THREE LETTERS OF A CENTURY AGO

MILICENT B. REX

THREE persons are summoned from the past as writers of these old letters—a young girl at boarding school, a patriarchal veteran of the Revolution, and a busy clergyman of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. And certainly not the least interesting of the letters is the one written by the school girl, Margareta McLean, whose description of life in the Beaver Street Seminary as given here seems to be almost the only trace of the school’s existence that has survived these hundred years.

Margareta had been sent to the seminary from her home in South Shenango, Crawford County, Pennsylvania, where her father, the Reverend Mr. Daniel McLean, held the Associate Presbyterian charge over a large surrounding territory—a charge that he had taken over as a pioneer pastor more than thirty-five years before. In spite of her upbringing in this rigid Seceder household, Margareta seems to have been a mischievous and high-spirited girl. Even in writing the letter printed here, she was breaking a rule of the school, and breaking it with great enjoyment.

But later she found more adequate outlets for her spirit of adventure. Perhaps the most exciting occasion was when she acted as an agent of

1 Head of the history department, The Madeira School, Greenway, Virginia. Ed.
2 The only mention of the Beaver Street Seminary made by the local histories seems to be in Erasmus Wilson, Standard History of Pittsburg, 511 (Chicago, 1898). The seminary was probably located in Allegheny on Arch Street, then called Beaver according to Charles W. Dahlinger, in “Old Allegheny,” ante, 1:179 (October, 1918).
3 For accounts of the Rev. Mr. Daniel McLean, see Samuel P. Bates, Our Country and Its People, 598 (1899); Samuel W. Durant, ed., History of Mercer County, Pennsylvania, 98 (Philadelphia, 1877); Joseph M. Wilson, ed., Presbyterian Historical Almanac and Annual Remembrancer, 167, 169 (Philadelphia, 1859); J. R. Brittain, A Memorial Sermon Preached at Greenville, Pennsylvania, July 1, 1876, pp. 6-13 (Pittsburgh, 1876); D. G. McKay, One Hundred Years of Ye United Presbyterian Church of Greenville, 5-10 (Greenville, 1901); History of the Shenango United Presbyterian Church (Greenville, 1901). The Minutes of Synod of the Associate Presbyterian Church, published in The Religious Monitor and The Evangelical Repository, also make frequent mention of him.
the Underground Railway when on her way back to Shenango from Pittsburgh sometime in the early 1840's. This was a journey she made rather frequently—usually in a carryall driven by her brother William—in going to and from school or on visits to various relatives. On this particular journey at the first stop for dinner William was taken aside by the tavern-keeper who asked his help in transporting a fugitive slave boy farther north. The boy had escaped from his master, a North Carolinian visiting in the neighborhood, and active search was being made for him, so it was necessary to get him out of the country immediately. The McLeans were ardent supporters of the Railroad, so William agreed to do what he could. At first they thought to disguise the boy, and Margaretta eagerly took out her box of colors. We can imagine her hastily mixing her paints in the dark stable, while the young slave boy's eyes rolled with fear and William and the tavern-keeper looked doubtfully on. But poor Billy's skin was all too plainly black, and so a new plan had to be decided upon. In this, too, Margaretta had a large share, for when the McLeans set out again in their carryall, William and his young wife were in the front seat, while in the rear sat the boarding-school miss with her boxes, looking quite charming and innocent, no doubt, in spite of the fact that beneath her feet, concealed by the billowing hoopskirts spread out so demurely, was Billy, the fugitive.

4 For this story of the Underground Railway, and for other biographical data given later, family tradition is responsible, and, in some cases, written and printed sources too scattered to be conveniently listed. The most important references, however, are given below in their special connections.

5 It is difficult to estimate where this first stop for dinner may have been, as it is not known with certainty whether Margaretta was returning from school in "Little Washington" or from a Pittsburgh or Butler County visit.

6 That many of the McLean family connections were involved in the Underground Railway is indicated by the remarks about Samuel Marshall in History of Butler County, Pennsylvania, 194, 197-198 (Chicago, 1883), and in Samuel Durant, ed., History of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, 170 (1876), where Bakerstown is mentioned as a station, and reference is made to "one Gilland," who undoubtedly was a member of the Gilleland family mentioned below. Moreover, information provided by Mr. Carl Heckert and Mr. Thomas Marshall, present-day residents of Bakerstown, describes the house of Dr. Guthrie as equipped with special tunnels in the cellar to provide ways of escape for runaway slaves.
They had not been long on the way when a group of men on horseback galloped up—the search party itself, with the slave-owner asking, "Have you seen a runaway boy on the road?" Poor Billy jerked with fright at the sound of his master's voice, and almost gave his hiding place away, but Margaretta put her feet firmly down and held the boy still, while William met the emergency as best he might. What compromise was made with his Presbyterian conscience can only be guessed, but perhaps a cautious reply delivered in a forbidding Scotch manner prevented any further inquisitiveness on the part of the gentleman from Carolina. At any rate the crisis passed, and the three young McLeans rode on, carrying Billy safely through to Crawford County and to freedom—an exploit that Margaretta gloried in ever afterwards.

