

The Letters of Tarleton Bates

1795-1805

By MRS. ELVERT M. DAVIS

In presenting extracts from these letters to the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, the first object was to call attention to a valuable collection of data in regard to early Pittsburgh which had apparently escaped the notice of local historians. The original letters of this collection are deposited with the Historical Society of Missouri, and photostat copies, from which these notes are taken, are in the Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library.

The extracts first selected arranged themselves so naturally into a romance, that the temptation to use it in that form was irresistible, especially as the story was one that had already been touched upon in previous articles in this magazine. Then, too, the freshness and naivete of the revelations are better enjoyed if the listener does not at first know of the inevitable tragedy which follows.

That arrangement, however, is better suited to the quest of the dramatist or the novelist, or perhaps of the psychologist, than to the student of history. Therefore, instead of presenting the matter as in the paper read before the society (April 24, 1928), this article has been prepared going more fully into other details than the personal ones covered at that time.

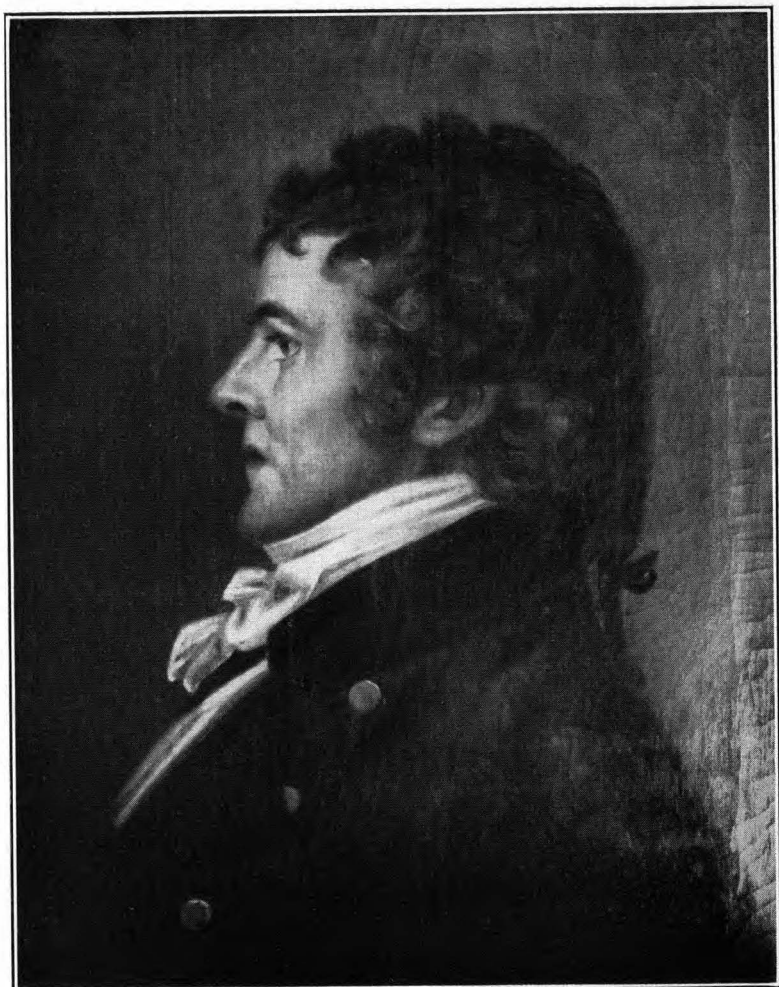
The first letter is dated at Pittsburgh, July 8, 1795, where the writer has evidently arrived after some wanderings in other places, and an absence from home occasioned, or the occasion of, some disagreement with his father.

Pittsburgh, July 8, 1795

Dear Brother—

.....

I board at a very genteel house ^(a) at half a guinea a week and 70c a dozen for washing. My wages are (including two rations) Thirty-five dols. per month. What I shall be able to put by of this I can only say will not equal my first expectations. I have thoughts of making the Western country my home, though it will be long, very long, before I can prevail upon myself to disavow that dear and



TARLETON BATES

much revered appellation of A CITIZEN OF VIRGINIA. That I was born amongst freemen I thank my God - - and an American I am particularly grateful, but that I first breathed in VIRGINIA is my chiefest glory desire to hear from my friends, relatives and fellow-citizens for I have not yet expatriated myself.

I spent the Fourth very agreeably with about 45 persons at the Sign of the Bear ^(b) -- fifteen toasts accompanied by the discharge of cannon were given and the day closed with harmony and a procession through the streets with three huzzas before almost every respectable house in town.

I was some days ago very agreeably surprised by the appearance of Q. M. Woodson, (Quarter-Master Woodson), a perfect Virginian, in this place. He has been in the Quarter-Master General's employ since last fall at 30\$ and two rations, is now on his way to headquarters from Philadelphia where he has been for three or four months.

Being entirely in the dark with regard to your politics, I know of nothing more that I can communicate (The address on the enveloping page, very much flourished, is - - "To Citizen Frederick Bates, Goochland Court House, Virginia ^(c) Via Philadelphia to Richmond, Virginia.")

(a) Craig's house, Dahlinger, 106, Onward Bates, p. 43 (Isaac Craig)

(b) Sign of the Black Bear, Dahlinger, 12, 13, 158.

(c) Goochland Court House, 28 mi. west of Richmond, county seat of Goochland County, bounded on the south by the James River.

