**To THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

New York, May 11, 1789.

Dear Sir: A few days ago I was conversing with you on the points contained in the enclosed queries,[86] when a Gentleman coming in put an end to the conversation.

As it is my earnest wish to adopt such a line of conduct as shall be judged most likely to secure essentials without being exposed more than is unavoidable to the charge of too much reserve on the one hand, or too much familiarity on the other, I would be much obliged to you for considering and returning the enclosed with your sentiments thereon as soon as you can make it convenient to yourself. With great and sincere regard etc.[87]

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86. On the conduct of the President.

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87. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To JAMES MADISON**

May 11, 1789.

My dear Sir: The enclosed[84] were communicated to me, (as you will perceive) to make a Confidential use of. Upon receipt of the first letter, I expressed a desire to be informed (if there was nothing improper in it) through what channel the report came, and what reliance could be placed in the authenticity of it. This produced the seed. letter. As you are upon business which requires every information of the State of the Union and knowledge of our relative situation with G. Britain I give you the perusal of them, at your leizure as I am in no immediate want of the Papers. I am etc.[85]

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84. The papers sent by Washington to Madison probably referred to George Morgan's attempted settlement of New Madrid.

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85. From the printed text in the sales catalogue of the *Washington-Madison Papers* (McGuire Collection, 1892).

This letter is also entered in two different volumes of the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*. All three texts vary in verbal details, one from the other.

**To JAMES MADISON**

New York, May 12, 1789.

My dear Sir: To draw such a line for the conduct of the President as will please *every* body, I know is impossible, but to mark out and follow one (which by being consonant with reason) will meet general approbation, may be as practicable as it is desireable. The true medium I conceive must lye in pursuing such a course, as will allow him time for all the official duties of his station. This should be the primary object. The next, to avoid as much as may be, the charge of superciliousness, and seclusion from information by too much reserve and too great a withdraw of himself from company on the one hand, and the inconveniences, as well as reduction of respectability by too free an intercourse, and too much familiarity on the other.

Under these impressions I have submitted the enclosed queries for your consideration, and would thank you for your sentiments thereon, with the return

of the paper.[88] For the remarks which it contains, it is necessary that some plan should be adopted by the President for his mode of living; that the pecuniary estimates for the department may have an eye thereto; and, though *secondary* , it is a motive for my bringing the matter before you at this time. I am your affectionate friend &c.[89]

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88. *See* Queries on a Line of Conduct to Be Pursued by the President, May 10, 1789, *ante*.

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89. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To MATHEW CAREY**

New York, May 22, 1789.

Sir: In addition to what I wrote to you formerly on the subject of a loan, I now inform you (and desire that *this letter* which conveys the information may be destroyed so soon as it is read) that my utmost exertions were ineffectually used to borrow a sum of money (even at a high interest, and for me on

disadvantageous terms) to comply with contracts of my own before I left Virginia. Having made this communication it is unnecessary to adduce further proof of my inability to comply with the request which is contained in your letter of the 18th instant. I am etc.[5]

5. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To WARNER LEWIS**

New York, May 24, 1789.

Dear Sir: Your favor of the 9th instant, enclosing a duplicate of the letter you were so obliging as to write to me on the 11th of March came duly to hand, and I sincerely thank you for the attention you have bestowed on the matter I took the liberty of troubling you with.

I thought I had acknowledged the receipt of the last mentioned letter before I left Mount Vernon, but suppose from the multitude of letters that were poured upon me about that time, and other business that pressed, it was omitted.

The Gentleman (Mr. John Dandridge) to whom the land belongs or did belong has consented to take the price for it which you thought it was worth, and has been desired to make me deeds for it accordingly. Should he do this, of which I have no doubt, I may sometime hence ask your advice what would be best for me to do with it, to prevent its becoming a moth in the unimproved,

and unproductive state in which it is from the payment of taxes.

As one's ideas of good, bad, and indifferent are comparative, and land that would be called good in one place would scarcely come under that description in another, and as I have a very perfect recollection of the complexion and quality of the soil about Warner-Hall, permit me, in order that I may form a more accurate opinion of the land in question, to ask if the land that was Bristows be worth £800 what would the like *quantity* of land equally unimproved, and no better or more timbered but of the same complexion and fertility of soil of that at Warner Hall be worth? The answer to this question will give me a very good idea of the value of the land formerly Bristows.

With every good wish for yourself, Lady, and family. I am etc.[7]

7. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To MATHEW CAREY**

New York, May 29, 1789.

Sir: in the course of my whole existence, I never before have been made the subject of such extraordinary conduct as that which I have been obliged to suffer by your sending to me unsealed, through a public conveyance, my letter of the 22d. and yours of the 27th. of this month.

After the *candid* and my heart witnessed for me *not unfriendly part* I had always acted towards you, I hoped, for the credit of human nature, at least to have escaped an intentional insult. I am &c.[20]

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20. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*. ( *See* Washington's letter to Mathew Carey, June 10, 1789, *post*.)

On May 29 the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church delivered in New York an address to Washington, to which he replied, presumably, on the same day. In that reply he stated: "I trust the people of every denomination, who demean themselves as good citizens, will have occasion to be convinced, that I shall always strive to prove a faithful and impartial Patron of genuine, vital religion." Copies of both the address and the reply are in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

On May 30 Lear wrote to Clement Biddle, for Washington, that Mrs. Washington wished the stays and slippers made by Mr. Sayre, sent to Mount Vernon. "The President will thank you to pay the charges which have been incurred by Billy, and send a statement of his Account that he may see how it stands, and make provision of necessary to remit." A copy of this letter is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

**To MATHEW CAREY**

New York, June 10, 1789.

Sir: Your letter to me of the 27. and mine to you of the 22. ultimo came *open* to my hand as I informed you in my last. The first never had *received* a seal, nor a fold that would have enclosed (agreeably to the expression of your letter) the latter. Both of them were wrapped in an open cover of brown paper, and exposed to the inspection of every curious person through whose hands they passed.

As you say it was not your intention to expose them I am satisfied with the apology, but wish more circumspection had been observed in the correspondence. I am etc.[34]

34. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To DAVID STUART**

New York, July 26, 1789.

Dear Sir: In the first moment of my ability to sit in an easy chair, and that not entirely without pain, I occupy myself in acknowledging the receipt, and thanking you for your letter of the 14th. instant.

Although my time (before I was confined) had been, and probably now will be much more engaged, yet your communications, without any reserve will be exceedingly grateful and pleasing to me. While the eyes of America, perhaps of the world, are turned to this government, and many are watching the movements of all those, who are concerned in its administration, I should like to be informed, through so good a medium of the public opinion of both men and measures, and of none more than myself; not so much of what may be thought commendable parts, if any, of my conduct, as of those which are conceived to be of a different complexion.

The Man who means to commit no wrong, will never be guilty of enormities; consequently can never be unwilling to learn what is ascribed to him as foibles. If they are really such the knowledge of them in a well disposed mind will go half way towards a reform. If they are not errors he can explain and justify the motives of his actions.