This was not, however, the only exciting adventure that she encountered on the journey between Pittsburgh and Shenango. Love at first sight befell her next. According to one version of the story, it was on the packet boat on the new canal—according to another version, in the diningroom of the hotel at Mercer—that Margaretta was noticed by a gentleman who asked who she was and announced, "Well, that young lady will have to say 'yes' or 'no' to me." He was Wilson King of Erie, a civil engineer whose profession was bringing him a share in the railroad prosperity of the forties and fifties. His greatest achievement was probably his part in the laying out of the line from Sunbury to Erie on its difficult course across the Alleghenies. Later he planned railroads

7 The slave boy, Billy Morgan, never left Crawford County, but settled down as a faithful retainer of Mrs. William McLean's family, the Henrys of Hartstown. He became one of the most devoted members of the Rev. Mr. Daniel McLean's congregation, and when he died—still a young man—he was buried in the Hartstown cemetery with the epitaph, "Born a slave of man; died a servant of God." His stone still stands, but the epitaph is gone, though clearly remembered by old residents. In this connection it is interesting to note in passing that a tradition exists that at one time John Brown, the abolitionist, worked in Hartstown in a tannery owned by this same Mr. Henry, and if so, it is possible that the opinions and example of these rescuers of Billy Morgan helped to strengthen Brown in his abolitionism. At any rate he would have felt himself in a most congenial environment.

8 The Beaver and Lake Erie Canal was completed about 1844. J. G. White, ed., Twentieth Century History of Mercer County, Pennsylvania, 1:67,68 (Chicago, 1909), refers to the pleasant social life found on the decks of the packets.
in the West. But at the time of his first meeting with Margaretta most of these accomplishments lay in the future.

The life that followed their marriage in 1847 was probably a very happy one. When Mr. King went out to the back country of Indiana and Illinois Margaretta went with him, ever eager for excitement and adventure. Mr. King scarcely approved, for he thought the new country too difficult for a woman, but Margaretta's enthusiasm and determination overruled his objections. From these years survive vague accounts of overnight stops in backwoods cabins and terrible sieges of malarial fever. Then, quite in contrast, came wealth, and a fine house in Erie, and for ten or fifteen years Margaretta knew every comfort and luxury.

This was the story of the first half of her lifetime. The second half was utterly different. Sometime after the Civil War—very likely in the panic of 1873—came a terrible reversal of fortune. Mr. King lost almost everything he had, and shortly thereafter died, leaving his wife to begin her second fifty years in insecurity such as she had never known. But this crisis, too, she met with the same vigor and determination that she had shown as a girl, and with hard work and careful management, she kept enough of the remnant of her husband's property to help her through the years. When she died in 1921, a hundred years old, on the hatrack of her little house still hung, quite casually, Mr. King's enormous high top hat, of the type worn by Lincoln sixty years before—like herself, a curious survivor of the past. Such was the long life that awaited the young student in the Beaver Street Seminary. But in her letter of 1839 she was still the eternal school-girl:

Beaver Street Seminary, Jan. 25th, 1839

Dear Sister: I did not intend to write so soon to you as A had been so lately at home but Anderson said that you wanted me to get you a cap for your little babe. He said you wanted Milinette caps but I thought he had misunderstood you

9 Hearsay alone has preserved the claim that Wilson King laid out the Sunbury-Erie line, for the Pennsylvania Railroad has no records of the personnel of this period. For the western railroads the only concrete bit of evidence that exists is a free pass on the Terre Haute, Alton and St. Louis, dated March, 1859, and a letter of Margaretta's from Vincennes written in 1853. Similarly uncertain is the tradition that Mr. King surveyed the route for the "plank road" between Waterford and Erie, now part of the Perry Highway.

10 The spelling of this and the following letters has been retained throughout, but for
as I knew there was no such thing as milinette. I hope you are getting along very well. I would like to see the babe very much—whether it is pretty or ugly. I have got a name selected for it already. I want you to call her Melisa—it is such a pretty name. If you don’t like that name call her Emiline. I think that is a pretty name also."

My health has been very good ever since I came here. Tell Sis that I have bought her a doll [doll] and a nice present for James and McLean. I have the pleasure to inform you that Grandfather has purchased you a very fine Rocking Chair, just the match of Mother’s. It cost Ten dollars."

I have a great many studies to attend to. We generally set up to nine O’clock and then we have to retire. There are [a] great many scholars here and some very mischievous ones. The rules are very strict here. We have to rise before daylight. They ring a bell for us to rise and in an hour they ring another for prayers. [S]chool generally commences at nine and closes at four or half after. It is now only eight weeks to examination. Mrs. Leech intends having two days for examination. I expect she will lose her reason entirely on the head of it, for she has the hystericks very often, especially when her and Mr. Leech don’t agree on matters. She wears the trowsers very often. I love Mr. Leech dearly—he is one of the kindest old Gentleman you ever was acquainted with, but she is just the reverse."

