

1800- Mr. John Lefferts- Hempstead- Favoured by Wm. S. Garman  
Rec'd 19th March

Ever D<sup>r</sup>. Brother,

Since my last to you I have entered the 64th year of my age with a greater prospect of health than I have enjoyed for several years past, but I am nevertheless mindful of my approaching dissolution, for altho' the vicissitudes of Fortune and the intervals of sickness and health are various and uncertain, yet the wheels of time move regularly on and each moment brings us nearer to our Lord. The cares necessary to our subsistence hang about us and keep us anxious and busy and greatly interrupt the more exalted duties of friendship, Piety and Devotion, but I nevertheless regret the want of more frequent opportunities to enquire after the welfare of my friends who still reside in my native Country and yourself in particular. I wish often to remind that though--- in body I wish to be----- in spirit speaking with my pen and endeavouring to strengthen the bonds of friendship which might otherwise relax into a cold indifference. The calamities of war which seem to rage with uncommon fury in Europe and other distant Countries staining the annals of the time with blood and courage are a galling consideration to my peaceful temper. And the raging fevers which so frequently infest our principal Towns and seem to even threaten depopulation fill me at times with melancholy reflection and turn my attention to that grand mystery which has puzzled the wise and learned in all the ages of the world, namely, to find out the original of evil. Why is it that the allwise author of nature suffers it thus to be. Why is it that there appears to be a greater proportion of moral and physical evil in the world than of good, and why do the human race in general incline to do evil in the world than good according to their own notions of virtue and vice. I have thus far indulged my speculations and hope I have not done amiss in mentioning these things, but cannot attempt a solution at this time. The ways of Providence are infinitely above our comprehension so that we ought not to repine when chastened but to humble ourselves and learn to know that a cheerful acquiescence is our greatest wisdom. To use the expression of the Prophet I do not think that God afflicts willingly but that every national Calamity is intended to answer some valuable purpose and that when the end is answered the rod will be laid aside. I should be extremely glad of a Letter from you to know how all friends are as I have been informed that the fever has not only raged in NewYork, this season, but has also made unusual advances into the Country. An epidemical fever has been attended with great mortality at Newbern, Edenton and Washington in this State but seems to abate of late. My domestic family have been healthy, but my Daughter Mary Ann and her family have been very sickly for three months past having been taken down one after another but she herself who was the last is just recovering from an obstinate fever which lasted with but little interruption for three weeks. My family desire to be remembered to you and the rest of my relations. I still flatter myself with the thoughts of making you another visit which if I can bring about will give me the greatest satisfaction. The foregoing part of this Letter was written some months past but being disappointed in the conveyance which I at that time expected it has lain by me till now, when I unexpectedly met with a Mr. Garman who tells me he lives on the south side of Long Island nearly opposite to Brookhaven and can deliver my Letters as he passes from NewYork home. Nothing remarkable has happened to us since writing the first part so that I have little to say as to the



situation of our affairs here. It is a general time of health and as the Crops of Corn and other products have been plentiful provisions are reasonable and the exportations very considerable. My Wife talks much of you of late and sundry dreams she has lately had seems to encourage her to hope to see you here again, but I who put but little dependence in Dreams can only observe that I wish I had reason to hear from you and perhaps a little encouragement added to my own inclination may quicken my resolutions to undertake another pilgrimage to my native Land and be assured that it would please me much better than a Voyage with Bonaparte to Egypt. If any of your neighbors are friendly enough to enquire after me please to give my respects to them. My duty to all relations without exception. And please to accept the respects of my family who together with myself are most respectfully yours. And now to change the tune once more from light to-----. If this should prove my last I am till Death your ever loving friend and Brother.

Saml. Leffers

Beaufort  
Feby. 24th 1800

Copied from the original owned by Mrs. Aleeze Lefferts Smith, Gloucester, N.E.



1800-

Dr Brother,

It would seem by the time that has elapsed since I heard last from you that we had declined all correspondence and that our friendship had subsided into a cold indifference. I hope however it is not the case as my inclinations still lean toward you and I have hopes of hearing from you. I do not at present recollect the date of your last letter but think it is more than two years since I have heard from any of my friends on the Island, if so you need not wonder that I am desirous to know whether you are dead or living and other matters relating to your welfare. I was in so weakly a state when I was with you last and found the cold weather so disagreeable that I resolved if ever I made another visit to take the warm season for it and felt a strong inclination to have come in the month of May last but I had undertaken to build a house which took up my time and attention till August and as no opportunity has offered since I have declined it for the present, and one of my age must not depend too much on years to come altho' the prospect at present, with me, is somewhat flattering as I have enjoyed a greater degree of health for 4 months past that I have experienced for some years past, possibly if life and health continues and no obstacles intrude I may undertake to visit my native country the next summer, and must intreat you to let me hear from you before that time otherwise I shall not be certain whether I have any friends there to visit or not. My situation at present is agreeable, my new house is calculated to my fancy and pleasantly situated, we have a fine prospect of the Sea in front have a good garden and Spring of water and are about 200 yds., from the eastermost boundary of Beaufort town. I live retired and amuse myself with my Garden, my writing desk, my Books and a walk to town as fancy desires and enjoy a competency of the comforts of life with resignation, and I hope with a becoming gratitude to the great disposer of all good. I know not where your residence may be at the present but supposing you to be at Hempstead must request you to remember me in the most friendly manner to sister Abby and Betsey, to Sister Mary and all enquiring friends. My Wife likewise desires to be remembered. Am as ever your loving brother

Saml. Leffers

Spring Garden  
near Beaufort Oct., 19th 1800.



1802- Mr. John Lefferts- Hempstead- Long Island.

D<sup>r</sup> Brother,

I waited a long time for a conveyance by water but as none offered I sent these Letters by post- one directed to John VanNostrand- one to Mr. Hart and one to yourself with a Letter to Saml. enclosed to save expense. If these Letters are not come to hand I presume they may be found in the Post Office. An unexpected opportunity now offering I gladly embrace it fearing the other Letters might miscarry. I have nothing new to relate, my family and friends here are much in the situation I found them in at my return home last fall. There is great complaints of dull times since the peace in Europe, our Vessels which use the West Indies trade having for a long time past been accustomed to make good voyages and bring home considerable quantities of Cash bring nothing of late from the english Islands but Rum for which there is a very dull sale and from the Cape Bills on France which is worse. I have had pretty good success in selling my Goods which I brought home with me but as my assortment is broken I have thought, if life and health permits, and I meet with an opportunity in a good Vessel to take a trip to NewYork this summer in order to get a new supply and make a short visit, but as this is altogether uncertain I should be glad to hear from you and hope you will not neglect to write. If you lodge Letters in NewYork with some careful hand, there are frequent opportunities in the summer season to send them to Newbern where they may be put into the postoffice and are sure to come to hand as the mail comes from Newbern to Beaufort once a fortnight. I should be very glad of a Letter from Saml. that I may see how he improves in writing. My wife and daughters are in tolerable health and desire to be remembered to you and in conjunction with myself to all relations and friends. I am as ever your loving brother.

Saml. Lefferts.

Beaufort 27th May 1802.