Pittsburg (sic) November 9, 1796

Dear Fred;

By W. G. S. ^(a), who arrived from Presqu'isle last night, we received the following manuscript intelligence verbatim "From Niagara we learn that the packet arrived there from Kingston in that province on the 24th October with the dispatch containing information that the French with seven sail of the line and 5000 troops had taken possession of the Isle of St. John's in the Gulf of St. Lawrence." mob in Montreal. . . . Success to the rising republic of Canada. . . . I shall send to you by W. G. S. a small (obliterated) for our uncle Frederick containing. . . . pair of Indian leggings, garters and moccasons (sic)—a belt I could not procure. . . . I have nothing to add which could be so

true as that I am, dear Frederick, sincerely yours,
(This is directed to Frederick Bates, Postmaster, Goochland Court House. ^(b))

- (a) W. G. Sydnor, a neighbor, probably a connection, of the Bates family in Virginia.
- (b) Evidently Frederick had been appointed postmaster in the interim. In a later letter, Tarleton rallies Fred for charging for his letters.

Pittsburg, March 10, 1795.

My Dear Frederic—

(Offers to send what "pittance" he can spare, for a certain purpose.) Small indeed. 100\$ in addition to what Ensign Lewis ^(a) may have deposited, will be the extent.

- (a) Meriwether Lewis; a neighbor, evidently always an intimate friend.

Pittsburg, April 7, 1797.

(refers to some prospect for his brother)

This is a momentous era in politics. We appear to be at the portal of Janus' Temple, but whether or not the doors will be cast open, I will not hazard an opinion. You know I am a Democrat, and have pronounced with enthusiastic (obliterated) success to the French. . . . but I am an American, and adore my country. ^(a)

- (a) It is worthy of remark that Tarleton Bates never uses the term Democratic Republican, but always "Democrat" or "Demo". He may be referring here to the French aggressions against American ships.

June 19, 1797.

. before the cause of that asperity existed, I had a Father. . . . I may have been obstinate, Mliler ^(a) unaccommodating.

(He comments on Cabell letters)

. . . .not disappointed at your remaining where you are till Christmas. At that time I have no doubt of being able to procure you business with the Q. M. or contractor, the first would be preferable, but I do not expect to have an option. About November, we can determine. (Studying French) I pay for tuition Ten Dollars a quarter and am attended every evening from 8 to 11, and on this time not even reading shall infringe until I am able to read without a dictionary. ^(b)

Three princes of the house of Bourbon, sons to the late, the infamous Egalite, arrived here from the falls of the Ohio yesterday. The only one of them that is tolerably looking is almost a dwarf, the others small, crooked legs and knees, round shoulders, hard features. In short, I am not altogether certain that the man who was to say they are deformed would deserve to forfeit his veracity. If their minds are crooked as their bodies, it is lucky for France that they are no longer to fix manners of a nation. But as I have but just seen them on the street, I may have judged amiss. Some have supposed it possible that they are not really the sons of Orleans but I do not think it possible that any persons of their appearance would have dared to have (assumed?) the honor of being princes.

They travel without state, are illy dressed, and I believe have but one valet between them. Yet though they have lost their paternal estate, their maternal is immense. ^(c)

- (a) Miller was evidently an influential friend of their father's, and probably some connection.
- (b) All the young men of that day studied French. (Appleton's Cycloped, Am. Biog. (Pike) Vol. V, p. 19.
- (c) An account of this visit is given in several local histories. For contrasting description, see Brackenridge, *Recollections*, p. 67.

Pittsburgh, Aug. 18, 1797.

Subjoined, my dear Frederick, is the copy of a letter from the Deputy Q. M. G. at Detroit. As often as I have urged the subject of its contents, I must be excused in adding, I think this is an offer that demands immediate attention. Some of the advantages are mentioned in the annexed; but there are others, one of which is most weighty and would, was my inclination alone consulted, induce me to prefer that situation to mine here—It is that the Northwestern Territory will very shortly make the 17th link in the Federal chain—of course persons of assiduity or a tolerable portion of abilities may rise with a rising State.

Miller you say is devoted to your interest. He surely cannot object. Should Miller require a free-will offering, I will send you what you may agree upon as the price of your liberty. . . . early in October by way of Presqu'île, so as not to have to go by way of Fort Washington to Detroit. You have seen Pickering and Monroe's correspondence. The latter writes well, if cuttingly; Citizen Tim's longest letter

is not written as he usually writes.

My affections to the Belmont family and yourself. ^(a)

(a) Belmont was the name of the family home in Goochland Co., Va.

Substance of letter from Matthew Ernest inclosed in preceding:

Your brother to come. The business will be nearly similar to that part of yours which relates to the Quartermaster department only, military stores entirely independent here. Detroit is healthy, pleasant, and affords a good English society of both sexes, and a young man may acquire the French language in one or two years with great ease.

Pay of clerk to assistant Q. M. G., 30\$ per month and two rations, 530½ dolls. per annum . . . better than at Philadelphia because living is cheaper.

August 25, 1797.

Dear Brother;

Will send by next post 200 \$. . . .Q. M. G. brother-in-law to Capt. Ernest. U. S. Sloop *Detroit* to be at Presqu'île in October—last trip this winter, of course after that time will be no way of getting to Detroit from this place except by a most disagreeable route. . . .you seem to hint that even at Christmas you have to encounter the frowns of parental dogmatism. . . .

September 29, 1797.

Marked "To be opened by Richard Bates if Frederick is absent."

