lime with a mixture of Nitrous Acid—I have tried several of the Metalic fossils with

Nitrous acid which dissolves the greater part of all of them Causing a great degree of fermentation and heat; which tends to shew how the water of the spring becomes heated. to wit the Nitrous Acid flowing with the water among those Fossils which Compose the Mountain & therefore it is no doubt in some degree Calibeat—Many of the Fossils look like rich gold Ore but are too light to Contain much of that Mettal or any other tho' there is, no doubt, some little of some sort in some of them but I had no test or refiners by me but the Nitrous Acid, and had not time to weigh them in water Indeed De Soto & Moscoso, examined those Mountains with such attention that I do not apprehend much Gold or Silver will be found there—

Two Nights ago my Horse I fear was stolen as he has never gone off himself for 9 m<sup>os</sup>. past & I cannot hear of him so that I fear some Villan has taken off to the States as these are Tricks often play'd here—he is a large sorrel horse 15 hands high and well made and only 2 years old last Spring had no white about him only a small strip in his face but has one thing remarkable his tail is large & bushy and has a Crook by nicking which makes it hang to the right side a little but no doubt if stolen they will Cut his tail. I intended if Wood had gone by land to have sent him to you last spring to match yours, but he went by water—as I have not time to write to Fisher you can write to them—Give my love to Cousin S. Pleasonton & his wife & the girls & tell him I recd his answer to my last letter—he mentions C. A. W. and wishes he could obtain a Clerkship there You will Enquire into the propriety of this, as there is nothing here worth attention at Present—I fear from what I have heard that C. A. W. without some attention will be lost to himself if not a Trouble to his Mother & friends.

Thomas Rodney.

I have not heard from home  
for 6 weeks past—

*Thomas Rodney to Cæsar A. Rodney.*

Town of Washington Misisipi T. Oct<sup>r</sup>. 31<sup>st</sup>. 1804.

My dear Son,

The Spanish aggressions and especially the retention of West Florida are kindling high resentment in the People here who feel much interested in obtaining that part of the Cession so material to their Communication with new Orleans—Col: Hutchins, whose son lives below the line, told me yesterday that the reinforcement sent to Baton Rouge was not so large as had been given out by them that it consisted only of fifty men—That they had demanded one 5<sup>th</sup> of the Negroes of all the inhabitants to cut a road from Baton Rouge to the River Amity; this is intended to make a communication that way that in case of a rupture they may send supplies to that Fort without going up the Misisipi. The inhabitants think this a trick too to rob them of their property as they do not think the Negroes will be returned again. They are indeed in a critical situation and are very uneasy and it seems doubtful whether this arbitrary measure will not cause a general insurrection for most of the inhabitants are Americans and very anxious to get from under the Spanish Yoke—The old officers here both of the Revolution and of the former western Army have many of them been to me to desire that in case of a rupture they may be employed; among those who have thus expressed themselves is Major F. L. Claibourne, brother to the governor, who wishes to obtain the office of Brigadier; Col-Ozmun, present Commandant of the Militia here, and an old Revolutionary Capt<sup>n</sup>. from New Jersey; Col-Ponnal, also an old Revolutionary Capt<sup>n</sup>. from Georgia, and who was sometime Surveyor General of that State; Capt<sup>n</sup>. Scot who was a Capt<sup>n</sup>. in the former western army and acted as adjutant—all these are healthy active men and men of property here: and

there are many others officers and soldiers here, who are said to be of the same mind, and would turn out in case of a Serious rupture; Indeed in this Case the whole Country appears of One mind—Yet they prefer peace upon Honorable Terms, but not with a relinquishment of west Florida—I will now express a few of my own Sentiments—If a serious Rupture should happen everything that is dear to the Spaniards in this Country, will be at stake; & there is no doubt but they will exert all their powers against us to preserve it—and if the Struggle should become Critical and important while I am in this Country, I do not Know that I could restrain myself from taking an active part in it, as Soon as the Land business here would admit of it—and many of the old officers here have expressed their wish to be under my Command, and say they would follow even to the City of Mexico, if necessary—but if I should ever Act in the Regular Service again, I could not accept of any Commission less than that of a Major General, as that Rank was offered to me in Jan<sup>y</sup>. 1777—and I was then much pressed by several of the general officers, to accept: but our own State then required my Presence, & I was obliged to decline the offer—and at this day I could not act in a lesser station, but would sooner Act as a Volunteer, that I might occasionally be where my Counsel and experience, would be most serviceable—and if it was such as the Commander in Chief and his Council preferred in December 1776, at that awful moment when our Independance stood in horror on the very brink of ruin, It might be of some use on other important occasions, at this day in the military department; if there should be any—yet as I never have solicited any office whatever in the Course of a long life of public service, I cannot do it now, tho' from the health and strength I enjoy, I am Confident I could do my duty at this day, as well as I did when I led the van of the american army, in Jan<sup>y</sup>. 1777 from Delaware to

