

FRONTISPIECE. *Self-Portrait with Spectacles*. C. W. Peale, ca. 1804. Oil on canvas, 26 × 22" (66 × 55.9 cm). Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia Gilpin Fund Purchase.

THE SELECTED PAPERS OF  
**Charles Willson Peale**

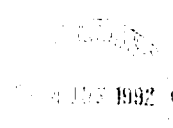
AND HIS FAMILY

VOLUME 2, *Charles Willson Peale: The Artist as  
PART 1 Museum Keeper, 1791-1810*

LILLIAN B. MILLER, *Editor*  
*Historian of American Culture, National Portrait Gallery*

*Sidney Hart, Assistant Editor*

*David C. Ward, Research Historian*



*Published for the National Portrait Gallery,  
Smithsonian Institution, by*  
YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
NEW HAVEN AND LONDON

1903

xliii, 670

me to add my sincere wishes that this legislative grant may be known and duly appreciated, as an acknowledgment of your merit in persevering, and of your success in so far advancing in your important work.

I am, &c. Your's,  
T.M.<sup>1</sup>

PrD, 1p.

1. Timothy Matlack.

### 157. CWP to the Honorable Legislature of Pennsylvania

PHILADELPHIA, MARCH 24, 1802

Gentleman

As an Individual among those who have at heart the diffusion of useful Knowledge, I beg leave to express to the Legislature of Pennsylvania the Gratification which I feel on the Resolution they have past,<sup>1</sup> appropriating part of the (*Museum*) State house, for the accommodation of a Museum, the fruit of so many years labour. Much as has hitherto been done, it is but the Foundation to a Nobler (*Institution*) Establishment which shall not be confined to the Satisfaction and advantage of a few classes of Citizens, but extended to Universal Benefit.

And always will it be a pleasing Circumstance in the History of this Establishment, that Pennsylvania has thus extended her Patronage to the first Institution of the kind in America.

\*(add here)

Gentleman

Your much obliged  
Fellow Citizen  
CW Peale.

Museum March 24th. 1802

The Honorable (*Legis*) the Legislature of Pennsylvia.

\*whenever the Museum may remain under Legislative patronage Let it be taken as the expression of Gratitude, that the Gentlemen composing our Legeslature shall be entitled to the use of the Museum and the attention of the Proprietor.

ALS, 2pp. Written in another hand, possibly ReP's, up to the asterisked insert.  
PFAmP: Peale-Sellers Papers—Letterbook 3

1. See above, 150.

## 6 Rembrandt and Rubens in England: March–December, 1802

For three months, Peale and his son Rembrandt, with the assistance of Moses Williams and William Rush, worked at assembling and mounting two skeletons of the mammoth; they finally were able to exhibit one Christmas Eve, 1801, in Philosophical Hall. The excitement that greeted the appearance of the fabulous animal convinced Peale that there would be profit in showing the second skeleton in Europe. Rembrandt was put in charge of the expedition, which included along with his immediate family seventeen-year-old Rubens, whom his father was already priming for a career in museum management, since his poor eyesight seemed to preclude art as a profession. Rubens's interest in botany, moreover, and his early instruction by his father in the "art and mystery of preparing Birds and other objects of Natural History" also seemed to dictate such an occupation.

As originally planned, the trip would take the younger Peales first to England and then to Paris and the Continent—an itinerary designed to introduce Rembrandt to the artistic capitals of the world, where he would be able to study and improve his art, and to give Rubens the opportunity to study the great museums of London, Paris, and Madrid. The Peales believed that admission fees would underwrite the young men's expenses and that they would further profit from the sale of the skeleton in Europe once they were ready to return to Philadelphia. The cause of America would also be served: in the mastodon. Europeans would finally realize that contrary to the belief spread wide by the writings of the comte de Buffon, animals in North America grew as large as their European counterparts.\*

\*CWP, pp. 261, 326; RuP, "Memorandum's of Rubens Peale and the events of his life &c." pp. 3-4, 7, P-S, F:VHIB/1A2-G13.

16. Unidentified. Sellers gives his name as Louis Wellens. Sellers, *Museum*, p. 134.  
 17. CWP lowered the admission price to view the mastodon to twenty-five cents in September. *Aurora*, September 29, 1802.  
 18. CWP did not get a printing press until 1804. See below, 298. Bowen ran off hand-bills from a press kept at his country home in Brighton, Massachusetts. Haberly, "Daniel Bowen," p. 324.  
 19. Unlocated.

