

FRENCH DESIGNS AGAINST CANADA

Mount Dorchester 7th May 1798

Dear Sir, on my return from Europe last fall, I found myself your Debtor for a kind remembrance by the winter's Express, which I purposed to have acknowledged by the return of our friend Pollard this winter, but his very pressing affairs deprived us of the pleasure of seeing him here, and his Arrival from York at Niagara was not announced to me untill after his departure for Detroit. I trouble you with this detail as the only apology for permitting a letter from my worthy friend to remain so long unacknowledged. I wish my Situation here enabled me to render my Correspondence useful or entertaining, but in truth I am a mere Hermit, taking no part in the public business of the Colony, other than a qua[r]terly attendance to my Duty on the Bench. I had not the Satisfaction of seeing your Connections in England. M^{rs} Meredith was, I understood, at Yarmouth when I was in Norfolk, but my time did not permit me to go from Norwich to pay my respects, and I had no guide where to enquire after M^{rs} Mercer. I heard that M^{rs} M. enjoyed Health, Spirits & Beauty, the great desiderata of youth.

The public Papers which find their way to your Quarter will inform you of the very critical Affairs of Europe, which seems to be universal convulsed by the new republic of France. The Cession of the Provinces on the Missisipi to France⁴⁸ appears to me to be a Prelude to some Commotion among us. I consider Louisiana at present valuable to France only as a Point of Attack on the U. S. and as Quebec is the other Point, I should not be surprised if they were to make an Attempt on the good will of the lower Province. in such Case we shall be between two Guillotines and I think probably have the Tomhawk raised over our Heads.

was married to Madam Desgranges vexed the state and federal courts for half a century. Many of Clark's consular papers are printed in the *Am. Hist. Rev.*, Vols. XXXII and XXXIII. For a statement of his relations with Madam Desgranges, see *U. S. Supreme Court Reports*, 6 Wallace, 645 ff.

⁴⁸ The cession of Louisiana by Spain to France actually occurred on Oct. 1, 1800; that well-informed men had long anticipated such a development is shown by Judge Powell's present letter.