

Americanism 100 Years Ago

Pine Township, October 30th, 1816.

Dear Children:

I received yours of the 14th of May, 1816, which contributed much to my satisfaction to find you in health and that God in his adorable providence has blessed you with an husband to your mind and thereby increased your family unto a flock gracing your table round. I pray that he may be like the goat going before his flock in the ways of truth and holiness, raising them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

By these you may learn that I am yet in the place of hope enjoying a moderate state of health at present, a blessing bestowed upon me which I have to be thankful for and among the many blessings I enjoy, I have ground of rejoicing that Providence has planted me in a land of liberty both civil and ecclesiastical. We enjoy peace and plenty, and none to make us afraid. We have the gospel here in its purity, having two Convenating ministers, not more than ten miles the furthest, and about four the nighest. We have no cause of complaint in respect of high rents, as we pay none, nor dares the Rector of his cure, approach our door to call for the tenth of our labor. We enjoy the fruits of our labor in a land of liberty. We have no cause to complain even of taxation. Our county tax is small, perhaps two or three dollars per year. William Hutchman's estate tax last year came to seventy-three cents for 166 acres of land, besides all his taxable property. When you compare these taxes with your dog tax you might wish you were safe out of Egyptian bondage, but Issachorlike, you couch under two burdens. When I am led to look over the Atlantic and enumerate the numberless acts of oppression wherewith you are treated, it makes me wish that all my friends and well-wishers were safe landed on Columbus' peaceful shores. Thus I communicate my best wishes to you, but will not dare to counsel any. I would wish to see you before I dee in Alleghany County, where you and your little one might be safe from under the iron hand of oppression. Pittsburgh is

the capital of Alleghany County, where we sell our produce. Flour sells now from four to five dollars per hundred potatoes half dollar per bushel; butter at two shilings or thirty cents per pound; turnips fifty cents per bushel of half dollar; meat at from six to eighteen cents per pound; eggs at twenty cents per dozen. The common laboring man has one dollar and eleven cents per day and finds himself. A young man has about sixteen dollers a month and found in the country with us, as we live about nine miles from the city. We pay seveney-five cents for making a pair of shoes. Money is not so plenty as it has been for some time past, but still we have no cause of complaint. We have different prices in land, just as it is situated, and according to location as it is in quality. First rate land nigh to the city sells at one hundred dollars per acre, etc., some fifty, some twenty, and ten, etc., but land thirty or forty miles from the city sells at three, some two, and some less, according to its quality and location. Our common cows sell for from sixteen to twenty dollars per head. By this scale you can weigh the situation. You may keep any number of cattle in the summer if you can winter them. Thus you see small taxes, no rents, if you purchase land of your own; no tithes; no duties; none to oppress you; we live under our own vine, and none to make us afraid. If we will work there is no fear of want, and there is employment for all kinds of the different kinds of tradesmen, or farmers, young or old. Time would fail to me to tell you of the different kinds of machines employed in the city. It is supposed to be one of the most flourishing cities in the United States. The grocery business is very advantageous one here, as the city lies in the fork of the Alleghany and Monongahela Rivers, which form the Ohio River and runs through a vast extensive country, and form the Mississippi River, which runs upwards for seventeen hundred miles and empties into the ocean below the city of New Orleans, where General Jackson gave John Bull's gallant troops a complete drubbing on the 8th day of January, 1815, where Johnnie Bull lost 2,500 men, with the loss of two men killed and five or seven wounded on our side. So terrible were they handled by our troops and so tremendous and continuous was our cannon and small arms, that Johnnie Bull's men, to save

their lives, lay down among the slain and pulled the dead corpses over them, and when Wellington's old veterans fled from the field, they rose and gave themselves up, prisoners of war. So panic stricken were Johnnie Bull's men that they ran, leaving their slain half buried.

Now when you see Johnnie Bull, tell him we live free and happy, under one of the best constitutions in the world. Nor need he come any more to disturb our peace, lest it fare worse with him for Yankee Doodle says he will live free, and now he is prepared to meet him by land or sea.

I could wish such spirit was found in all my friends and relations, and it might prevail on them to come and enjoy a part of our liberty and freedom. There is nothing wanting here, either civil or religious liberty, to contribute to our happiness. We have now four placed ministers in the bounds of the congregation, that the Rev. Mr. Black formerly occupied, viz., the Rev. William Gibson, Mr. Williams, Mr. Cannon, and Mr. Black. Here you see how religion is prevailing, as there is yet a vacancy for one or more on these bounds... We are here supported in the free exercise of our religious sentiments, by the civil constitution of the United State, hence we have nothing to fear from the quarter.

Your sister Elizabeth and family are well and desire to be remembered in love to you and family. She has five children, two sons and three daughters, Joseph, Samuel, Mary Ann, Sarah, and Rachael Campbell.

Sister Sarah and family are in health and desirous to be remembered with love to you and family. She has four children alive, three sons and one daughter, viz., Nance, Boggs, Samuel, Mary Ann and Josiah Hutchman. Dear daughter. time would fail me to write to you the blessings and privileges which we, by the kind providence of God, enjoy in the land of liberty, but I shall here conclude by hereby transmitting my love and best respect to you and family, and particularly to my aged and loving father, if yet alive. We perhaps may never meet again in time, but that we meet daily at the throne of grace, and that his prayers for me may be that we meet at a throne of Glory, where sighing and sorrow shall be no more. Remember me to brother Hance and family, brother Rabert

and family and brother Archibald and family, brother and sister Gordon and family, and all inquiring friends or neighbors. I add no more but remain your loving mother.

MARY BOGGS.

N. B. We received your letter of May 20th, 1816, but none else from 1807. I wish you to lose no opportunity of writing to us, and let us know of James Cummins, as we have no account of him, only he was the bearer of your letter.