Expected letters by two posts. . . .In a letter to the contractor ^(a) General Wilkinson says that a rebellion that actually exists at Kaskaskias (on the west of the Mississippi, 40 or 50 miles above Ft. Massac) requires his presence. The numbers of the Kaskaskia settlement I do not know. It is of ancient date and principally French. I am told that two or three companies are gone upon this service. The contractor is ordered to provide at some point in its vicinity 300 daily (sic) rations. The attack on Fort Recovery is as stated in my last. There are now in Pittsburgh jail two Indians for the murder of one Clark on Beaver Creek, 30

or 40 miles from hence. . . . This may possibly overtake you in Pittsburgh.

(a) Col. James O'Hara, *Standard Hist. Pgh. Wilson*, p. 996

Headquarters, Pittsburgh
25 December, 1797.

(Addressed to Frederick)

(Bates, Quartermaster's)

(Office, Detroit.)

Merry Christmas to you, my dear Brother, and many New Years too, among your Galli-American fair at Detroit

"The Ladies of Pittsburgh" gave a soiree (?) some days ago at which there were thirty-one ladies and near forty gentlemen. Capt. T. Lewis and J. Pierce's companies are still here destined for the Mississippi—waiting for the will of God to depart. The three ci-devant Princes of Orleans with the Adj. Gen. of Dumouriez at the famous battle of Genappee (Jemapees) are here. They are bound to New Orleans. . . . (For T. Lewis and J. Pierce, see *Powell's List*, 39, 38)

9 o'clock, January 12, 1798

. . . . I have sold your mare for nine months for 80\$.

You seem inclined to court the law. In this quarter her slaves (in their bills) have no regard for fee-bill, justice or moderation, these words being struck out of their vocabulary, and the words injustice and extortion inserted in their room. A young gentleman of the name of A---- talks of visiting your town as an attorney. He expected last fall a license to practice but was barred by a most preposterous law,—an excrescence of British monopolizing spirit—which requires a certain number of years' study. He is quite an ordinary genius, who in his pupilage (?) has caught the little manners of Brackenridge ^(a) without acquiring a spark of his acuteness. . . .

(a) Hugh Henry Brackenridge, *Appleton's Cyc. Biog.* Vol. I, 345.

February 19, 1798.

I presume you have not yet had the temerity to fall in love with any of your handsome girls except on the principle of general admiration of the sex. Matrimony is a quicksand from which, once entangled, there is no extrication.

. . . . As for war, I think we shall not have it either with France or Spain or yet with England, and that the depredations of our commerce will still continue as well by the first as by the last, I have no doubt. It is not simply a war with France that I dread but the strictest alliance with the Queen of Isles. This I believe to be the darling object of our Executive and if carried may shake the Union to the centre.

.
I have thoughts of sending you two shirts by the first conveyance which I presume would be something cheaper than you could procure in Detroit. Will search the post-office for J. D. Hay, to whom present my respects.

Pittsburgh, May 25, 1798.

. . . . happy that shirts arrived opportunely - - Swift's treatise not yet procured . . . Although I had heard of ruffles without a shirt, I had in fact no idea that there was any such thing, till the receipt of your (letter).
Assiduity and attention to business promises wealth in due time, although you may perhaps be obliged to confine yourself to your rations and "live like a Frenchman", and even wear ruffles without a shirt! You have caught, I see, the British phrase, the States. It is the opinion of many, the fear of most people, and the wish of some that the Dogs of War should be loosed and that WE should take exemplary vengeance on the infidel French, and the darling measure of these last would be an alliance, Offensive and Defensive with Mother Britain, bowed down with a weight of 450 millions and tottering to her grave. My Creed is, make no more Treaties, that unnecessary causes of war and foreign influence (whether British or French is equally obnoxious) may be avoided. In case of war it is probable the Mississippi would be the scene of action; but it surely would be the extremest impolicy to leave the posts bordering on the Territory of our *Amicable, Commercial and Navigating* allies, the British, garrisoned only with subaltern's commands

On Saturday the nineteenth, precisely at 2 P. M., the *first* galley was launched at this place. It was said to be a very beautiful launch, she slid a most unusual distance, I believe 126 feet. When she descends the river is not known, as it

depends more on the destinies than on man, for although she is not in a sailing state, neither is the water high enough to admit it. The General ^(a) talks of leaving here for the Mississippi next week. It is probable Mrs. Wilkinson moves with him, and I had supposed the Q. M. Gen. also. ^(b)

(a) Brigadier General James Wilkinson, then Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the United States. See Craig, *History* Pgh, p. 285.

(b) John Wilkins, Jr.

July 13, 1798

. . . . Day before yesterday General Wilkins offered me the appointment of Q. M. at Natchez which I should have accepted with avidity, and have started next week for that post, but Major Craig cannot part with me till September, and the Q. M. G. promises to make no permanent appointment there till that time, so that I have expectations of leaving this within two months, and as I cannot properly provide myself with conveniences on the small matter of cash I can here raise, would be obliged to you for 100\$ by the first safe hand. ^(a) Lest I should have departed before its arrival it might be best to enclose it to my particular friend John Park ^(b) who I believe will, in the interim, make me any advance that my exigency will require. Should, however, the Natchez business not fall to me, possibly I may be accommodated at Fort Washington, where a Q. Master will be wanted vice Cap. Harrison appointed Secretary of your Territory. ^(c)

(a) Frederick owed him \$130.00.