Ever D<sup>r</sup> Brother,

I had flattered myself that I should have been at Hempstead at least a month ago- but as it is otherwise ordered by the over-ruling Providence of God, it is my duty patiently to submit and rest satisfied with the decisions of unerring wisdom. I proposed to embark the first opportunity that afforded after the middle of July, and in case there should be no vessel going from this place about that time, to have gone to the Castle, as I did two years ago, to seek for a passage. But just about the proposed time Capt. Elijah Bell arrived from the Wt. Indies who told me that as soon as he had discharged his cargo he should endeavor to procure a freight for NewYork and that I might depend on a convenient passage in his vessel- but as he found some difficulty in getting a freight, he delayed the time so that he did not get ready to sail till the 29th of August and proposed to sail the 30th wind and weather permitting- the weather continued fair until 12 oclock at night, when the wind which was about ENE began to breeze and the black clouds began to presage the coming storm. The rising wind and falling rain ushered in the morning of the 30th, the violence of which progressively increased for 36 hours, and at 12 oclock the 31st it raged with a violence which I cannot well remember. Fruit Trees of every description are either torn up by the roots or left naked dismembered of their fruit and branches. Forest trees flourishing in the height of verdure either leveled with the ground or stript of their boughs and beauty- and the stately Pines, the pride of Carolina racked and tortured- torn up by the roots or broke off like faggots and left as a cumbrance on the ground which they were wont to shade- fences in general were blown down whereby what remains of the crops are liable to be much injured- many Houses are demolished- others uncovered and many chimneys blown down- but the greatest calamity of all on the sea coast is the tide for it appears that, no building, the foundation whereof is on the surface of the ground, can withstand the combined force of the wind and water in those violent commotions. There were in this small port when the gale came on, a Ship of 350 Tons, a Brig of 200- two Schooners of 120 each- 3 small Boats (meaning the same as the foregoing) (H.B.C.J) and one Sloop. all of which were driven from their anchors. The Ship, the Brig and one of the large Schooners are overset and likely to be lost. Capt. Bells loaded schooner in which I expected to take passage, is drove on shore and much damaged- part of her cargo lost- the rest must be taken out and the vessel repaired, and it is therefore uncertain whether she will proceed on her voyage or not. We have account of three Vessels that are stranded on the sea beach in the distance of 20 miles, and we dread to hear of the disasters of Ocracock and on the coast from Hatteras to cape Henry. Thus I have given you a short and imperfect sketch of this tremendous gale in this place only, not having time to learn what has happened in other places where we have reason to expect equal or worse consequences. I shall only add that amidst the jarring elements and terrifying appearances I and my family were, thro' mercy, preserved in safety, and have suffered no considerable loss. We had also an opportunity of administering relief to some of our neighbors who were deprived of their dwelling places, and forced to seek else where for shelter. I am still desirous of visiting you this fall, but surrounded as I am with uncertainty I can promise nothing. Therefore resigning myself to the direction of that almighty power on which my life depends, I patiently wait the opportunity of meeting you all in love- but if disappointed of that hope, this may serve as a testimony of the unabating friendship of your ever loving brother.

Saml. Lefferts

Beaufort Sept. 3rd 1803.

p.s. please to remember me to all my relations and friends- and keep Samuel at school till further orders.



No address on this letter-

Beaufort Nov<sup>r</sup>. 16th 1803

D<sup>r</sup> Brother,

I sailed from sandy-hook on Sunday evening the 6th of this instant with a strong NW wind which lasted till tuesday 12 oclock when it rather increased and shifted so far to the westwd. that we could not lay our course- were forced to lay too till wednesday 9th Oct<sup>r</sup> it moderated a little and shifted to SW we stood in to get in with the land- wind shifted to SSW we again hove too with a severe gale till thursday morning and shifted to SW again & moderated so that we could carry small sail- stood in again till the evening when it became so moderate that the hands were call'd up to make more sail but no sooner were they on deck than the wind shifted suddenly to NNW- all our sails were immediately handed but a slow rified foresail under which we scudded with a tremendous sea till 12 oclock the next day, the wind then moderated but the sea continued to board us at times till sunset when it began to subside- we came up with Hatteras at 12 at night and crossed the shoals at about 2 in the morning- Saturday the 12th moderate we took a fine sea turtle which was very seasonable- had fine weather to dress a part of it which made us a most delicious repast- this was the first dinner which we were able to cook and enjoy with comfort on our passage. I had not eat any thing like a meal the whole time- in the afternoon the wind came ahead and we beat against till Sunday morning when we saw the land about 25 Miles to the northward of Cape-lookout- the wind increased sudenly and by 9 A.M. blew a storm at S by E were again forced to heave too for about 12 hours when we began to be apprehensive of drifting on Hatteras; but fortunately the wind moderated in season, continued calm till monday morning- when the wind shifted to the northward and soon increased to a good sailing breeze- we crouded all sail and crossed lookout about 5 in the evening, as it was too late to get in we anchored under the Banks and got under way at daylight and anchored in Beaufort harbour about 8 October after a most boisterous and disagreeable passage of 10 days. Thus D<sup>r</sup> Brother after combating with wind and waves, the same almighty power which seems to smile on us in the calms of quiet life, has preserved me in peace and safety- granted me one more happy meeting with my family and friends; and laid me under new and lasting obligations to adore, love and praise him while my life shall last. On my arrival I was informed that there was a Ship to sail in a few days, for NewYork, and altho' very anxious to write I should not have had time if the weather had been moderate, but no sooner were we in port but it came on so stormy that I have not been able to land my goods which circumstance has given me an opportunity to proceed thus far. My family desire to be remembered to you. Please to remember me to all enquiring friends. I am with all due regard

Your ever loving brother,

Saml. Leffers

Copied from the original owned by Mrs. Aleeze Lefferts Smith, Gloucester, N.C.



1804- Mr. John Loefferts- Hempstead

Beaufort April 16th 1804

Dear Brother,

I recd. your of the first of Jany. last and have had no chance of conveyance since till now. It is a general time of health but there is great complaints of hard times, the season in these parts was unfavourable last summer and the crops were likely to be short if no disaster had happened and I believe at a moderate computation one half of what was growing was destroyed by the storm, consequently a scarcity of breadcorn and fodder must ensue and as these disasters have been followed by a cold & tedious winter great numbers of cattle have died for want of food and there are great complaints among the poor people of the scarcity and dearness of breadcorn and other provisions and the difficulty of procuring money to purchase with. And altho' I have reason to be thankful that I am not pinched with cold and hunger, yet I compassionate those who are, without having it in my power to relieve them. Business is very dull for as the expense of the necessaries of life is much greater than usual and many people complain that they cannot get work as usual and money is scarce the chance of selling goods is greatly diminished. But notwithstanding these discouragements as I want to put Saml. to business I propose to go to NewYork in the month of June next, life, health & oppty. permitting. As it is uncertain whether I can get a passage from this place at the time when I should wish to go I have sent George by the present oppty. who is the bearer of a number of letters to our friends. I hope if he arrives he will meet with a favourable reception and that he will answer the end proposed. My wife and daughters desire to be remembered. Please to remember me to all enquiring friends. I am your ever loving brother.

Saml. Loefferts.



1805- Mr. John Lefferts- Hempstead- Long Island.

Beaufort May 20th 1805

Dear Brother,

This may inform you that I and my family are in tolerable health and that nothing remarkable has happen'd among us since I saw you and that my not writing sooner has been owing to want of opportunity. I have received no Letters from you altho' I was inform'd by one John Litchfield that he saw you last winter and that you put a Letter in his hands for me, which he put in the chest of one Piner for safe keeping after which they separated and the Letter has never come to hand. I hope you will not fail to write as I am very desirous of hearing from you as I do not expect to visit you this summer, business is very dull here and I have Goods enough on hand to last me excepting a few particulars which I purpose to send for by the first good opportunity that offers. I write now by Captn. Elijah Bell who goes to Plymouth on Roanoke River to load where the Vessel is owned and must return, but if he receives any Letters for me he can send them from Ocracock. Pray let me know how all my friends at Hempstead are, whether George continues contented with his station and behaves well, and how poor sister Mary makes out in her new method of living. I have not yet disposed of Saml. but am looking out for a place for him, he continues as usual capable of learning every thing and scarcely willing to do any thing but play. Captn. Bell has only call'd in here in his way from the West Indies and is to sail the first wind so that I do not know that I shall have time to write any more Letters to my friends at Hempstead, therefore request you to give my best respects to them all particularly to Sister Abby & Betsy and Gideon. My Wife also desires to be remembered to you and to them. I am as ever your affectionate brother.