175. RuP to CWP  
 LONDON, SEPTEMBER 6, 1802

London Septemr. 6th. 1802

Dear father

Rembrandt will give you a full account of what has been our proceedings. You have an idea of the bustle and noise's in this place from experience, therefore I neednot say anything on that subject, I have been to but few places of amusements yet— the *Leverian* Museum,<sup>1</sup> Pidcocks collection of Wild Beasts & Birds<sup>2</sup> (*It is said the(re are) Birds in the Museum amount to 5000 and upwards. But (it) there appeared to me to be several of one kind, but a great many valuable specimens, a great many African, South American, Asiatic, and European, but few North American*) *Leverian* Museum It is said this is the compleatest and most interesting collection of natural curiosities in the matropolis. The British Museum I have not seen therefore I cannot judge for my self which is the best collection, Mr. Parkinson was not at home I me(a)rely ran through the Rooms which Rembrandt will describe to you another time— I only say the large Room has a very elegant effect, but if the Glass cases were all one size like yours it would be ( ) much (*times as*) handsomer, it is said the Birds exceed 5000 in number, and contain 1600 several species; (*and*) some are preserved very elegantly and others indifferently, but the Quartrupeeds are preserved very bad (*but*) yet there are some very valuable ones. The Insects are but few but elegant specimens; great number from Asia Africa and south Ama. The minerals are very elegant the specimens are generally large which forms a very brilliant part of the collection, If you could only see the minerals you would emediatey set to work to display yours to advantage. Next the Shells which are placed on narrow shelves all round the room with a great varriety of other marine productions. Next that valuable collections (*which was collected*) by Captm Cook<sup>3</sup> &c. we have a great many of the same in the Museum. But to make a display (*of what he has got*) he has several of one kind which makes the collection appear more valuable than it really is. There is an Elephant preserved and a Rhinoceros

which I didnot (*not*) see which stands in the yard under a shed exposed to the air, (*also a*) in one room is an *Elephant* skull which is very different from the mammoth's in stid of continuing straight up from the condle<sup>4</sup> of the neck it goes forward and has a deep hollow about 6 Inches above the condle where as the mammoth's is almost flat, but we will discribe it completely another time. Among Pidcocks collection are, the Elephant, Lyon Tygars, Hyeana's Jackall several species of the cat kind which are new to me, The large Red nose baboon, and perhaps 20 species of *monkeys* some Lyon Monkeys with white hair around the neck & a pair of *Beavers*, and a pair of *Kangaroos* with young. They are as extrodinary as any animal I am acquainted with, when they wish to walk they press their tails on the ground then hawl their hind feet forwards and so on. The Elephant is very sagacious— one has lately died, supposed to have been poisoned by the keeper; it was to be bought by the National Insitute for 750 guineas, and was poisoned a day or so before they paid for it. Pidcock sold it to a Doctor Brooks<sup>2</sup> who is dissecting it. This happens very well to have a Skeleton which we can examine compleatly at our lasure. Among the Birds there are the Great *Vulture*, *Wood Ibis* (N 806) *Cassowarys* and a Great number of Parrots. Also the skeleton of a *whale* which is a bout 50 feet in length, I had the pleasure of seeing one on our passage which was a pleasant sight to us. It was about the size of this skeleton of a dark brown colour and with what Majesty it went through the water, and which it spouted (*the water*) up like a fountain accompanied with a kind of bellowing but went extreamely slow through its elemint. (*it*) The season her[*e*] appears like late in spring for we saw when we first came cherries and several spring fruits, now *Plumbs*, *Peaches* *Pairs* apples are just coming in season or turning red. A very good collection of Curiosities might be bought in London, Preserved Birds and beasts are in windows all over the Town and Pictures in abundance, valuable stones, (*and*) coins Medals &c.

your affectionate son  
 RP

ALS, 3pp.

PPAm1: Peale-Sellers Papers—RuP Letterbook

1. See above, 46; below, 190; see also *Peale Papers*, 1:446.
2. A menagerie of exotic wild animals managed by Gilbert Pidcock (d. 1810) had for many years been housed in the upper floor of the Exeter Exchange in London. The walls of the exhibition rooms were painted to represent appropriate scenery. CWP had written to the proprietor of the exchange in 1800 hoping to set up a correspondence. Richard D. Altick, *The Shows of London* (Cambridge, Mass., 1978), pp. 38–39, 229, 307–08; CWP to Exeter Exchange Museum, December 30, 1800, P-S, P:HA/23G1.
3. James Cook (1728–79), ship captain and explorer, who on his three voyages to the South Pacific accumulated large collections of plants, animals, and ethnological artifacts, portions of which were given to the British Museum and the Leverian Museum. RuP was

probably referring to the collections of native tools, weapons, and dress. *DNB*; Edward Miller, *That Noble Cabinet: A History of the British Museum* (Athens, Ohio, 1974), pp. 74-76; Altick, *Shows of London*, p. 32.