(b) *Historical Gleanings*, Parke, p. 354.

(c) William Henry Harrison.

Pittsburg, September 1, 1798.

. . . . On the fifteenth I depart for Natchez. Transmit to my very good friend John Park 100 dolls. Expect letters from you before my departure.

Pittsburg, September 2, 1798

Captain Ernest ^(a) arrived here last Friday morning I leave this in a small skiff for Fort Washington on my route to Natchez, the (torn) . . . on horseback to Marietta,

whence we shall proceed (?) together. (If you knew French) Cap. Ernest could get you Prothonotaryship of Detroit. It is said Governor St. Clair intends removing but never a word of this because (torn . .) known there would be many candidates.

- (a) Captain Matthew Ernest, his brother's friend and patron. See *Life and Papers of Frederick Bates*, Missouri Hist. Soc. Powell's List, p. 36.

Cincinnati, November 5, 1798

You will doubtless, my dear friend, be astonished to hear that I am again in Pittsburg, or shall be before you see this. The cause is simple, Wilkins has deceived me. Has appointed a Q. M. for the Mississippi and although in Pittsburg, has not even condescended to drop me a line, but desired Craig to say he wished me to return. Craig has also added his own wishes and Col. O'Hara's, which latter has in no inconsiderable degree influenced my decision. Preparation for the journey has left me penniless, and my chagrin induces to curse myself, mankind and almost, with Job, to curse my God. Wilkin's only object was to deprive me of business, no other reasonable excuse.

Chilicothe, November 10, 1798.

(Laments his situation) entire confidence I had in the Q. M. G. I am at a loss what to do on my return to Pittsburg. (Has had a letter from Wilkins with attempted explanation, but does not credit it).

This is an extremely handsome place with upwards of two hundred homes - - rapidly improving. John Sutherland ^(a) is of my company and presents his compliments with my esteem.

- (a) Not identified. Farmer gives a James Sutherland in Detroit, there is reference to Joel Sutherland in Pa. affairs. May have been a son of Joel. Appleton's Cyc. Am. Biog. Vol. VI p. 1.

Pittsburg, December 3, 1798.

Arrived on 17th November. Q. M. G. Wilkins gave me the choice of yet going to Natchez as resident A. (Assistant) Q. M. or of going in the quality of paymaster for the department there and returning immediately. I have, however, engaged in the contractor's service for one year upon

considerably lower terms than I had resolved, 300 dolls. and expenses. I reside in O'Hara's family ^(a) - - shall be in Philadelphia in about 7 weeks, in Martinsburg in Virginia in February, and (if I can possibly steal so much time) at Belmont in March - - and here immediately thereafter, and possibly the spring may put me in your presence. This would be a round, indeed, to me a pleasant one. I would not write you by En. (sign) Thompson ^(b) - - I have seen none of yours subsequent to your departure for Kentucky.

You will find astounding news in the enclosed paper ^(c)

What in 1794 would have clothed the American (public?) with mourning and dejection, has in 1798 excited mirth and festivity and lighted the streets of American towns with bon-fires. Electioneering has run high here. It has put frowns upon the faces of friends and produced jarring and distrust where amity and concord subsisted. Illiberality is the watchword and the influence of party paramount to everything but an avidity after riches

- (a) The home of Col. O'Hara was the most elegant in town. Dahlinger, 106. Miller, p. 13.
- (b) John W. Thompson and David Thompson were both Ensigns at this time. Powell, p. 38.
- (c) Pittsburg Gazette, Sept. 9, 1798, and following numbers record captures of French ships. See U. S. Political History, Goldwin Smith, p. 142-143.

Pittsburg, Feb. 25, 1799.

(Has had a letter from his brother Fleming) (Quotes from the letter): "Our father's affairs are near a crisis to be dreaded." (There are mortgages and several debts of which the family till now knew nothing, will take more than the estate). (Tarleton suggests that he and Frederick make up 100 dollars a year while they "continue single" to educate their younger brothers, James and Edward.)

Alas, our poor sisters! Our means, my dear brother, are small indeed but never let it be said that we have dishonored humanity by forgetting them

Sometime since the Q. M. Gen. received orders to cause to be constructed, at this place, two gallees for the Mississippi, to carry a 24 pounder and some smaller guns - - whether 6's, 4's or swivels I do not know. The keel of one

of these boats is laid, but although they were designed to be in "their destined Element" in May at farthest I think the autumn may see them on ground. ^(a) How far is it constitutional to form a *navy* by executive authority only, I leave you to determine.

(a) Craig, 285. *Pittsburg Gazette*, March 30, 1799.

Pittsburg, March 16, 1800.

. . . . How otherwise could you omit to write for a whole year? From Natchez to this place I had a horrid time ^(a) through a country horribly savage and almost impassable.

Your trips to Michilimackinac ^(b) to Miamis and Fort Wayne

On appointment of new prothonotary ^(c) here, I was engaged for half the profits to do the business. (little leisure) . . . he confined to his bed, I attending his affairs by day, him at night . . has nearly worn me down. He must shortly recover or die, in the latter event, I have some hopes of succeeding. In other event, my wages are good.

Yes, "the American Phoenix is no more". ^(d) Funeral honors have been everywhere paid to his memory. ^(e) It is hoped that his inestimable loss will be in some degree repaired by the election of OUR illustrious Jefferson to the presidential chair.

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(a) See *Delineations Am. Scenery & Character*, J. J. Aububon p. 23 to 24.