Saml. Lefferts

On back of letter "you will please return an answer to this as soon as possible to me. JVN"



1805- Mr. John Lefferts- Hempstead- Long Island.

Beaufort Oct. 18th 1805

Dear Brother,

By yours of the 15th of July I had the disagreeable news of brother Daniels unhappy course of life which I sincerely regret. Also Israel Smiths unhappy situation- have also seen accounts in print of the wasting epidemics prevailing both in NewYork, Philadelphia, New haven and some other places to the northward. Our thanks are due to the divine goodness that general health has prevailed in this part of the Country during Summer and at present there are very few cases of any thing worse than agues & fevers and other intermittants that do not prove mortal and a few instances of the dysentary of a favourable kind. The Summer & the fall hitherto have been an almost continued series of clear warm weather attended with seasonable showers and we have not had a settled rain even of 12 hours duration, as I recollect, since February last, the crops of corn are supposed in general to be better than ever was known and every other production of the Earth uncommonly good. O that the goodness of God might lead us to repentance and fill our hearts with gratitude for all his blessings bestowed on the children of men. I have sent Saml. with his uncle Thomas Duncan, to assist in doing my business and as he proposes to make you a short visit he can inform you of every particular circumstance relating to our affairs here, I shall therefore be less particular in writing. David Hellen has been very hearty since his arrival here and looks much better than he did, but he has received so little countenance on account of his deserting his business that he seems desirous of returning provided he could be free from Mr. Osborn for whom he seems to entertain an irreconcilable aversion. I have wrote to John VanNostrand to know whether he could take him to himself and shall wait his answer before I put him to any other business. I found on his return that instead of improving in writing and the use of figures he had in a great measure lost what he had I have therefore had him at school the 3 month past which has about reinstated him in what he knew before. I hope you will have friendship enough for George to keep him in a way of improvement until somethingis further determined for him. Possibly if life and health will permit I may attempt to make one visit more to native place in the course of the next Summer which, if Providence permits, will I presume be my last visit among my aged relation and friends, in the mean time I consider every Letter as a testimonial of friendship which may possibly be the last. I therefore request you to give my most affectionate respects to all my relations and friends at and about Hempstead and let them know that altho' my memory will scarcely retain the common occurrences of life for a month yet I have not forgot to love my friends. My Wife and Daughters desire to be remembered to you and all Relations. I remain your ever loving brother.

Saml. Lefferts



1806- There is no address on this Letter

Dear Brother,

After a pause of many months I have again taken up my pen in order to resume that friendly correspondence which has been so long continued between us, and altho' I find that I have not that fertility of invention which I formerly experienced when writing to a friend, yet I hope that if my diction does not please the delicate ear my heart felt affection may create a sympathy in the bosom of a beloved brother. I am fast approaching the term of a shortlived man having been in my seventieth year since the 29th of October last I would therefore wish to express some thing in every Letter which might be worth preserving should it be my last. I wrote my own Epitaph some years ago, and altho' it may never be engraved on stone you may read it for your amusement as follows

1806 Praises on Tombs are vainly spent

Good deeds are mans best Monument.

Having thus far hinted at what ought to be an old mans principal concern I now descend to the common affairs of the world, my health, thro' mercy, has been tolerably well preserved and that of my family, except my Wife, who has had several returns of illness and is the greater part of her time troubled with rheumatic pains. I have hitherto encouraged you to think that I might make you another visit and the very great satisfaction I have found in visiting my native place and conversing with my relations and friends has kept this hope alive in myself till I feel the last spark nearly extinguished. I therefore can propose nothing further on this head. I have concluded to keep Saml. with me by whom I may visit you by proxy in the course of the ensuing Summer. If our aged sister is yet living remember my kind love to her and tell her that my constant prayer for her is that she may be enabled patiently to endure the crosses, difficulties and infirmities with which she is surrounded and may be prepared to enjoy that rest which remaineth for the faithful servants of the true God. Remember me particularly to John Smith and his family reminding him that our days must be nearly numbered this may be the last testimony of the friendship which has so long subsisted between us. I might fill up my paper with requests of this kind but I think fit to end them by requesting you to remember me respectfully to all inquiring friends. I shall be glad to know how George behaves, whether he seems satisfied and what course had best be taken with him. I have put David to live with one William Nichols at Newbern, he is an English man of education and is supposed to be one of the best Architects in America. My Wife and Daughters desire to be remembered and with all the feelings of cordial affection & brotherly love I remain your aged Brother.

Saml. Lefferts

Beaufort April 9th 1806.

of

Copied from the original owned by Mrs. Aleeze Lefferts Smith, Gloucester, N.C.



1806- Mr. John Lefferts- Hempstead- Long Island  
Fav'd by Capt. Duncan

Beaufort August 8th 1806

D<sup>r</sup>. Brother,

As the season approaches wherein I usually made my visits among you, like the bird of passage, my attention is turned toward you with a friendly wish to enjoy, once more, the satisfaction of social conversation with my beloved Brethren, Sisters, and Friends. The day of life with me, must be far spent and as I advance in years I find myself more attached to home and less capable of traveling, and therefore have but small hopes of ever seeing my native place again. It is the lot of human nature to be subject to many infirmities, and altho' I seldom trouble my friends with an acct. of my complaints, yet as I have lately had some uncommon visitations and have had but little else of consequence to relate, perhaps the seige I have had of my approaching dissolution may prove acceptable. About 6 months ago I went to bed in good health and after a sleep of some hours I awoke in a situation which I cannot well describe. I had a very unusual feeling but on reflection found myself free from pain &c altho' I would breathe without difficulty, yet it did not seem to answer the end of respiration, my feet felt cold and I could perceive no pulsation in my arms, and I was impressed with the Idea that the spiritual part which I call myself was in the action of quitting its clay tenement, I endeavor'd to raise my head but finding it very giddy rested it on my pillow again and was at a loss to know whether it was best to awake my wife or to put myself in a posture to die in secret, but after one or two efforts more I raised myself and sat on the bed side and my wife awaking asked me what was the matter, I told her I had been thinking that the Father of mercies was about to grant the request I had often made that is, that when it was his good pleasure, I might be removed hence without tedious pain and sickness to myself, and trouble to my friends. I was restless the remainder of the night, and continued indisposed for some time- had frequent return of the same disorder at irregular periods, which gradually growing milder at length recovered my health. I continued tolerably well till about the last of May when after a comfortable nights rest I arose with no other complaint than a sensation of numbness in some parts of my face which I paid no attention to until I went to wash my mouth agreeable to my usual custom, when I could not sip the water and when I attempted to discharge it, it ran down my bosom, I repeated the attempt but found I had lost the use of my muscles of my mouth and one eye and could perceive a slight swelling on one side of my face but without any pain. I continued in this state for several days. I could not chew my food nor drink any other way than by pouring a small quantity into my mouth and holding my hand to my mouth until I swallowed it and I could only make use of food that could be taken in this way. After a few days the disorder removed from the right to the left side of my face and centred chiefly in my left eye. I could not close my eyelids- the eye ball became exquisitely tender so that I could neither bare the wind nor sunshine and I found great difficulty in covering it as the least touch was attended with pain. After continuing weeks in this state I began to have some use of my lips & I have been mending but the recovery has been so slow that it is not yet complete- the disorder in my eye has been more obstinate- I cannot close my eyelids- my eye is extremely weak and my sight much impaired so that I read and write with difficulty. I conclude my tedious narrative by devoutly praising the giver of all good for the use of my senses so long for the comfortable hope of a sufficiency to answer my necessary purposes for the few days I have got to live.



