

Woodbury, May 14, 1805

Dear Sir, (Wm. Cooper)

I am not displeased that you and my brother in law have formed a commission in business. He is the son of an honorable clergyman, who is in better circumstances than the clergy are in general among us. The family have been anxious that the young man should enter upon some of the learned professions, but his uniform attachment to trade, led them to give up that object some years since. Their next object was to settle him near them, after having prepared him for mercantile business. But his enterprising spirit has uniformly opposed every attempt of this kind, and some part of the State of New York has been in his mind for some time past.

He now seems quite pleased with going to Williamstown & I hope & believe he will do well there. He is however young & will want as much of your advice & assistance. The happiness of his family, as well as that of his own is intimately connected with his success in life & I feel a much greater confidence of that success for him being connected with you. I cheerfully commit him to your care & guidance.

I do not come across a family for your tavern yet, who will go there, that seems quite of the right sort, But perhaps I may before the season is through. If you have no objection, I had rather trust my little concern in Williamstown with Benedict than your business and if he could get a little something for drawing the writings it might be an encouragement to him on this subject, however I shall do nothing without your consent because I shall not interfere with any arrangements you may have made.

You may remember that in our contract I was to have three acres in the village lots to be drawn for. If this circumstance has slipped your mind I can communicate your letter which formed the basis of our agreement. Should you draw for the lots anytime in my absence let Benedict draw for me. Should Benedict wish to purchase any lands in Williamstown it might accommodate him for you to take a bond and mortgage of some of my Cook lands and discharge the bond & mortgage on such as he might purchase. The fact is that he has lands the fee of which has already vested in him from his mother, who is dead & will have considerable more at the death of his Father if he outlives him. And if he can accommodate himself in any way from property in Williamstown I should take lands he now has or may have in this quarter at a much better rate than for him to sell them for money & then make payment for lands in cash.

I am sir your sincere friend & well wishes

Nathaniel Smith

PS On reflection I am inclined to believe that Benedict had better purchase some land in Williamstown. It will serve to attach him to the town & interest him more fully in the business of the settlement, & if it can be done in the way I mentioned it will serve to shift his property from this quarter to that.

Yours

N.S.