(b) *Michigan History Mag.* Vol. XII, p. 525, 526.

(c) John C. Gilkieson, *Dahlinger*, 59, 163. *Brackenridge Recollections*, 68, 69.

(d) Ex-President Washington.

(e) *Pittsburg Gazette*, January 11, 1800.

Pittsburgh, August 17, 1800.

. . . . You seem impressed with my ideas on the Secretary. Father is too partial and has too little influence. Pursue, I pray you, with all avidity, your studies of the law. (Will help him get lawbooks, etc.)

I have no less wondered than you do at the invidious distinction of Democrat and Federalist, as if they were at variance . . . (Sacrifice of principle to policy deplored) But unremitted endeavor can do all things. The ex-officer

was confessedly the worst prothonotary in the state - - he may be forgotten - - he would not have been continued by Governor Ross - - I am his successor ^(a) Brunot (?) acknowledges that I acted in the matter as a gentleman and in consequence has showed me the most marked politeness. ^(b) I think that a uniform honest and honorable demeanor may compel the esteem of your fellow-citizens even without sycophancy and false professions.

Last Saturday, the Tree of Liberty - - and the leaves thereof shall be for the healing of the nations - - was planted in Pittsburgh. I send you the first impress. It will keep fanned the mighty flame of party spirit that consumes us. *Our* party, I think, are gaining much ground Our Feds here, Ross (b b) Wilkins &c, will be nearly as much mortified at Adams' election as at Jefferson's. Amongst about ten officers at the camp three miles hence ^(c), only two dared to speak for the present constitution. They were Cap. Shoemaker ^(d), and Lt. Pike ^(e). Your hopeful set from Detroit were amongst them. ^(f)

We have a meeting here day after tomorrow to say who shall have the hardihood to oppose Gallatin. ^(g) Major-General P. Nevil is proposed. They say they will run and elect although he says he will not be their dupe. They only intend to put him up by a defeat that John Woods may be elected - - as the new census takes place we will have a new district. ^(h)

- (a) Pittsburgh Gazette, April 19, 1800. (bb) James Ross, *Ap.Cyc. Am. Biog.* Vol. V. p. 329.
- (b) This name is not plain in the mss. For Brunot, see Dahlinger, 48, 51.
- (c) Gazette, Dec. 21, 1799; June 7, 1800; Nov. 7, 14, 1800.
- (d) Captain Peter Shoemaker, Tree of Liberty, Dec. 13, 1800. Coues' Pike xxvii.
- (e) Zebulon Montgomery Pike, see Coue's Pike, intro. Vol. I, p. xxv, xxvi.
- (f) See letters of Anthony Ernest, in *Life and Papers of F. Bates*.
- (g) Albert Gallatin, see Sept. 27, 1800. Tree of Liberty.
- (h) General John Woods, a leader of the Federalists in Pittsburgh, Dahlinger 131.

Pittsburg, Sept. 8, 1800.

. . . . 219 recruits from Virginia arrived here last week under command of Cap. Claiborne ^(a). He with his company of seventy men is in the Garrison. ^(b) The residue of the 1st Reg. under Cap. Strong, ^(c) go to Niagara. The

hundred Todd ^(d) men from Detroit and the late garrison of Fort Fayette winter on the Ohio in our vicinity. Cap. Gray ^(e) is going to Kentucky with Lt. Arbuckle ^(f) to recruit, and my friend Lt. Lewis ^(g), paymaster of the 1st (?) goes in a few days to Cincinnati, Wayne, your post, and if practicable to Mackinac, to pay the troops. Wilson ^(h) has lately gone to Cincinnati for money for the troops here ⁽ⁱ⁾ General Wilkinson will be here on the 26th inst. and continue during the winter. Col. Strong has lately arrived from Cincinnati, and Cap. Visscher ^(j) has gone to Wayne for Madame Hamtramck. ^(k)

It is doubtful whether or not we will have a voice in the Presidential election. Maryland too is in great ferment, the Highflyers are making exertions to get what they call a federal house of representatives in which case the assembly will choose the electors. The demos say they will elect by district. The violent on both sides are sanguine of success..

It is reported that Gt. Britain is in possession of Mobile and Pensacola, and have 10,000 from Jamaica for New Orleans.

The bearer of this is waiting. Your ever devoted,
(signature)

P. S. Have you any views in which I can serve you through your Governor? I have some friends who are his. (See following letter for explanation of this P. S.) (see also Burton's Early Detroit, p. 33)

(a) F. H. Claiborne, *Apleton's Cyc. AM. Biog.*, Vol. I, 619.

(b) Fort Fayette, see *Western Pennsylvania Historical Mag.* Vol X, p. 72.

(c) Cap. Strong, Elijah Strong, Lt. 1797, Capt. 1802, Powell' List, p. 38-40.

Col. Strong, David Strong, Powell, 37, Coues' Pike, Intro, xxvi d. Aug. 19, 1801.

(d) Probably militia from Kentucky.

(e) Archibald Gray (or Grey), Coues' Pike, xxvii.

(f) Matthew Arbuckle, *Apleton's Cyc. Am. Biog.* Vol. I, p. 86.

(g) Meriwether Lewis, made Captain June 1, 1802, Powell's List, p. 40.

(h) John Wilson, Coues' Pike, xxvi, xxviii.

(i) This seems ambiguous, possibly 'here' should be 'there' in the letter.

