

Santiago de Cuba July 8th 1842

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My dear Cousin Jonathan

I received thy very acceptable favor of May 29th on the 9th present, and I had no time in replying to it, I may thereby prove, if proof be necessary, how interesting your advice are felt by me, and because I am following up the plan of forwarding my letters, by the vessels employed in the copper ore trade hence to Swansea, so as to save postage, but which involves more time for carriage. You ask me, what sort of a man is Doctor Madden? In reply I forward by the same conveyance that this letter goes by, a blank cover, but enclosed with which I really intended to place my epistle, only that in trying how it would fold best, I got so compactly sealed, that I thought it was a pity to undo it, a pamphlet in which the American Consul at Havana handles the subject. Mr Dist is an honorable man, I believe incapable of telling a lie, a true Virginian, formerly private secretary of General Jackson, and President of the United States, who nominated him to that office, and has been fully acquitted even by his political opponents, of the accusations cast upon him, by a malignant unworthy clique, Mr Dist has his indignation to lead him into language not exactly diplomatic, but it is not on that account the less worthy of credit, and I entreat you to write with him in his opinion of Madden, than whom and his brother friend Turnbull the late British Consul at Havana latterly dismissed from office by Lord Aberdeen, no two more noxious individuals ever resided in this Island, they have both done all they could to intro-

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I received thy very acceptable favour of May 29th on the 9th present, and I lose no time in replying that I may thereby prove, if proof be necessary, how interesting your advice was felt by me, and because I am following up the plan of forwarding my letters, by the vessels employed in the copper ore trade hence to Swansea, so as to save postage, but which involves more time for their carriage - You ask me, what sort of a man is Doctor Madden? and in reply I forward by the same conveyance that this letter goes by, under a blank cover, but enclosed with which I really intended to have placed my epistle, only that in trying how it would fold best, I got it so compactly sealed that I thought it was a pity to undo it, a pamphlet in which the American Consul at Havana handles the subject fully. Mr Dist is an honorable man, I believe incapable of telling a lie, a high toned Virginian, formerly private secretary of General Jackson on latter President of the United States, who nominated him to that office, and he has been fully acquitted even by his political opponents of the accusations cast upon him, by a malignant unworthy clique, Mr Dist has permitted his indignation to lead him into language not exactly diplomatic, but it is not on that account the less worthy of credit, and I entirely write with him in his opinion of Madden, than whom and his Boston friend I own all the late British Consul at Havana latterly dismissed from office by Lord Aberdeen, no two more notorious individuals ever were residents of this Island, they have both done all they could to introduce

us cord and stride into our happy and tranquil country and Quonball
has published a book full of known lies and misstatements upon us,
indeed some of my friends compelled him to a palinode in print, as
soon as he found himself involved in a hostile correspondence with them,
and I have little doubt but what Madden will pursue a like course
in order to replenish his purse, and that his work will be as little
entitled to credit as that of his friend, who except as regards the
statistics compiled from others, filled it with a tissue either of woful
ignorance or sheer and wilful perversion. The information
relative to the affair which you mention in the commencement of your letter
was very consolatory to me, as I sympathized truly in the matter,
I observe with interest all you say of family affairs, and regret
the deterioration in worldly affairs of the Knoll branch, will do I
remember the broad brimmed hat, and the present made by uncle
to my brother and myself of one each, on some memorable occasion
and the cooing tone with which he asked me, when patting me like a
good boy on the back. "Wont thee have thine cocked names?" I think
Aunt Martha's removal to Thomas Street a prudent determination
she is getting too advanced in life to reside so far away from you
all God grant her a long continuance of life and health
I have not heard a syllable from Ohio of the two sad accidents
which you mention as having happened to brother Beheemah
and you have filled me with alarm and anxiety for I have had
no letter from him since 31st October last, although I
have written him in reply in December, and subsequently in
February, March and May, and I have since the receipt

yourself before me addressed him, and father as well as brother Perry
in order to measure an answer from some one of them for it is hard
to the mind to remain in doubt upon such serious and grave objects
— The failure of the Boston firm of one of our special partners
which does not however commit our Cuba affair for a penny, but
detains him in the States longer than he expected, and the indisposi-
sition of the wife of another in France preventing his presence he,
as early as required, will most probably make it too late in the
season for me to leave here this winter, after the dissolution of
the actual firm here by limitation on the first of October next,
so that it is now likely that I shall not leave this before the
month of March or April 1843, and that then I shall proceed
to Ohio by the way of New Orleans, and by steam boat up the
River Mississippi and Ohio to Belmont, thus you will have quite
sufficient time for some more communications before I depart.

