

Mecklenburg

Wm. M. M.

St. Marys

Oct. July 18/46

Dear Sir,

I lately read an Essay in
reply to an Essay by a friend of mine
advocating the doctrine of the Antiquity
of man as set forth by certain Geologists.
One point I attempted to make was
to show that their calculations were quite
untrustworthy. In support of that position
I referred to 3 facts for which I was
indebted to newspapers which have
been long since destroyed. My facts
have been called in question & as the
most prominent Authority on Geological
matters ^{which} I could refer I have ventured
to write to you to ask if you could
direct me to the source from which

the facts Comd. The facts are (1)
That Sir Chas Lyell having made statements
as to the age of the Delta of the Mississippi
was proved by a U.S. Government's Commission
to have made an enormously erroneous Cal-
culation. (2) That Geologists having made
Calculations regarding the age of ^{the} Delta
were refuted by the finding of pieces of
Roman pottery which proved the Deposit
to have been made not in 1000 years but
within the Christian Era. (3) That Geologists
were proved to have made false Calcu-
lations regarding the deposits at the base
of Mt Vesuvius by the finding of the
Cities of Herculaneum & Pompeii.

The papers in which I found the
statements were the Toronto Globe & the
N. Y. Evangelist, but as the
copies have been destroyed I cannot
now refer to the number of the papers
respectively so that my Authority is

of a painfully low kind. If you
can assist me out of my difficulty
by referring me to any ~~reliable~~ Authority
to which I can appeal I shall be
very much obliged & still more obliged
if your reply be given as nearly
as possible

Apologising for troubling you but
assured that the interests of Truth will
be in your eyes my ample excuse
I remain

Dear Sir

Yours Very Truly

Principal Dawson

John McAlpine
Pres. Mon.

P.S. I may say that the Libel against whom
my Essay was directed, himself being a Minister, has
exercised for years a very beneficial influence in
this district, that my essay created at least
some division of feeling & that its effect must
to some extent be nullified if I cannot
furnish my Authorities. I may also

states that the Challenge has not yet been publicly made. It was made to night privately by a person a Comparative stranger to me, who professed to be doing it privately for his own private Satisfaction, but who I feel persuaded is an enemy of the True Union, so that in a day or two it is likely that I shall be publicly challenged to produce my Authority, when I fear the Consequences will be disastrous to the truth tho I be found wanting.

I am on Controversialists was never engaged in a Controversy before, so had no idea of the storm my essay was to raise & was therefore loose in my comparisons than, had I been more knowing, I wd have been.

J. M. A.

P. P. S. Is it true that Sir C. Lyell corrected his miscalculation before the U. S. Government Commission was appointed, or at least before they reported on the age of Delta of the Mississippi?