4. Condyle, a prominence of the occipital bone that connects at the joint with the atlas, or first vertebra of the neck.

5. Joshua Brookes (1761-1833), surgeon and anatomist, held private classes in anatomy in London and maintained both a museum of comparative anatomy and a menagerie for the use of his students, men of science, and others upon special invitation. *DNB*; Altick, *Shows of London*, pp. 27-28, 38n.

## 176. RuP to SPS

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 6, 1802<sup>1</sup>

Dear Sister

The females are generally very ugly. they dress very Rich with flou-  
cis,<sup>2</sup> (and) but they destroy thier beauty with paint for they carry it to  
extreams: (but) I cannot know what I shall see this winter amongst the  
nobilities, (for) there are very few in town at preasant, but I have seen a  
great many follies already. The mode of living is this, Eeat breakfast at 10  
or 11 eat Dinner at 6 or 7 in the evening and (go to bed when we get up in the  
morning) Think of sleep whin we think of rising, it must be very bad for  
health. (The Public E ) Tell Betsey she would not be an odity he(are),  
for the girls are mostly plump and short I have seen several that I  
would of taken for her sisters if she had been an English girl. (There are  
Churches of the Established Religion 116 chapels of the established religion 62.) It  
would be a task to give any kind of an idea of London but I only mention  
some few particulars, first of all the places of worship. It contains 116  
churches of the established religion; 62 chapels of ease, being chapels of  
the established religion, in parishes the population of which is too great  
for the magnitude of their respective churches; 71 Roman catholic chap-  
els; 17 churches and chapels belonging to foreign protestants; 6 syn-  
agogues, or places of worship belonging to different English protestants  
dissenting from the established religion; making a total of 344. Hospitals  
and churitable Institutions 489 and upwards. I have been in but very few of  
the public buildings Westminster-Abbey; or, St. Peter's Collegiate Church.  
The inside of this church is extreamely elegant, (Monuments surround this)  
The whole inside walls are covered with monuments supperior to any  
thing you ever saw, one part distinguished by the name of the Poets corner,  
there are the monuments to the memory of Chaucer, Spencer, Shakespeare,  
Johnson, Milton, Dryden, Butler, Thomson, Gay, Goldsmith, &c. the whole  
building is in the gothic Stile, it is so old the stone is crumbling to dust.<sup>3</sup>

I am sorry to hear that the Yellow Fever is in our city but hope it may not  
have spread further, the papers mentions that it has not spread, It being  
only in Vine Street and in Baltimore.

You must remember me to Mr. Sellarses<sup>4</sup> familys and all my acquaint-  
ances who enquire after me, I have no time to write at preasant to any,  
but if any of my acquaintances would wish to drop a few lines I shall feel  
great satisfaction, and shall answer them with pleasure.

(An) Americans when we meet them they appear like relations last  
evening we had the pleasure of taking Tea with three besides our selves,  
and the Americans which we have been introduced to have behaved very  
agreable. You perhaps will be surprised when I tell you we are living up in  
the third story at 25 shillings per week— I sleep in the garrit, our parler,  
and bedchambers are in the third story, and a family has the second and  
the first is occupied by a Lawyer, and the Family of the house in the Sellar,  
the rooms are furnished, but we have to provide the provisions  
cecil street strand  
your affectionate brother  
Rubens Peale

ALS, 2pp.

PPAmP: Peale-Sellers Papers—RuP Letterbook

1. This letter may be dated by its appearance in RuP's letterbook following 175.

2. Ornamental strips around a lady's dress.

3. Westminster Abbey, officially Collegiate Church of Saint Peter in Westminster, was  
begun in 1050 but was almost entirely torn down by Henry III in 1245 and rebuilt in the  
Gothic style. Its architectural features include a fan-vaulted roof, carved oaken stalls, and  
the massive West Towers, completed in 1740. The church contains tombs and monuments  
of British monarchs and, from the first half of the eighteenth century, prominent literary  
figures. RuP may have been impressed with the "pyramidal style" of the monuments, an  
Italian innovation of the seventeenth century that had become popular in England during  
the first half of the eighteenth century. A. J. K. Esdaile, "Sculpture," in Arthur S. Tunber-  
ville, ed., *Johnson's England*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1933), 2:74-81.

