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The Panton, Leslie Papers: Two letters of Edmund Doyle, Trader, 1817

Edmund Doyle



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THE PANTON, LESLIE PAPERS
Letters of EDMUND DOYLE, Trader

Prospect Bluff 28th Jan. 1817

John Innerarity Esqr

Dear Sir

I have for many days past deferred doing myself this pleasure in hopes of the return of my indian carrier of the 10th ulto who has not to my great surprise as yet made his appearance

Since my last advices have done but very little business and I clearly perceive, unless some alteration takes place nothing will be done here until fall: The few skins that will now be soon coming in cannot be purchased for want of necessary articles required by the Indians; the only saleable goods I carried with me are the Romals and binding, salt, Taffia, as the two latter articles are disposed of, you see the necessity of sending a supply as soon as possible; The indians are not pleased in not seeing the store furnished with the articles they want and indeed it is principally for want of an assortment that we are so destitute of trade, there are three handsome stores on this River, and without a small & general assortment is kept constantly up you will do no more business here

Mr. Hambly who I have supplied with some goods at *our prices here* has purchased about 150 bushels of corn and about thirty head cattle, I have received here about sixty bushels of corn and about fifty or sixty deer skins, this corn I could send you with many articles I carried with me that are unsaleable at present.

I had the pleasure of receiving your favor of the 21st ulto pr *Tellifaukie* I am extremely sorry to

hear of all your heavy losses and disappointments, I see no safety whatever in venturing anything out of doors at present in the country. Since the evacuation of the Camp on Flint River we have had very trying times here, I never suffered more uneasiness from various sources, I think now everything is safe and we shall have quiet times in the Nation: On the 23rd Inst four negroes came here from the Mikasukkys and demanded of me protection which of course was offered; they returned same day to bring the rest of their party there, they belong to a Mr. Kingsley of St. John's River

I have only one old white man here and the two negroes from Pensacola one of them sick, of course I am greatly exposed and out of reach of assistance provided it was necessary-Mr. Butler owes the House about sixty dollars; what shall I do if he wants more goods: I understand he has settled at the next camp on this River, you must let me know **flatly** what is to be done should he want goods as I think he will require them at the usual credit given these people "viz when the troops are paid off" you will also please to send some person to take charge of this place, I have fulfilled every obligation I am under to the House, the Land is taken possession of, this place is in good repair, & I shall remain here for a few weeks with whoever you send out until I see perfect safety restored: I shall be here generally this summer, if the House is pleased to give me a little outfit, on a short credit

The negro family which the indians wanted to purchase is worth at least \$2,000 he-went to Pensacola without my knowledge thinking to play you a trick, I hear he is gone to see you again, we have had so much confusion here since I last wrote, that I thought it advisable to send Dolly and her children,

with Tom to Mr Hambly's residence, I have Cynthia here, none of our negroes at the Seminoles has come to see me, but I hope from the message sent them and from the exertions of the indians on this River they will be obliged either to give themselves or abandon the Seminolie shortly-

There has been a meeting of the chiefs on this River for this purpose who are now at the Mickasukky to endeavor to prevail on those indians to join them to force them home if necessary-

I have promised the chiefs the reward offered by the House and have also promised that the people of Pensacola & other parts of the Spanish country would do the same we shall in the course of next month know the result of all these measures;

I hope, My Dear Sir, you will *not neglect* sending some person here to relieve me, I feel my spirits seriously affected by this solitary mode of living, beside, I think I shall be of more service to the House by the change I propose. Should you continue the store you will require a general assortment for the indians-I am greatly thankful to Mr. Hambly for his care and attention to our affairs-In hopes having the pleasure hearing from you soon I remain Dr Sir

Most Gratefully
Your obt servt
Edmd Doyle

PS; Woodbine went from this place to Suwannie, sent for Kenhozee who went to see him there, he told the indians Col Nicols would be out here in three months, from that time (about two months ago) Woodbine quit the vessel & remained for some days there from thence he went to Tampa Bay to get a passage to the Havana, from thence he said he

would sail for Providence-the Commandant at St. Marks statement to the Governor is *incorrect*.

