

Morris County Library, Whippany NJ
Local history collection
HOWELL FAMILY LETTERS

Gideon and Sarah Gordon Howell raised a large family in Hanover Twp NJ in the late 18th c. Gideon, in the Township 1798 tax rolls, is listed as farming 400 acres, his son Ezekiel 290 acres. Gideon's and Sarah's son Daniel, with his wife Eunice Keen, was among a company of New Jerseyans who went west to Ohio, ending their journey by settling the town of North Bend there, a 632 mile overland trip.

Three of Daniel's and Eunice's letters were presented to the library in June 2013 in memory of Arthur Lefkowitz, used furniture dealer (died 2004) who came into possession of them when he did an estate clearance of the Morristown home of Eleanor Cook in 1963. Contact Morris County Library for additional information on Mr. Lefkowitz and Miss Cook. Additional Howell family letters will be found in the archives of the University of Michigan libraries.

January 16, 1790

Honored Father and Mother I gladly take this opportunity to inform you that we are all well at present for which and all other mercys we have great reason to bless Almighty God and hope that these lines may find you all in like condition, we are at Mr Jeremiah Gards and expect to tarry here this winter we had a tedious journey of about four weeks, I have had plenty of work at my trade as yet, I have made 14 pr of shoes for one man and 2/oi a pr for cash 2/6 is the price in trade, provision is something scarce here, an early frost hurt the corn very much when we first came here we could buy wheat for 3/6/bushel cash ry - 3/0 corn 2/0 men shoes will fetch 12/0 But the price of grain rises fast by reason of the great number of travelers that are a going to Canetucke—we were so unfortunate as not to see ward and Holsey neither did any of the Neighbours see them that went before us we expect to make us Boats this winter to go down the River in the Spring—in regard to this country about Redstone I don't like it at all, nor any of the rest of us. Samuel Seward has a mind to return to Jersey again and indeed Eunice is forward to ???. But for all the account that I can hear of Canetucke it must be the best part of North America and I think to go there next spring-----Last account that Jeremiah had from Gershom Gards [stain] was last summer and then they were some at [stain] Miamis ? and some at Limestone. Jemimy is married to one Peter Keen [note: Daniel's wife Eunice also a Keen] at Limestone—we arrived here on Saturday and the next day we went to Meeting to hear one Isaac Suten a Baptist preacher and since that I have been to hear Mr. Lussberry at Besontown two miles from this he preaches there every fourth Sabath he lives on Georgeses Creek 10 miles from this I gave him the Letter that Ezekiel sent by me to him Oh how I long to see you all and to hear from Father and Mother in particular I intend to write to you all opportunitys, and hope that you will do the same by me Many is the sorrowfull hour that I have by thinking of all my absent friends and relations But as we cannot live by seeing one another but must do something more thare fore down to we must submit to the hand of providence in all these things yet I intend to go to see you as soon as opportunity will permit.

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I have nothing more in particular to inform you off, but beg you will not forgit me----- give our love to all my brothers and sisters Ezekiel in especial manner for I cant write his name without sheading tears I hope he will not fail to write to me----- it is impossible for me to write to you all in particular—thare fore, I will set down all their names in this one Letter-----give our love to Ezekiel & Susannah Gains and Elias Howell to Jonathan and Sarah John Ball and Martha Lemuil and Hannah--Henry and Abigail tell them I should be exceeding glad to have a letter from each of them--So no more at present but remain your Deer Children Till Death
Daniel & Eunice Howell

To our deer
Father and mother
Gideon and Sarah Howell

NB the letter was wrote Sometime ago and I did not date it till now and we have altered our Scheme and have bought one boat and some of us are building one now and I can't tell when we shall go down the river but I expect by the first of March if not before we have different accounts from Canetuck Some say that grane is very scarce and deer and some say that it is plenty and corn sells for 1/1 pr bushel and many that has come from there says that they can buy plenty for 0/9 pr bushel

I was so lucky on Christmas day as to kill a buck but I haven't followed hunting much tho Deer is plenty we have heard from Jersey and other places that a bad cold has been very mortal----- and perhaps some to whome I am writing, has for ever done with this world----I shall never feel easy till I hear from you all----- the Lord only knows whethe I shall ever see you more fare well

Address panel:

Mr. Gideon Howell

Hanover Township

Morris County

State of New Jersey

pr favour of Mr Pruden

Daniel & Eunice from Redstone No (2) January 16-1790

added: 7 letters t to Keenes [Eunice's family] & 1 to the chene?