The poets RuP names were: Geoffrey Chaucer (1340?-1400); Edmund Spenser (1552?-  
1599); William Shakespeare (1564-1616); Benjamin Jonson (1573?-1637); John Milton  
(1608-1674); John Dryden (1631-1700); Samuel Butler (1612-1680); James Thomson  
(1700-1748); John Gay (1685-1732); Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774). *DNB*.

4. The Sellers family arrived from England in 1681 and settled in Delaware County,  
Pennsylvania. By the outbreak of the American Revolution, Nathan Sellers, who had joined  
the Pennsylvania Associators and marched to Long Island, had achieved a reputation as a  
fine designer of paper molds and was summoned back to Ivy Mills in Pennsylvania by the  
Continental Congress when the nation faced a severe paper shortage. Nathan's son, Cole-  
man Sellers, married SPS in 1805. *NCAB*; *PMHB* 74 (1950):488-89; 65 (1941):404; *CWP*, p.  
322.

## 177. RuP to CWP

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 23, 1802

Sepr. 23d. 1802.

Dear father

Rembrandt & my self wrote on the 6th by the Calliope, for Philadel-  
phia When The Box of Insects &c was opened at the Customhouse.

( ) we found the bodys of a great (*many*) number broken off; and some loose, several injured— I do not think, the plain boxes are as good as with cork for travelling— A Mr (*Vansitter*) Francillon<sup>1</sup> has the finest collection in Europe of Insects, from the southern States of America (*in Europe*), on Saturday the 6th (*Rembrandt & I*) we began the examination of this collection which consists of Insects from different parts, amounting to 7000 Specimens, classically arranged. The colours (*of*) were superior to anything I ever beheld, Fifteen folio volumes of drawings of the *worm*, the *crysalis*, and the *fly*, with the Plants which they feed on, besides several hundred not bound. The drawings and a part were executed by a Ghool Master in Georgia whose name I donot recollect, also the Insects from georgia &c. This collection I understant he has for sale the price of which is £2000 Sterling or 8,888 Dollars (*88 Cents*) which is moderate. We shall finish the examination as soon as we have more laisure. The sides of his cases are double, the inside full of holes, this apartment is for containing *Camphire*, which is in lumps<sup>1</sup> so that none can come in among the Insects. The tops are made to fit extreamely (*tite*) tight which makes them very handsome & they are like drawers, always horizontal & not exposed to the light. To give you an idea how (*high*) dear every thing is, I will mention a few things, first the rent of houses from £200 to 500 per annum. A room in a good situation, only a few doors from Carlton house, the residence of the Prince of Wales in *Pall Mall* which we have taken for the exhibition £150 untill 25th of March. Lodgings near the room (*in*) No12 Fludlyer St Kings St Westminster at 2½ guineas per week, or 533.33 cents. The price of newspapers 6 pence, or 11¼ cents ¼th a piece. Cloathing much cheaper than in America, but provisions much dearer generally. Coffee is extreamly dear for 6 pounds you have to pay eight dollars. Cocoa nut, not made into chocalate 6 pounds for 5-33 cents. chocalate 1.33 cents a pound! The price of Beef is 18½ cents per pound. Mutton 14.¼ cents per pound. Milk 14.¼ cents per Quart, Bread is rather cheaper than in America. Butter is about the same. Fowls 177 cents a pair, &c. The consumption of Provisions in London is very astonishing, The number of Bullocks annully consumed is 110,000; of Sheep & Lambs, 776,000; calves, 210,000; hogs, 210,000; sucking pigs, 62,000; besides other animals. The quantity of Milk consumed is not less than 6,980,000 gallons annully. The number of Cows kept for this supply is 8,500; the sum paid by the retailers of Milk (*for the supply*) to the cow-keepers is annually £240,833, on which the retailers lay an advance of *cent. per cent.* making the cost to the inhabitants the annual sum of £481, 666. Not content with this profit the retailers add water to the milk, to the extent, on an average, of a sixth part. Although the cow-keepers do not themselves adulterate the milk (it being the custom for the retailer to contract

for the milk of a certain number of cows, which are milked by his own people) yet they are not wholly to be acquitted of the guilt; for in the milk-rooms (places where the milk is measured from the cow-keeper to the retailer) pumps are erected for the express purpose of watering the milk which is openly performed. *Vegetables, and Fruit*:— There are 10,000 acres of ground, wholly for *vegetables*, and about 4,000 acres for *fruit*, to supply the London ( ) consumption. The sum paid at market for *vegetables & fruit* is £1,045,000; independently of the advance of the retailers, which, on an average, is more than £200 *per cent.*, making the entire cost of *Vegetables and fruit* for the London supply upwards of £3,000,000 *Sterling*. The annual consumption of *wheat* in London, is 700,000 quarters, each containing eight Winchester bushels; of *coals*, 600,000 chalderns;<sup>2</sup> of *Ale and Porter*, 1,113,500 barrils, each containing 34 gallons; *Sperituous liquors and compounds*, 11,146,782 gallons: *Wine*, 32,500 tons; *Butter* about 16,600,000 pounds; and of *cheese*, about 21,100,000 pounds. This account is accurate.