(j) Nanning I. Visscher, *Legacy of Historical Gleanings*, Vol I, 149. Coues' Pike, xxvi, xxvii.

(k) Wife of John Hamtramck, Lt. Col; Col., 1802.

Pittsburgh, September 21, 1800.

. . . . We are likely to carry all our candidates in this district, - - Washington, Greene, Allegheny and the new counties, Crawford &c - - for Gallatin, State Senator, J. Hamilton; Representatives in Assembly, I. Morton and Sam Ewalt; commissioner, Nat Irish; coroner, John Johnston; all good men and true. Gallatin says Pennsylvania will have a vote for President, and President Adams says he would rather Jefferson would be elected than C. C. Pinckney, - - that there is a formidable British party in America which he, Adams, has for years been combatting, and that he knows Jefferson would never be the dupe of that party. Adams also says the Feds - - meaning the Hamiltonians - - are now the greatest disorganizers, - - that had Hamilton been two years at the head of the 12 Regiments, the Union must have raised another army to disband those regiments - - and that we shall never be quiet till we have a monarchy There is little change in North Carolina. (predicts Democratic victory) But I pray you have compassion on Mr. Brush, do not tell him this. ^(a) Who? What is your amiable accomplished Ogilvy? ^(b) I long to see him.

If you have any views I probably can render you some service with Governor St. Clair if you make them known shortly as it is said that he is to be superceded by the *Great Man* whom you expected at Detroit in the *Adams*.

(a) Elijah Brush, Farmer's Hist. Detroit, Vol II, p. 1031.

(b) Not identified.

Pittsburgh, July 20, 1801.

Beautiful sash and dirk received (reference to a buffalo hide) Yes, I had applied but have had no answer, and Meriwether Lewis is silent though he promised to write weekly I cannot tell how the Mackinac business will go. I thought Mr. Henry ^(a) seemed dumb-like when I inquired of him what the collectorship would be worth. I had some thoughts of applying for it for you.

(a) James Henry of Detroit, Farmer's Hist. Detroit, 26, 95 &c. Vol. I.

Carlisle, January 18, 1802.

I am here on my way to Baltimore via Philadelphia and Washington If you remember six beautiful martin

skins you sent me I had them dressed and presented them to the wife of my benefactor. ^(a) Martin muffs and tippets are now all the fashion; send some more - - will cost in Philadelphia, merely because they are in the fashion, 150\$.

Two regiments of infantry fall. Col. Hamtramck will command. The officers will be retired by selection. If they were about evenly divided in politics it would seem an unfair way, but there *can* be no political selections.

(a) Mrs. Hugh Henry Brackenridge, then living at Carlisle.

Pittsburgh, July 21, 1803.
. . . . Doctor Scott ^(a) says you have egregiously mistaken the late circular instructions which he produced.

I wrote you last week a statement of Christie's ^(b) business. My most intimate friends have treated me ill or are satisfied with my conduct except that it is considered rash to have slapped the jaws of any man who was in reputable society, whatever *I* might think of him. I believe the acknowledgment was the least that Christie could accept or I give. He was insulted in the grossest possible manner and accepted what my friends considered, a slight acknowledgment, "that he was entitled to be treated as a gentleman", if on no other grounds, because others treated him as such. But "I was too long" in what I did. It was two days. The friends of Mr. C. wished me to make acknowledgments, I sent (*obscure*), my friend, with authority to make them of a certain kind. I even wrote them at length, and they were afterward verbally altered, as my friend thought, without altering the sense. The time and manner of meeting had not been fixed, although I had given the most explicit directions to fix it at the earliest moment - - he had given pretty general notice by his immediately borrowing ladles to make bullets.

I must again request you to ask of Mr. Henry the copy of Mr. Scull's ^(c) postscript.

I have received a letter from Father . . . in great ill-health. ^(d)

(a) Dr. Hugh Scott, Postmaster at Pittsburgh, Dahlinger 96, 121, 128.

(b) William Christy, Merchant, Dahlinger, 132.

(c) John Scull, Editor of Pittsburgh Gazette, Dahlinger, 133-4.

(d) He was evidently by this time reconciled to his father.

Pittsburg, August 15, 1803.

(Frederick has evidently written him, reproaching him for rashness in the Christy affair) I have long known, and since last September felt, that to fall under the malice of certain "Wise and Good" men of Pittsburg, is to have opened upon one the floodgates of falsehood, detraction and villainy, not simply of avowed enemies, but of professors of friendship. In the affairs with Christy and Woods and Haslett ^(a) I have the approbation of *myself* and of *all my friends* who have expressed opinions except yourself; for my enemies I care not a rush, to obtain their approbation I must first forfeit my own. Mr. Mason, ^(b) who was the friend of Mr. Christie, has assured my friend that he was in hopes the affair had been settled in such a manner as to prevent in a great degree those impertinent insinuations which prevail more or less on all similar occasions.

As to the man "who professes friendship for us both",
a scoundrel, a poltroon, and although you do
 not choose to give me his name, I *may* learn it and I *may*
 meet him, and I hope you will find yourself at liberty to
 show him the five last lines. ^(c)

Our father is in a very low state. ^(d)

- (a) Henry Hazlett, rumored to have seconded Stewart in the final duel. See West. Pa. Hist. Mag. Vol. X, p. 76.
- (b) Not identified, possibly Isaac Meeson, who figured in the duel with Henry Baldwin, see Thurston, Allegheny's Hundred Years, p. 41.
- (c) Could this be a pun on the name of (James) May, of Detroit?
- (d) He died in 1805.