But it is now nearly ten O’clock and Mrs. Leech. the sake of clearness the letters have occasionally been cast into paragraph form and punctuation has often been supplied.

11 Margaretta’s only sister was Mrs. Nancy White, the wife of Dr. James White, a physician of Hartstown.

12 This “A” may be meant for “I”, meaning Margaretta herself, but it is also possible that it stands for “Anderson,” whose name appears in the next line. This second possibility is made all the more likely in that it appears from Mr. Glover’s letter, reproduced below, that Margaretta had not been home during the Christmas holidays.

13 Anderson was Margaretta’s youngest brother, Daniel Henry Anderson McLean, who at this time was studying theology at the Associate Presbyterian Seminary at Canonsburg. He became pastor at Greenville, Pennsylvania, then professor of mathematics in Westminister College at New Wilmington, and finally an editor of the United Presbyterian. For accounts of his life, see the Biographical and Historical Catalogue of Washington and Jefferson College, 1802-1889, p. 83 (Cincinnati, 1889); United Presbyterian, January 24, 1895; McKay, 8, 10-16; Brittain, 14-17. Occasional mention of him is made in the histories of Mercer, Lawrence, and Beaver counties, and in the Minutes of Synod of the Associate Church.

14 “The babe” was Mrs. White’s fifth child, then nine days old. Margaretta’s suggestion for a name was adopted, for the child was called Nancy Emmeline.

15 “Sis” was Mrs. White’s other daughter, Elvina Margaretta, named after her young aunt. McLean and James were Mrs. White’s sons. “Grandfather” was James Glover; “Mother” was his daughter, Mrs. Daniel McLean of Shenango.

16 Harris’ Business Directory (Pittsburgh, 1841) has an advertisement of a school called the Hemans Institute run by a Mr. and Mrs. Leech who are undoubtedly the same persons described by Margaretta as the heads of the Beaver Street Seminary in 1839.
Leech has hollowed up stairs to us to go to bed. I suppose we must obey her commands. I am writing in such a hurry that you must excuse my bad writing and composition. It is against the rules to write on any day but on Tuesday and I am now breaking one of the rules, but I don’t care one cent.

But I had almost forgot to tell you that James Marshall’s wife is dead. She died a few days ago. I did not know that she was dead until she was buried. Intend to go to see him next Saturday if Mrs. Leech will let me. I do not know how he will keep house, for Mary Bell is so small she will not be able to attend to all the affairs about the house.17

Lizete Patterson18 sends her love to you and a kiss for the Babe, and all the Girls join in sending their love to you. My love to the Doctor, and tell Rachel I will bring her a small present if she will be a good Girl.19 Do write soon—or I expect you are not able to write yet, but I expect that Mother will be there, for she generally is there—you know what I mean. Write about the Caps and tell me all the news. Direct your letter to care of Mr. Leech. Tell James to write to me. But I am almost freezing. I will be brief in my next so

Farewell to I see you,

M. G. McLean.20

The second of the letters published here was written by James Glover, Margaretta’s grandfather, the patriarch of the family. He was halfway through his eighties at this time, a hale and hearty old man who rejoiced in his numerous descendants and his Presbyterian faith. Nothing is known about his early youth, except an uncertain tradition that one or both of his parents was of Dutch descent and that he was born in Essex County, New Jersey. The delicate and well-proportioned handwriting of his letters suggests some degree of schooling, but his vocation was that of a metal-worker—a silversmith and a blacksmith. His skill and fine artistry in this trade are evident in the silver spoons and sugar tongs that he made years later as a wedding gift for his granddaughter. As a young man he lived in Philadelphia, and when the Revolution broke out he enlisted in the Pennsylvania forces and served until he

17 James Marshall and Mary Bell are unidentified, but very probably James Marshall was a brother of the Samuel Marshall referred to below.
18 Lizete Patterson was the daughter of Andrew Patterson, a merchant of Mercer. Whether her special connection with the McLean family arose out of her being a schoolmate of Margaretta’s or from the fact that Anderson had made her acquaintance while teaching during the summer in the Mercer Academy is not clear. She was married to Anderson in 1842 after he had become pastor of the Associate Churches in Greenville and Mercer. See History of Mercer County, 364, 690-691 (1888).
19 “The Doctor” was Margaretta’s brother-in-law, Dr. White. Rachel is unidentified.
20 The G. in Margaretta’s signature stood for Glover.
THREE LETTERS OF A CENTURY AGO

was invalided in 1781. He was in the battle of Long Island and at Trenton and Princeton and Valley Forge. According to the story he used to tell his children, he was a corporal in charge of the fires that were kept burning to deceive the British while Washington was preparing his surprise attack on Princeton. But the greater part of his Revolutionary service was of a different sort. He was in greater demand as a metal-worker than as a soldier, and he spent much of the war period as a gunsmith in the army’s “Continental Shops” at Hummelstown, Lancaster, and Philadelphia. His Revolutionary experience always loomed large in his life and his youthful devotion to George Washington did not diminish with the years. A sturdy and strong-minded character to the day of his death in 1844, he always wore the knee breeches of the eighteenth century rather than the long trousers of the nineteenth, saying that what was good enough for General Washington was good enough for James Glover.