I have not seen Mr Hall, but shall take a walk to see him in a few days. The distance is so great I have not been nearer than a mile & a half.

Our Room is 22 feet wide and 30 feet in length, & about 16 feet in height with a skylight like the old Museum, the walls and Floor are covered with *green baize*, and we shall paint the *Pedestal Railing & Gallows* green, which will look handsome. We finished putting up the *Gallows and Pedestal* two or three days ago, and shall begin in a few days (*to*) erect the *Skeleton*. *Rembrandt* in a short time, will have the Pamphlet out, he has (*just*) nearly finished writing it.<sup>3</sup> It is (*necessary*) customary to dedicate; therefore shall to Mr. *Josh. Banks*, as he has behaved exceedingly well to us, and is P. R. S.<sup>4</sup>

It is strange to us seeing Spring flowers, and so cold that we have to keep on winter cloathing and have Fires, This they call summer. But our American Summers are warm & dry while this is damp foggy, disagreeable weather

I shall perhaps find more interesting subjects, the next oportunity, when I (*shall*) hope to inform you of receiving handfull of Guineas, at a half Crown each.

Remember me to all friends & relations.

your affectionate son  
Rubens Peale

ALS, app.  
PPAmf: Peale-Sellers Papers—RuP Letterbook

1. John Francillon, a jeweller in the Strand, London, presented "a number of fine insects" to Peale's museum from his immense collection. A return had not been sent as of December,

1804, and ReP was anxious that the matter be attended to. In 1818, after Francillon's death, his collection of insects was sold. *Museum Accessions Book*, p. 1; *John Francillon, A Catalogue of the Very Superb and Celebrated Collection of Foreign Insects, of the Late John Francillon . . . Which Will Be Sold by Auction by Mr. Kin* (London, 1818).

2. An old unit of measure varying from thirty-two to seventy-two imperial bushels. The first of ReP's two pamphlets describing the exhumation of the mastodon skeletons and comparing his skeleton to that of the elephant was dedicated in October, 1802, to Sir Joseph Banks. A copy was sent to Banks on November 3, who, in turn, sent one to the celebrated German naturalist and anatomist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach. Banks welcomed ReP and RuP, offered them advice concerning their exhibition, invited them to his library breakfasts, and introduced them to men of science including Robert Fulton.

CWP believed that ReP should not have undertaken to describe the skeleton himself but should have left the task to Dr. Thomas Pole (1753-1829), a Philadelphia-born physician and anatomist who had settled in London. Pole was displeased at not being allowed to publish the description and, according to CWP, "very much injured the exhibition" by asserting that the mastodon was an elephant. ReP, *Account of the Skeleton of the Mammoth, a Non-Descript Carnivorous Animal of Immense Size, Found in America* (London, 1802); A(TS):316; DNB; APS, *Early Proceedings*, p. 331; ReP to Sir Joseph Banks, November 3, 1802, January 29, 1803, British Museum, F:VIA/1C8, C9-10; J. F. Blumenbach to Sir Joseph Banks, February 2, 1803, British Museum, F:IIA/27B10-13; *Académie de sciences, Procès-verbaux* 2 (1800-04):595, 599; Charles Edwards Lester, *The Artists of America* (1936; reprint ed., New York, 1970), p. 206; RuP, "Memorandum's."

4. President of the Royal Society of London, a national scientific society founded in 1660 and chartered by the king in 1662. Its membership included many patrons of science in addition to active researchers. In its organization and activities the Royal Society became a model for the APS: it held regular meetings, it offered prizes, it published a journal, *Philosophical Transactions*, and it accumulated an extensive cabinet, which was transferred to the British Museum in 1781. Raymond T. Stearns, *Science in the British Colonies of America* (Urbana, Ill., 1970), pp. 88-101.