P.S. The negroes does not wish to go to Pensacola, & if they got the least hint of it might run away; I have them at work preparing to plant a corn field on the Island opposite the Spanish Bluff where Mr Hambly lives, they can be employed advantageously this year, there is no fear whatever of their being lost to the House, should the rest of the negroes be got & should you **Positively** order them sent on we can have them secured and sent in at once, altho' I should not recommend it, at this moment I have desired the indian to remain three days in Pensacola to refresh himself for his return

Rec'd 13 Feby

Ans 18 “

* * *

Prospect Bluff 3rd June 1817

John Innererity Esqr

Dear Sir

You will have seen by my letter of the 24th ulto pr the Trial our situation here, I then expected the arrival of the U. S. troops at the forks, I regret they still keep back, & I greatly fear a rupture before that important Port for our safety is occupied by them, since I last wrote several gangs of cattle have been stolen from the frontiers, & the indians in the service of the U. S. at Fort Gaines on active duty, scouring the country of those robbers as far as this force can venture, which is seldom lower than old Perryman's former dwelling about forty or fifty miles below Fort Gaines-

When I dispatched my last Currier, it was with a mind overwhelmed with sorrow and apprehension at being doomed to live in this awful solitude where

nothing but danger for years past presented itself, besides the stake I had in view is of no great importance for such risks-moreover having no person whatever to solace me under all these calamities, and at the same time to feel neglected, as I *then supposed*, would have drawn sympathy, when all was well with you.

Consider my forlorn situation forty miles from an indian hut that would shelter me, wearied out by restlessness for months pregnant with danger, & every day presenting something more dismal, in short it is a state not well to be described, it can only be felt by a person on the spot.

You had to contend with a civilized general at least, you were surrounded by your friends every day to comfort and assist you. What was & is my situation, surrounded with outlaws & murderers, runaway negroes, all of whom would put (and expect to do still) me to a cruel death if they dared, the eyes of all of these villains are directed to Hambly and I. I am indeed weary of the life it shall soon cease.

Under all these reflections and the delay of my messenger, induced me to *suppose* I was neglected I did in some measure give way to my feelings, and I am sincerely sorry my distresses should have extorted from me any expressions to give you offense, for I always found you kind and gentle to me in a high degree.

Some time before I dispatched this currier Mr. Hambly wrote the Big Warrior his intentions of withdrawing from his present residence, he has since received an answer, requesting him to maintain his post for a few days longer & that he should have ample assistance, this letter & expecting McCulloch & the Troops, induced me to risk all & stand it out

as I knew your want of cash: McCulloch would have been down here before this but on account of the trouble that took place about the time he wrote me, and since then it would be certain death for a small party of Americans or American indians to pass the Forks: I am now in a complete trap & those rascals look on the plunder of this place as certain, they daily expect the arrival of a British agent to see them Rited, the Americans and us drove off the land. This circumstance has been officially reported to the Commanding officer at Fort Gaines & to Mr. Hambly by Mr. Arbuthnot who keeps the store at the Ocaloughney Bay. This is my happy state. I have been here for weeks, I never slept an hour at night lest the house should be burnt over my head, & my general way of living is to walk my little gallery, until such time as I am wearied out fall down on my pallet & snatch a reluctant and uneasy sleep, such are the rural pleasures of Appalache for six months past.

I am now in hopes to have some peace and tranquility instead of adopting measures too desperate to live under much longer-our only safety now is to keep alive a party to oppose these fellows, it was our wish to strike a stroke at once & drive them over the Okalaughney but our party would not dare do so. it has this good effect it keeps the villians in check for the moment.

I return Captn Butlers letter & your reply thereto, I shall of course be governed by your observations therein. the moment I touch the cash I shall send it or bring it on. I am in hopes some amends will soon be made for the heavy expense incurred at this place. I have the best opinion of Captn Butler he is known to be honest & punctual and I know his loss was great at this place-

Concerning my having the, store on my own a/c I must forego your kind offer. Under much more favorable circumstances it has failed & be assured I cannot manage better for myself than I have for you-

As I now wish to settle my old a/c with the House and knowing I shall fall in your debt, I will offer you a fine wench and her two boys ; Mr. Forstall in his letter to me valued them at \$1200. but you shall have them for \$1000. one half I would wish placed to my credit & the other to Forstalls and should you approve of this-keep it to yourself or I can purchase Cyrus on easy terms, as he says he came on to me for this purpose-this family united would be equal to any of the kind in Louisiana, you will please to let me know your sentiments on this head, as I send this indian at my own expense for this purpose, if you approve I shall send you in the family at once-

Your brother was good enough to write me twice and personally told me had given you directions to pass the deeds of my land in the office, you told me yourself you would do so. I spoke to Mr Arroyo on the. occasion who promised me to put you in mind of it, if you wish to do so please to do it at once, & I shall pay the expense attending it-Hambly is for some time ill of a fever & I am not well myself

I remain Dr Sir, very truly

Your obt servt

Edmund Doyle

you will please forward the
inclosed to Mr Millar
sealing it

I want no more carpenters, Charles may now go back when Bunker has done with him. I am giving all the old Houses a thorough repair, which will do for three or four years longer when more leisure can be had for better buildings