Pittsburg, October 13, 1803.

. . . . Connor ^(a) never had in his offer the situation of companion and guide to Cap. Lewis. On the contrary Cap. Clark ^(b) of Louisville even in the former capacity had the first offer, and the only one except to Hook ^(c) conditionally, and the high preference. As to the guide, Mr. Lewis had engaged an Indian interpreter from the interior of your territory or the Ohio state, whose name I do not know. It may be Connor.

(He refers again to the duel) Sorry to have offended - - liars believed Scull and Henry of course may rest. I had a right to expect better treatment from my friend Jouett. ^(d) I was civil to him and he has taken occasion to traduce me under the mask of friendship.

I know little about your becoming a separate government. Lewis had not heard of it.

- (a) Coues' Lewis & Clark, Vol. I, p. xxiv. (intro)
- (b) Capt. William Clarke of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.
- (c) Moses Hook Coue's Lewis & Clark, Vol. I, p. lxx. (intro).
- (d) Jouett, Indian Agent at Detroit, Fuller, Economic & Social Beginnings of Michigan, p. 97, n. 4.

Pittsburgh, January 28, 1804.

.....

I have given 1050\$ cash for twenty acres of land on Grant's Hill in sight of the borough. I have bought a donation tract of 200 acres for as many dollars with a little expense of brokerage and *am to give* 100\$ for 7 acres of hill and 1½ acres of bottom land below Robinson's ^(a) on the Allegheny River nearly opposite its confluence with the Ohio. These two last I consider very good bargains, and have bought four tracts for taxes which if valid are very good - - 800 acres for 200\$. Mr. Harriott ^(b) reports that you are doing very well - - and Mr. Lucas ^(c) has written to this town that he *wishes* you may be appointed Secretary. Would think your chance about equal.

We are carrying on here our old game. The federal *ladies* in meekness and modesty still refuse or decline to visit newcomers however respectable. The bank has gone into operation here. Messrs. Wilson ^(d) and Smith ^(e) the cashier and teller, have families who have not been visited even by the ladies of the directors, ^(f) because "they came here in a strange way". Mr. Wilson, the cashier, is a man about forty, respectable for his *talents* and his *wealth*, both are respectable for their high honor and integrity—their ladies are equally amiable and meritorious - - but, also, they are Democrats. They refused bringing letters of introduction, because they very justly considered that the very committal to their care of perhaps one-half million of money was of itself proof of their high standing in Philadelphia and with the Bank of Pennsylvania which indeed is an aristocratic institution. But our ladies are of too *high* origin, they have too pure blood of ancestry flowing in their veins, to mix with any but patricians! I fear that we are fast becoming the reproach, the laughing stock, if not of the Union, at least of Pennsylvania.

Federalists muster at their balls 13 gentlemen, 18 ladies. This year they have had a farce of pretending to permit the demos to participate. Some of them met together and formed an assembly for the season and appointed managers, without desiring our attendance. *Afterwards* certain persons - - not managers - - went round with a subscription paper to some of my friends but did not come to me. True *a little before the first dance*, a gentleman, by what authority I know not, for he was no manager, met me and said he should have the honor to wait on me the next day. On inquiring for what, he said with the subscription paper. I desired he would not. He did not, and they now make a distinction with respect to me, that I was not asked because I would not go. It is true I shouldn't have gone, asked even in a proper way, but without any particular circumstances I should not have gone, asked as I was - - that is, asked by a person having no right, if I might be asked. But I tire you with minutiae. (g)

I was surprised to hear you acquit Mr. Sibley ^(h) of any duplicity in the affair of the Secretaryship after your information that he was the first to advise you to offer.

- (a) James Robinson, Dahlinger, p. 30.
- (b) From the other letters, evidently a merchant of Detroit.
- (c) J. B. C. Lucas, Ap. Cyc. American Biog. Vol. IV, p. 49.
- (d) Thomas Wilson, Boucher, Hist. Pgh. Vol. II, p. 64.
- (e) Not definitely identified, probably soon succeeded by John Thaw who came here as chief clerk, Pgh. and the Pgh. Spirit, p. 258. Miller, Chronicles, p. 36.
- (f) List of directors, Standard Hist. Pgh., Wilson, p. 303.
- (g) This social item is given to support Cuming and Ashe in their estimates of Pittsburgh Society.
- (h) Solomon Sibley, Early Detroit, Burton, p. 48 Farmer's Hist. Detroit, Vol. II, p. 1031. Appleton's Cyc. Am. Biog. Vol. V, p. 522.

Pittsburg, February 6, 1804.

. . . . Mr. Lucas informs me that he was the chairman of a select committee which has reported against the bill to divide the Indiana Territory, that it was again to be called and that he hopes the division would take place . . . by which I presume he will advocate your appointment, and I now think you will succeed. I calculate upon the support of Ab. Baldwin ^(a), O. Phelps ^(b) Smilie ^(c) and Lucas and

probably three others. Perhaps however there may be someone hungrier than you to provide for!

- (a) Abraham Baldwin, Appleton's Cyc. Am. Biog. Vol. I, p. 148.
- (b) Oliver Phelps, Appleton's Cyc. Am. Biog. Vol. IV, p. 752.
- (c) John Smilie, Appleton's Cyc. Am. Biog. Vol. V., p. 554.