After the Revolution he married and moved west in the great post-war migration. He took up land in Washington and Butler counties and established a blacksmith’s shop in Pittsburgh, later buying a farm that eventually became the heart of Allegheny City. His hunting expeditions into Butler County resulted in gaining him the title of first settler of that county—a title disputed by several other early pioneers—and the hunter’s cabin that he built in the unbroken forests of Cranberry Township may have been on the very farm from which he wrote this letter of 1839.

It must have been through land speculation, certainly not from his trade—important though ironworking must have been in the early days of expanding Pittsburgh—that he became the well-to-do and important

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For James Glover’s Revolutionary service, see the Pennsylvania Archives, second series, 10:60, 216-217, 422; 11:751; 15:423; third series, 23:491. No record exists for his service in the Artificers’ Corps, as the official records are not intact, but pension affidavits and family tradition have somewhat supplied this lack. Unfortunately the little book in which he himself recorded his Revolutionary career has disappeared. An account of the part played by the campfires in the Princeton campaign is found in William Scudder Stryker, The Battles of Trenton and Princeton, 274, 461 (Boston, 1898).

The ruins of a log cabin said to be the original Glover building are to be found on a farm in Cranberry Township, Butler County, which is still in the possession of one of James Glover’s descendants. It appears unlikely, however, that this was the farm from which his letter of 1839 was written.
old gentleman of later years, who retired from business and became a sort of family Santa Claus, presenting gold watches to all his granddaughters and silver watches to all his grandsons, to say nothing of farms and grandfather clocks, and such incidentals as yards of silk and “gingam” and money for cakes and rocking chairs, as mentioned in his letters. Four of these letters survive, all similar in style and subject matter—a mixture of the devout and the practical, especially interesting for their references to the methods of travel and transportation that he undertook in getting about the country to visit his relatives.*

One of these is a letter addressed to his son-in-law, the Reverend Mr. Daniel McLean, and to Mrs. McLean, Mr. Glover’s daughter Mary:

Breakneck, 4 Feb 5th, 1839.

Dear and dear Son and Daughter:

You will hear by these few lines that I and all our freinds here are well at present for which we are under unspeakable Obligations of thankfulness to the gracious Author of all Mercy and Goodness to us unworthy Creatures. I received your kind Letter of the 20th ult. on the 3rd instant, Leting me know that you are all well Excepting the hurt that Daughter got by a fall. I am glad to hear that she is almost well again.

I have been alternatly with Sons Gilleland and Marshall since the last of September. I had the gravestones at Mr. Gilland’s the Election day and

21 For an account of James Glover, see History of Butler County, 28, including footnote (1883). This material is repeated in other local histories. A considerable mass of oral tradition exists, probably because James Glover himself and other members of his family all lived to such a good old age. In the early 1920’s there were still two or three people living who could remember him.

24 Breakneck, according to the United States Post Office Department, was then the name of the post office at Evans City, Butler County. It may, however, be used here as the name of the farm where Mr. Glover was staying at this writing. In either case, the name would suggest that this farm was located in the valley of Breakneck Creek, probably in Adams Township near Mars.

25 It seems impossible that a letter from so near at hand should have taken so long in transit. The explanation must be that it was delayed by being forwarded about among the various relatives with whom Mr. Glover had been staying.

26 “Son Gilleland” was probably Barnet Gilleland, the husband of James Glover’s other daughter, Nancy. The Gillelands were active in the early settlement of Butler County. Scattered references to them are found in the local histories: History of Butler County, 184, 196, 234-235, 246 (1883); History of Butler County, 51, 71, 83, 204, 439, 443, 449 (1895).

“Son Marshall” was Samuel Marshall, the husband of James Glover’s granddaughter,
was intending to go to Shenango the first opportunity I had of taking the Stones along. They being a princible part of my erand, I could not think of leaving them behind. However my not going at that time is no great Loss to you or me. I am now ready at any time to go if the Stones can be taken along, if it please God that health and wether permit, and as I have two Large rocking chairs to take allong, whether by waggon or Sled, they Should be Covered as wet would Spoil them much. At present we have no Slaying near us and had little as yet—the snow at deepest not more than 3 inches and gone in 2 or 3 days. I would prefer the Sled—if [there] Was Snow, it would be much easier and safer for the Chairs.

Mr. Guthrie, Nancy and Margarata G. Came from Bakerstown in a Slay to See us [the] last day of Dec. Margarata went with Wm. Gilleland on new years day to Pittsburgh. She was well but not much delighted with her Boarding. I Gave her $1-50 to buy her Some Cakes when hungry.

