Dear Sir

Martinburg February 12th 1803

I this day recd your letter of the 10th last month, and feel myself obliged by the kind offices of Capt. David, and also Col. Joshua Gist — from the strong impressions which Colonel Gist made on my mind, in your favr in a conversation which I had with him something more than two years ago, I became much disposed to engage your aid in my business, relative to some lands which I claim in Kentucky.

I wrote you about that time upon the subject, directed the letter to the post-office at Paris, and am truly sorry to hear of its miscarriage.

In the month of March 1784, was surveyed in my name, under the guidance of Michael Cassidy, whom I am told you know, 5643 acres of land on main Licking, and who previously, by virtue of a treasury warrant had located the same. Some time after this, from Cassidy's representing to me that he had risked himself among dangers, and encountered other difficulties in advancing far beyond the settlements, in order to find a secure spot on which he could make the location, I grounded upon the presumption, the whole was completely safe, that he should be entitled to 2500 acres thereof, to be laid off in a fair and equitable manner, as a compensation for his risk and services; though it was considerably beyond the stipulation which I had made with a Mr. Wilson, who was possessed, in the first instance, of the warrant and threw the business into the hands of Cassidy. This transaction, and Cassidy were, at that time, alike strangers to me.

On the 15th Dec. 1788, I obtained a patent for the whole from the land office at Richmond. Afterwards, I think, subsequent to this, Cassidy proceeded, without my knowledge, to lay off his part, and informed me by letter, that he drew lots with some person

person & the worst part of the land had fallen to him, and if I disliked the division I might, at any time hereafter, have it over again. Some time after this he came here and stated the thing in the same point of view, I think in the presence of a Mr. Creighton who is now practising law in Chillicothe, still keeping out of sight, any dangerous interference of other claims; — upon this I conveyed him my right.

I have taken the liberty of troubling you with this history of the affair, as you may have the better knowledge of the ground on which I stand.

As to the instructions which you desire, I can say nothing more than your own ideas of rectitude, will naturally suggest. — By this letter I mean to transmit to you full and ample discretionary powers, both in law and equity over the above recited lands, so far as the law may have invested me with a right therein, — to the end that you may fully and freely investigate the validity of the titles thereof, and in this enquiry you will no doubt, where you find we are supported by law and right, assert and contend for the claim, and on the contrary where you are convinced that no reasonable or lawful right exists, at once relinquish all pretentions, — and in complicated cases where doubts may arise, from anxiety of circumstances, perhaps a compromise or a reference to arbitrators will be most advisable — having in every case as little recourse to law as possible. You will at once see that I mean to give you the most ample latitude, for it is natural enough to suppose, in the settlement of this business, many things will occur which I cannot foresee, and as a speedy and fair adjustment is my object, have only to beg that you will act precisely in every instance, as if the case was your own. The sooner my titles may be rid of all incumbrances or interfering claims, however little or much

~~[illegible]~~ improper to accede to his terms. Have been told that the land is fine, and that the specious & intelligent terms of Wilson's location, will secure a considerable part of it — for further information, permit me to refer you to Mr. Wilson, who is now become an old-man, and perhaps the sooner the enquiry is made the better.

I have a strong disposition to live in Virginia ever, to have come as a son of your Country, but at that time, a tide of adverse fortune, uniting itself with my own indiscretion, has made it a matter of much uncertainty when I shall get there now.

I am afraid you will think my details long and troublesome, but you will be pleased to attribute all the inconvenience which I am about to put on you to the high opinion which Gist has of you.

I am Your Mo. obedt. Servt.

Eph.m Gaither

P.S. With respect to a compensation for the trouble, which this business must necessarily impose, I can only say — I suppose, the charge will be such, as you usually make on similar occasions.

Should he, be at to know, that this letter has reached you in safety.

paid 25

Colo. William Prudden
Winchester
Clark County
Kentucky

American Hotel
New York Oct 24th 1852

My Dear Son

I hope you have been able to have the proud improvement made - and culvert securely stopped up - so that we shall get rid of the leak when the Corn is dry enough to have it cut - not before - as it would risk the loosing of it - the potatoes & Cabbage secured - when the Corn is cut have a fence (worm fence) run so as to protect it from depredations by the rail road laborers and the loose stock that is remaining on the road - I wish you to go to Bedford once a week & see that all is going on well - and if you can ascertain when the Cattle which are sold - are to go away - if Mr Lin Robinson is not well enough to attend to the delivery - I wish you to see him and consult as the best way of ascertaining the weight whether by killing and weighing - or weigh them on the Scales - receive the money & deposit in Bank to my credit - probably it will be more convenient for the purchasers to deposit in the Paris Branch if so - it suits equally well - if Robinson is well enough - to come up and look at the Heifers - I wish him to do so

decide whether it is best to sell or keep them
If to sell at what price &c — You had better get
from Lowd's a piece or so of Jones to make
up for the Boys at Home — I presume the crop
is finished — Have next the plank fence between
the Hog lot & grounds done — Have the little crib
squared up and plumbed — recovered with Shingles
a floor &c Have posts got out for a continuation
of the railing around the garden — See Mr
Grannell Smith — who promised me some time
ago to have hauled out & sawed into saw logs
the large Oak tree that is laying down
in the meadow — If he will do so & have it
sawed into scantling 3 by 4 inches — I will thank
and pay besides — these scantling are for the
railing fence — I hope to be at home by the
middle of November

You must my Dear Boy — not forget to resume
your studies with diligence — you must now
make rapid progress — and study hard laboriously
& diligently — remember that your future respect
ability standing & position in society — now de=
pends upon yourself — labor my Boy — and never
consent to occupy a position of inferiority
You have capacity & talent enough — all that
is wanting is persevering & unremitting appli
cation — Aim for the highest honors & distinction

of scholarship & attainments — I know you have honor truth & integrity — to see you complete your education with distinction — will make me most happy and gratified beyond measure

Next May god willing — we will all take a trip to this great City & attend the Worlds fair which comes off there — But Mary & Ellen must also study and improve their manners — Sister Mary would shock people here if they were to see her pile her plate with promiscuous enough for a plowman which she wants to eat — She must be more particular & try and be more genteel and act like a Lady who had been well bred — But enough of this lecture Mary has capacity to make herself what she pleases — She must do better She is growing up fast — to the improvement of her mind and manners — She must give particular attention

I fear the result of the election and that Grant in the May be beat — I find here that Hoit — probably are much more confident than the Whigs — I have written to your Mother a letter to day which I hope she will receive — Your Devoted Father

H. J. Duncan

Return at election of Davis