At a distance from the theatre of action truth is not always related without embellishment, and sometimes is entirely perverted from a misconception of the causes which produce the effects that are the subjects of censure. 1. This leads me to think that a system which I found it indispensably necessary to adopt upon my first coming to this city, might have undergone severe strictures and have had motives very foreign from those that govern me assigned as causes therefor; I mean, returning *no* visits; 2. Appointing certain days to receive them generally (not to the exclusion however of visits on any other days under particular circumstances) and 3. at first entertaining no company, and afterwards until I was unable to entertain any at all confining it to official characters. A few days evinced the necessity of the two first in so clear a point of view that, had I not adopted it, I should have been unable to have attended to *any* sort of business unless I had applied the hours allotted to rest and refreshment to this purpose for by the time I had done breakfast, and

thence till dinner, and afterwards till bed time I could not get relieved from the ceremony of one visit before I had to attend to another; in a word, I had no leisure to read or to answer the dispatches that were pouring in upon me from all quarters; and with respect to the third matter I early received information through very respectable channels that the adoption thereof was not less essential [than] that of the other two if the President was to preserve the dignity and respect that was due to the first Magistrate, for that a contrary conduct had involved the late Presidents of Congress in insuperable difficulties, and the office (in this respect) in perfect contempt. for the table was considered as a public one, and every person, who could get introduced, conceived that he had a *right* to be invited to it. This, although the Table was always crowded (and with mixed company, and the President considered in no better light than as a Maitre d'Hôtel) was in its nature impracticable and as many offences given as if no table had been kept.

The citizens of this place were well knowing to this fact, and the principal Members of Congress in both Houses were so well convinced of the impropriety and degrading situation of their President, that it was the general opinion that the President of the United States should neither give or receive invitations. Some from a belief, (independent of the circumstances I have mentioned) that this was fundamentally right in order to acquire respect. But to this I had two objections, both powerful in my mind; first, the novelty of it I knew would be considered as an ostentatious shew of mimicry of sovereignty; and secondly that so great a seclusion would have stopped the avenues to useful information from the many, and make me more dependent on that of the few; but to hit on a discriminating medium was found more difficult than it appeared to be at first view. for if the Citizens at large were begun upon no line could be drawn, all of decent appearance would expect to be invited, and I should have been plunged at once into the evil I was endeavoring to avoid. Upon the whole, it was thought best to confine *my* invitations to official characters and strangers of distinction. This line I have hitherto pursued; whether it may be found best to adhere to or depart from it in some measure must be the result of experience and information.

So strongly had the citizens of this place imbibed an idea of the impropriety of my accepting invitations to dinner that I have not received one from any family (though they are remarkable for hospitality, and though I have received every civility and attention possible from them) since I came to the city except dining with the Governor on the day of my arrival, so that, if this should be adduced as an article of impeachment there can be at least *one* good reason adduced for my not dining out; to wit never having been asked to do so.

One of the Gentlemen, whose name is mentioned in your letter, though high toned has never, I believe, appeared with more than *two* horses in his carriage[60] ; but it is to be lamented that *he* and *some others* have stirred a question which has given rise to so much animadversion, and which I

confess has given me much uneasiness lest it should be supposed by some (unacquainted with facts) that the object they had in view was not displeasing to me. The truth is

60. Stuart had written (July 14): "I have been much concerned at the clamor and abuse against him [Vice President Adams]....The Opponents to the government affect to smile at it, and consider it as a verification of their prophecies about the tendency of the government. Mr. Henry's description of it, that it squinted towards monarchy, is in every mouth, and has established him in the general opinion, as a true Prophet. It has given me much pleasure to hear every part of your conduct spoke of, with high approbation, and particularly your dispensing with ceremony occasionally, and walking the streets; while Adams is never seen but in his carriage and six. As trivial as this may appear, it appears to be more captivating to the generality, than matters of more importance...an error of judgment, is more easily pardoned, than one of the heart." Stuart's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

the question was moved before I arrived, without any privity or knowledge of it on my part, and urged after I was apprized of it contrary to my opinion; for I foresaw and predicted the reception it has met with, and the use that would be made of it by the adversaries of the government. Happily the matter is now done with, I hope never to be revived.[61]

[The opposition of the Senate to the discrimination in the Tonnage Bill, was so adverse to my ideas of justice and policy, that, I should have suffered it to have passed into a Law without my signature, had I not been assured by some members of that body, that they were preparing another Bill which would answer the purpose more effectually without being liable to the objections, and to the consequences which they *feared* would have attended the discrimination which was proposed in the Tonnage Law. Why they keep their doors shut, when acting in a Legislative capacity, I am unable to inform you; unless it is because they think there is too much speaking to the Gallery in the other House, and business thereby retarded.

61. On April 23, the day after Washington arrived at New York but before his inauguration, a committee of the Senate was appointed, consisting of Richard Henry Lee, Ralph lzard, and Tristram Dalton, to report "what style or titles it will be proper to annex to the offices of President and Vice President of the United States." Dr. David Stuart, writing to Washington, July 14, said: "Nothing could equal the ferment and disquietude occasioned by the proposition respecting titles. As it is believed to have originated from Mr. Adams and Lee, they are not only unpopular to an extreme, but highly odious. Neither I am convinced, will ever get a vote from this State again." The matter aroused considerable, excited discussion in the country, but as no definite step was taken it gradually faded from the public mind.

Your letter is the first intimation I *ever* received of any defect in the title, or of any claim to the Land called Claibornes. It is hardly to be conceived that Philip Whitehead Claiborne, who was the brother (and as you say Executor) to William Claiborne, for the payment of whose debts it was sold, shd. have joined in the Conveyance of land to which he himself had a right, by Entail. Admit this, and bad motives must be ascribed to the action; viz. a knowledge that his Son, if the Entail was good, would not be barred by his Conveyance (if no Act of Assembly or Writ of Ad quadamnum had previously docked it.) Such a suspicion I cannot harbour of that Gentleman, because he always supported a fair character. To the best of my recollection, there are some papers in the Garret at Mount Vernon which belong to the Estate of Mr. Custis; in making a hasty arrangement of my own, I came across them, and had them put into a Trunk or box by themselves; from a cursory inspection, they appeared altogether

unimportant, or I should have sent them to you; and in another Trunk in my study there are Papers which relate to my accts. and transactions with that Estate, possibly (for I do not think it probable) you may find something in one or the other of them that may be useful. If in the first, I wish, if they are deserving of the Carriage, you would take them home; the others may be necessary for my own security; and therefore I would not have them removed. The decree of King William's Court will not, I fear, avail much; for I do not conceive that it could extend (if there was an Entail in force) beyond the life of William Claiborne, if then living, or that P. W. Claiborne's act could bind his Son. Your trouble in this, and the other disputes in which the Estate is involved, will I perceive be very great. That your success may be equal thereto, I sincerely wish. We shall be anxious after the decisions to learn the result.