Mary Marshal was delivered of a fine Son about half an hour before the Commencement of the present year and her and him is doing well. Prior to this Rachel Gilleland Brought forth a fine Largh son name John Craford.

Mary Gilleland. He became one of Butler County's leading citizens. Elected judge in 1851, he held this office time and again. See History of Butler County, 194-198, with portraits of Judge Marshall and his wife opposite p. 192 (1883); History of Butler County, 123, 129, 196, 436, 909, 1145-1146 (1895).

28 The gravestones seem to have been intended for the grave of James Glover's wife, Margaret, who had died the year before and was buried at Mr. McLean's church in South Shenango. A headstone fully inscribed and a footstone with the initials M. G. (the latter now obviously placed at the wrong grave) are still standing in this cemetery, and the fact that these stones are of a different style and material from all the other surrounding stones seems to confirm the supposition that these are the ones referred to in this letter, especially since they are exactly like the sandstone markers of Washington County, thus suggesting an origin from near Pittsburgh. It seems rather surprising that Mr. Glover should put himself to the inconvenience of transporting them all the way north to Shenango, when the residents of Shenango apparently obtained their stones elsewhere.

29 The election was probably that for governor of Pennsylvania in October, 1838.

30 The rocking-chairs are no doubt the same chairs mentioned in Margeretta's letter. The pains that apparently had to be taken in regard to them would suggest that travel and transportation were still difficult matters in his part of the country. There was, of course, no railroad in Butler County until more than thirty years later. History of Butler County, 39 (1883).

31 It appears that Margeretta had been spending the Christmas holidays with the Guthries in Bakerstown and had gone back to the seminary under the care of her cousin, William, one of the sons of Barnet Gilleland.

32 Mary Marshall was another of Barnet Gilleland's family, married to Samuel Marshall. It has so far been impossible to identify which of the eleven Marshall children this "fine son" was. Rachel Gilleland was the wife of William Gilleland and very probably the daughter of John Crawford of Allegheny County. See History of Butler County, 196 (1883).
I have now 15 great-grandchildren—one is no more—would have been 16—and like to soon have another.\textsuperscript{32} It is possible that some of them may live to see better days in the Church than I have, when the watchmen in Zion will see eye to eye in the visible Church and cease to tear and scratch like Leopards and Owls.\textsuperscript{33}

Your wish for me to be at Mr. Gilleland’s when Wm. comes down I cannot promise under Several Considerations. His coming through Harmony to Mr. Marshal’s will be 4 miles farther than to Mr. Gilleland’s. If in the Land of the living he will find me at S. Marshal’s. Choose the time to you most Convenient. I would be glad to have moderate weather.\textsuperscript{34}

Mrs. James Marshall is no more. The Second Monday of January she Departed this Life regrated by all her acquantance. God in his providence saying to each of us, Be ye also ready, for in Such a time as ye think not, &C.

\textsuperscript{32} Eleven of these sixteen great-grandchildren can be definitely identified as related to persons mentioned in these letters: the four White children, including “the babe”; the three children of Nancy Guthrie; two belonging to William Gilleland; and one—and probably others—belonging to Samuel and Mary Marshall. The one that “is no more” was a child of Mrs. White’s who died in infancy.

\textsuperscript{33} This was a period of great dissension in all the churches. James Glover’s own church, the Associate, was at this moment struggling with two controversies that shortly resulted in the withdrawal both of the Vermont and the South Carolina sections; Mr. Guthrie’s Covenanters had been divided into the New and Old Schools for six years; and factions were developing among the Associate Reformed Presbyterians, the Presbyterians proper, and the Methodists. Most of these differences arose in connection with the slavery issue. See American Church History Series, vol. 11, Gross Alexander, History of the Methodist Church, South, 9-13, and James Brown Scouller, History of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, 178-189, 217-219 (New York, 1894); Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit, 9:vii-viii; W. W. Sweet, The Presbyterians, chapters 5 and 19 (New York, 1936); R. E. Thompson, History of the Presbyterian Churches in the United States, chapters 10 and 11 (New York, 1895); Andrew Zenos, Presbyterianism in America, 79-84. (New York, 1937).