Morristown, through that glorious Period which fixed the Independence of America, on a basis that could not afterwards be Shaken.

But however freely I have thus expressed my own mind, as well as that of others, for the information of government, if there should be occasion, yet I hardly think the Spainards will be so unwise as to provoke America to war—and that, however reluctantly, they will resign west Floriday sooner than risk the loss of that, and more important possessions—and as I am persuaded their gold & silver mines would be destructive to the industry of America, if in our possession;—and that, in Case of a war, it would not be possible to restrain our people from overrunning those Countries I hope a war may be rendered unnecessary by the Spainards delivering over the whole of the Country Ceded to us by France.

Taking it for granted that the Legislature intended the first allowance of 2000, Dollars as Compensation up to the first day of December next, I shall enclose you a draft on the Secretary of the Treasury for 500 Dol<sup>s</sup>. of that allowance, which are still unpaid—If he pays it you must transmit two hundred Dollars of it to Mr. John Fisher, for the use of your Sisters Children, and part as a Present to Sally and Betsey—as I shall now particularly direct him. To wit, I shall direct 40, dollars to each of the Children, 40, to Sally, & 40 to Betsey, in Lieu of Presents which I had ordered *Wood* to send from Philadelphia; who did not git my Letter, & of course did not send them, as he informed me since his return—and I wish you to make such Presents to Susan & your own Children out of the remaining 300, as you may think best unless you have occasion to make better or more necessary use of them—Thus I leave this to yourself—we know not in what manner we are to be paid the 6 dollars a day, as the Secretary of the Treasury has not wrote us a word on the subject—There is

plenty of public money here in the Collectors hands, tho' it is Equally convenient to draw on the Treasury, as our drafts will always sell for Cash.

The Board has been held hitherto in what is called the Government House so that we have had no rent to pay, but on the first of December we shall have to move out, to give place to the Legislature, and then shall have to pay rent for a large House; for the business requires four Rooms at least—and not a Cent is allowed for House Rent, firewood, or any other expense, necessary in doing this business; and this has fallen Chiefly on me, as there has been long no one else to pay it—Surely there is no other government that expects their officers to pay all such expenses on such occasions—and surely it is as necessary, a public charge, as the House rent, stationary &c. &c. of the public offices at the Federal City—Things of this Sort, Certainly ought to be regulated by the legislature—yet I should have been silent on this subject if other officers did not press for Something to be said—that some regulation may be made that may accomodate others as well as themselves in the Course of time—for much of the same Kind of business will be to do in other parts of the Country—I love frugallity and economy in the Management of public Money, but I view Parsimony & extravagance as extremes that are Equally productive of Evil—The weather has been cooler here since the Middle of September, than it usually is in Delaware in the same Period—we have had large White Frosts for a week past, and have been obliged to Keep fires for more than a month: Yet the last news from Orleans says the Yellow Fever was bad there—but the late Frost has probably stoped it before now. Governor Claiborn's lady and Child, both died with it; and the governor was dispaired of some time but recovered—we shall probably mention to Congress some alterations &c. necessary in the Land Law and I

shall write to M<sup>r</sup>. Nicholson on the subject as he was Chairman of the Committee.

Thomas Rodney.

November 1<sup>st</sup>. 1804.