From Eunice Keen Howell, wife of Daniel, to her in-laws Gideon and Sarah Gordon Howell, Hanover, NJ

April the 23rd 1790

Honored father and Mother after my kind love to you I shall try to inform you of our welfare which is sumthing Noteworthy on account of the Indians we expect they will Be something troublesome this summer they have hant hurt us yet the lord only nowe how soon they will they have killed one Stephen Carter in Sight of our door they shot him thru the back cut his throte and scalped him took his close of and his gun and left him in the woods but since That thar was thirteen men out from Limestone after Indians kiled four and took Seven horses and three guns There is a gate number of men gon after them Indians That about ? they have taken a number boots that Was a cuming down the river we had very good luck agoing down the river we never so the fase of one Indians all the way down the river we started from Redston forte and came to Limestone in seven Days and thare we staid three days and started from Lime sone and came to the little myamme [Miami] and there we found moses broadwell thay told us that his brother Was gon to Lexontun to liv there moses brodwel has got a fine Son and hay cal his name bille? Crane and Tomson saed at limestone near gobs gards near?... has gon up the little myame. [miami] and exspect to Settle thare We came on Dow the river to Singers? went whare we would be contente to stay if we could liv in peace We liv with our father yet on the of being strongger in our houses we are all well and rememember [a great deal?] agraddell of love to you Samuel Suard [Seward] had a fine Sun born in a weak after we landed on the miamme who wish you was you was all hear if you could live in peace but I cant wish you to come till there is a better prospect of it--I must bid a d?? you and all my friends at present--pray for us your Deer Children Daniel and Eunice Howell

this is Eunices letter

to our

absent father and mother

Gideon & Sarah Howell

Dear father dont fail to rite every oppportunity for I can take more peshure a reading youre letters than anithing i du remembe me to all my unkl and ants and particular to my grandmother

Address panel: Mr. Gideon Howll

Hanover

Morris County

State of New Jersey
from Daniel & Eunice
North No (4) Bend
April 23, 1790

Gideon Howell, 1/28/1728-1/20/1803
Sarah Gordon Howell, 3/25/1732-10/22/1803
Eunice Keen Howell, b 2/15/1773 daughter of Capt James Keen, married Rittenhouse after Daniel
Howell's death in 1790

To Ezekiel and Susannah Howell, Hanover, NJ

North Bend [Ohio] April 24 1790
[in Daniel's hand]

Dear Brother and Sister by these I inform you that we are all well at present for which we have reason to bless God our great preserver—I received your Letter of the 18th of Feb, together with a number of other Letters one from father and one from brother Jonathan some from brother Lemuil all of different Dates which I was Exceeding glad of we received them a week ago ~~last Saturday~~ today—I wrote a Letter to father the 2 of this instant in which I informed him that I was well satisfyd with this country and that we apprehended no danger of the Indians in this Settlement—but alas we have seen the contrary for about four days ago very early in the morning Robert Whelan was up in the loft and heard the report of two guns at one instant he looked out of the window and saw three men running and thought they were hunters and shot a Dear. Soon after he and his father went after their cows and coming past the place where he saw the men and thence they saw a most awful sight a man with his throat cut and his scalp taken of his whole head they shot a ball in at his breast which came out at his back this act of barbarity was done in sight of all our houses the men gathered and persued [sic] the Indians over the miami but could not overtake them—

We are not at present in so good a condition as I could wish but were going immediately to fortify and build a blockhouse tho it is said they will never attack the houses and I don't expect they will yet we chuse to be as safe as possible—This summer is expected to be the trying point an it is hoped Congress will send us some relief if not we must stand for ourselves we hope for the best the worst of fear we have not seen and indeed we have seen a most awful Sight indeed—the man was our nearest neighbour.
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his name was Stephen Carter son of Benjamin Carter of Chatham—if the letter I wrote to father should miscarry—we had a very good passage down the river, and never saw on of these inhuman Creturs we was but about six days from old fort to Limestone stayed there a few days and then came to Columbia in 15 hours which is 52 miles Stayed there about two weeks the land on the Little miami is of a very good quality but is much subject to the flowing of the river which was one reason of our quitting. I expect to plant about two acres of corn which is almost ready to plant we have all made gardens and should do much more if we dare to venter out as to the fish the river has been so high and cold that we have not much advantage of that as yet I have catched eight or nine the largest of them weigh eight pounds it was a cat the whicht reached that I catched was about the size of a good shad----- The time fails me the opportunity is a going of I must conclude----- give our love to father and mother brothers and sisters and all inquiring friends—pray for us that the Lord may look upon our condition and save us from the hands of unreasonable men from the barbrous Indians

From your Deer brother and sister till Death

Daniel Howell

Eunice Howell

To our

Deer brother and sister

Ezekiel &
Susanna Howell

NB I should not wish to discourage any person from coming here for our safety depends on the settling of the place yet I cant invite you or any of my relations to come her till thare be a better prospect of peace-----

Perhaps the last time I shall write to you Farewell

Address panel: No. 3
For Ezekel Howell
Hanover Township
Morris County
State of New Jersey
pr favour of Mr Silas Howell
added: Daniel's last letter to Ezekiel

Daniel Howell died three months after writing this letter, July 1790