\textsuperscript{34} By William, Mr. Glover this time meant William McLean who was coming to take the old gentleman back with him to Shenango. The route followed appears to have been the Pittsburgh and Mercer road as far as Zelienople. Harmony was, of course, the famous Rapp community. Mr. Glover’s discussion of the route raises the question of the exact location of the Gilleland and Marshall farms. From this mention of Harmony and the heading of the letter from Breakneck, it would appear that the Marshall farm at this time must have been in the Breakneck Valley somewhere between Mars and Evans City, while the Gilleland place was probably to the west of Mars in the hills of Cranberry Township where there is still a farm known as the old Gilleland-Marshall property. These holdings were originally owned by James Glover, who apparently took up a number of claims at the time he entered this part of the country, but deeded them over from time to time to his various relatives, and after his retirement from Allegheny about 1825, lived with one descendant or another, turn and turn about, for nearly twenty years. Reference to these different holdings are neces-
A 1000 barrals flower in one Boat going down the revir is no Evidence that
grain will be Chaper by Coming up.\textsuperscript{15}

You will be pleased to all my relatives to remember me. I hope I may yet
see them well—they are often in my mind. I am desireous to be remembered
to all enquiring friends and in particular to Mr. Marshal and all his Con-
nections.\textsuperscript{16} Especially as I am in Complet acordance with the old gentleman’s
Opinion with him \textit{[apparently a careless repetition]}, respecting Dav. Porter’s
Election. I am senceable of his feelings—they are exactly my own.\textsuperscript{17}

I add no more but remains while God in mercy Continues me in life and
reason.

\textit{[Your]} loving though unworthy Father,

\textbf{JAMES GLOVER.}

sarily somewhat confused: \textit{History of Butler County}, 28, 196-197, 229, 234 (1883); \textit{His-
tory of Butler County}, 1145 (1895).

\textsuperscript{15} The remark about the barrels of flour comes as a rude shock after the Biblical
quotat, and seems to be utterly meaningless. Was it a local proverb, or was it intended to
introduce an entirely new and unrelated subject?

\textsuperscript{16} Mr. Marshall of Shenango was a neighbor of Mr. McLean’s and no connection of
the Marshalls of Butler County. The family is mentioned in Bates, \textit{Our Country and Its
People}, 885, and in \textit{History of Crawford County}, 626-629, 997 (Chicago, 1885).

\textsuperscript{17} David Porter was elected governor of Pennsylvania in opposition to the Whig can-
didate, Joseph Ritner. The campaign was one of the bitterest ever fought in Pennsylvania
politics, finally culminating in the famous “Buckshot War.” From James Glover’s remark
it is not clear which candidate he supported, but all signs point to his having been a Whig,
especially since the Marshalls of Shenango, with whom he expressed himself in such hearty
sympathy, were staunch Whigs, according to the accounts in the Crawford County histories
cited above. Moreover an oral tradition survives to the effect that James Glover was once
paraded triumphantly through the streets as a Revolutionary soldier and this would cer-
tainly suggest the Whig victory of 1840, if the occasion was an election parade rather than
an ordinary Fourth of July celebration—a point on which traditions are conflicting. Then,
too, the third letter in this series shows Dr. Guthrie, Mr. Glover’s grandson-in-law, defin-
itely Whiggish in sentiment. Doubtless a special factor was operating here in regard to the
political views of both these gentlemen—the anti-slavery convictions of the Seceders and
Covenaner which at this time were tending to make so many in western Pennsylvania
critical of their former allegiance to the Democratic party. For Butler County’s strong
Democratic sentiment in 1838, see \textit{History of Butler County}, 120 (1895). The family
tradition of James Glover’s descendants was in later years enthusiastically Republican, with
the sole exception of Judge Samuel Marshall. For the campaign of 1838, see William C.
Fred A. Godcharles, \textit{Pennsylvania}, 1:291-301 (New York, 1933); Henry R. Mueller, \textit{The
Whig Party in Pennsylvania}, 48 (New York, 1922). For the views of the Seceders and
Covenaners, see Scouller, \textit{History of the United Presbyterian Church}, 178-182, and other
references concerning Presbyterians cited in note 33. The strong stand of the Seceders is
shown in their Minutes of Synod—\textit{Religious Monitor}, 6:90-93, 169, 180; 18:8, 29.
The last piece of correspondence published here was written by the Reverend Mr. Thomas Cathcart Guthrie, a minister of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, living in Bakerstown, Allegheny County. Dr. Guthrie was married to another of James Glover’s granddaughters, Margareta’s cousin, Nancy Gilleland, and it was to Mr. Glover himself, then visiting with the McLeans at Shenango, that this letter was written. Unlike his grandfather-in-law, the Rev. Mr. Guthrie made little show of piety, quoted no Biblical texts. On the contrary, his letter, much more Modernistic in tone, concerns itself with social and political matters rather than with theology. For this reason it has value not only as a fragment of the life of a country parson of the 1840’s, but also for the broader glimpse it gives of the whole state of mind of much of the country in that period. Almost all the issues of the day are touched on here, with all the reformist fervor and lively sense of public concern characteristic of that time. One reason for Dr. Guthrie’s varied interests may be the fact that his education was not solely a theological one. Born in County Antrim, Ireland, he arrived in America in 1817, and six years later became the very first of all that long line of graduates that have gone out from the University of Pittsburgh since 1823.38 From there he went to Philadelphia where he studied medicine for a year at the University of Pennsylvania (1824-1825). Finally he turned to theology and completed his education by a course at the Philadelphia Covenanter Theological Seminary.39 He went to his Bakerstown charge

38 For Dr. Guthrie’s graduation from the University of Pittsburgh, see the Alumni Directory, 1:9, 88, and Agnes L. Starrett, Through One Hundred and Fifty Years, 83 (Pittsburgh, 1937). As to his medical education, it has sometimes been attributed to Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, but there is no record of his attendance among the Jefferson files, whereas the University of Pennsylvania credits him with a year’s attendance but no degree.

