

Williamsburgh, Maine, 13 Feb 1834

Rev. David James
Sir,

Ever James Brackett of Bangor in this state, some time last summer forwarded me a letter from you to himself, date 1st July last, making certain inquiries in relation of a slate quarry in this town, which were prompted I presume, by some inquiries which he had previously made of you, with a view to obtain information which he politely undertook to obtain for me if practicable. Being at that time much engaged, I could not then immediately answer the letter & it got mislaid. At length to day I have found it again, & now do myself the pleasure to answer your inquiries:—

Specimens of the slate have been examined by experienced judges in Bangor Boston & other places, & all agree in pronouncing it far superior to any American slate they have ever seen, & equal to the best of any foreign slate imported into this country. — Of this I have not the least doubt, as I have myself compared it with the best American & foreign slate, & think I am able to judge somewhat of their qualities:—

The slate forms the body of a large hill, in one solid mass ^{ledge,} covering several hundred acres. It is found all the way from the base to the summit of the hill in some places projecting a little above the surface, in others covered with soil from a few inches to a few feet deep. — It is in strata [^] nearly vertical, inclined a little to the south, — running nearly east & west. — [^] The elevation of the hill from its base is probably from 150 to 200 feet perpendicular. [^] — The northeastern side where the slate is nearest the surface is steep, so that it is easy to begin towards the base & work in horizontally, without being obstructed by water, & convenient to throw off the rubbish. — The other parts of the hill extend off [^] gradually & the slate probably lies deeper under the soil. — I have no doubt that five millions of tons may be quarried [^] without going below the surface of the ^{its} ~~base of the hill,~~ or removing more than an average of two feet [^] of earth from the surface, or being the least impeded by water.

[at right]
Specimens have been tried, as well as we could without tools or experience, to manufacture it into writing slates, & it is found to make excellent ones, with very little labor to finish them fit for framing —

[at left]
There is another quarry near this, of less size, but I need not now describe it.

The owners of these quarries are desirous to have some persons experienced in the business undertake the working of this quarry ^{them}, & would give them very fair terms, but [^] are not at present in a situation to work it themselves. If you or any of your friends who are experienced in the business, should be inclined to make the attempt to quarry it for roof slates, or manufacture writing slates from it the owners would give some assistance towards it, & every reasonable aid for a permanent establishment in the business. ~~but I am not authorised at present to offer any compensation for examining it. If however any reasonable assurance of encouragement to you or their undertaking it on your own account, would be a sufficient inducement to visit it, this will not be wanting.~~

A fine stream, large enough for ^{propelling} machinery runs at the base of this hill, & may be made useful in the manufacture of writing slates. — A rail road is chartered from Bangor to this place, & measures are in train to get it in operation. — There is

You will be able to judge in some measure from the foregoing account whether this quarry may be expected to afford encouragement to enterprise in working it & you would oblige me very much by giving me your opinion. If it should appear to you encouraging for a serious attempt, I should be glad to consult with you further, on the subject. It is not now under any engagement, & perhaps it may afford an opportunity for a company having some experience in the business, to establish themselves to general advantage. — If you know of any persons who

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might be desirous of such an opportunity, serious, sober men, I should be glad to hear from you further, respecting it.

There is no question respecting the working of slate, respecting which I should be glad to be more particularly informed. Then the average quantity which a man will quarry & dress, fit for market in a day, or any given time this number will vary according to circumstances, but may be stated as the quantity under the most favorable & also under the least favorable circumstances. If you will please to give me your opinion as far as you can judge from the description I have given of the average quantity per day which a man might work from ^{ours} it will be a very great favor. Please also to state the quantity usually considered as ^{an} average work in the quarries with which you have been acquainted.

If the expense of quarrying ours should not be greater than I anticipate I have reason to believe we might command a market for 6000 tons annually. This would give employment for a considerable number of laborers, & we have means to accommodate them I think to their satisfaction. We have heretofore had thoughts of sending to Wales or Scotland to engage a small colony for this purpose, & perhaps may yet think it expedient to do so. If I understood Capt Brackett correctly you are from Wales or some part of the west of England & it may be that this seemingly accidental intervention of Capt Brackett in relation to this business, may prove a providential direction to our thoughts, which may lead to important events in the lives of some of us, of which we were little aware.

You will oblige me very much by answering this as soon as may be convenient to you, & I shall be happy in any further communications which may be desirable to you. Letters by mail, directed to Williamsburg Penobscot County, Maine, will always come in about a week from New York & without expense.

I am, respectfully

Yours obt servt

Moses Greenleaf

Rev. David James Greenport L.I. N. York.

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Rev. David James Greenport, L.I. New York —

[Sideways at right]

To Rev. David Janes
Greenport, Long Island

N. Y.

13 Feby 1834

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