178. RuP to CWP

LONDON, OCTOBER 3, 1802

No. 12 Fludyer Street, Westminster, London October 3d. 1802.  
Dear father,

We wrote by the Julianna, on the (19th) 23-Sept. which gave you an account of our room &c.<sup>1</sup> We erected the skeleton a few days ago, and will expose it to public view tomorrow. Friday & Saturday the room was open to the medical gentlemen whom Rembt. invited. Sir Joseph Banks, unfortunately is out of town.

This room may properly be called the green-room, for every thing is green, which has a handsome appearance, and several of the gentlemen, who came, said you have a fine room Sir.— the baize is not new, but all being in harmony.

The modes of advertise(ments)ing is this, 1st. in the daily papers by paying one dollar and 33 cents, for a short advertisement less than a squair, even if it is but 2 or 3 lines, and every time it is published, no deduction is made, if you keep it in for a whole year, you have to pay the

same prise per day. 2d Post bills stuck against the walls. 3d. Post bills on square boards with a handle, which a man carries about the streets. 4th. Small bills which a man delivers to every genteel person passing along the streets. 5th. In reviews or magazines.<sup>2</sup>

Yesterday we hand [had] Mr. Brooks's students, who were much pleased. Doctr. Letsum,<sup>3</sup> lent a tooth which was found in Siberia, resembling much the carolina tooth, which I think was certainly a species of the Elephant. Doctr. Brooks has lent us a Jaw of the Elephant which is a section of it, shewing the situation of the Tooth in the Jaw which is hollow and the teeth going into it, but the mammoth's is sollid, and the bone grows between the roots or fangs, which I beleave is the case with all carnivorous animals, or of the mixt kind. We shall perhaps give you some information concerning the Elephant &c.

Peter porcupine<sup>4</sup> has a fine house almost opposite our room, and I expect he will have something to say concerning the Mammoth, or us. I find the english donot like the Americans, we have been advised to not mention where the Bones came from, for many would not come because it came from America.

This is quite an American house, Mr. Sharp, his Wife and sister,<sup>5</sup> lives in the second story and we on the first floor, we are more pleasantly situated now than we have been, since our arrival. Our maid says there is not a house in london, where the familys live as we do, for it is not customary for the ladies to see about their household buisness.

The gentleman who will deliver this is an american Mr. Phillips.<sup>6</sup>

your affectionate Son  
Rubens Peale

Favd. by Mr. Phillips  
of Philadelphia

a short discription of the elephant head and teeth. also the Siberian Elephant— tooth with a drawing.<sup>7</sup>

ALS, 3pp.

PPAmP: Peale-Sellers Papers—RuP Letterbook

1. See above, 177.

2. From October, 1802, until the exhibit closed in June, 1803, ReP and RuP inserted advertisements periodically in the London newspapers. *The Morning Post and Gazetteer* ran this advertisement on November 8:

1802: MAMMOTH— The very extraordinary SKELETON of the MAMMOTH, a species of Gigantic animal which is not known to exist, and which was lately dug up in America (all the bones being found together), is now EXHIBITING, No. 118, FALL-MALL, where it has been visited by Ladies and Gentlemen of the first respectability, all of whom have expressed the highest satisfaction. This Skeleton is eleven feet high, and twenty feet long, with bones of an astonishing bulk. From its teeth it must have fed on flesh, and could not but have been a terror to the country where it lived. It is generally supposed to have been destroyed at the Deluge. Admittance 2s 6d from Ten in the Morning till Five in the Afternoon.

attention of Britain's learned community to his exhibition, ReP published a series of articles in the *Philosophical Magazine*: "A short account of the mammoth," 14 (1802):162; "On the differences which exist between the heads of the mammoth and elephant," 14 (1802):228; "Account of some Remains of a Species of gigantic Oxen found in America and other Parts of the World," 15 (1803):325.

3. John Coakley Lettson (1744-1815), Quaker physician and a founder of the Medical Society of London, was known for his philanthropic activities and writings on public health. His mansion, Grove Hill, outside of London, contained a notable museum, botanical gardens, and a library. *DNB*.

4. Peter Porcupine was the pen name of William Cobbett (1762-1835), English journalist and politician, who had emigrated to Philadelphia in 1792, where he established the Federalist journal *Porcupine's Gazette* (1797). Cobbett delighted in ridiculing Jefferson and his allies, among whom was CWP. "I have seen more for a halfpenny in the travelling hutch of an itinerant brute-monger, in England," he wrote of CWP's museum, "than I could see at your 'airy' Museum for a quarter dollar." Cobbett suggested that CWP "throw out your snakes and your alligators" and "sooty Africans" and replace them with "half a dozen Democrats stuffed with straw" so that the public would be able to see more "venomous brutes." In 1800, Cobbett returned to England and in 1802 founded the *Weekly Political Register*, which he published until his death. Cobbett's political views became less conservative, and in 1819, as a result of his advocacy of reforms and his attacks on the government, he was prosecuted and convicted for libel. *DNB*; *Porcupine's Gazette*, October 3, 1797.

