



Created by: Mary Jane Markley, Graham Elementary

Grade level: 5, Students on IEP's

Primary Source Citation: *Betsy Mix Cowles Letter to Giles Cowles Regarding Economy and Canal Trip Portsmouth (Ohio) April 2, 1842 [4pages]*. Betsy Mix Cowles Papers, box 1, folder 11, Kent State University. From *Ohio Memory*, <http://www.ohiomemory.org/u/?p267401coll36,2773>.

Allow students, in groups or individually, to examine the photograph located at the above link while answering the questions below in order. The questions are designed to guide students into a deeper analysis of the source and sharpen associated cognitive skills.

Level I: Description

1. Who is writing this letter?
2. Where and when was the letter written?
3. What type of transportation is the letter writer thinking of using?

Level II: Interpretation

1. What do you know about the author? (For example job, married / single, friends)
2. What words in the letter describe how the author and community may be doing economically?

Level III: Analysis

1. What does this letter tell you about transportation in Ohio during this time period?
2. Describe the advantages and disadvantages of traveling or moving goods on the canal would be like compared to other transportation available at the time. (No cars, planes or railroads were available)

Portsmouth April 2. 1842

Dear Giles

I expect by this time you begin to think me bankrupt- & what more or less could you think; in these degenerate days? "Hard times" make the [caret] people [written above line] blue, green & yellow in this quarter- it is groaning, trouble & distress in every nook & corner- how is it with you? Are you coming this way as you said last fall? I Should be delight ed to See you- but; mark! dont leave home until you are almost or quite well. To be sick away from home must be bad enough- & you have tried it once- beware how you do so again- if however you should come this way spend as much time as possible with me.

Until the 25 th. of April I shall be where I now am- at Lemuel Moss- about two miles from Portsmouth- after that time I expect to be at Mr. Doles in town. I closed my school two weeks since- have engaged to Mr. Williams the Presbyterian Minister who is teaching a school for young ladies- he gives me \$ 25 per month. He has a va- cation commencing the first of July & con- tinuing until the first of Sept. Of course I shall go home then provided I can get money to take me there & back again. I have been in a great fever ever Since April came in be= cause the money was not underway- but to tell you the truth I had it not tho I had an order upon the Scioto Bank- wh. Stands yet but for the last week I could not send & get it. I do not Suppose that you are suffering for want of it but my word; wh. was pledged for the remittal of it is Suffering - & that makes me uneasy - until I think it has reached you. I am much [underlined]-yes! Very [underlined twice] much [underlined three times] obliged to you- wh. is all of the interest I can give you now [underlined]; but perhaps sometimes I can.

All the accounts from you have been so favorable that I almost forget that I am writing to an invalid- but think not that I am uninterested- far far [underlined twice] from that you well know- most sincerely do I hope to hear that your health continues to improve; & that you may regain it, at least to enjoy [caret] it in [written above line] a tolerably comfortable degree. But dear Giles you are in the hands of One- who knows what is best for you - One who, loves you better than any of your friends can - & one who will most assuredly bestow blessings; tho they may come in afflictions form - yet they are blessings still; & as such, the child who trusts a Father's love; a Fathers kindness; will receive them. Thus I hope it is with you - & that at all times you can confidingly Say - "not my will - but thine be done."

How are your father & Mother & the rest of you? I want to hear particularly, as I have only heard indirectly since Edwin wrote. Love to Ed. tell him I was very glad to get his letter - he wrote a good letter - & I shall write to him again after awhile.

I wrote to Helen in the winter but have never heard an answer - tho' I heard by way of Oberlin - that she Succeeded well in School & was expected to return to O. Has she gone? Where is Samuel? Is your Mothers health good? & Alfred how is he & what doing?

One year tomorrow or next day - since I went to Cleveland - what a contrast in the season - Peach blossoms have been gone [caret] nearly [written above line] a week lilacs & other flowers just in prime - indeed we have had no winter. I have not worn a cloak since I came here. Tell Ed. I think him much for the papers- hope he will continue to send them - & more of the "Cabinets."

How & where is your Aunt Cowles? Love to her, & to Mrs. Wade & Mr. Wade too - How does the new church prosper - & how the old one too? I hope both [caret] do [written above line] well. Now do write to me soon- your mother's write- I should love much to have you. I shall go home by way of canal if I can muster patience enough for the trip - if not, shall go up the river to Wellsville & be at home in three days - but rather more expensive than Canal. There was a Boat burned on the river not far from here last week - a total loss of property= A new Boat built last summer. Good night= I must leave one end for P.L.

Most Aff. Yours Betsey.

[written vertically in middle of page] Mr. Giles H. Cowles Cleveland Cuyahoga Co. Ohio A paper from home to day contains the obituary of Giles Bussil of Erie Mrs. Aron Austins father.

Portsmouth April 21. 1822

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Boat Aff. Yard. Pelay.

PAID 1/2

Mr. Giles H. Cowles
Cleveland
Cuyahoga Co Ohio



THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES
AMERICAN HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER

A paper from home to day earlier
The ordinary of Giles H. Cowles
Mr. Andrew Austin's father.