I am much mistaken if I did not in the year 1778 convey both the King William and King and Queen Lands to Mr. Custis by Deeds executed at Camp before Colos. Harrison, Mead, and many others as witnesses to

prove it in the General Court; and this in the presence of Mr. Custis. If it was not recorded for want of due proof, I am ready to re-acknowledge the same Deed, or a copy of it, for I recollect pretty well taking the opinion of Colo. Harrison upon the nature of the Conveyance; and if my memory has not failed me, you will find some mention of the matter in one of my letters to Mr. Custis, now in your possession, which you called upon me sometime ago to authenticate.

Mr. Dandridge gave me an order upon Mr. Brown (of Kentucky) for £800, to be applied if received, to the credit of Mr. Custis's Estate; but the order was protested, and Mr. Dandridge has been advertised thereof.

Nothing would give me more pleasure than to serve any of the descendants of General Nelson, of whose merits when living, no man could entertain a higher opinion than I did; at the sametime I must confess, there are few persons of whom I have *no* personal knowledge, or good information, that I would take

into my family, qualified for the duties of which; many things are requisite, to wit, a good address, abilities above mediocrity, secresy and prudence, attention and industry, good temper, and a capacity and disposition to write correctly and well, and to do it obligingly.

Most Clerkships will, I presume, either by Law or custom, be left to the appointmt. of their principals; little expectation therefore could Mr. Nelson or any stranger have from this source. This latter consideration added to the desire I feel of serving the son of my old friend and acquaintance, has enduced me, at all hazards, to offer Mr. Thos. Nelson (his Son) a place in my family.

I shall not trouble you with Legislative, or any other details that are recited in the Public Gazettes; but I have sent you the Journals of the Senate as far as they have been published and handed to me. If the Successor of Mr. Richards[62] would get the Federal Gazette (Published by Mr. Fenno)[63] from this City, it would enable him to collect all the

62. George Richards. He was publisher of *The Virginia Journal and Alexandria Advertiser*, Alexandria, and was succeeded by Samuel Hanson and Thomas Bond, who changed the title to *The Virginia Gazette and Alexandria Advertiser*.

63. John Fenno. He published the *Gazette of the United States*.

transactions, and news of this theatre. My best wishes in which Mrs. Washington and all around me join, attend Mrs. Stuart yourself and all the family, and I am etc.][64]

64. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*. The part in brackets is from a photostat of that much of the original in the writing of Washington in the possession (1932) of W. S. Johns and Cornelia Johns Grice, of Norfolk, Va.

**To BUSHROD WASHINGTON**

New York, July 27, 1789.

Dear Bushrod: Among the first acts of my recommencing business (after lying six weeks on my right side) is that of writing you this letter in acknowledgment of yours of the ultimo. Not being fairly on my seat yet, or in other words not being able to sit up without feeling some uneasiness, it must be short.

You cannot doubt my wishes to see you appointed to any office of honor or emolument in the new government, to the duties of which you are competent; but however deserving you may be of the one you have suggested, your standing at the bar would not justify my nomination of you as Attorney to the Federal district Court in preference of some of the oldest, and most esteemed General Court Lawyers in your own State, who are desirous of this appointment. My political conduct in nominations, even if I was uninfluenced by principle, must be exceedingly circumspect and proof against just criticism, for the eyes of Argus are upon me, and no slip will pass unnoticed that can be improved into a supposed partiality for friends or relatives. I am etc.[65]

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65. From the "Letter Book copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To SIR EDWARD NEWENHAM**

New York, July 29, 1789.

Dear Sir: Since my arrival in this city I have had the pleasure to receive a letter from you, but you will do me the justice to believe that my numerous avocations, and encreasing duties have been such as to form some apology for want of punctuality in my private correspondencies.

The immediate object of this letter is to introduce to your acquaintance and civilities Mrs. Montgomery, a Lady of a very respectable family in this country, and the Widow of a very distinguished Officer, who sacrificed his life in support of the liberties of America; But I may be allowed to say if Mrs. Montgomery was not a Descendant of the ancient and opulent family of the Livingstons, who have always been the strenuous Advocates of freedom, or the edict of the intelligent and brave General Montgomery, whose name will be immortal; yet her personal merits would entitle her to every attention and respect, which are usually shewn to Strangers of distinction in the hospitable kingdom of Ireland.

I have only leisure to add, that the prospect of the prosperity of this country, under the influence of the new General Government, continues to excite the most pleasing sensations in every patriotic breast and that I am etc.[68]

68. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To DOCTOR JAMES CRAIK**

New York, September 8, 1789.

Dear Sir: The letter with which you favored me on the 24th ultimo came duly to hand, and for the friendly sentiments contained in it, you have my sincere and hearty thanks.

My disorder was of long and painful continuance, and though now freed from the latter, the wound given by the incision is not yet closed. Persuaded as I am that the case has been treated with skill, and with as much tenderness as the nature of the complaint would admit, yet I confess I often wished for your inspection of it. During the paroxysm, the distance rendered this impracticable, and after the paroxysm had passed I had no conception of being confined to a lying posture on one side six weeks, and that I should feel the remains of it more than twelve. The part affected is now reduced to the size of a barley corn, and by Saturday next (which will complete the thirteenth week) I expect it will be skinned over. Upon the whole, I have more reason to be thankful that it is no worse than

to repine at the confinement.

The want of regular exercise, with the cares of office, will, I have no doubt hasten my departure for that country from whence no Traveller returns; but a faithful discharge of whatsoever trust I accept, as it ever has, so it always will be the primary consideration in every transaction of my life be the consequences what they may. Mrs. Washington has, I think, better health than usual, and the children are well and in the way of improvement.

I always expected, that the Gentleman, whose name you have mentioned[14] would mark his opposition to the new government with consistency. Pride on the one hand, and want of manly candor on the other, will not I am certain let him acknowledge an error in his opinions respecting it though conviction should flash on his mind as strongly as a ray of light. If certain characters which you have also mentioned,[15] should tread *blindfold* in his steps it would be matter of no wonder to

me. They are in the habit of thinking that everything he says and does is right, and (if capable) they will not judge for themselves.

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14. George Mason.

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15. Martin Cockburn and Richard Chichester.

It gives me pleasure to hear, and I wish you to express it to them that my Nephews George and Lawrence Washington are attentive to their studies, and obedient to your orders and admonition. That kind of learning which is to fit them for the most useful and necessary purposes of life, among which writing well, arithmetic, and the less abstruse branches of the mathematics are certainly to be comprehended, ought to be particularly attended to, and it is my earnest wish that it should be so.

The Gazettes are so full of the occurrences of public, and indeed a private nature, which happen in this place that it is unnecessary (if I had more leisure than falls to my lot) to attempt a repetition: I shall therefore refer you to them or to the Alexandria paper, through which they may, if pains is taken, be retailed. Mrs. Washington and the rest of the family join me in every good and friendly wish for Mrs. Craik, yourself and the rest of your family; and with sentiments of sincere regard and friendship, I am &c.[16]

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16. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To ELIZABETH WASHINGTON LEWIS**

New York, September 13, 1789.

