

Lodge of Masons of Iowa, for one year, having been elected to the position in 1846. Through out his life he was a firm believer in the Christian religion, and was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

At one period in his life he was much interested and had quite a love for military training, and as I remember, was a colonel of militia; his sword and other military trappings were carefully preserved as momentos [*sic*].

He had a large love for his country, and was intensely loyal to this government. During the war of the rebellion he tendered his services to Governor Kirkwood, and although they were not accepted he showed his willingness to render assistance to our country's distress.

He was always an extensive reader and being endowed with a very retentive memory had acquired an almost inexhaustible amount of information and was a ready and interesting conversationalist.

He had legal knowledge, but his knowledge of statutory laws of the Territory and State was superior. He was well informed relative to state affairs generally, and was authority on anything pertaining thereto. He possessed a large generosity and unbounded sympathy, was ever ready and willing to lend a helping hand to the needy and unfortunate, or to furnish necessary or proper information, official or otherwise, to those in quest of it. He was a lover of doing acts of kindness for others. He often rendered financial aid when he could not really afford it. Modest and unassuming, all of his acts of kindness were rendered quietly and without ostentation; unconsciously he seemed to obey the injunction: "Let not thy right hand know what thy left hand doeth." He might have become wealthy had he been so inclined and had made judicious use of his acquired means, but he seemed to have little importance to live for than the mere accumulation of riches.

About four years prior to his death he was stricken with paralysis, from the effects of which he suffered a decline physically and mentally. He had two subsequent attacks of the same dread malady, the last of which proved fatal. On the morning of the first of February, 1873, he passed quietly from this life. The widow and three daughters still survive him. The funeral was largely attended by his friends and neighbors. An excellent discourse was delivered by Prof. Fellows, who reviewed the more important events of his life. Prof. T. S. Parvin read the beautiful Masonic burial service. Thus passed away one of the noblest and best of men.

Note:

This has been transcribed duplicating exactly misspelling, punctuation and capitalization from the copy furnished by Mabel McCleary. It is not known if any peculiarities are attributable to the original or to Mrs. McCleary's transcription. *E. M.*

COPY

New Boston, Ill., Wisconsin Territory,
Nov. 25th, 1836Mr. G. W. McCleary
Warrenton
Jefferson County, Ohio

in haste

Dear Brother:

I received your letter in May and one from George about the same time stating that John would be here in the fall and bring me the article that I wrote for, and I stood greatly in need of but he has not done it. I wait to know the reason he did not come as we expected him and have been looking for him this month past and he has not yet arrived. I was depending on him for some money to pay a balance on some oxen that I bought as I am making a part of a prairie team and stand very much in need of a waggon and must have one. If you send me one by the first of April it will answer. You will be sure to send it by water as it will be impossible to come by land in the spring of the year. I expect his assistance this winter helping me to improve a farm and likewise kept me back with work. My expenses have been so great on that account that money I can not do without. I have got about thirty pounds of flour and have not got money enough to clear my expenses to Warren County to buy provisions and no money to buy with if I was there. You must either fetch or send me some money as soon as the river breaks in the spring, otherwise I must sell what I have here and return as I can not stay here without money. If you send me any more letters or papers I want you to pay the postage as I have not the first red cent to pay for them. I have received some papers (viz) Union Heralds, Globes, Minotors & Glad Tidings, but they come very irregular. I want you to send them on by all means as it is all the satisfaction I see, reading them. I want you to send me the returns of the Presidential election as soon as possible throughout the United States. I have bought a first note claim for John for one hundred dollars from Wm. Crow and Stewart Humphrey as they are living on the other side of the River and they could not hold it was the reason I got it so cheap. It joins George Humphrey - and my claim on the other side of the bluff of the Iowa river. It is a first rate claim. The reason I bought it was I thought that John would like the country and sell out in Ohio and come here. If he does not come or send me the money by the first of May I will have to sell it. I was to pay the one half the first of December but I can keep it till the first of May if I can get money then to pay for it. If you would come and fetch three or four thousand dollars we could make more by buying claims or preemption rights, if there should be a preemption law passed this winter, than we could make there in five years. If he has not a notion tell him I will sell out my right to the claim for twenty five hundred dollars or less if he does not think it is worth that much and make the payment as liberal as he can, two or three hundred dollars per year with interest. If he does not want to buy, send me the interest yearly which will be one hundred and fifty dollars. I would rather he would keep the place and pay me the interest. If he comes in the spring I want him to fetch me all the articles I wrote for as I can not do without them. If you was here you could see what I need. I could get some of the articles here but I would have to pay double price for them and have not got money to buy with. I seen from a letter of yours that John was paying his addresses to Miss Margaret Smith. I am sorry to hear that he would court in such a dirty and family. She is too much like Jane. If John does not come this fall or spring tell Joseph to come next fall and stay all winter and hunt as there are lots of deer and turkey and all sorts of game here. If he does not like the country he can go back in the spring. I want you to write to me what is the reason that John did not come or whether he did start or not. Write immediately on the reception of this letter and let me know all the particulars that has happened since you wrote your other letter. I have never had the ague

