

Brownville 13 April 1850

Mr. A H Merrill

Dear Sir

There are two large slate Quarries in France the slates from one goes to supply Paris and other neighbouring towns the other one is too much inland to bring the slates into general market there are also several small quarries there but all the slates that are made in France are of inferior quality and of small sizes none exceeding twelve inch long. — there are also some small quarries of very inferior slates in some parts of Germany. — In England & Ireland also there are some small ones but I am not aware that they export any slates whatever from any of the above Countries. —

All the slates that are imported here comes from Wales. Mr. Wilbur told me once that he imported 4000 tons in one year and I heard him say many times that there were as much imported into Boston as to all other ports together therefore it is safe to say that there are 6000 Tons imported on an average here every year. — The cost of the 16 x 8 per M. in Wales is 42 shillings. — There is one small Quarry in Va of very strong rough kind of slate of Gray Color but they can never make 100 ton a year from it.

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MMN # 100536  
 Date: April 13, 1850  
 Description: William Hughes assessment of Merrill Slate prospects, Brownville



There are several slate quarries on both sides of the River Sushquhana 20 miles above H. D. Grass where there are about one hundred Welsh Quarrymen at work and turn out about eight or ten tons of slates daily. —  
The slates here are soft and will absorb water. — In Lehigh Gap also they make about as much of a kind of a rotten slates. —  
On the Delaware river <sup>on</sup> both sides there are slate quarries where they make considerable of roofing and writing slates but they are not to be compared to the Brownville slates as to quality and durability. —  
There are no other slate quarries in this country worth to be mentioned. —  
In answer to the other question I can't do better than inform you how many men we can employ next year to make slates and inclose you the report I made some time ago upon this quarry which I still think is near a correct one. —  
Well, after this years operations we shall be able to employ from 20 to 25 men and no more unless that you will expend more in opening and if you wish to do that you can make room for as many as you like — You can tell what would be a fair price for the slates on

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on the Bank as well as I can or better. But I think if they were mine that I would take \$2.50 a square for them and no less. —  
You and Mr Crocker have got plenty room to set to work 300 men each of you but it requires large out lay. —  
But if there was a certain prospect of a Rail Road to come here you & Crocker might be able to make 250 tons of slates each per month before the road could be made from Bangor here that would amount to 500 tons of slates a month. —  
You can get good deal of [torn] formation in the enclosed. —  
I am  
dear  
Sir your  
obt servt  
W<sup>m</sup> Hughes

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