Dear Brother, I heartily wish you could make it agreeable to take George under your Guardianship and endeavour to put him in some way to learn to earn his living, this would certainly be doing a charitable and friendly act for the poor boy and perhaps with but little personal disadvantage you might live to experience that satisfaction which is so often the reward of good actions. As I have several boys under my care and find myself almost unfit for any business, I tho't as you have no children of your own and seem by your letters to have a good opinion of George- you might agree to this proposal and thereby greatly oblige an aged brother and an orphan child.

(The next 7 lines are torn and particularly hard to read).

Copied from the original owned by Mrs. Aleese Lefferts Smith, Gloucester, N.C.



Augt. 12th 1806

I had written the foregoing parts of my Letter at sundry times finishing the Paragraph respecting George on Sunday morning the 10th instant, after which I passed my time at home, being somewhat indisposed, till about 12 O'clock when there came on a heavy shower of rain with some distant thunder- my wife was in a bed room- Betsey Fugh and Sally Leffers were in the Kitchen and I happen'd to walk there and make a stand about 6 ft. from the fireplace when I observ'd Betsey at the fire attending to a pot that was boiling. Then I lost all sensation, occasion'd by a body of lightning coming down the chimney which I cannot recollect seeing, feeling the stroke or hearing the thunder- Betsey was in a worse condition having received a more severe shock and having her feet badly scalded by the pots being overset- Sally was luttel hurt- my wife coming in frighten'd almost to distraction order'd Sally to run for help - it rained excessively and the highest Neighbour about 200 yards off and People mostly at Church as was Saml. The first thing I recollect was that I was lying on my back on the floor and several People around me raising my head the circulation from my body downwards seem'd totally suspended and my thighs & legs felt like solid masses of lead which I was totally unable to stir. I told the People my legs and feet were dead- they then stripp'd them and by chafing and rubbing with Campher soon encourag'd the circulation which proceeded gradually downward until the dead weight was in a measure removed and I could stir my feet- as the floor was cover'd with fire, ashes, soot, broken brick & lime I was removed to another room- here I discover'd Betsey grasping for breath in the utmost agony, which was all the symptoms of life I could discover in her- the sight of this reviv'd in me a heartfelt grief which I had not felt for myself. After some time I could begin to move my legs and feet- was washed and put to bed- Betsey was also put to bed in a much worse condition and my heart still melts when I recollect what my wife must have felt on this tragical occasion. I proceed now to give you a short and imperfect account of some of the wonderful and incomprehensible properties of Lightning. The top of the chimney was broken to pieces and fell on the back of the house, as it was attached in the middle of the house the rafters and roof kept the part that was confined standing, after which one side was burst off almost to the second floor, the lightning then proceeded down the fireplace where 2 trunnels were hanging the lightning then seems to have separated into a number of parts one stream struck the jamb of the chimney a solid wall of brick about 12 inches thick and drill'd a hole through which was not more than a quarter of an inch in diameter at the entrance and not so big as a goose quill on the other side it then went through the floor with a shiver out of a Sleeper to the door which has a stairway of 3 steps one of the side pieces of which it split and follow'd to the ground, another stream enter'd the floor at the opposite end of the fireplace- took a shiver out of the under side of a plank running nearly at right angles with the first mention'd stream, to another door and descended to the ground exactly in the manner of the first, between these 2 streams we all three stood and Betsey received a violent stroke on the left side of her neck which proceeded down her breast inclining toward her side until it took her arm and proceeded in a spiral manner round her arm and ended in a point, the skin seem'd sear'd and of a dark colour the streak in the widest part about an inch growing less toward each end. Altho' the wound itself is neither much sore or painful yet her whole body is disorder being sore and painful in every part- it is with difficulty she can swallow any kind of nourishment and she is still in a low state but we have good hopes of her recovery. I now proceed to give an account of myself during this uncommon scene. It has been long known that one property of lightning is that it is of so subtil a nature that it will pass thro' a bar of solid Iron without impeding its force or velocity another property of this inexplicable something I find is, that when it meets a brick wall, which it seems resists its subtilty, though the stream is not bigger than a straw, it will bore its way through with a great velocity. I have reason to believe that a stream



of incomprehensible something passed through my clothing without any visible mark and coincided with my body a little below my armpits- glided down my side nearit to my hips, it then became forked- one stream continued its course in a pretty direct line down my thighs and leg and went off at my heel bursting my shoe behind- the other streak went down the right side of my belly directly to my watch- melted the silver on the edge of the case and left a black tarnish on the edge of the chrystal without doing any other damage- the skin in these streaks is of a deep red colour in some places an inch wide and in others less, in parts that are fleshy the skin was coloured but not injured but in the bony parts as down the side of my knee the skin seem'd sear'd and was of a dark colour and some small blisters appear'd, under the chrystal of my watch there still remains a very deep red spot, all this was done without searching a thread of my clothing as I can perceive altho' they have been washed, the streaks and blisters are neither sore nor painfull and the smart of the whole is not more than what I have felt in one day from being sunburnt.

This my dear friends, tho' labouring under much bodily infirmity, I have thro' mercy, been enabled to give you an imperfect acct. of this visitation. If the shock had proved violent enough to have put an end to my existence I should have died without pain or sickness, but as it did not, I revived with a calm composure of mind which has continued without one terrifying reflection, or any grief of mind except what I feel for Betsy's misfortune and the grief and trouble of my wife and friends. My thoughts are chiefly employed in endeavoring to make the whole a Lesson of useful instruction. I have in it a striking view of the mighty frown of God together with a full conviction that his goodness is equal to his Power. I can rely with confidence on his protecting mercy in full assurance that all his dispensations toward me are for the best. I will endeavor to wait my appointed time with patient resignation, constantly praying to be instructed in the knowledge of my duty and inspired with resolution to persevere therein to my lives end.

My Eyes are weary.

Farewell.

Mr. John Lefferts



1806- Mr. John Loefferts- Hempstead- Long Island.

Beaufort Oct. 29th 1806

Dear Brother,

Yours of the 2nd Sept. I rec'd together with a number of others from my friends the contents whereof were read with a grateful sense of that love and friendly connection which unites families together. I am this day 70 years of age and in taking a retrospective view of the satisfaction which I have received in the annual visits which for several successive years I made among you, I cannot restrain the friendly tear when I consider that those heart cheering scenes are no more to return. - NO- my beloved Friends, they are past and gone, and I fear that an epistolary correspondence cannot long survive as the disorder in my Eye makes writing a painful exercise. Your promise to act as a Guardian to George gives me great satisfaction and I pray the Almighty to crown your endeavour with success. I must make my Letter short and Saml. can supply the deficiencies by answering all your enquiries. Remember me in love to all my Relations and friends. To my Sisters & yourself I wish to express that disinterested friendship and sincere love which I trust will continue thro' all the changes of life and serve to prove me your truly affectionate brother till death.