since I wrote home but my family has all got it now-have had it off and on all season. All Geo. Humphrey family is well and have been for some time. I will not write for you to come for two years yet as I have understood you have been elected _____ . Tell John if he intends to sell before he comes to bring lots of first rate sheep, horses, cattle and waggons and everything else that could be needed here for farming. This is going to be one of the best countries west of the Ohio. The emigration is greater here than ever it was to the State of Illinois; the Indian reserve is bought by government and nearly all settled already. Flour has been selling at twelve dollars per barrel and none to be had at that. Cornmeal is worth one dollar per bushel and very scarce. Tell mother to write to me about the loan I wrote to her about some time ago. I want you likewise to send me your acc_____ agains I _____ for schooling as I think I can get it in provisions and it will not do you any good. I think if I had it I could get the amount. Do not forget to send it. We have a boy at our house. George's family and mine wanted to call it little Jack. For my part I want it named Wisconsin. Tell John if he comes in the spring to fetch me one of Huston's boys. If he does not come tell him to send me one of them if he can. Tell Joseph to send me the Glad Tidings regular as I want to read here very bad; and any little news you want to send write it on the margin of the paper. Tell John by his not coming he has knocked my calculations all wrong. Had he come he would have benefitted more than two hundred dollars. If he does not come he can send what he wants to by Joseph McCaughey. I want you to let me know when you write. If John has paid the balance of that money to Gilaspie he got a deed. If he has not, do it immediately. The Indians have all left this part of the country and gone a hundred miles west so there is no danger with them.

We received a letter from you dated the 21st of Sept. and was happy to learn that you were all enjoying good health, in which you stated that your capacity had increased to an enormous size. We would be very glad to see you in this country, but your circumstances will not admit of your coming very soon. If you could arrange your business so as to come here in the spring with a capitol of five hundred dollars I make no doubt but you can realize tripple the amount by fall as the mercantile business in this country is very profitable. Give my best respects to mother and tell her I am in better health at present than I have been for ten years and not to be afraid to come there as it is very healthy in this country, particularly for old folks. Any of the necessities of life can be got here that can be had there by having lots of money as they are brought here by navigation within five miles of this place. I want you to write to me and let me know all the particulars _____. Good bye _____.

Yours respectfully,

Elizabeth Humphrey

Part of letter

Uncle Wm. McCleary has left Michigan and moved to Rock River in Illinois. I shall look for John as facilities are better by the last of March or first of April. Tell him not to disappoint me as he did this time and send or fetch one hundred and fifty dollars and not less. If he could send me two hundred dolls and one of the boys it would enable me to make a prairie team and have him for a driver and could get a farm opened much sooner. I seen Wm. Thomas and James Maxwell. No more at present but remain, yours respectfully.

Abraham McCleary

COPY

April 13th 1837 far West Wisconsin Territory, Louisa County

Mr. George McCleary (Back-corresponding to envelope- 25)
 Warren Township (Apr. 18)
 Jefferson County, Ohio

Dear Sir:

Having a wish to renew a correspondence which from neglect or some other cause has for some time ceased to exist between us, I now resume my pen to address you with hopes that through the medium of the post our intercourse will be more frequent. We are all in good health. Elizabeth has been unwell for some time past but she is now in tolerable health. Her complaint was of a bilious nature. Abram John and family are well and well pleased with their situation. They live one fourth of a mile from us and join claims with me. We have had a very hard winter. The spring is more backward than usual. All kinds of produce is and has been through the winter very dear. Flour was worth 16 dollars per barrel, peck from 10 to 12 dollars per cut, corn meal from \$1.50 to \$2 per bushel. There is a prospect provision will be had on better terms in a short time. The emigration to this part of the territory surprised all reliability and would be from the best information much greater were it not for reports that there will be hazards apprehended from the Indians this summer. I have been a strict observer of their movements since I have been among them and can see nothing that would justify an assumption of that kind. There is a war in full blast between the Sauks and Foxes on the one hand and the Sioux on the other, which if government will not interfere, is certain to involve all the Indian tribes in the contest as far as perhaps the Rock Indians. There was an engagement some few days between a small party of each in which the Sioux were the victors, having killed or wounded every man of the opposite party, but one. The fight took place about fifteen miles from this place between the Iowa and Cedar rivers. The Sioux then retired before a large force of their enemies with the intention of drawing them off the lands of the United States not wishing, their Chief said, to violate the treaty with government. The latest account we have states that the Sioux has 1000 warriors posted on the neutral ground between the two Nations. Their enemies are hourly expecting the arrival of several hundred Potawatimies when a bloody battle is expected to be fought. I wish both parties good luck. There are fresh troops sent on to all the garrisons on our frontier. Governor Dodge is ordered out with a large detachment of Rangers for some cause, probably to establish a peace between the contending parties, which will not be an easy matter at this time, as they are much exasperated on both sides. The Winebagoes have split and will probably some join both parties. The Potawatimies have joined the Sauks and there is a likelihood the Pawnees will join them too. It is stated the Snakes and Crows, neighbors to the Black Fooths, have joined the Sioux. The Black Fooths say they will not remain idle spectators but will take a part in the war. Likewise I would say there was a grand prospect of an Indian War but I will quit talking of wars and rumors of wars and return to the more peaceful employments of civilized Nations. Your brother John was telling me that you talk of coming to this country and engaging in the mercantile business if he thought you could do well at it. I would say that you could double your capital at least every twelve months as most goods here is 100 per cent higher than there and of an inferior quality. I have been informed you intended to come to this country to see it this summer. We would all be very glad to see you. I think you would be well pleased with the beauty and situation of the place and judge for yourself. Write to me on the receipt of this giving me a full account of everything you think would interest us. No more, but remain yours with the sincerest respect.

George Humphrey

On same page:

Dear Mother: I find room to send you a few words in which I will be brief. I had a few, probably three shakes, of the ague last fall but I have had better health this winter than I have had for ten years until some few days ago I had an attack of the bilious fever. But I am now tolerable well. I wish you to write to me and let me know if you have any notion of coming to this country. Let me know who them top handkerchiefs was sent to that John brought as soon as you receive this. Write to me. I have been here three years and have never received a line from a relative that I have, not even my mother. No more at present.

Elizabeth Humphrey

Secretary's Office, Iowa City, Mar. 1st., 1851

Dear Monseur:

I this evening received by the Muscatine Mail your favor without date. I was glad to hear from you again-so I have not heard from you since I arrived in this city of Schools & Churches-altho, I wrote to you immediately on my arrival, I also sent you several documents-tho, I had but few to send-I had concluded that I would not write again until I heard from you by letter-and as that event has transpired I will now proceed to answer yours. But you have written so much I can not promise answers to all in just one letter. However, I will give you all I can. Firstly I am glad to hear you have so many hogs & so much corn, oats & wheat, as such articles bring a good price now and command money. Although money is the root of all evil, it is a great consideration now adays. I would like it very much had you visited the city this winter while the legislature was in session. I have no doubt you would have been highly diverted with the proceedings. They had some tall scenes and amusing speeches and some comical proceedings. The boys all went home the next day after the adjournment, the governor too, as well as the hangers-on and lobbyists. Since then our city has been very quiet with the exception of a few little fracasces. You know or have heard of Col. Jesse Williams, the Secretary of the Board of Public Works. Well, he remained here a few days after the legislature adjourned. A Mr. Workman, thinking the colonel had made rather free with his "better half" took it into his head to take vengeance on the colonel. So he got a cow hide, hit the colonel on the public square and thrashed him within an inch of his life. This circumstance created quite an excitement in the city. Workman had to take the madam and leave.

As to our new code, it is my opinion that it is much better than the old law. If the counties elect good Judges the law will be popular with the people when they become acquainted with it. I know of no objection to any part of it (except County Supervisors). I think the _____ first rate. What do the people object to in the Cou.? I got a letter from old George lasfnight. They are all well except _____, lady who is better. In regards myself, I am very well satisfied for I have been very busy this winter, especially since the middle of the session. I had to copy and send all the Joint Resolutions, Memorials, etc. to our Senators and Representatives in Congress, one to each, besides copying laws to be published in newspapers. 30 or 40 Acts take effect by publication in newspapers. Some of them are very long. Since the adjournment I have had to furnish copy to the state printer and read the proof. Besides this winter I have made out and recorded 2-3 thousand deeds for land-from 150 to 200 commissions for notary publics and desedes I have written thousands of _____ letters and lots of other writing which has kept me to it I assure you. I have raised with the light & written generally to 10 or 11 o'clock at night. After all my office is not very profitable. I presume my salary is \$500 per year besides fees. The legr. gave me 300 dollars for superintending the printing of the laws & distributing (except the Code which Woodward superintends). I also get 400 dollars for distributing the code and 400 dollars contingent fund. My fees since I have been in office would be perhaps fr _____ dollars. I kept no account. I have been as industrious as I can be so as not to have to hire a deputy. I have got along so far & can get through without one. It has been usual for secretarys heretofore to have one deputy & some times two about the end of the session & for some time after. I thought if I could save the price & make my fees for Coms Certificates, etc., & keep my family, I might save something out of that I get as a salary & attending to the law.