My dear Sister: Colonel Ball's[19] letter gave me the first account of my Mother's death.[20] Since that I have received Mrs. Carter's letter, written at your request, and previous to both I was prepared for the event by some advices of her illness communicated to your Son Robert.

Awful, and affecting as the death of a Parent is, there is consolation in knowing, that Heaven has spared ours to an age, beyond which few attain, and favored her with the full enjoyment of her mental faculties, and as much bodily strength as usually falls to the lot of fourscore. Under these considerations and a hope that she is translated to a happier place, it is the duty of her relatives to yield due submission to the decrees of the Creator. When I was last at Fredericksburg, I took a final leave of my Mother, never expecting to see her more.

It will be impossible for me at this distance, and circumstanced as I am, to give the smallest attention

19. Col. Burges Ball.

20. Mary Washington. She died at Fredericksburg, Aug. 25, 1789, in the eighty-third year of her age.

to the execution of her will;[21] nor indeed is much required, if, as she directs, no security should be given or appraisement made of her estate; but that the same should be allotted to the Devisees with as little trouble and delay as may be. How far this is legal, I know not. Mr. Mercer can, and I have no doubt would, readily advise you if asked, which I wish you to do. If the ceremony of inventorying, appraising, &c. can be dispensed with, all the rest, (as the will declares, that few or no debts are owing) can be done with very little trouble. Every person may in that case immediately receive what is specifically devised. The Negroes[22] who are engaged in the crop and under an Overseer must remain I conceive on the Plantation until the crop is finished (which ought to be as soon as possible) after which the horses, stock of all sorts, and every species of property not disposed of by the will, (the debts, if any, being first paid) must by law be equally divided into five parts, one of which you, another my Brother Charles, and a third myself, are entitled to; the other two thirds fall to the share of the children of our deceased Brothers Samuel and John.

Were it not, that the specific legacies, which are given to me by the Will are meant,

21. The text of Mary Washington's will is printed in Ford's *Writings of Washington*, vol 14, p. 416.

22. The Negroes were devised by Augustine Washington's will to his sons after his wife's death. This will is printed in Ford's *Writings of Washington*, vol. 14, p, 410.

and ought to be considered and received as mementos of parental affection, in the last solemn act of life, I should not be desirous of receiving or removing them; but in this point of view I set a value on them much beyond their intrinsic worth.[23]

Whilst it occurs to me, it is necessary it should be known that there is a fellow belonging to that estate now at my house, who never stayed elsewhere, for which reason, and because he has a family I should be glad to keep him. He must I should conceive be far short in value of the fifth of the other negroes which will be to be divided, but I shall be content to take him as my proportion of them; and, if from a misconception either of the number or the value of these negroes it should be found that

he is of greater value than falls to my lot I shall readily allow the difference, in order that the fellow may be gratified, as he never would consent to go from me.

Debts, if any are due, should be paid from the sale of the crops. Plantation utensils, Horses and stock; and the sooner an account is taken of the latter and they can conveniently be disposed of, the better

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23. In addition to the lands on Accokeek Run in Stafford County, and her Negro boy named George, Mary Washington devised to the General her best bed, bedspread of Virginia cloth curtains that stood in her best room, her quilted blue and white quilt, best dressing glass, her next best dressing glass, one bed, bedstead bolsters, one pillow, one pair of sheets, blanket, and counterpane.

it will be for two reasons; first because the Overseer (if he is not a very honest Man) may take advantage of circumstances, and convert part of these things to his own use; and secondly because the season is now fast approaching when without feeding (which would lessen the sale of the corn and fodder) the stock will fall off, and consequently sell to a disadvantage. Whether my Mother has kept any accounts that can be understood is more than I am able to say. If any thing is owing to her it should be received and, if due from her, paid after due proof thereof is made. She has had a great deal of money from me at times, as can be made appear by my books, and the accounts of Mr. L. Washington during my absence; and over and above this has not only had all that was ever made from the Plantation but got her provisions and every thing else she thought proper from thence. In short to the best of my recollection I have never in my life received a copper from the estate, and have paid many hundred pounds (first and last) to her in cash. However I want no retribution; I conceived it to be a duty whenever she asked for money, and I had it, to furnish her notwithstanding she got

all the crops or the amount of them, and took every thing she wanted from the plantation for the support of her family, horses, &c. besides.

As the accounts for or against the Estate must not only from the declaration in the will, but from the nature of the case, be very trilling and confined I should suppose to the town of Fredericksburg, it might be proper therefore in that paper to require in an advertisement all those who have any demands to bring them in properly attested immediately, and those who are owing to pay forthwith. The same advertisement might appoint a day for selling the stock, and every thing, excepting Negroes, at the plantation, that is not devised by the will, as it will be more convenient I should suppose for the heirs to receive their respective dividends of the money arising from the sales than to be troubled with receiving a cow, a calf, or such like things after the debts (which must be the

case) have been first paid. It might be well in fixing the day of sale, to consult the Overseer, to know when the business of the plantation will admit the Cart, Team and Utensils to be taken from it.

As the number of articles to be sold cannot be many and will be of small value, I think they had better be sold for ready money and so advertised, for though they would fetch more on credit, there would more than probable be bad debts contracted, and at any rate delay, if not law suits, before the money could be collected, and besides if there are debts to be paid money will be wanted for the purpose, and in no way can be so readily and properly obtained as by a ready money sale, and from the crops.

If you think this business will be too troublesome for you with the aid of your sons Mr. Carter[24] and Colonel Ball who I am persuaded will give each of us assistance, and you will let me know it, I will desire Major George Washington to attend.

As the land at the Little-falls Plantation goes to Mr. Bushrod Washington he should be apprised in time of the breaking of it up, otherwise there may be injury to the houses and fencing if left without some person to attend to them. Have particular care taken of her papers, the letters to her, &c.

I should prefer selling the houses and lotts on which my Mother lived to renting of them,

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24. Charles Carter, who married Elizabeth Lewis, daughter of “Betty” Washington Lewis.

and would give a year or two years credit to the purchasers paying interest, and not being acquainted with the value of lotts in Fredericksburg, I would leave the price to any three indifferent and impartial Gentleman to say what they are worth, and that sum I will take.

If they cannot be sold and soon I would rent them from year to year to any orderly Tenant on a moderate rent. If they are not disposed of on sale or by tennanting before the weather gets cool the paling will, I expect, be soon burnt up.

Give my love to Mrs. Carter, and thank her for the letter she wrote to me. I would have done this myself, had I more time for private correspondences. Mrs. Washington joins in best wishes for her, yourself, and all other friends, and I am, with the most sincere regard, your affectionate Brother.[25]

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25. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To MRS. MARGARET CARROLL**[29]

New York, September 16, 1789.