39 Little or nothing can be learned about the Philadelphia Covenanter Seminary. It was “New School” in its theology, which accounts for Dr. Guthrie’s decided views during the schism of 1833. See William B. Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit, 9:vi-viii (New York, 1869); History of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, 1:317 (Chicago, 1889). Evidence of Mr. Guthrie’s attendance there in April, 1825, has been found by Mr. Guy Klett of the Presbyterian Historical Society in the Minutes of Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States, 1:147-148 (August 5, 1825). Since Mr. Guthrie went to Bakerstown the next year, it does not appear that he could have studied at this institution for very long.
in 1826, where it is said that he practiced both professions at once as he made the rounds of his territory, bringing babies into the world as a doctor and baptizing them into the church as a clergymen. He was active in church matters and especially interested in the subject of union with the other reformed denominations.\textsuperscript{40} In this, as in his interest in civic activities, he broke with the conservative group among the Reformed Presbyterians, becoming a member of the "New School" branch that emerged in 1833. In recognition of his leadership he was made moderator of the synod in 1844 and received the degree of doctor of divinity from Franklin College, New Athens, Ohio, in 1847.\textsuperscript{41} About ten years later he retired from his Bakerstown charge and removed to Sparta, Illinois, where he died in 1876.\textsuperscript{42}

**Bakerstown, February 9, 1842.**

My [dear?] Grandfather Glover:

We are at present well and have generally been so since you left us: The only exception to general health has been in the case of Margaret. She caught some Cold and gave decisive evidences of a highly inflamed State of the lungs, for three weeks; but at present she is much better—James is quite healthy and has become a very mischievous and stirring boy. And from present appearances, he will not far sink beneath his Sister Margaret in vivacity and animal Spirits.\textsuperscript{43}

My older boys are going this winter to the public School, we failed in getting a proper teacher for our Academy in Nov. and I could not this winter teach.\textsuperscript{44} About the middle of November I commenced visiting in my Con-

\textsuperscript{40} Dr. Guthrie was a delegate to the great unity conference of 1842. See Evangelical Repository, 3:280-281.

\textsuperscript{41} Muskingum College, New Concord, Ohio, now possesses the records of Franklin College, but no information regarding special degrees is available in the registrar’s office.

\textsuperscript{42} For accounts of Dr. Guthrie, see, in addition to the references cited above: History of Allegheny County, 1:313, 321; 2:142-144 (1889); History of Butler County, 197, 231-232 (1883); History of Butler County, 442-443 (1895); Lawrnce R. Guthrie, The American Guthrie and Allied Families, 475-476, 722, note 434 (Chambersburg, 1933); The Presbyterian Almanac, 193, 196; William M. Glasgow, ed., The Cyclopedic Manual of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, 143-144 (Pittsburgh, 1903).

\textsuperscript{43} Margaret and James were Dr. Guthrie’s youngest children, and two of Mr. Glover’s sixteen great-grandchildren. James was Mr. Glover’s namesake, one of many such. The older boys, Hugh and Joseph, were Dr. Guthrie’s children by his first marriage.

\textsuperscript{44} The public schools had been organized for six years, but apparently the private school tradition was still strong. There is no reference in the local histories to any academy at Bakerstown, so it may have been a short-lived institution.
gration and have employed from 3 to 4 days of every week till the present
in this exercise. I have had a very laborious winter indeed. I have visited
in 156 families and in my charge preached 16 times on week days in
different parts.

The cause of temperance prevails in our region. In my church by the
Turnpike we have a very strong temperance Society, as well as at Union.\textsuperscript{45}
Snively, one of our village Tavernkeepers, ceased to Sell on new years day.
And we expect Blackmoor \([?)\] to stop by the first of April, thus leaving the
Whisky matter in the Village in the hands of Jones\textsuperscript{46}—From Union and
Pine-Creek Congregations and from the vilage we have Sent to the legisla-
ture, strong remonstrances against the present licence System of Stores And
Taverns. permitting intoxicating liquors as a beverage to be sold. And we
petition for a law leaving the whole Subject to be decided by the Vote of
each Township \&c. Whether in said Township there shall as a beverage,
any intoxicating liquors, be sold. In our Townships I believe we could put
King Alcohol down by vote.\textsuperscript{47} Father McConnell comes out zealous on the
subject: but lost very few of his Congregation.\textsuperscript{48}