Saml. Lefferts



1808- Mr. John Lefferts- Hempstead- Long Island

Beaufort April 12th 1808

Dear Brother,

As the season approaches in which I have usually heard from you all the agreeable sensations revive which are nourished by a friendly intercourse, - blest intercourse which animates every fibre of my heart and calls forth a convivial flow of love which the cold damps of age cannot suppress. Ye Powers above- Ye Guardians of virtue assist a declining child of mortality once more to attempt to keep up that intercourse which alone can supply the place of personal converse and reci----- endearments. Since my last I have experienced various vicissitudes of health and infirmity, but thro' mercy my health seems pretty well restored at present, and I thankfully acknowledge the blessing as it gives me another opportunity of writing to you and the hopes of receiving an answer from you. I long to hear from you and the rest of my friends, for as many of them are advanced in years, as well as myself, I have reason to expect some alterations may have taken place in the course of the year. I have waited all the spring in hopes that some Vessel from this place would go to NewYork in which case I expected to have sent Saml. but as no oppty offers I send this by a Gentleman who does not expect to return till the fall, therefore cannot expect an answer immediately, nevertheless if you have any thing of consequence to inform me of you can write by Post as there is a Postoffice now established in this place where the Mail comes regularly once a fortnight. My family all join me in their respects to yourself, to my Sisters and all friends and particularly to George whos welfare we have still at heart, please to inform him that his mother died in September last, that his sister Sally lives with us, that she is a healthy well grown young woman- dutiful and industrious in which I hope he will follow her example.

My wife tho' 2 years younger than myself seems more infirm altho' she is seldom confined to the House she is often talking and dreaming of your making us a visit and seems full of hopes of seeing you here. I heartily wish it might suit you to comply with our wishes in crowning her hopes. All the encouragement I can give is that when you arrive you will, I hope, find us pleasantly situated with a comfortable habitation and a family united in friendship peace. I am dear Brother with unceasing love and esteem your aged brother,

Saml. Lefferts

On back of letter: "I wish you to Send your letter down as Soon as possible as the Vessel sails the latter end of this week!"

John Van Nostran

Copied from the original owned by Mrs. Aleeze Lefferts Smith. Gloucester, N.C.



1809- Mr. John Lefferts- Hempstead- Long Island  
Capt.<sup>n</sup> Stanton

Beaufort September 20th 1809

D<sup>r</sup>. Brother,

As the year rolls round the season approaches when I am looking out for a conveyance to let you know that I still survive and am permitted to tell you that my health continues seemingly as well as it was 12 months ago, altho I am sensible that every year must increase the load that will in the end press me to the grave. I am about to decline all business but such as will serve as an amusement to prevent the wearisomeness of leisure. I find that exercise of some kind or other are necessary as the shortest day is too long to be comfortably spent in idleness and I cannot without an opiate spend the shortest night in sleep. After so long an introduction I proceed to let you know that the summer has been generally healthy owing perhaps to its being more cool and wet than common the crops it is said will not be so plentiful as they were the last year but as we have had no storms to destroy them I presume that grain will be plenty and cheap and as people are getting into the way of clothing themselves in homespun I can see no cause to complain of hard times altho we should be cut off from some of the foreign Luxuries which we have been too much accustomed to. I have been gratified of late to observe that almost all the Gentlemen from Newbern and other fashionable towns appear in homespun coats on all public occasions altho we have no manufactories and the cloth whether cotton or wool is worn just as it comes from the Loom and every family spins and weaves for their consumption, the complaints against Government on account of the suspension of trade seem to subside in proportion as people find they can live without it. My little family continue as before with the addition of George Dill who lives with us and serves to run errands and do little jobs about the house. Betsy and Sally are industrious and keep the house and furniture in good order, they also spin and weave cloth of which they make themselves decent clothing. Saml. is with us merely as a boarder, since he has been studying with the Doctor so we seldom see him but at meal time. Blest as I am with health I have reason to think myself as well situated for comfort as a man of my age and condition can reasonably expect to be, I have time for reflection- can see company or retire as best suits my inclination, and as I am not interrupted by any one I take care not unnecessarily to interrupt others. As I am hard of hearing, ever since the shock from the lightning, the young People about me can enjoy their own conversation, in a low key, in the same room with me, without letting me into their secrets or exciting my curiosity. The chief source of my anxiety arises from the sufferings of my daughters and their families as they have each a number of small children and they are seldom without some complaint. Mary A. Dill has suffered extremely with the rheumatism which has deprived her of the use of some of her fingers but she is in tolerable health at present. Sally Brooks has had a bad time lately in childbed- was with much difficulty delivered and her child expired as soon as it was born- she is now---- in a state of recovery. You may perceive by the length of my Letter that I write with less difficulty than I have done for some time past, a blessing for which I cannot sufficiently express my grateful thanks to the giver of all good. We know not how to appreciate the blessings we enjoy until we are in danger of being deprived of them, and it is indeed a pleasant thing for the eyes to behold the light. I send this by Cap James Stanton who lives in Beaufort by whom I hope to hear from you and the rest of my friends. Please to remember me particularly to my Sisters to Bisey & George and return my compliments to all inquiring friends. I am with the highest respect and esteem Your brother and friend.

Saml. Lefferts

Copied from the original owned by Mrs. Aleeze Lefferts Smith, Gloucester, N.C.



1809- Mr. John Lefferts- Hempstead- Long Island  
to the care of J. Van Nostrand

Beaufort April 10th 1809

D<sup>r</sup>. Brother,

I rec'd your fav<sup>r</sup> of the 14th of Nov<sup>r</sup> by Capt<sup>n</sup> Duncan together with the other friendly Letters which were an acceptable relief to me in a time of trouble. My Wife after lying about 4 months in the most deplorable condition expired on the 3rd of November and as I had reason to hope that she was prepared for that death which put an end to a tedious and painful disorder. I felt intirely satisfied with the decree of Providence and submitted to my fate without a murmur. As Betsy Pugh's time of service with my Wife had been out more than 3 years at the time of my Wife's death I expected this change in the family might incline her to leave us in which case Sally would have been lonesom and of course dissatisfied which might have occasioned me to break up housekeeping, but as they seem firmly united and desirous to continue in their present stations I can see no prospect of bettering myself by a change. Government have had a Fort erected here, the work has been going on for 6 months past and has in a great measure compensated for the privations of the Embargo, the materials were all furnished and the labour all done by the Inhabitants of the place which has already put about \$10,000 in circulation among us and will I expect require 5,000 more to complete the work. The winter has been cold and stormy but tolerably healthy- provisions are plenty and cheap- and every housewife is busily employ'd in clothing her family in homespun- and altho' goods are scarce the prices are low and the sale dull. My family and friends here are in reasonable health and nothing remarkable has happen'd among us since my Wife's death- for my own part I have enjoy'd as good health for 12 months past as I have experienced for many years back. I live retired, have but little to do and have the consolation to find myself able to do that little with comfort, how long this will be the case God only knows for as I am in my 73rd year I have reason to conclude that my time is short. You ask my advice with respect to George I can only recommend you to consult his ~~own~~ and inclination and do what you think is the best for him- if he is not calculated for a man of letters and dislikes mechanical business let him learn the art of husbandry and take his rank among that respectable class of men call'd Farmers. As it is troublesome to me to write many Letters I desire you to remember me to George and tell him that I advise him to stay where he is until he learns to earn his living and not come here to learn the idle habits which prevail among the Boys and prevents their usefulness when they arrive at manhood. Samuel has spent much of his time in this Idle way but at length has been taken notice of by a D<sup>r</sup>. Poythress who commenc'd the pratice of physic here about 2 year ago, and is now studying with him and seems very attentive to his business in which I earnestly hope he may succeed as I have nothing more at heart than the welfare of all my children- As one Letter must serve I have to request you to give my most friendly respects to all my relations and friends and with every good wish for them and yourself I remain Your ever loving Brother

Saml. Lefferts

Copied from the original owned by Mes. Aleeze Lefferts Smith, Gloucester, N.C.



1810- Mr. John Lefferts- Hempstead- Long Island  
Favour'd by Capt. Stanton

Beaufort April 10th 1810

r  
D. Brother,

Yours of the 17th of Feby. by Capt.<sup>n</sup> Duncan came safe to hand for which you have my grateful acknowledgments, was glad to hear once more that all friends were well.