Mdam: A Person having been lately sent to me from Europe in the capacity of a Gardner, who professes a knowledge in the culture of rare plants and care of a Green-House, I am desirous to profit of the very obliging offer you were pleased some time ago to make me.

In availing myself of your goodness I am far from desiring that it should induce any inconvenience to yourself. but, reconciling your disposition to oblige, with your convenience, I shall be happy to receive such aids as you can well spare, and as will not impair your collection. Trusting that this will be the rule of your bounty, I have requested General Williams to give you notice, when an opportunity offers to transport the trees or plants in the freshest state to Mount Vernon, and to pay any expence which may be incurred in fitting them for transportation, and to receive them from your Gardner for that purpose. I have the honor etc.[30]

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29. Of "Mount Clare," Md.

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30. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***DAVID STUART**

New York, September 21, 1789.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 12th instt. came duly to hand. I have given the subject of it every consideration that time and my situation would enable me to do. The result is, that if Mr. Alexander, upon your recovery of the Land for which the price, and mode of payment is disputed, and paying rent for it during the time it has been out of his possession (the latter to be fixed by Men of judgment and impartiality) is disposed to accomodate the Suit which is pending between you, as Administrator of John Parke Custis Esqr. deceased, and himself, that it would, all circumstances considered, be most advisable to accede to it. My reasons for this opinion are many. It is unnecessary I conceive to detail them if I had leisure, which in truth is not the case. I am etc.

My opinion coincides with the above, and I advise the adoption of the measure accordingly.[36]

36. The last paragraph is signed “Martha Washington,” From the original letter in the possession of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union.

**To THOMAS HARTLEY**

New York, September 29, 1789.

Sir: As you are about to return to your own State, you will oblige me by informing the Gentlemen to whom you wrote sometime ago, or any others in whom you can place entire confidence that I will give £400 Pennsa. currency (to be paid in specie) for twenty mares of the annexed description, delivered at my Seat of Mount Vernon in Virginia (which is only nine miles from Alexandria) and I will allow besides a commission of 5 pr Cent. on the said £400 as compensation for the trouble of purchasing, which two sums I mean to be in full of all expences, risk &ca. in delivering of them as above.

**Description**

None of the above Mares are to be under *15 hands high* by a proper standard measure, not to exceed *six years old* last spring, *and to be warranted sound* . Bays or Blacks would be preferred, but no colour rejected. They must not be low in flesh, or have marks of abuse about them, being a little rubbed by collars will not be regarded.

If a contract of this sort can be made,

the mares must all be taken to Mount Vernon at one time, and duplicate descriptive lists of their colours, brands, and marks, minutely detailed. One of which must be sent to me by the post, when the mares set off for Mount Vernon, the other will accompany them to that place, in order to receive at the foot of it the receipt of my Nephew Major George Augt. Washington, who lives at my house, which receipt will entitle the Purchaser, or bearer thereof with your order annexed to the aforesaid sum of £420 which shall be paid at this place at any moment it is presented.

As I have no doubt of getting mares answering this description for 40 or 50 dollars and am assured of this fact by Col. Thos. Lowry, I am not inclined to exceed the sum of £420. for the above mentioned 20, and therefore beg the favor of you as soon after your return home as you can make it convenient to let me know if I may depend upon that number in your parts for this price. Should this commission be executed to the entire satisfaction of my Nephew, who will be charged with the

examination of the mares, and will be instructed to reject any, and all, that deviate from the above description, it is not only possible, but very probable I may take twenty more on the same terms, from the same or other persons, being more convenient than any that could be bought in Jersey. I am etc.[67]

67. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To OTHO HOLLAND WILLIAMS**

New York, October 2, 1789.

Dear Sir: From the purport of your letter of I have reason to fear that my request of you to forward the plants which Mrs. Carroll had been so obliging as to offer me was so incautiously expressed, as to lead you into a mistake, and myself consequently into an expence which I had no intention to incur. More than to embrace the opportunity of the Packet from Baltimore to Alexandria or any other casual conveyance from the one to the other by which the above plants could easily have been sent, I had not extended my ideas, and if a large vessel should have been employed for this purpose the cost will far exceed the value of the things. If not too late now I could wish to avoid it.

I had no expectation of large trees, or of any plants beyond their infant growth, the first would be a robbery of the good Lady without answering my purposes so well as things of smaller growth. But in any event I beg you to receive my sincere thanks for the pains you have taken. The cost shall be paid so soon as you make it known to Dear Sir Yours etc.[74]

74. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To GOUVERNEUR MORRIS**

New York, October 13, 1789.

Dear Sir: In my first moments of leisure I acknowledge the receipt of your several favors of the 23 of February, 3 of March and 29 of April.

To thank you for the interesting communications contained in those letters, and for the pains you have taken to procure me a watch, is all, or nearly all, I shall attempt in this letter; for I could only repeat things, were I to set about it, which I have reason to believe have been regularly

communicated to you in detail, at the periods which gave birth to them. It may not however be unpleasing to you to hear in one word that the national government is organized, and, as far as my information goes, to the satisfaction of all parties. That opposition to it is either no more, or hides its head. That it is hoped and expected it will take strong root, and that the non acceding States will very soon become Members of the Union. No doubt is entertained of North Carolina, nor would there be of Rhode Island had not the majority of that People bid adieu, long since to every principle

of honor, common sense, and honesty. A material change however has taken place, it is said, at the late election of representatives, and confident assurances are given from that circumstance of better dispositions in their Legislature at its next session, now about to be held.

The revolution which has been effected in France is of so wonderful a nature that the mind can hardly realize the fact. If it ends as our last accounts to the first of August predict that nation will be the most powerful and happy in Europe; but I fear though it has gone triumphantly through the first paroxysm, it is not the last it has to encounter before matters are finally settled. In a word the revolution is of too great magnitude to be effected in so short a space, and with the loss of so little blood. The mortification of the King, the intrigues of the Queen, and the discontent of the Princes and the Noblesse will foment divisions, if possible, in the national assembly, and avail themselves of every faux pas in the formation of the constitution if they do not give a more open, active opposition. To these the licentiousness of the People on one hand and sanguinary punishments on the other will alarm the best disposed friends to the measure, and contribute not

a little to the overthrow of their object. Great temperance, firmness, and foresight are necessary in the movements of that Body. To forbear running from one extreme to another is no easy matter, and, should this be the case, rocks and shelves not visible at present may wreck the vessel.

This letter is an evidence, though of a trifling sort, that in the commencement of any work one rarely sees the progress or end of it. I declared to you in the beginning that I had little to say; I have got beyond the second page, and find I have a good deal to add; but that no time or paper may be wasted in a useless preface I will come to the point.

