

New Lisbon N.J. Dec. 2nd, 1873

Andrew M. Jones

Dear Andrew

I have been in the habit of going to you in times of trouble, financial. and have been led by your advice in a general way in the general plan of any business transactions. I have doubted about writing to you now as you appear to be so fretted as at my last personal interview with you. that I dreaded to speak or write to you. now when I have lost my crop of berries and towards spring must be distressed financial in my payments. and in my advancement of my plans the next season. But I have thought it my duty to write to you. because you always have been my friend. and the friend of my parents before me. And you promised to help me financially. once on a visit here. I do not demand this help from you now. But use it as an excuse for writing to you and so neglect and old habit of so doing at such times. because your manner was so severe on me at that interview we last had. For the memory of that denunciation for incapacity, folly, and personal insult to you, for which you accused me at that time, as I believe unjustly. is very painfull to me yet. For as Sam says I have a morbidly sensitive nature. and I do not think my falt so strong as he makes it yet I suppose I must acknowledge being sensitive.

I had ditched flooded. planted my Cranberry bog more & more of late years as my crop provided the means. it has greatly improved under it. In 1871 at spring time the prospect was good for a large crop. But when the bloom was at the highth a large flood covered them with water and blasted the bloom. we had no fruit but from some budds thzt had not expanded. at the time of the flooding. In 1872 the crop appeared to be heavy after harvest so we began. (to mortgage the crop as it was) to open large ditches twelve feet wide through a swamp below the bog. continuing it up through the big meadow, aiming to avoid in the future the like losses of the year before from flooding. and to make dryer large portions of the bog that were still to wet. The crop furnishing the means we increased the dams. cleaned out the bushes from vines &c so greatly improved the whole place. made up the shortcoming of Lisbon Farm. purchased a new horse & harness. so commenced the new year with the act curant payed and a balance of a hundred or two in Bank.

During last winter the flood gate was washed out by a flood owing to some imperfection in them that we had not noticed. it took out a fathomless pit under them. so bad that at that time we estimated the cost of replacing them at near \$600. and in summer they would not cost less than one third that sum. in our first years the vines done well without flooding. so took the risk. and the vines were winter killed considerable. we also had a frost near the first of June that killed some of the blossom budds. some drought in July, when the bog should have been irrigated. but was neglected some week or two after my poor boys death. We also had a frost in September 15th. The berries being very green and tender. because the first ones to bloom were killed by the June frost. were softened up very much. Myself and some others estimated the crop at two hundred barrells just before picking and as usual with this expectation put in a gang of men to pull out bushes to drain & right after the pickers. the only time it can be done without distroying the crop during the year. We had to pay 75 cts per bu for picking, being 50 percent over the common price. A man has to be employed nine months in a year. and a horse kept for him as they are so far from any place. and then we finished picking with only one hundred blls. and these have to be sold at lower prices than usual. and the same of it wont amount to the hire by several hundred Dollars.

Lisbon Farm dont pay, the soil is greatly improved. but Corn & Pork & Rye dont pay to raise. at present prices of labour, and these articles. Farms wont sell at any prices because they dont pay to work them.

On Our soil we are forced to these crops, without we make a radical departure from old practices. Joseph J White, my son inlaw with his father has grown Strawberries and other small fruit. and know about the profits & costs of this kind of work. and advices me that with the care I would give them and the advantages of soil. Rail. Road conveniences. a nest of population for pickers. it would pay me twice or thrice what common crops would do. So it appeared easy for me to do it. with Cranberry prospects for money. So last spring I planted three acres in Strawberries, manure plants labour costing well up to \$200. It is necessary to plant every spring as msny, but we have the plants from last years patch. I wished to plant five acres in Blackberries. and have trench out large furrows and filled with mud from the swamp. Gooseberries we are propogating enough for to plant an acre or more. It will be necessary to have boxs to market the fruit that will cost about Sixty Dollars per Acre for the Strawberries but we will have them from year to year. Without we go on I seem to loose in a measure the outlay allready made. Delay a business that will be congenial to my taste. require constand supervision. and take away all necessaty for manual labour on my part, and pay. My son worked the farm on shares and as it did not pay. I find small notes against him since his death; reaching perhaps to about 350\$.

A young man that grew up with me will most likely take the farm on shares and I will attend to the berries, live here, I want a cow or two on the Farm a little repairs on the farmers house. twelve or fifteen hundred Dollars would do me this spring perhaps, and with good crops and prices next year would be most likely to pay this and much more. But should they fail once more. I think it best to borrow on Mortgage on the Cranberry Bog three. four or five thousand Dollars. and hold in in reserve a fund for such casualties.

Last year I sold my Cranberries for over five thousand Dollars gross receipts. Judging by the past our crop is like to yield one thousand barrells annual as an average. and grow larger in the area covered in vines and so go be ong this in time. then

1000 blls at 7\$ per bll	\$7000
Deduct 1/2 for marketing & pick	2333
Say. for advancement (annually)	1000
	<u>\$3333</u>
Leaving for annual profits	\$366%

This is lower than I have ever sold berries for by the barrell!

The prospect is flattering. and should be a n inducement for to purchase. such property. and I would be pleased to sell could I find a purchaser with Cash enough to pay down fifteen thousand upon it. leaving five thousand upon it!

I am over sensitive. timid. or I would try a joint stock company with it puting it down for thirty thousand Dollars. I have seen worse ones go off well at this rate. Now with the small fruit on Lisbon Farm yielding a profit and the Cranberries yielding on half less than the estimate although I expect it to reach beyond these figures in four or five years. I shall at last make I hopr a surplus fund. in a few year. My teeth are poor and I am troubled with dyspepsia and have a bowell complaint. But as soon as I see my way clear I will get a new set of teeth which I hope with reason, if not delayed to long my health will return.

My wife complains of rheumatism in the back. Minnie and the two babies are well and to Emma, they are good company.

The world tome seems brighter now than I expected it would ever do again after the death of son for a month or two. This money trouble over, and generally with Gods blessing. I trust the latter part of my life may be happier than the past has been. Do you hear any thing from France? With love to cousin Caroline

I remain truly yours  
James A Fenwick