Your observations relative to the stem of our
genealogical tree, has awakened a desire on my part to endeavour to
have it traced, so as to prove if it be practicable whether your assumption
of our being the descendant of the Wrights of Purton upon Swale might
be correct or otherwise, and I have written to my father thus "Cousin
"Mathan appears to be engaged in an endeavour to trace our family
"up to G. done times for the day, to me" — here follows verbatim all that
you state about it and then I proceed to observe — "Now the facts of
"the case are these John and Christopher Wright brothers were both
"knights the former was an adherent of the Earl of Essex and escaped the block
"when the Earl fell, and he the said Wright was acknowledged as the
"most famous swordsman of his day, and a chief among, what we call

called the Spanish Catholic party in England, and was shortly after
the accession of James the first, dispatched an envoy to the court of Spain
by that party in order to solicit aid, with the view of attempting to dethrone
James, and to establish a Catholic dynasty, having failed in this object
he was the third person, who joined Catesby in the gunpowder plot,
as the only resource left to those of his religion against the unmitigated
persecution under which they groaned, contrary to the repeated pledge
of James before he was declared King, to the head of that religion, and
he was subsequently joined in the conspiracy by his brother Christopher
and upon the discovery of the plot, both brothers retired along with
other chiefs thereof and about eighty followers well mounted and
armed to Holbeach house, the residence of Stephen Littleton, where believing
themselves a match for the tumultuous host of their adversaries,
they determined to give them battle, under the persuasion that a victory
in the circumstances would add to their numbers, but unfortunately for
them, during their preparations for battle, a spark of fire accidentally
communicated to their store of powder, by which Catesby and some
others of the chiefs and followers were severely injured, and the major-
ity of the followers took advantage of the confusion to make their escape,
the two Wrights remained faithful, and when the house was surround-
ed a haughty defiance was returned to the summons to surrender,
and they both fell mortally, sword in hand in the court yard together
with Catesby and Percy, from the fire of the assailants, so that if
Jonathan mentions that "one suffered" meant to convey the idea
that either of them met their fate on the scaffold, I believe him to be
decidedly in error, and I shall say so to him in my next, for I dislike
that he should go astray, under the impression that he, whom he believes to
have been our progenitor came to a like end. I feel desirous notwithstanding

"the gunpowder treason, to trace our family up to the said John Wright, because
"amongst other reasons, he was an actual partisan and chief of the Spanish
"Catholic party, and commissioned by them as an envoy to the Court of
"Spain, circumstances favourable to me as a subject and resident of Spa-
"nish dominion, and as you furnished me with a genealogical tree of
"our family from my grand father down as far during my visit to Ohio
"in 1833 and I remember that you asked me at same time, whether I wished
"you to ascend any higher? but I did not, as my only wish then was, to know
"before me the actual state of its existing members, but now appeal
"to you with a different object in view, that of exploring and clearing up
"the misty parts, and to try in conjunction with cousin Jonathan, if the chart
"which he speaks of, can be filled up and made legible, for I really believe
"that he has got hold of the right link of the chain on the other side of it,
"for what more likely than, that some of the family of that notable John
"under the then afflictive persecution of the Catholics generally, in
"England, and naturally of his relations in particular, should have
"fled to Catholic Ireland for refuge, his sons for example, and that
"they were driven to the concealment of the stock from which they sprang
"by a very rational fear of pursuit and discovery, but retaining their
"ancestral family predilection for the Christian name of their unfortunate
"ancestor. I now, call in uncle William to your aid, and give me
"all the information that you can, stating the name of your own grand
"father, with every particular that you know about him and his,
"together with all and every tradition of his ancestor, for what
"may appear the smallest atom of facts, may be the lost link of the
"discovered chain, the mutilated or erased page of the old scroll may
"be made plain by some apparently trifling event relative to any of
"our forefathers, add also all that you know by record or tradition