Will you then, my good Sir, permit me to ask the favor of you to provide and send to me by the first Ship, bound to this place, or Philadelphia, mirrors for a table, with neat and fashionable but not expensive ornaments for them; such as will do credit to your taste. The mirrors will of course be in pieces that they may be adapted to the company, (the size of it I mean) the aggregate length of them may be ten feet, the breadth two feet. The frames may be plated ware, or any thing else more fashionable

but not more expensive. If I am defective recur to what you have seen on Mr. Robert Morris's table for my ideas *generally* . Whether these things can be had on better terms and in a better style in Paris than in London I will not undertake to decide. I recollect however to have had plated ware from both places, and those from the latter came cheapest; but a single instance is no evidence of a general fact.

Of plated ware may be made I conceive handsome and useful Coolers for wine *at* and *after* dinner. Those I am in need of viz. *eight* double ones (for madeira and claret the wines usually drank at dinner) each of the apertures to be sufficient to contain a pint decanter, with an allowance in the depth of it for ice at bottom so as to raise the neck of the decanter above the cooler; between the apertures a handle is to be placed by which these double coolers may with convenience be removed from one part of the table to another. For the wine *after* dinner *four* quadruple coolers will be necessary each aperture of which to be of the size of a *quart* decanter or quart bottle for four sorts of wine. These decanters or bottles to have ice at bottom, and to be elevated thereby as above;

a central handle here also will be wanting. Should my description be defective, your imagination is fertile and on this I shall rely. One idea however I must impress you with and that is in whole or part to avoid extravagance. For extravagance would not comport with my own inclination, nor with the example which ought to be set. The reason why I prefer an aperture for *every* decanter or bottle to coolers that would contain two and four is that whether full or empty the bottles will always stand upright and never be at variance with each other.

The letter enclosed with your draught accompanying it will provide the means for payment. The clumsy manner in which Merchants (or rather their Tradesmen) execute commissions, where taste is required, for persons at a distance must be my apology, and the best that can be offered by Dear Sir &c.

Mrs. Washington presents her compliments to you.

P.S. I was in the very act of sealing this letter when yours of the 31st. of July from Dieppe was put into my hands. Accept my sincere thanks for the important communications contained in it, and for the tables[3] which accompanied. I shall add no more now, except that in the morning I commence a tour, though rather late in the season, through the States eastward of this. Adieu.[4]

3. Morris had written (July 31): "I...send some Tables which contains the political military pecuniary and commercial State of this Country. I believe them to be tolerably authentic, as far as they go." Morris's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

4. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To WAKELIN WELCH & SON**

New York, October 13, 1789.

Gentn: I have requested my friend and acquaintance Gouvr Morris Esqr when in, either London or Paris, to procure and send to me by the first conveyance to this City or to Philadelphia Plated Coolers, Mirrers, and Table ornaments and to draw upon you for the amount which please to pay and place it to the account of Gentn. Your etc.[93]

93. The original is in the Frederick S. Peck Collection, Barrington, R. I.

**To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE**

New York, October 14, 1789.

This is the first time I have written to you, my dear Marquis, since I have been in this place, and I have not received a line from you in the same space of time. This has been a long interval of silence between two persons whose habits of correspondence have been so uninterruptedly kept up as ours; but the new and arduous scenes in which we have both been lately engaged will afford a mutual excuse.

I wrote to you very fully in my last letters from Mount Vernon, and since that time the gazettes, which I know you receive, have given a pretty ample detail of our public proceedings. I therefore take the advantage of the politeness of the Comte de Moustier, (who is about returning to France) more with a view of assuring you that you are still remembered by me with affection, than with an intent to convey any political intelligence. I will only observe, generally, that the prospect is favorable to the political happiness of this country.

The revolution, which has taken place with you,

is of such magnitude and of so momentous a nature that we hardly yet dare to form a conjecture about it. We however trust, and fervently pray that its consequences may prove happy to a nation, in whose fate we have so much cause to be interested and that its influence may be felt with pleasure by future generations.

Mrs. Washington joins me in best wishes to you and your amiable Partner. I am etc.[8]

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8. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*

On October 14 Washington wrote to Otho Holland Williams, thanking him for his care and trouble in the matter of trees and plants from Mrs. Carroll, and requesting that if it was not too late, no large trees be sent "especially the one of which she has not a second. It is highly probable *this* tree, and perhaps *all* large ones would be lost to us both by the act of transportation unless very fine weather, a short passage, and *more* than *common* care are met with." This letter is in the Maryland Historical Society.

**To MRS. MARGARET CARROLL**

New York, October 14, 1789.

Madam: The letter with which you were pleased to honor me dated the 25. of last month, came duly to hand. I know not how sufficiently to thank you for your polite and obliging compliance with my request, nor, in what manner to express my fears lest those motives should have led you into inconveniences. My Green House is by no means in perfect order, and if it was, it would not have been my wish to have robbed yours of any *grown* or bearing plants. If it is not too late I would again repeat and entreat that this may not happen.

Mrs. Washington joins me in thanking you for your polite invitation to Mount Clare (on the supposition that we should return to Virginia during the recess of Congress). For the more perfect reestablishment of my health among other considerations I am on the eve of a tour through the eastern States. We shall at all times have great pleasure in asking how you do and both of us unite in best wishes and respectful compliments. I have the honor etc.[8]

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8. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*

On October 14 Washington wrote to Otho Holland Williams, thanking him for his care and trouble in the matter of trees and plants from Mrs. Carroll, and requesting that if it was not too late, no large trees be sent "especially the one of which she has not a second. It is highly probable *this* tree, and perhaps *all* large ones would be lost to us both by the act of transportation unless very fine weather, a short passage, and *more* than *common* care are met with." This letter is in the Maryland Historical Society.

***To BURGES BALL AND CHARLES CARTER, JUNIOR**

New Haven,[9] October 18, 1789.

Dear Sirs: Having set out on a tour through the Eastern States, it was at this place your letter of the 8th. Instt. overtook me.

Not having my fathers Will to recur to when I wrote to my Sister, nor any recollection of the Devises in it, I supposed She was entitled to a Child's part of the Negros; but, if they were otherwise disposed of, by that Will (as I believe is the case) She is certainly excluded; and the Sons only, and their representatives, come in. In this manner the devision must be made.

Everything of personal property, not specifically disposed of by my Mothers Will had better be sold: with the proceeds of which, and the Crops, the Debts must be paid. The surplus if any, must be divided among the heirs.

Being well convinced that the Gentlemen who were so obliging as to examine and set a value upon my Lots, acted from their best judgment, I am perfectly satisfied with their decision; and beg my thanks may be presented to them for the trouble they have had in this business.

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9. On Thursday, October 15, about 9 a. m., Washington left New York on his tour through the Eastern States, He traveled 31 miles that day and lodged at Rye, in Westchester County. He reached New Haven, Conn., in the afternoon of October 17, and left that place at 6 a. m. on the 19th.

If they are not already sold, I am willing to allow three, instead of two years credit for the payment of the purchase money, Interest being paid. In a word, as I do not want to tenant them, I should be glad to sell them on *any reasonable terms* , as that kind of property, at a distance, is always troublesome and rarely productive.

