as a Sweet child used to call me at augusta) for Cordinary Thankaloons yes by Josh! lis true as an alarming "Y3rlaking up" e voje for my partaloon + there for the River - these Beauty I have now worn just one week I they are now compleatly Bespatterd with shots mostly cand by langling or coughing with my mould fall of very droll appearance they would wear - the very Aucer I deas thise spots mught suggestioned

Contributed to Maine Memory Network by Maine Historical Society (Coll. 2125, Ser. 1 Box 1/2)

Date: April 5, 1814

Description: John Neal letter to his sister concerning ice on the Kennebec

River

Sis. April 5th

This Kennebec air, my dear is one of the beautifullest things in the world - It has made me quite a poet and as "brack as a fire coal" - Lord I wish you could see me!. clad like a "beautifull mister" (as a Sweet child used to call me at Augusta) for Sabbatday - my phir glowing with rubies & Sapphires and carbuncles - my chin propd up like a fellows ears in a pillory with a delicious bundle of filth and wood & splinters -with a taring fine yellow waistcoat and - pray be attentive - a pair of olive colord corduroy pantaloons - yes by Gosh! tis true as the bible I have on me at this moment such an article of dress–≠ have worn th one calld this moment with a cry of "The Ice is going!!" — much damage is expected to be done — we are dissapointed!

is

The ice ^ not going to yet – at least tis not an alarming "Breaking up" — Now for my pantaloons, & there for the "River — these Beauties. I have now worn just one week & they are now completely Bespatterd – with spots mostly causd by laughing or coughing with my mouth full of cider a few evenings since - the cider spilld in a shower on them! — and not suspecting the the very droll apperance they would wear - the very Queer Ideas these spots might suggest, neglected

withing them untill the ceder was dry Hur za! for Obcowing _ Soin in the Shout to patreotic Throng I ce few days suce lunch Sames wrote me_ advise he to be freedond in Reply I sent him a piece of these olive Cordbrogs! about as big -d'n this See! If it don't go time mongh for me to que a description of it before I fluish this, or what some of the Story I shall wish the devil had it For a whole week of alternale rain of sunshine exactly calculated to make a Beautiful freshet havet I been autrespating) a charming assemblage of Horizon to record It for a whole week have I met nothing but dess apointment _ hurra! there It goes! Bless may soul takat a turnall-Immonge masses of Inow and Seconsolidated aw tombling section this river directly beneath in observation the Kennebec, always rapid is now wonderfully so Black & Curbed ets water are now tumbling of following along fin such a kind of humbellary blessific Granden as as man may be accustomed from his youth to wundations & peshets - yet of he can view the rese of threatening aspect of this reber he must be a hero at this moment the water is up to the floor in this very house - hack! a tremendous erash _ a body of ice has just structe an

wiping them untill the cider was dry – when Lo' — Huzza! for OE coutry - Join in the Shout ye Patriotic Throng — a few days since Uncle James wrote me — advisd me to be prudent — in Reply I sent him a piece of these olive Corduroys! about as big as a g^d — — — — d-n this Ice! If it dont go time enough for me to give a description of it before I finish this, or upset some of the Stores, I shall wish the devil had it — For a whole week of alternate rain & sunshine exactly calculated to make a Beautiful freshethave I been anticipating a charming assemblage of Horrors to record — & for a whole week have I met nothing but dissapointment — hurra! there it goes! — Bless my soul! what a tumult -Immense masses of Snow and Ice consolidated are tumbling down this river directly beneath my observation — the Kennebec, always rapid is now wonderfully so — Black & turbid its waters are now tumbling & frothing along in such a kind of tumultuous & terrific grandeur as would appal the stoustest hearted observer — as man may be accustomed from his youth to inundations & freshets — yet if he can view the rise & threatening aspect of this river he must be a hero — at this moment the water is up to the floor in this very house — hark! a tremendous crash! — a body of ice has just struck an