I like this city very well & I believe it is as healthy as any place in the state. The people here are very friendly. Almost all the ladies of the city have called on Jamima and she has returned their visits. Although we have not spent the day or evening as yet with anybody, nor nobody with us, we have however been at some half dozen social parties, one at the Masonic Hall on the night of the 22nd. It was as pleasant a party as I was ever at. We had tickets to lots of balls this winter but did not go. It cost \$2.50. We go to Church here when we please—only costs a dime.

I have not room to say anything about railroads this time - more anon. I shall be glad to see you & uncle Nathan. Jamima wishes to see him very much. So be sure & bring him up. I rather think I did get the best of you in that buggy transaction. I always calculated to find somebody with it. As to the \$7 bike _____ ed it just now so you can use it if you like.

G. W. McCleary

COPY

Iowa City Dec. 25, 1853

I received your letter but not in time to answer it by last Saturday's mail- and I understand your county convention was on Saturday last. As you are no doubt a delegate I shall look for you up on the 9th of January. I have not made any pretensions to the office of Governor, altho I have been urged by many friends to be a candidate for that office. But I have invariably told them, I would prefer the office I now hold. I believe it is generally understood now that I am a candidate for secretary. There are a dozen candidates for Governor. It is hard to tell the result. There are always influences brought to bear on the convention-trading on-so it is hard to form an idea how it would go. If I were a candidate I might get the nomination & I might not. It's hard to tell. But for the office I now hold I think the prospect pretty good. At any rate I would rather risk the chances for Secry. than Governor, besides it pays better and does not require so much to support the dignity of the station. I have made & can still make some money out of the office. But if I were elected Governor I am afraid I should spend what I have made, as it would be attended with great expense to live here and act as Governor. Now I have given you my opinion and I presume you will concur with me.

We are all well or nearly so now but the children have every one been sick with shomething similar to winter fever. They are taken with a bad cold, cough & fever. I put one through the wet sheet and they are nearly over it.

I got a letter from Joe also. He says he is going to bring Ellis McCleary out in the spring, to see us all. I have not heard from old uncle George lately. Red headed George Humphrey has been elected County Treasurer of Fulton County, Illinois. I got a letter from him informing me of the fact; but as you are coming up soon I will say no more at present.

Geo. W. McCleary

COPY

Iowa City, Iowa Jan the ___, 1855

Respected father:

I take the present opportunity of dropping you a line to let you know that Ann did not receive her letter & I want you to write uncle George a letter & request him to get me bourding or let me bourd at his house & pay for it because I won't work when I am going to school. If I have to stay at his house & work I will come home again & also I want you to send up my coat that is in the store in Muscatine right off. I need not state any thing about the celebration for Jack can tell you all about it. I expect that Jack froze his feet agoing home for I frosted mine coming up. I think somebody has been shaking my arm from the looks of this letter.

Answer immediately to uncle George.

G. W. McCleary, Jr.

COPY

Iowa City, Aug. 5th, 1855

Dear Sir & Brother:

Since I wrote you last, the cholera has broken out in this City. There has been a considerable number of cases & ten deaths. Br. Belden died last Friday, which was the last death. There has been no case since but many have the diarrhoe and other premonitory symptoms. We are not sure that it is going to cease. I expected to have been down about this time, as I have some business at Wapello. I don't feel at liberty to leave home at present under the circumstances. My second neighbor east lost his wife with the cholera and a child died right opposite my house. The first neighbor west of us also had it. Several of the children have had the diarrhoe pretty bad, in fact it has been all around us. I have watched the progress of events and checked the diarrhoe as fast as any of the children took it. don't know now when I shall be down-probably as soon as the health improves.

John M. Davis talks of going down soon on a visit. His sister, Georgina, is with us at present & is going down with him. They may not go however until you come up, when they will go down with you.

The State University opens again on the first Wednesday in September next. We adopted a resolution to admit all the students free so you won't need Judge Sowers' certificate, as George can attend the University proper instead of attending to learn to teach school. You can therefore send him up by the 7th September. You need not trouble yourself about the boarding, as he can stay with me while he attends school here.

I got a letter from J. C. last night - all well. I suppose you have heard the removal project in the house. The K. N.'s are doing their best licks here. They expect to carry this county next Monday (tomorrow). We shall see.

Very respty,

Geo. W. McCleary