I am still pursuing the voyage thro' life, in an old, though tolerably sound Barque. I endeavour to proceed under an easy sail and as much as possible to guard against the storms and quicksands of life and am constantly looking out for the Port where I am to resign the helm and retire from the busy scenes and perplexing cares of this transitory life. I am not much concern'd to know what opinion the world will form of me after I am gone but am much engaged in serious meditation and prayer to make my calling and election sure. After all my toil and study I find myself weak ignorant and full of imperfection, but my hope is that a wise and merciful God will not take advantage of the imperfections of his creatures, but will help their infirmities- hear their prayers- assist them in the hour of temptation- redeem them from all evil and do for them who diligently seek his favour, what they are not able to do for themselves- here I wish to fix the anchor of hope and when that is established I shall rest in peaceful retirement- be content to forget the world and be by the world forgotten. It is a time of general health and my family and relations, as far as I know, are all well- the necessaries and common comforts of life are plenty and cheap. as to other News I do not recollect any at present worth relating. Please to remember me in the kindest manner to all my relations and particularly to those of your own family. I am with the utmost friendship and esteem your own loving brother.

Saml. Lefferts

P.S. After finishing my Letter and subscribing my name thereto I recollected that I had to acknowledge the receipt of a firkin of Butter by Saml. which he told me was a present from you and for which I gratefully thank you, it was good and came very seasonably to hand as butter is a scarce article here in the winter season. I am &c

Saml. Lefferts

Copied from the original owned by Mrs. Aleeze Lefferts Smith, Gloucester, N.C.



1811- Mr. John Lefferts- Hempstead- Long Island  
24th June

Dear Brother,

I rec'd Yours together with several other friendly Letters last fall and as nothing new has happen'd I have delayed writing till now when I have to inform you that I have sold my possessions here to Mr. Henry M. Cooke who is appointed Collector for the Port of Beaufort in the room of Mr. Brian Hellen who resigned and as Mr. Cooke is an intimate acquaintance of mine and has an agreeable wife and but one child and I am particularly attached to the pleasant situation which I have enjoyed for 10 years past I have agreed to continue as a boarder with Mr. Cooke during pleasure. I have also sold my furniture and what goods I had on hand at auction so that I am now quite disengaged from business so that it is remarked here that I have set the singular example of making my Will and executing of it in a great measure in my life time and in a state of health. Under existing circumstances if health and strength is continued possibly I may attempt to make you a visit next summer, but at my advanced stage of life I dare not venture to say that it is very possible altho' I have a very great desire to see you all once more and take an affectionate farewell before the Curtain falls that will put a final end to our friendly correspondence. I send this by a Capt<sup>n</sup> Rumbly of this place who I expect will not leave NewYork in less than 10 days after his arrival I therefore hope it will be in your power to forward a Letter as I am very desirous of hearing from you. For further particulars I refer you to Betsy's Letter and as I do not recollect anything more worth relating I only request you to remember me to all relations and enquiring friends and remain as ever your affectionate brother

Saml. Lefferts

Beaufort Apl. 16th 1811

Copied from the original owned by Mrs. Aleaze Lefferts Smith, Gloucester, N.C.



Rec'd 1st Aug. 1812 Mr. John Lefferts- Hempstead- Long Island  
Fav'd by David Hellen

Beaufort July 20th 1812

Dear Brother,

Thro' the long continued permission of a kind Providence I am permitted once more to enquire after the welfare of my distant but much esteemed friends. As I have received no Letter from any of you since October last, you may reasonably suppose that a favour of that kind would be very acceptable, during the winter and spring I have indulged hopes that if health and opportunity permitted I should have made you a visit this Summer but altho' my health and strength are in no way impaired yet as no good opportunity has offered before the declaration of war I have little hopes of ever seeing you again, it is therefore necessary if we mean to keep alive the spark of friendship to cherish it by a regular epistolary correspondence, which may be best effected by post, as the Mail comes here regularly once a week and a Letter from NewYork is usually rec'd here in 14 or 15 days. I send this by David Hellen who is able to answer all enquiries which your friendship or curiosity may induce you to make both with respect to himself and your relations here. I recommend David to your friendly attention- his case is truly singular- he was bound apprentice to a Carpenter & house joiner of the first respectability with whom he wrought till within a few months of the end of his term, giving general satisfaction and sustaining a good character, at the time he was visited with a painful and wasting disease which terminated in what was termed by Physicians and others to be a confirm'd Consumption, which progressed untill it was thought to be in the last stage of the disorder when he seem'd to be relieved from the very Jaws of death by a speedy and severe salivation, after which a change took place- he recovered gradually and for 3 months past no symptoms of a consumptive nature have appeared- but altho' he has recov'd his flesh and appears to be in health yet I fear he is so much debilitated by inward decay that he will never have strength sufficient to go through the laborious part of his calling. As times are dull here at present David has determined to take a trip to NewYork in hopes that he may find some kind of employment suitable to his strength by which he may earn his bread until he knows how matters may terminate with respect to his future prospects. Any assistance that you or any of our friends can give him will be gratefully acknowledged by me and I beleive his character as to sobriety and honesty is unexceptionable. I have ~~to request~~ you to give my most friendly regards to George and let him know that his sister Sarah was married last fall to Wm. Brooks a brother to James Brooks and that she has a daughter born whom she calls Susanna Lefferts. It seems to be a general time of health at present and Crops are flourishing so that there is a prospect of plenty. The alarm of war is amongst us and a Battalion of the new raised militia are to be posted here and at Fort Hampton which is at the Inland point opposite the Town.

Please to remember me to all enquiring friends, and accept the best wishes of your aged brother.

Saml. Lefferts

Copied from the original owned by Mrs. Alceze Lefferts Smith, Gloucester, N.C.



Mr. John Lefferts- Hempstead- Long Island, N.Y.  
Beaufort, N.C. May 1814

Straits near Beaufort, May 15th 1814

Ever Dear Brother,

About 3 weeks ago I had the very great satisfaction of receiving your favour of the 9th of March and I owe my grateful acknowledgments to the giver of all good for the health & comfort which you and the rest of my relations enjoy. I had heard of Sister Mary's death by a former Letter but not of uncle John's and heartily sympathize with you in the satisfaction you express in having been so eminently instrumental in administering to their support and comfort when the weight of old age and poverty lay heavy upon them. When I wrote you last I was a boarder in the house that I formerly owned where I continued till about 20 months ago, when as Samuel had taken a house in a pleasant situation on the waters of the Straits, I agreed to live with him and am so well pleased with the agreeable disposition of the wife and Neighbors that I am likely to still to continue here, and altho' I am 77 years of age I do not remember ever to have spent 20 months together with fewer complaints. After war was declared Saml. who is always pleased with new things, turned his attention to military Tactics in which he soon distinguished himself and in July last when the Regulars who garison'd Fort Hampton were order'd to march to Canada a Garison was furnished from the drafted militia, Saml. entered the service as a volunteer as a 3. Lieut. of Artillery and in the course of 6 months rose to the rank of 1. Lieut. And when a second draft was made he tho't fit to continue in the Fort until they were relieved by regulars which happen'd about 3 weeks since. Fort Hampton is 6 miles from our house. I am glad to hear that you are not much oppressed by y<sup>e</sup> calamities of war and that the industrious can find employment and live comfortably. And I am happy that I have it in my power to make the same remark with regard to people here I do not know a single article of provision that is higher than usual, except sugar, which has been as high as \$25 per C wt. The inland navigation between our Inlet and Virginia has been very profitable to those who own small vessels as great quantities of goods are brought in here in neutral Vessels & ----- and transported thro' the Sound to Virginia and I believe there are one time with another since the war five times the number of large vessels in this port that I have ever known to be here in time of peace. But notwithstanding all the profit that can be made I abominate the very name of war and should prefer peace tho' attended with laborious poverty accompanied with virtue and humanity. Finding that I am near the bottom of my paper I must quit other matters or neglect the obligations of friendship. Altho' my Eye sight is no worse than it has been for years past yet writing is a troublesome business to one of my age I must therefore be excused from writing more than one Letter to my friends at Hempstead, therefore I request of you to give my best respects to each and every of them and I beseech God Almighty to bless you all both here and hereafter. I remain your ever affect. brother.