I have considerable opportunity of seeing the public news this winter And
I consider our Situation as a Nation very critical—that we are fast preparing
for the Vials of Divine Wrath to be poured out upon us, The Congress of
the U. S. I consider rather as an organized Mob than a Solemn assembly of
men met for National purposes. The Gag law is enforced with unremittting

\textsuperscript{45} The "church by the Turnpike" appears to have been the Pine Creek Church in Hamp-
ton Township, Allegheny County, on the main road between Pittsburgh and Butler. Dr.
Guthrie's other church, Union, was near Mars in Butler County. Both churches are still
standing and in use. Dr. Guthrie was minister at Pine Creek Church for thirty years (1826-
1856), and at Union from 1826 until sometime in the 1840's; the local histories give 1840
or 1841 for the date of his withdrawal, but this letter makes it clear that he was still there
in 1842. Mr. Glover was buried in the Union Churchyard in 1844.

\textsuperscript{46} These tavern-keepers are unidentified, but the name Snively appears among the early
settlers of West Deer Township. See History of Allegheny County, 2:137, 143.

\textsuperscript{47} For this great temperance era in western Pennsylvania, see John Newton Boucher, A
Century and a Half of Pittsburgh and Her People, 1:25 (1908); History of Butler County,
211 (1895). For the views of the dissenting Presbyterians, see Scouller, History of the
United Presbyterian Church, 181, 220-221; Religious Monitor, 18:36; Evangelical Reposi-

\textsuperscript{48} Father McConnell seems to be Dr. James McConnell, minister of the Deer Creek
Associate Reformed Church in West Deer Township from 1811 to 1845. See History of
Allegheny County, 2:141-142; and Glasgow, Cyclopedic Manual, 214. Dr. McConnell ap-
ppears to have been a man of very "zealous" opinions on subjects other than temperance,
for a comment in one of James Glover's unpublished letters (August, 1837) described him
as "a sensible cheerful gentleman greatly opposed to the Catholicks." According to his
words he "could see every devil of them shot down."
zeal against Antislavery men.49 The powerful opposition to a Tariff50—the Constant Confusion in Congress—The want of order and subordination in almost every case—the insufferable Tyranny of the Slaveholders—all proclaim that we are fast approaching some terrible crisis. I am much mistaken if antislavery principles are not gaining ground in many parts of our country. The Presbyterian Church of the old School—The Episcopal Methodists And the Associate reformed brethren are the strongest pillars of Slavery in our land.51 As I am not blindly attached to party policy, I never will vote for an aider or abetor of Slavery nor for an imoral man so far as I may be acquainted with his character.

I am still intent on building [illegible] Summer. I have provided the brick and—joists and Studing. And [illegible] These are all sawed. Next week I intend to go to Pitts- and purchase Shingles and flooring, boards and doors. And window frames ready to place down and in the walls. I do not however Intend building till August but I intend to have all materials ready so that, when I [start?] my kitchen a few weeks will erect my house.52 The reason why I am now wishing to purchase the lumber of my house is I have on hand a quantity of money. And Am Afraid of loosing it. It is not Safe to have any bank Notes on hand at present. As well as many of the Ohio and other Western State banks we shall very likely have a failure of Many of our Penna banks.53

Our friends here as far as I know are all well. My wife sends you her best respects, as also to Mr. and Mrs. McLean and tell Mary54 we are all

49 Dr. Guthrie doubtless referred to the Gag Resolution of 1836, which forbade the discussion in Congress of anti-slavery petitions.

50 The tariff of 1842 was not passed until more than six months after this letter was written. See F. W. Taussig, Tariff History of the United States, 112-114 (New York, 1888). It is evident that Dr. Guthrie, like other western Pennsylvanians at this time, was becoming favorable to the idea of a protective tariff. So far as is known, however, he had no personal connection with the new manufacturing enterprises of Pittsburgh that might have influenced his opinion on this subject.

51 At least two of these “pillars of Slavery” were weakening at the very moment of this writing. See the references regarding church controversies cited under note 33.

52 According to Mr. Carl Heckert and Mr. Thomas Marshall of Bakerstown, Dr. Guthrie's house was torn down about twenty years ago, and the bricks used to build a near-by garage which now stands on Route 8. This was the house that had the cellar built to serve as a fugitive slave station.

53 The panic of 1837 was still running its course. A temporary revival of banking stability had been succeeded by a second collapse, and Dr. Guthrie was apparently fearful of a third. See Boucher, A Century and a Half of Pittsburg, 2:89.

54 Mary McLean was a daughter of Nancy Gilleland Guthrie by her first marriage to John, a son of the Reverend Daniel McLean. The child was brought up in the Shenango manse by her grandfather rather than in the Guthrie household at Bakerstown.
well. [Two illegible words, possibly, "Her regards"] to Margaretta and all the boys. To Mr. McLean and all the household I would present my best wishes and respects. And if you are not able to handle the pen—please tell some of the boys that I want a letter from some of them that I may know how you are all.

And I remain truly and Sincerely yours,

Thomas C. Guthrie.