I deem it of more consequence at present to get a good Town under way, which you know tells well with residents, and our welfare is much dependent on the first reports given of us.- Most of our Colonists now have buildings up & nearly finished & will soon go to clearing & fencing their farm lots & have them in order for planting in March.- I now supply Colonists with provisions on terms very reasonable to them, and I consider advantageous to the Agency; or rather to the public, for I am obliged to do ~~work~~ which might be dispensed with at present, were I not obliged to forward stations.- I make it a point to have every able bodied man (and we have but one invalid) work for his food, even when the work is of little consequence.- I make them to understand once for all that the Society will never supply a lazy man with bread in this Colony.- I have now commenced an undertaking of considerable magnitude in the building of a Stone ware house and wharf, the latter of which I have nearly completed, and at this time Sir, they have not a wharf in Monrovia that can compare with it.- I might have got along without this Warehouse for a year or two, yet rather uncomfortably, as the present store room is entirely too small to hold our merchandize (and) the provisions requisite to supply a large expedition.- At any rate this business would have to be done a year or two hence, & I think these were quite sufficient reasons for undertaking it at this time.- 1st. The one above referred to, of the necessity of finding employment for the Colonists whom I am obliged to supply with food and this is no inconsiderable one.- 2d. The advantages which will result to the Agency from having a good house ere other mercantile houses are opened here.- 3d. The work can be done on far more reasonable terms now, than when other buildings of this kind are going up (and



greater demand for labour exists, and many goods can be turned off as payment which it would not be so easy to dispose of after the stores are opened.- 4. My health is now good, perfectly good, & I can personally oversee & inspect the work, which it will be impossible for me to do, when another expedition or two shall have arrived, (and) the duties of Physician so arduous and perplexing, shall devolve on me;- I much fear my health will suffer under it.- Independent of all these reasons, there is no expenditure of money which would be so permanent, useful, & show to so good an advantage in a new Colony.- As you seem to be anxious for pictures, I will send you one of the ware-house when finished.- You also seem to be desirous of details of matters and transactions here, but I assure you they would be quite uninteresting, particularly when told in a plain strait forward correct manner void of all embellishment (and) addendo.- However an incident occurred some days since, which I will trouble you with, that you may judge in some measure of the ultimate advantage we shall be to this Country, when we can with safety interfere with their private government.- They have a custom (like our pious (and) sapient forefathers of Salem) of attributing all the great calamities of life to witchcraft, particularly all sudden deaths & the middle ages (and) active.- In such cases, the Greegree man, Doctor or Grand Devil (synonomous terms) is consulted (and) he points out the witch or necromancer so offending.- In order then to prove whether the suspected is actually guilty, he is compelled to drink large quantities of the decoction of a poisonous tree called Saucy Wood.- Should he survive he is deemed innocent, but otherwise, should it prove fatal.- Quite a number have been subjected to this ordeal, since our settlement here, (and) some have died in the most excruciating tortures.- Should the culprit vomit freely within an hour or so after taking it, before it

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

II. Correspondence Received
C. Foreign Letter Books

1. January 1834--November 1837

1834