I did not mean to give Mr. Mercer the trouble of stating any formal opinion, all I had in view was to know if the formalities of the Law with respect to Inventory, appraising, &c. could be dispensed with. If it could, I was sure no other difficulty would arise, as I knew my Mothers dealings were small, and the business consequently easily closed.

I am exceedingly sorry to hear of the loss the Country has sustained from Frost. The Crops of Corn in this State Connecticut) along the road I have travelled, are abundantly great.

I offer my best thanks to you for your kind services, and my best wishes to my Nieces and your families, and with sincere esteem etc.[10]

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10. From the original in the Ball Deposit in the Library of Congress.

**To SAMUEL TAFT[18]**

Hartford, November 8, 1789.

Sir: Being informed that you have given my name to one of your Sons, and called another after Mrs. Washington's family. And being moreover very much pleased with the modest and innocent looks of your two daughters Patty and Polly I do, for these reasons, send each of these Girls a piece of chintz. And to Patty, who bears the name of Mrs. Washington, and who waited more upon us than Polly did,[19] I send five guineas, with which she may buy herself any little ornaments she may want, or she may dispose of them in any other manner more agreeable to herself.

As I do not give these things with a view to have it talked of, or even to its being known, the less there is said about the matter the better you will please me, but that I may be sure the chintz and money have got safe to hand, let Patty, who I dare say is equal to it, write me a line informing me thereof directed to “The President of the United States at New York.”

I wish you and your family well and am etc.[20]

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18. Of Uxbridge, Mass.

19. On November 6 Washington stayed over night at Taft's house. Washington's hearing, or memory, was at fault as to Patty's name, which was not Martha, but Mercy. Her letter to Washington is dated December 28 and is in the *Washington Papers*.

20. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To JAMES MERCER**

New York, November 17, 1789.

Sir: During my absence on a tour through the Eastern States, your letter of the 15th. Ulto, enclosing an Order of the District Court which had been in Session at Fredericksburgh, came to this City. This is the reason why you have not recd. an earlier acknowledgment of them; for I did not return until the 13th. instr. too late for the Posts of last week.

A bad memory, and no memorandums or papers to refer to, added to the multiplicity of occurrences which have happened to lay claim to my closest attention since the year 1774, have obliterated almost every thing relating to the conversations and conduct of Mr. Dawson[21] at the Sale of Colo. Mercers Estate in the month of Novr. of that year. All that remains upon my mind respecting his conduct (for my business you will recollect was not with him, but to sell the Estate) is, that the Plantations appeared to me to be in bad condition, and himself too simple, easy and incompetent for the management of them. I have some faint recollection also, that there were suspicions of, or charges

21. William Dawson.

against him for, his having disposed of Pine timber. And I think he was under promise to be down soon after the Sale to settle, and render an acct. of his Stewardship. But, the most certain things of all to me, is, that the whole has more the Semblance of a dream than reality; for which reason and because I wish to do no injustice to either part, I pray that no stress may be laid upon any thing I have here written, touching this business, further than it is corroborated by the testimony of others. With esteem and regard I am etc.

PS. Mr. Dawson has written to me on this subject, his letter dated the 5th. of Octr., and propounded questions which my memory does not enable me to answer. The certificate which he enclosed to me, I now return, with a request that it may be handed to him.

[H.S.P.]

**To OTHO HOLLAND WILLIAMS**

New York, November 22, 1789.

Dear Sir: Upon my return to this city, after making a tour through the eastern States, I received your favor of the 29 of October enclosing one from Mrs. Carroll, and two days ago I received another letter from you dated the 10th. of the same month.

I can no longer refuse the kind and pressing offer of bearing fruit Trees from the good Lady, and in the enclosed letter to her, I have informed her that when the season will permit, you will do me the favor of embracing a good occasion of forwarding them to Mount Vernon.

From the promising abilities and good character I have heard of Mr. Robert Smith, I entertain a very favorable opinion of his merits; but, as in the Person of a Judge, the World will look for a character and reputation founded on service and experience, I cannot conceive that the appointment of so young and unexperienced a man as Mr. Smith would be considered as a judicious choice by the community in general, though it might meet the approbation of those who have had the best opportunity of becoming acquainted with his talents. In such important appointments as the Judiciary, much confidence is necessary, and this will not be given fully to an untried man. With esteem and regard, I am etc.[25]

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25. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To MRS. MARGARET CARROLL**

New York, November 22, 1789.

Madam: Since my return from a tour thro' the eastern States I have been honored by the receipt of your polite, and very obliging favor of the 26 of last month.

I am overcome by your goodness, and shall submit to your decision with respect to the plants from your Green House I must however again declare I should feel infinitely more pain than pleasure from the receipt of them, if I thought, in encreasing my stock, you had, in the smallest degree, done injury to your own. After this declaration, which I make, my good Madam, with the utmost candor and

truth, such plants as your goodness may have intended for me, General Williams will forward when the season shall arrive, which will admit, with safety, of their transportation, and this from some late accounts of the alteration my new Gardner has been making at Mount Vernon will be as soon as my Green House will be completely in order for them.

I feel myself much flattered by your kind congratulations on the recovery of my health and the continuance of Mrs. Washington's and with gratitude I receive your obliging invitation to Mount Clare. Mrs. Washington joins me in compliments to you, and with very great respect, I have the honor etc.[26]

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26. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To JOSEPH JONES**

New York, November 30, 1789.

Dear Sir: Your favor, without date, came to my hands by the last post, but not till after I had decided in favor of Mr. Cyrus Griffin, and directed the commission to be made out. This being the case your application for the office of District Judge has not, nor will it be mentioned by me.

In every nomination to office I have endeavored, as far as my own knowledge extended, or information could be obtained, to make fitness of character my primary object. If with this the peculiar necessities of the Candidates could be combined, it has been, with me, an additional inducement to the appointment. By these principles, in a proper degree, have I been influenced in the case of Mr. Griffin, who is not only *out* of office and in *want* of the emoluments of one, but has been deprived of the former by *my* means, owing to an opinion which prevailed here at the time, among our Countrymen, that his accepting of the temporary appointment of Commissioner to treat with the southern Indians

would not bring him under the disqualifying act of Virginia by which, however, it seems he has lost his station in the council of that State, and is now entirely out of employment. This circumstance added to the knowledge of his having been a regular Student of law, having filled an important office in the union in the line of it, and being besides a man of competent abilities, and of pure character, weighed with me in the choice, to which I was not a little influenced by the opportunity of deciding positively whether he would accept or not, for I confess I was not a little unwilling to hazard *another* choice without some previous enquiry and consultation, and sufficient time was not allowed me between the receipt of Colonel Pendleton's resignation, which came to this place whilst I was on a

tour through the eastern States, and the day appointed for the session of the District Court, to do this. With very sincere esteem and regard, etc.[41]

41. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On November 30 Washington appointed William Nelson, United States attorney for the Virginia District, inclosing his commission to him in a brief note, explaining the necessity of a later confirmation by the Senate. This note is recorded in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

**To THOMAS HARTLEY**

New York, January 16, 1790.