Saml. Lefferts

Copied from the original owned by Mrs. Alceze Lefferts Smith, Gloucester, N.C.



Dated 1815

Mr. John Lefferts- Hempstead- Long Island

Straits near Beauf't 10th Sept. 1815

R<sup>r</sup>  
D. Brother, d

Dev. Hellen was with me to day and inform'd me that he was going to NewYork and I immediately set about writing a Letter which has become a very uncommon thing with me, I rec'd a Letter from brother Leffert dated at Wilmington the 29 of May last who inform'd me that he was loading a Ship for Liverpool but did not let me know whether he was going there himself or not, his like the rest of his Letters, was short barely informing me that he believ'd our friends in general were well. The prospect before us here is very discouraging we were visited with a Storm on the 3rd and 4th of this instant which raised the tide to such tremendous height that it overflowed all the low Lands on the Sea board and and altho' the lower floors of our houses are generally 2 feet or more above the ground yet I have heard of but very few but what had the tide on the floor. The Sea made a fair breach over the Land washing away fences and every thing, that would float which was carried in long rafts over the corn fields laying every thing waste in their progress, great numbers of stock are drowned, and without some unexpected relief I fear many of the poorer class must suffer the effects of famine I have seen a number of Hurricanes during my residence in this country but never saw such inundation before and I could have wished that I might have been permitted to have finished my pilgrimage before it happen'd, I am within a few weeks of finishing my 79th year and altho' I am bless'd with a good degree of health the infirmities of age are daily reducing my strength and I can perceive my mortal powers also are fast declining therefore you need not be at a loss to account for the imperfections of my Letter, as my Eye sight is much impaired of late I shall attempt to write but one Letter making use of you as my proxy to deliver my most cordial respects to all my dear Relations & friends warning them that this is likely to be my farewell address, the surviving members of my family here are generally in tolerable health but some of them I fear will suffer severely by common calamity above described as they are in low circumstances & have large families of small children I am dear brother with every consideration of love and respect your aged brother.

Saml. Lefferts

Copied from the original owned by Mrs. Aleeze Lefferts Smith, Gloucester, N.C.



Dated 1816

Mr. John Lefferts- Hempstead- Long Island  
Fav'd by David Hellen

Beaufort April 30th 1816

Dear Brother,

I received your favour of October last by David Hellen which is the last Letter I have rec'd from NewYork and I never heard of brother Lefferts arrival from Europe till about 6 weeks ago when I saw a young man from NewYork who told me that brother returned in November but he knew nothing of his success in his voyage. I believe I gave you some account of the Storm which we experienced here in September and of the distress which many people were reduced to on that account, such distress as will not soon be forgotten, but as divine Providence never sends affliction without a visible display of his mercy so the consequences of the calamity has proved less fatal than what was expected. The fall and winter has been more sickly than usual and there has been many deaths especially among the ~~aged~~ and altho' I am one of the few that now compose the oldest class in the County I have thro' mercy enjoy'd an uncommon degree of health insomuch that I have not laid myself down on account of ill health since the month of August 1814. My children and grandchildren have suffered in the common ~~calamity~~ altho' they are in tolerable health at present. I should be glad to hear how you and the rest of my friends are as I still feel an interest in your welfare altho' I have not a hope left of ever seeing you again, my days must be numbered and my pilgrimage on earth must be drawing to a close and every epistle from a frail mortal in the eightieth year of his age may well be considered as a valedictory address. Please to give my best respects to all my Relatives and friends and reserve the best wishes of your aged brother.

Saml. Lefferts

Copied from the original owned by Mrs. Aleeze Lefferts Smith, Gloucester, N.C.



6th September 1818- Mr. John Lefferts- Hempstead- Long Island

Straits near Beaufort Sept<sup>r</sup> 6th 1818

Dear Brother, Sister & Neice,

With weak nerves, dim Eyes & a trembling hand I undertake this joint and last address to you my ever dear relatives and friends. On the 2nd Sept<sup>r</sup> instant I rec'd your Letters of the 12th & 15th of July last which I read with usual satisfaction. I return my grateful acknowledgments for this and all other favours of every kind which you have from time to time confer'd upon me. In a former Letter I believe I inform'd you of the uncommon degree of health I have been blessed with for a number of years past this continued without much interruption till Sept<sup>r</sup> last when I was somewhat indisposed for some days which was followed by a privation of strength & loss of appetite & a slight fever I nevertheless walked about the house for a week when my fever & weakness confin'd me to my bed and progressively increased until I verily thought myself dying and took my leave of my friends who were present, nevertheless it pleased God to continue me longer in this world altho' my hearts desire in daily prayer was to depart, during the course of this fever I never had any pain or other distressing symptom but enjoy'd perfect quietness & composure both of body and mind but while in a state of recovery I endured much pain and disquiet, but altho' much weaker and infirm than I have usually been I have enjoy'd a tolerable degree of health during the summer but have had an impression on my mind ever since my recovery that I should not survive more than 1 year if so much, this impression still continues and as I feel nearly the same symptoms with which my sickness commenced last year I have reason to think that my pilgrimage on earth is nearly at an end, I am still reconciled to my fate and sincerely pray that Gods will may be done. My grandson John Hellen died last fall the rest of the family here are I believe in good health. I have lived to be so much a stranger to the world that I know but very little of what passes even in the neighborhood where I live and am so hard of hearing that I do not understand a word of what is said in the key of common discourse even in the house where I reside.

When ever I have made you a visit I have always considered that bidding you farewell was the most affecting scene that happened I have lived to bid a final ~~farewell~~ to the far greatest part of my relations and friend and I think I am the oldest person living of all our family connections, why my life is spun out so far beyond my wishes I cannot conceive but I cheerfully submit to the wise disposer of events knowing that I must shortly bid a final adieu to the world and all that inhabit it and how much sooner the tender feelings are exited I shall conclude this my last Epistle by bidding you all an affectionate and final farewell. Farewell my dear brother my Dear Sister & Neice- Farewell for ever.

I am &c

Saml. Lefferts

Copied from the original owned by Mrs. Aleese Lefferts Smith, Gloucester, N.C.



Mr. John Lefferts- Hempstead- Long Island, N.Y.

1820 Beaufort N.C.

4th month 15

Straits near Beaufort April 10th 1820

Ever Dear Brother,

As I was not permitted to die when I most ardently desired it & when the thread of life seemed to be spun out to the extreme end, and as I did not meet the fate I anticipated afterward I think it a duty I owe to you to let you know that I still survive, and am adding more days to my wearisome pilgrimage on earth, and, thro' divine mercy, enjoy a tolerable degree of health and comfort. After I recovered from my sickness and found I had still to live I thought it might be most for my comfort to have a home of my own in a retired situation to spend the remainder of my days without being beholden to others, I therefore purchased a house and small farm at the Straits about 6 miles from Beaufort where I have lived better than 2 years. Samuel and his family consisting of himself his wife three children and 2 slaves live with me at present. My only surviving child Sally Brooks lives about a half mile from me, she has 7 children and a kind husband and they seem to live as comfortable as their neighbors. My daughter Mary Ann died about 3 years ago, she left 8 children but her eldest son William Dill died lately of a consumption, my grandson John Hellen is also dead, the rest of my descendants here I believe are in health, and it has been remarkably healthy here during the year past, the crops of grain along our sea coast have been abundant the two last seasons, and as there has been less call for it abroad than usual it is plenty and provision in general much cheaper than they have been for many years past.