5. Unidentified.

6. In a letter to Jefferson on January 21, 1806, CWP mentioned a Mr. Philips, whose death sometime around 1803 left vacant the position of consul in the island of Curacao. P-S, F:IIA/37E4-5.

7. Unlocated.

179. RuP to CWP

LONDON, OCTOBER 15, 1802

London, October 15th. 1802.

Dear father.

In my last letter dated October the 3d,<sup>1</sup> I mentioned, we had the room open Friday & Saturday, for some Friends & anatomists as a private examination. They were much pleased and thought it the greatest curiosity ever brought to England— They agreed it was carnivorous & different from the eleph<sup>t</sup>. but that it must (*of*) have had a proboscis. Some thought it might be classed amongst the carnivorous animals and others amongst the mixt kind.<sup>2</sup> The exhibition was opened (*last*) Monday the 4th which was a bad day. Rain & wind. we received 10 shillings (Sterling). Tuesday 1 pound 10 shillings. Wednesday 1 Pound 10. Shillings. Thursday £3.12.6. Friday £1.17.6 Saturday 17 Shillings 6 pence. making that week 43 dollars. Monday the 11th Red. £1. 15. 0. Tuesday 7 Shilgs. 6 pence. Wednesday £2. 7. 6. Thursday 2. 5. 0. (*Wednesday*) Friday £1-7. 6. & Saturday £ 2. 0. 0. making 87. dollars 55 cents.

We are told London never was so deserted before, the w(*h*)eather has

been very fine. but these few days past, have been very cold Foggy & Rainy, which will bring them to town shortly. Paris I am told is full of englishmen. There are a good-many Frenchmen he(*a*)re, but this place is so large we only met them now and then, there have been several at the room (*and*) who are much pleased with the skeleton; they all say it will be different in Paris, as soon as you open the exhibition you will be crowded, they donot stay to ask who has been there, but every one will try who will be the first, this is the universal account from all, French, and Englishmen; however, they told us so of London.

I have about 30 species of Insects from Portugall several of them are nondiscript, I find a considerable number of (*the*) our Insects are injured; antenas heads &c brok off.

When you send any things to us, you will put as many things in one case as you can, for every case is charged seperately, and it will be very well to value the cases, for Subjects of Natural history are (*valued*) charged ad valoram, 33 per cent. The Insect cases Must be lined with cork. I wish you to send any thing you please, it is no matter how common. Birds, Quardrupeeds, Fish. Snakes (in spirits), Insects, Shells, Oysters. Clams, Mussels &c.

There are no clams he(*a*)re, but Oysters which are very different from the American, also Muskles which are very different. I have seen some gentlemen who wish to corispond with you

Dr. Langsdorff,<sup>3</sup> will exchange Insects, Fish &c. He left his direction in Germany which is this. (Dr. Langsdorff chez Mr. le Conseiller Koolh<sup>4</sup> Docteur en Medecine à Frankfort Sur le Meyn en Allemagne.) this gentleman has been several years in Portugall and (*collected*) made a large collection of fish, and Insects, he says (Count de Hoffmannsegg<sup>5</sup> at Brannschweig. *Germany*.) wishes to exchange. Birds, and Insects; they will send you the first collections. I saw a collection of birds chiefly from Botany Bay, which are not stuft, but the skins dried, and some very rotten but I shall pick a few out. some are very valuable and nondiscript.

The gentlemen who will deliver these,<sup>6</sup> appear to be clever, I have seen but little of them.

Tell Raphaelle when we receive a letter from him I will find some thing to say. He was very full of making a fortune with the skeleton, but I wish we were only in America once more, with the Skeleton; I have no doubt we would mak more than we shall heare, for we pay so dear for every thing, the expence's runs away with the profits.

Remember me to all Relations and friends.

I remain your affectionate

Son

Rubens Peale.

ALS, 4pp.

