

(A Copy)

Tazewell, Va  
Jan. 25<sup>th</sup> 1904

Mr. McCray,  
Dear Sir:-

Your letter of the 21<sup>st</sup> inst. was rec<sup>d</sup>. late Saturday afternoon, and I was so much troubled over its contents that I got little or no rest the following night, because it is the only time in my life that I ever bought several hundred bushels of corn, or any other commodity, from any party, and at a fixed price, and afterwards have almost the entire transaction denied by him, as to the price.

I feel that you have done me a great wrong, but I hope that there is nothing more serious to charge that wrong to than a defective memory on your part.

I will now try to refresh your memory as to whether or not we fixed a price on the corn. In the first place, if you will take the trouble to hunt

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up a letter that I wrote you a few days before the Mercier public sale, you will find that I stated in that letter that I would buy a few hundred bushels of corn from you privately when I attended the sale "provided you would make some little concession in price". Is not the inference from that letter <sup>as</sup> plain as can be that it was contingent on the price, as to whether or not I would buy the corn? When I did attend the sale, I called you out to one side one day for no other purpose than to make a trade with you about the corn. When I first broached the subject you asked me how much of the corn I wanted. My reply was that it depended on the price.

You then told me that you "had been offered \$2.00 per Bshl. for it to ship it," but that you <sup>thought you</sup> could get a little more for it." I then called your attention to the fact that it would cost you considerable to hire teams and haul

In the first place, if you will take the trouble to hunt up a letter I wrote you a few days before the Mercier public sale, you will find that I stated in that letter that I would buy a few hundred bushels of corn from you privately when I attended the sale "provided you would make some little concession in price". Is not the inference from that letter as plain as can be that it was contingent on the price as to whether or not I would buy the corn? When I did attend the sale I called you out to one side one day for no other purpose than to make a trade with you about the corn. When I first broached the subject you asked me how much of the corn I wanted. My reply was that it depended on the price. You then told me that you "had been offered \$2.00 per bushel for it to ship it but that you thought you could get a little more for it". I then called your attention to the fact that it would cost you considerable to hire teams and haul and deliver the corn to the cars, and that after deducting this expense that you probably would not get over \$2.00 per bushel.

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and deliver the corn to the cars, and that after deducting this expense that you probably would not get over \$2.00 per Bbl. You seemed to agree with me as to this view of it, and I made you an offer of \$2.00 per Bbl. for 80 Bbls. of the corn in the crib at the home place, and also an offer of \$1.00 per Bbl. for all the short corn that you would have at High Point, regardless of the quantity, and you accepted the offer for both lots of corn, and we were to measure it up as soon as I moved. As you admit selling me the short corn in the D. J. Mercier barn at \$1.00 per Bbl. that part of the transaction is not in question. These are the facts, and I have detailed the transaction at length with the hope that your memory may be sufficiently refreshed to set you right; if it does not, your memory indeed serves you a bad turn. The proposition that I would buy 80 Bbls. of

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good corn, and an indefinite quantity of short corn from you or any other man without having the price fixed, is absurd on the face of it.

No sane man, if he be capable of transacting business, would leave the price of that much corn to be fixed by the man from whom he buys it.

I regret <sup>deeply</sup> that we did not reduce our contract about the corn to writing as all contracts should be, but my haste to get back to my sick children prevented this.

Far more deeply, however, do I regret that a dispute untenable ~~although~~ I claim it to be on your part, should have arisen between us at all, which may cause estrangement, especially so if it should evolve itself into a question of honor, ~~which would be~~ <sup>which would</sup> trenching on sacred ground, ~~and which~~ I always will defend, even to the sacrifice of my life, if need be. Now I have written you a much

The proposition that I would buy 80 bushels of good corn and an indefinite quantity of short corn from you or any other man without having the price fixed is absurd on the face of it. No sane man, if he be capable of transacting business, would leave that price of that much corn to be fixed by the man from whom he buys it. I regret deeply that we did not reduce our contract about the corn to writing as all contracts should be, but my haste to get back to my sick children prevented this. Far more deeply, however, do I regret that a dispute untenable though I claim it be on your part should have arisen between us at all, which may cause estrangement, especially so if it should evolve itself into a questions of honor, which would be trenching on sacred ground, which I always will defend, even to the sacrifice of my life, if need be.

longer letter than I intended, yet I do not see how I could have written ~~more~~ less. In conclusion, I can only say that as I am going next week to live among strangers and new environments, I want to make friendships, not enemies, around my new home. I would most certainly rather have you my friend than my enemy, and I think you will be when you take this matter to its proper place, which is your heart and conscience.

Very Truly,  
W. R. Graham

Now I have written you a much longer letter than I intended, yet I do not see how I could have written less. In conclusion I can only say that as I am going next week to live among strangers and new environments, I want to make friendships, not enemies, around my new home. I would most certainly rather have you my friend than my enemy, and I think you will be when you take this matter to its proper place, which is your heart and conscience.

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