February 16, 1804

. . . . The profits of my office will be diminished - - calculate it will never be much under 1000 dolls. This is no great salary. . . . The Feds pretend to admire Gov. McKean and that they will support him against J. McClay who is the leader of the hotheads or Irish party - - good sense will triumph in election of Gov. McKean.

Under the circumstances I will suffer you to bear a part of James' ^(a) education. Had intended to meet that expense by keeping no adjutant. Hopkins ^(b) wishes me to send James to Princeton as the properest place for a lad of Genius tho unfortunate for one who is dull. Yale is my choice on account of cheapness and frugality of manners. It would not probably cost less at Princeton than 400\$, and there are too many boys sent there to spend money and not to learn. I hope he will go in the fall. His present expenses I pay by piecemeal without much feeling it, and shall be able, I hope, to *advance* the first year at Yale. I can after that call on you for assistance.

Mr. Lucas thinks Detroit may be set up. (Fred's appointment discussed) Audrain is considered. ^(c) You say Sibley and Henry both candidates. Sibley persuaded you and Henry induced Sibley to offer. This is strange, indeed My friend Henry Baldwin ^(d) has written warmly on your behalf to several, particularly to his brother of the Senate.

- (a) James Bates, whom his brother had brought to Pittsburgh. See Onward Bates and Life and Papers of Frederick Bates.
- (b) Not positively identified, probably one of the junior army officers there were several of that name. Powell (40) gives Lt. Henry Hopkins, Md.
- (c) Perhaps Peter Audrain, who had gone from Pittsburgh to Detroit. See Dahlinger, p. 39, where it is misspelled, as in Adams' Galatin.
- (d) Henry Baldwin was Tarleton's most intimate friend. See Appleton's Cyc. Am. Biog. Vol. I, p. 148.

January 14, 1805.

Mr Lucas informs me the bill is reported, and Mr. Granger informs me the division of your territory will take place in the spring. ^(a)

- (a) Mr. Granger was probably Gideon Granger, Postmaster General. Appleton's Cyc. Am. Biog. Vol. II, p. 705.

Pittsburg, May 10, 1805.

Introducing your Chief Justice, Col. Huntingdon. (high esteem as a judge - - he and Tarleton acquainted for some-time) ^(a)

We are just beginning our political violence. God knows when it will end. I have not time to amplify. Shall not be in Detroit this summer. Am going to Meadville next week. Expect my friend Henry Baldwin was married last Friday in Lancaster to Sally Ellicott ^(b) and that he will be here on Monday.

Your Governor and Secretary are expected here weekly. ^(c)

- (a) Probably Samuel Huntington, Appleton's Vol. III, p. 327.

- (b) See Onward Bates, 43.

- (c) Governor Isaac Hull.

Pittsburg, July 27, 1805.

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Your lottery ticket has drawn a prize of 20 dolls . . . I have just made a bet of 200\$ and exchanged notes on our election. If I lose my money I shall also lose my office. The feds may bark - - as a party they seem (remain?) neuter.

Pittsburgh, September 14, 1805.

(Inquiry for Charles Sweeney, brother of a man in Washington county, and his estate on the Rush (Rouge?) River.)

We go on at a great rate. McKean will be elected by between 10,000 and 20,000, and Duane will go to perdition. I ordered the *Tree* to be sent to you, and I have taken the *Freeman's Journal* instead of the *Aurora*. ^(a)

- (a) William Duane was the editor of the *Aurora*.

Pittsburg, October 17, 1805.

. . . . We have carried McKean by about 5000, nearly the same as in 1799, though not the same persons. The feds acting nobly. I believe we will have a majority in both houses, certainly the lower. This saves Pennsylvania, saves the Union. We will probably have at Pittsburgh a Supreme Court in Bank next spring which will add something to my profits. Wish you could get subscribers for the *Tree* - - it is a great object to make it a leading paper. How is your town, county, &c? Please write minutely.

Yours, (signature)

This is the last letter. Three months afterward, Tarleton Bates was killed in a duel on the banks of the Monongahela. The clearest account of the duel and of the political events which led up to it is contained in "Pittsburgh; a sketch of its early social life", by Charles W. Dahlinger. A good account is also given in a manuscript by T. L. Rodgers, entitled "The Last Duel in Pennsylvania," and on file in Historical Hall. Accounts are given also in *Onward Bates' Bates et al of Virginia & Missouri*, Chicago, 1914; while further particulars about the family are to be found in *Life and Papers of Frederick Bates*, edited by Thomas Maitland Marshall, St. Louis, 1926.

None of the above letters of Tarleton Bates' have been before published. There may be some mistakes, due to the fact that they were copied under some difficulties. They will serve to call attention to the wealth of material in the collection. Many were probably lost, and a great deal has been omitted here, especially of the personal details.

It is remarkable that in none of those found does Tarleton Bates refer to Henry Marie Brackenridge, who speaks so affectionately of him.

There are few mistakes in spelling in the letters though the *h* is left off or added to *Pittsburgh* as fancy seems to dictate. The abbreviation for Captain is always Cap., as it was abbreviated in speaking.

The notes added to each letter do not represent much research, but may be of some value to those not familiar with the local characters or the men of that period. A very close relation with Detroit is shown, men well-known

in the one place were as familiar to the people of the other town. The social importance of the army is emphasized. Some light may be gained on national as on local politics.

The letters in answer to these seem to have disappeared. It is a great loss, as the one would have explained the other. But much of value and interest could be supplied by careful study.

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