*P. S.* Upon Reflection I find in the application of the money mentioned in my letter, I omitted some thing which I intended; That is that you should procure, Each of Lavinias Children, as well as your own, a Lottery ticket in one or more of the best Lotteries now on Foot; I mean by best those which propose the highest Prizes; and let those of your own Children be in Partnership and those of Lavinias Children in another partnership, that each may share the good or bad fortune of the rest,—also buy one for Susan, one for Sally and one for Betsy Fisher to be paid out of the money of each before respectively appropriated to them—and I also request you to buy one for myself in the Lottery that has a 20000, Prize—for heretofore I have always been fortunate enough in Lotteries to draw more Prizes than blanks and as some one must draw the highest Prize, it may fall to my lot—at any rate it is but risking a little Money for the Chance of gitting a good deal—Even 1500, Dols. now would purchase a large landed Estate in this Country—and among all there will be several Chances—

I have wrote to our friend M<sup>r</sup>. Nicholson and noticed some alter<sup>ns</sup> necessary in the Land Law which I have requested him to Communicate to you—we shall also write in Substance the same to M<sup>r</sup>. Gallatin—I shall also send M<sup>r</sup>. Nicholson, a long letter which I wrote several months ago, by this mail—it gives him some little account of this western Country & tho probably he has heard most of it from you before, as probably there is nothing in it but what you had from time to time from me—

I have also written several Letters, since I entered

into the western Country to the President, communicating such information as I thought might afford him some amusement, but as I have heard nothing from him, have long since ceased further Communication—perhaps they were rendered uninteresting by his receiving more satisfactory information from other sources—but however that may be I shall not Cease to Communicate to other friends whatever occurs in this Country that I think will be acceptable to them & amusing. As I have not received any letters from home for 5 or 6 weeks past I shall not Close this till the mail arrives which we expect today—Now I think of it I wish to request Mr. Smith and Mr. Wilson, in future to Direct my Papers to this Place as hitherto they have gone by to Natchez where I have to send for them and often do not git them.

Our Cousin S. Pleasanton was at some expense and trouble, on my application in the Secretary of States office which I desire you to pay as I could [not] get a bank bill here to send him, and Present him my thanks and regard as I have not had time to write to him since receiving his last letter.

We have heard by the Post Rider that Mr. Briggs is at Tombigbee but have heard nothing certain of Mr. Williams yet—they have both been absent ever since March last and left the Toil to [illegible] and it is fortunate that I have had such good health.

Most of what is Called the good Lands in the Territory are covered by one Sort of Claim or another, and the residue is mostly what is Called here Pine Barrons but as many of the Presumption Claimants are Settled on some of that Kind of Land several of them have lately told me that it produces very fine Corn and that it excels Even the richest land in producing Cotton—This information is favorable to the United States, as the opinion here of that land has been that it was worth nothing and of Course would not sell or be settled at



the Congress price—but if the account of its excelling the rich land is verified by a few years experience it will soon sell & be settled, for Cotton is the rage of this Country.

When mentioning officers I omitted our Clerk Major R. Claiborne of Virginia who was a Revolutionary officer & would also turn out if there is Occasion he was sometime aid to Gen<sup>l</sup>. Green—I have no hesitation in saying that, if such a war should happen and a new army to be raised, the old Revolutionary & other experienced officers ought to be preferred.

Saturday Nov<sup>r</sup>. 3<sup>d</sup>. 1804.

The mail expected on Thursday did not arrive till this Evening. I received no Letters from Delaware tho' the Post brought two Mails, but learn from the Intelligencer and from a Letter to M<sup>r</sup>. Shields from M<sup>r</sup>. M<sup>c</sup>Coom, that the Republican Party has been totally defeated in Delaware—This however was not unexpected to me—after seeing their Plan, I apprehended this Event—As to yourself it will afford you an opportunity of attending more to your own Interests, but if the Federal party should exercise the government with the same party Spirit they formerly did they may render the State very disagreeable to the Republicans at least to many of them whose exertions have rendered them obnoxious—As this Event may more strongly incline you & J. Fisher to Contemplate a removal, I have at least for the Present suspended the order I proposed sending by the Present Mail till I can consider more on the Subject as there is no place where money Could be laid out to more advantage than here in Lands and I have been pressed much to procure a freehold Estate at least here—but if you and Fisher should at any time become serious in a removal there is no place where you Could expect greater advantages than here and in that Case it would be convenient to to have some previous Estab-

lishment—This however being only a sudden thought I suspend the order to Contemplate it further.

Thomas Rodney.

The Spanish Embassadors reply to Major Jackson seems to Indicate that the Spainards would rather settle with us peaceably—This will Certainly be best if they Will give up west Florida and Louisiany westward Imbracing all the waters of the Misisipi westward to their sorces.

(To be continued.)