PPAmP: Peale-Sellers Papers—RuP Letterbook

1. See above, 178.
2. In 1802, ReP concluded that the mammoth's short neck necessitated a proboscis, or trunk, that would enable it to obtain food. A year later, he changed his mind and concluded that the inner nostril was located and angled in such a way as to indicate possibly an external structure similar to the nostril of the whale. ReP, *A Short Account of the Behemoth or Mammoth* (New York, 1802), below, 208.
3. George Heinrich, Freiherr von Langsdorff (1774–1852), physician and traveler, published an account of his travels and also wrote on botany. *NUC*.
4. Unidentified.
5. Johann Centurius von Hoffman, graf von Hoffmannsegg (1766–1849), wrote a description of the flora of Portugal and an account of his travels. *NUC*.
6. A letter from ReP dated October 14, now unlocated, seems to have accompanied this letter of RuP's. See below, 196, 197.

180. GWP to Thomas Jefferson

PHILADELPHIA, OCTOBER 28, 1802

Museum Oct. 28th. 1802.

Dear Sir

A Gentleman from Virginia lately viewing the Skeleton of the Mammoth, told me that 9 miles from the sweet Springs in Green bryer County,<sup>1</sup> a few months past, was found in a Salt petre cave some large Bones, which they supposed from the hole in one of Vertebrae's, measuring 9 Inches in circumference was of a larger species of the Mammoth than my Skeleton, and that a bone of one of the claws measured 9 Inches in length. He also informed me that the person who was digging (*it*) out the bones, intended them for me, but he could not recollect his name, but advised me to write to John Lewes Esqr.<sup>2</sup> a Magistrate who had given him this information, and whom he said was of a generous & liberal mind. He also said that the Salt Petre cave, is very long, and in it were found, some of the *finest* fur.

This is the same species of Animal as those bones you presented to the Philosophical Society, and not the Mammoth as those persons have supposed—<sup>3</sup> The Vertebrae may be one in the front of the Animal, the holes of which is commonly larger than those in the middle or hinder parts of the back. Some of the back bones belonging to my Skeleton has larger holes for the spinal marrow than a circumference of 9 Inches.

The obtaining bones of other nondescript Animals of our Country is now a favorite object with me, and I would have willingly made a visit to the spot, but the situation of my family does not permit it at present.

Doubtless you have seen some paragraphs in the news Papers on the (*head of*) half of the head of the Mammoth being found in the barrens of

Kentucky— it was dug up in sinking a pit to get salt water, 50 feet below the surface of the Earth—in what the people of that Country call a sink— Doctr Hunter<sup>4</sup> of this City being in Kentucky, I wrote to him my desire to obtain this relick, that I would not regard some expence to obtain it, as being Very important to complete our knowledge of the form of the head of my Skeleton. He informs me that Dr. Samuel Brown has undertaken to procure it for me, and that he would send it to Orleans, to be conveyed to Philada. by Water. Dr. Hunter is expected in Philada. in about 2 Weeks, and probably will give me more particulars.

I have just received Letters from my Sons in London—<sup>5</sup> they had obtained a Room for their exhibition of the Skeleton, in the building formerly used for the royal Academy in Pall Mall for which they are to pay 666 Dollrs. for it untill the 25 of March next.<sup>6</sup> Rembrandt has been much favoured by the Officers of the Customs, by means of Letters which Mr Bond<sup>7</sup> was so obliging as to give him. And the board of Commissioners had ordered that the Valuation of the Skeleton should not exceed 50£, and after all, the duty amounts to about 130 Dollars.

Rembrandt had gone through a great deal of trouble, with much anxiety, and he says, he could not think of writing to me before he had better Prospects— He was preparing to get up the Skeleton & he says his next letters will be more interesting to me.

I am fully satisfied that both of my sons will make useful observations on all interesting works of Art &c. They have done well thus far.

My progress of improvements of the Museum is considerable during the absence of the Citizens.

No labour or expence shall be spared to render it conspicuously usefull to my Country.

I am Dr Sir with much respect your

friend CW Peale

His Excelly.

Thos. Jefferson Esqr.

ALS, 3pp.

DLC: Thomas Jefferson Papers

Endorsed: Peale, C. W. Museum Oct. 28. 1802 recd. Oct. 31.

Copy in PPAmP: Peale-Sellers Papers—Letterbook 3

1. Sweetsprings, a watering place, formerly in Greenbrier County, Virginia, now in Monroe County, West Virginia, near the Virginia border. Federal Writers' Project, *West Virginia: A Guide to the Mountain State* (1941; reprint ed., St. Clair Shores, Mich., 1974), pp. 452–53.

2. Unidentified.

3. See above, 83.

4. George Hunter (1755–1824), Philadelphia druggist and chemist, went to Kentucky in 1802 on family business, returning in late October. In 1804, Jefferson chose Hunter to participate in an exploration of Louisiana under the auspices of the Department of War.