ancient building about 3 rodd from me of it has totally dissappeard _ I should remove _ but Smith will whom I board, maintained all morning there was but little danger and is now too late _ it rains tirribly the fog to obscure every object at the distance of the water - yet all the house tops are court Towwett men women & children - my dear sester I cannot panit to you The consternation then countinances express _ none feel alarmed lis true. on account of there liber but if the water con times rising half an how longer much prop cely will be lost _ what a sublince spectacle I I having no property at stake can view it calme - the water has already rison so as to overflow The first stories in this street this moment a floating mass of snow struck the window ofour parlow t bustit in they have removed the carpet + furniture up here - wer the chambersin this street we realize all I have fread of , unundations - the people are filling all the boat They can obtain and are it at this unstant pushing I rowing them in all directions to places of safety The rivery roars and formy so as to resemble a cataract in its impotworty - you may wonstory of a high building and the present abarm alredy begins to subside -

ancient building about 3 rods from me & it has totally disappeared — — I should remove – but Smith with whom I board maintained all the morning there was but little danger and it is now too late — it rains terribly — the fog too obscures every object at the distance of the water — yet all the house tops are coved now

^ with men women & children — my dear Sister I cannot paint to you the consternation their countenances express — none feel alarmed tis true on account of their lives but if the water con tinues rising half an hour longer much property will be lost — what a sublime spectacle — I having no property at stake can view it calmly — the water has already risen so as to overflow the first stories on this street — this moment a floating mass of snow struck the window of our parlour & burst it in---- they have removed the carpet & furniture up here — viz the chambers-- in this street we realize all I have read of inundations — the people are filling all the boats they can obtain and are [erased] at this instant pushing & rowing them in all directions to places of safety — — the river, soars and foams so as to resemble a cataract in its impetuosity — You may wonder at my calmness, but I am in the upper story of a high building and the present alarm alredy begins to subside ——

Towns of Heaven! two more buildings are just swept a way - one partly bright the See from the rever above that loosend and came round a point of land to be distinctly seen - the fog has cliend away - I il doesfunded present a subline spectacle - figure to yourself a whole rever mingled with Inver - suddenly stiffned and et course obstructed! the alam tucrease, to timble height. I hould this bast body of Ice meet with any of position the water well over flow all the surrounding country -Adeen! I sunt finish they dome to the time Good bye! my mother! - the house lotting. good bye Machel I'm going Thank heaven the danger is over! The water is now running, off. I and the sun begins to be affect _ The rain has ceased twas as we E feard a small Island about after of a mile beton This prevented the passage of the ice - which con twined heaping itself up till vertoped compliance The highist banks of the river _ it presuled in awfull Barrier to this world of waters _ the rever continued rising for about twenty nimeds - and a contest seemed taking place when it mustind all its strength between it and this emmande dam which for granden + majesty would sappass at The emagination could conceive - swollen - exasperate + policy with rage it rose in the fullness of Thing - rolled back a few rods - + Then tumbling forward Powers of Heaven! two more buildings are just swept a way — one partly brick — the Ice from the river above had loosend and

as to

came round a point of Land So ^ be distinctly seen — the fog had cleard away — & it does indeed present a Sublime Spectacle — figure to yourself a whole river mingled with snow — suddenly stiffned and its course obstructed! — the alarm

a

- increases to ^ terrible hieght! should this last body of Ice meet with any opposition the water will overflow all the surrounding country — Adieu! I must finish this some other time Good bye! my mother! — the house tottersgood bye Rachel — I'm going — Thank heaven the danger is over! — the water is now running off! and the sun begins to be appear — the rain has ceas'd – twas as we feard a small Island about a 1/4 of a mile below this prevented the passage of the ice — which con

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tinued heaping itself up till ^ oertopd compleatly
the highest banks of the river — it presented an
awfull Barrier to this world of waters — the river
continued rising for about twenty minutes — and a
contest seemed taking place, when it musterd all
its strength — between it and this immense dam
which for grandeur & majesty would surpass all
the imagination could concieve — swollen — exasperatd
its

& frothing with rage it rose in the fullness of ^ strength — rolled back a few rods - & then tumbling forward

[remainder missing]