In your Letter of July 1818 you gave me a very pleasing acct. of Georges affairs, please to remember me to him and tell him that I wish him success and advise him to pursue his calling where he is, and by no means to think of coming to Carolina in hopes of bettering himself, there are many instances of young tradesmen who have come from the northern States with this view, and after working at their trades a while have been led by the example of those who are supported by the labour of their Slaves into such habits of dissipation, as must prove injurious to all, and finally ruins many. If you should ever favour me with another Letter I should be glad to know how brother Leffert succeeds in his new undertaking, and what ever else may have happen'd to any of my friends, since your last, my will is good to write more Letters but writing which was formerly a pleasing amusement has now become a burdensome task, I therefore request you to answer my purpose by remembering me in the most friendly manner to all who may interest themselves in my welfare and more particularly to Sister Abigail, my neices Betsey and Mary Titus and their husbands, My Daughter Sally and Samuel desire to be remember'd, I am dear brother with unabated affection and a heartfelt friendship your aged brother.

Saml. Lefferts

Mr. John Lefferts  
by Post

Copied from the original owned by Mrs. Aleeze Lefferts Smith, Gloucester, N.C.



1821

Mr. John Lefferts- Hempstead

Straits near Beaufort Sept. 10th 1821

Dear Brother,

Having duly observed the contents of your Letter I have concluded not to import any goods for sale, for as I closed my mercantile business 10 years ago I do not think proper to renew it at my stage of life when nature seems to require rest rather than action. Goods cannot well be sold at present without giving credit which would be opening a number of new accounts which would not probable be settled in my life time, I have therefore made out a memorandum of such articles as I think necessary for my own support and comfort and some to distribute among those whose circumstances and merit claims my assistance, after which I recommend it to you to remit the remainder of what you think fit to bestow in Cash, which can be deposited and hope ready to be distributed when ever it shall be necessary in order to comply with your generous intentions aided by my Judgment or direction.

I have further to remark that if you assist George during your life and leave him something by will he will be better provided for than the rest of my grandchildren and as by the tenor of my will he will come in for his distributive share of my small ~~estate~~ I shall order his share to be deliver'd to his sister Sally as I think it more reasonable for her to have the use of it than any other person until George shall ----- fit to demand it. As Saml. cannot answer all your inquiries respect our affairs here I shall only request you to tell my relations and friends that I wish them once more to remember me and with high regard and with sincere friendship for them and your self I remain your aged brother.

Saml. Lefferts

Copied from the original owned by Mrs. Aleeze Lefferts Smith, Gloucester, N.C.



1821- Mr. John Lefferts- Hempstead- Long Island, N.Y.

Beaufort, N.C.

Straits near Beaufort August 27th 1821

7th month. 1st

Ever Dear Brother,

Your favour of the 8 instant I received the 24th with the usual satisfaction that ever attends them, Your liberal proposal intitles you to my most grateful acknowledgments and your generous donation, when received, if life permits, shall be applied in such manner as best answers your intentions as far as they are known.

As you are desirous to know my circumstances and how I spend my time it may proper to give you some account of both, my little farm and bank stock is nearly all the property I possess and all the income I have is the profit arising from my bank stock which notwithstanding the dividends have been small for 2 years past has proved sufficient to furnish me with all the necessary comforts of life and a little to spare for other purposes.

Finding my stomach often divided by heavy diet, and variety I came to resolution about 18 months ago to quit the use of flesh meat and of spiritous liquors of every kind since which my food has been fish, shell fish, butter, bread, rice, potatoes and other vegetables and my drink coffees which I use for breakfast & supper and occasionally at other times this new mode of living soon became familiar and I never have had the least inclination to alter it my stomach and bowels are undisturbed and I feel no infirmity of body except such as the effect of old age, I enjoy tranquillity of mind and being at peace with the whole world I wish well to all the human race. I have made my will by which after bequeathing a few particular legacies I have ordered all the remainder of my estate to be equally divided among all my grandchildren who are living at the time of my decease for altho' their merits may not be in all respects equal yet I thought it best to act indiscriminably and leave their virtues and vices to be rewarded or punished by a more competent Judge.

I am fond of retirement and spend the greater part of my Time, by myself and as my bill of fare is very different from that of others I usually provide and dress my own provisions the employment of Cooking with some other trifling matters which I am able to do helps to lighten the burden of time which frequently lies heavy on hand. Thus I have given you a brief account in what manner I am journeying through the last stages of life and waiting for that summons which is to bring me to the place appointed for all the living where I hope through mercy to exchange my wearisome pilgrimage on earth for a quiet and lasting peace.

I have agreed with Samuel to go to NewYork when opportunity offers which I do not expect will happen till sometime in October, when he arrives you can arrange your matters with him and he can do my business without giving you further trouble, my Eyes are weary but I must comply with tender feelings of my heart and request you to remember me in the most affectionate manner to my sister and other relations whose welfare is dear to me and wishing that they with yourself may enjoy the smiles of a long and gracious Providence I remain your aged brother.

Saml. Lefferts

Copied from the original owned by Mrs. Aleeze Lefferts Smith, Gloucester, N.C.



Mr. John Lefferts- Hempstead- Long Island, N.York

Beaufort, N.C.  
 11th mo. 24  
 Nov. 18th 1821

Straits near Beaufort Nov. 18th 1821

Dear Brother,

By the unmerited blessing of a kind Providence I am enabled to acquaint you with Samuel's return he arrived on the 26th of October bringing with him all the goods agreeable to my memorandum amounting to \$208.31 and those for his own use amounting to \$93.55 and the remainder of Cash amounting to \$685 these sums together with the freight and other necessary expenses completing the whole sum of \$1000. The goods after reserving those for my own use I have distributed as follows: As my deceas'd daughter Mary Ann was all her life time a dutiful and beloved child and in her Mr. Dill has to lament the loss of an industrious and prudent wife and his children ( 4 of them young and unable to provide for themselves, a most kind and tender mother I have considered them as the most needy and accordingly given a larger allowance than the rest, 2<sup>nd</sup>ly as my daughter Sally is my only surviving child and pays great attention to me ever seeking for opportunities to administer to my relief and comfort, I have duly considered her merits & so aided her accordingly, as to the rest I have considered their circumstances giving more to those who have families to provide for and less to those who have only themselves to support, & so order'd it that none have been neglected and all seem satisfied. As Samuel left his own business at home and went to N.York to do mine and had performed it to my satisfaction I have made him what I think ample compensation for his services, he seems also to have received much satisfaction from his visit and was proposing to write but we have concluded it best for me to write now and for him to do it at some future day when perhaps he may have something of more consequence to relate he therefore wishes to be remember'd to all friends and to be excused from writing. As I have no occasion to make use of any of the money on my own acct. I shall take care to preserve it until it shall become necessary to dispose of it agreeable to your generous intentions. People have been rather sickly this fall and sundry cases have happen'd among our relations, but I believe they are generally in health at present, as for my self I have had several complaints but am thro' mercy tolerably well at present, the infirmities of old are upon the increase as it might reasonably be expected at eighty five and as I am alternately stronger and weaker at short intervals I can plainly perceive that I gently descending from my present stage of life to its last reward and my daily petition to y<sup>e</sup> throne of mercy is that I may be enabled with pious resignation to wait my appointed time and die in peace at last and that you and the rest of my dear relations and friends may enjoy the same felicity that I solicit for myself in the prayer & hearts of your truly loving brother.

Saml. Lefferts

Copied from the original owned by Mrs. Aleeze Lefferts Smith, Gloucester, N.C.