about Pallinelay, and of the change of the family religion from catholicism
to quakerism &c. &c., and over and above all whatever in any way
may have reached you as regards the immigration of the family into
Ireland, by all which I shall truly be much interested for I feel
great faith in Jonathan's anti-quarian acumen and perseverance not
permitting his research to be in vain, but that he will finally get at the
"truth though it be hid in a well," read all that I say to uncle Mel-
ham, I feel confident that it will stimulate his memory to call old
"stories and traditions to mind" — you will probably be surpris-
ed dear Jonathan, to find that you have struck a chord to which my feel-
ings vibrate so keenly, but really I have a warm desire to induce you to follow
up with industry and perseverance the trail of our genealogy, refer to
Hingard's England for in it you will find reference made to many books
and documents, relative to the manner in which the Wrights especially
John was interested, and probably in some of them the flight of his family
may be recorded, refer to the documents and leases relative to Pallinelay
as well those in the possession of the family, as in the public archive
examine relative to the admission of the first member of the family who
joined the Society of Friends, perhaps the record thereof may still exist,
and may explain something of the position and the whereabouts of
the individual, and give you a trace of the Parish that he belonged to,
thus enabling you to refer to the records thereof for his birth or mar-
riage and should this have been our great grand father, his birth
with names of parents would bring you within 50 or 70 years of the
period of the gunpowder plot, — while engaged in the foregoing or
any other researches tracing up the stream of time, I would recommend
and do not think there would be any presumption or impropriety in it

you & Draping the existing heads of the family of Wright of Parton upon
 such for the sake of adding them of your pursuit and soliciting from them
 every information possible upon all incidents bearing upon or about the pe-
 riod that you have reason to suppose the emigration from England may
 have taken place thus endeavoring to trace downward from the source,
 to join the chain of evidence in working up, and I think you might state
 when soliciting their aid towards your exertions, that the matter was
 being attempted to be carried out at my request, stating my position
 to them if they should be at all aristocratic in their notions, for example
 that I am a Spanish subject, without exaggeration the oldest and first
 mercantile house in a city of 40,000 inhabitants, the metropolis of a
 province of 950,000, where I have been both United States and British
 Consul, enjoying the confidence of my own government, with titles within
 my reach should I think proper to attain them, what you may say how-
 ever must be governed by your own ideas of what is meet and proper.
 Now it is very evident that you cannot personally give yourself up to
 the engrossing nature of such exploring, as may be necessary, and
 it is but just that I should pay every fraction of whatever expenses
 may be incurred from the largest to the smallest item, and I am very
 willing indeed to do so, in fact I should be well satisfied to pay £100
 or pay One hundred pounds sterling even to prove that nothing can be
 proved, and even £200 or pay Two hundred pounds sterling to
 establish the positive identity of our family with the stem to which
 you imagine it proceeded from, or indeed with any other, so as to
 clear away all doubts as to our origin, You must of course
 employ some person or persons to carry out your examinations
 and enquiries, try to get for principal some one of antiquarian gusto.

of a plodding persevering character and of a clear head, and I doubt
not but you will reach the source of the Nile, and keep from the start
a regular note of all expence I beginning with the postage of this letter
I have now determined to forward it by the mail steamer that is now
signalled as coming into port on her way to England, but the pamphlet
will be despatched as mentioned by first merchant vessel to Swansea
I embrace your offer with thanks of sending me a copy of the crest
which you obtained from the Herald's office in London, and if you could
have it engraved in steel, and enclosed to me in a letter, so much the
more acceptable would it be, for we have no engravers here, and
I should like to have it, so as to make of it a nice natty seal, for which
object it ought not to be too large, for a crest seal is generally of
then small size you could send it by the way of Swansea, but your
reply to the present had better come by mail, and as soon as you
advise me therein that you will commence the genealogical quest, I will
transmit you a small draft on London to meet expence I as they
arrive postage &c &c, and you will please to say to me the
number of your store in Christ Church place for what I ex-
pected me. All parties are tranquil in the Island and
likely to remain so all the difficulties with the steamer in the
Havana arose from the evil disposition of Consul Powell,
here where we are their agent & every facility had always
been extended towards them by our authorities. Remember
me affectionately to Aunt Merthe, your father and brother and
all relatives & believe me
Sincerely your loving
Cousin
James Wright