Dear Sir: The letter of Mr. Zantzinger[8] which you put into my hands last night, enclosing the list of Mares,[9] which had been offered to him and Mr. Miller[10] for sale, I have read and considered, and feel myself under very great obligations to those Gentlemen, and to you, Sir, for the disinterested trouble you have already taken, and are willing to continue to procure for me the number that I want.

It was not my intention to give this trouble to any one without making compensation, and, for that reason I placed the business upon the restrictive footing of my former letter. But, as these Gentlemen, are so obliging as to undertake this business merely to serve me (for which, through you, I beg to offer my acknowledgements) it would not only be uncivil, but unjust to expect they should incur any expence or run any risque in the prosecution of it on my account. I would therefore leave it to them to act for me as they would for themselves in the purchase of 17 mares which, with the three you conditionally contracted for will complete my object; but I must still require that the

8. Paul Zantzinger.

9. A list of the mares purchased and [forwarded to Mount Vernon by Zantzinger and Adam Reigart is in the *Washington Papers* under date of Feb. 12, 1790. Their total cost was £317:17;6.

10. John Miller.

average price of the above 17 may not exceed £25 or £26 Pennsylvania currency. That all such as may be under 15 hands (by standard measure) shall not exceed 4 years old next spring, and, in

this case, none may be under 14 ½ hands high. That none may at any rate exceed six years old and be perfectly sound; the loss of an eye, if not proceeding from a mad or restive disposition I should not regard, as the defect will no doubt be considered in the price. That they shall be sent to Mount Vernon, at my expence, under the conduct of a careful man, with a descriptive list not only of the *exact* height and colour but of the minutest marks, natural and accidental, and a duplicate thereof to me. This may be useful on many accounts, and without its a man not *very* scrupulous might exchange the best of them for others of inferior quality answering a *general* description. Receiving them at Mount Vernon any time in the month of February will answer *my* purposes fully, but I should be unwilling to incur the expence of keeping them until that time at the house of the Sellers. It may rest therefore with Colonel Miller and Mr. Zantzinger whether they will send the whole to Mount Vernon at one or at two trips as they may be purchased.

I will lodge in Colo. Biddle's hands £400[11] subject to the orders of the above Gentlemen, and whatever this may fall short of the purchase shall be paid as soon as it is made known to your etc.[12]

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11. Lear wrote to Clement Biddle (January 17) that the President had directed the payment for these mares to pass through Biddle's hands. “The amount will be about £400 Pennsylvania Currency which sum I shall endeavour so to accommodate with the Bank in Philadelphia. If this cannot be done, I shall transmit you bills to that amount, when I write further upon the subject.” Lear's letter is recorded in the “Letter Book” in the *Washington Papers*.

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12. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To BURGES BALL**

New York, January 18, 1790.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 26 of December came duly to hand, but occurrences of various kinds have prevented an acknowledgement of it till this time.

I am not at all uneasy at the delay, or impatient for the settlement of the estate accounts of my deceased Mother; I am persuaded they will be rendered in due time, and to the satisfaction of all concerned. To pay all she owed is my first wish, to render unto every one their due is the next. The method which has been taken to dispose of the effects is, I presume, the best, and I am satisfied therewith. That none of the families of Negroes have been parted (where it could be avoided) is very agreeable to me.

I am well pleased that Mr. Carter is inclined to take possession of my lots in Fredericksburg. We shall not disagree about the price, or in the mode of payment; of which be so good as to inform him.

I hope you have got through your difficulties on account of your surety-ship for Major Willis, and without loss. When you engaged in this business you neglected the advice of the Wise man, than which no better I believe is to be found in his whole book, or among all his sayings, 'Beware of surety-ship." Offer my love and good wishes to Fanny and the family, accept the same yourself and those of Mrs. Washington. I am etc.[13]

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13. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On January 20, in reply to an address from the General Assembly of Maryland, Washington wrote: "Your mention of the place from whence you address me awakens a succession of uncommon reflections. In noticing the eventful period, since the resignation of my military command: I trace, with infinite gratitude, the agency of a Providence, which induced the People of America to substitute in place of an inadequate confederacy, a general Government, eminently calculated to secure the safety and welfare of their Country...When I reflect on the critical situation to which this Country has been more than once reduced, I feel a kind of exultation in the character of my Countrymen, who have rescued it from threatened ruin by their virtue, fortitude, intelligence and unanimity."

## To EBENEZER TUCKER[2]

New York, January 24, 1790.

Sir: Captain Burnett delivered me your letter of the 18. instant, and is so obliging as to take charge of this answer.

It is my sincere opinion that the land mentioned in it[3] is worth what I asked for it, to wit four dollars per acre, and once would have sold for it; but, if, in the present scarcity of cash it will not fetch that sum, let those, who are really inclinable to buy, come forward, like men that are in earnest, and say what they will give. If they, or their Agent have seen the land, (and without this it is useless to name any price) have examined its qualities and improvements, they can tell what they will give, and ought to act like fair and candid men. On these terms I am ready to treat with them. It is not my intention to dispose of the land for a song, nor is it my wish to higgle, or make many words to the bargain; for which reason I pray them to come to a decision at once, and that you would inform me of the result.

At any rate it would be well for you to write to me, and soon, that I may not miss any other offer, should any be made to, Sir, etc.[4]

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2. Of Little Egg Harbor, N. J.

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3. In Washington County, Pa.

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4. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To WILLIAM CRAIK[16]**

New York, February 8, 1790.

Dear Sir: I have duly received your letter of the 25 of last month, and return you my thanks for your attention to my dispute with Stromat respecting the Proclamation warrant.

If Mr. Stromat will fulfil the offer of compromise in the manner he has proposed to you, or in such a manner as you, under the aid of Mr. Dunnington's information, (who is perfectly acquainted with all the land to which Stromat lays claim by virtue of his warrants) shall think will subserve my purposes, I would prefer it to a suit at law; by which I might *gain* or *lose* all. To prevent the injury which my tract would sustain by the intersection of it by the slipes Stromat was endeavoring to obtain, was my primary object, to attain which will satisfy me. If you could make it convenient to attend the survey it would enable you to decide on the *spot* with more propriety, and such a service would be very agreeable to me. Bind firmly whatever agreement you may make with Stromat without delay; that he is not punctilious in observing his word *I* know, and that he would deceive you, if he can gain any thing by it I have very little doubt. For your services in this business, and the ejectment of Perry, with the expences that have been incurred, I again pray you to apply to my Nephew, G. A. Washington, for payment. With very great esteem and regard I am etc.[17]

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16. Of Port Tobacco, Md.

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17. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To GOUVERNEUR MORRIS**

New York, March 1, 1790.

Dear Sir: Since my last to you, dated the 13 of October, 1 have removed to a larger house (the one lately occupied by the Count de Moustier), enlarged my table, and of course my Guests; let me therefore request the favor of you to add two pieces to the number of plateaux required in the above letter, and ornaments equivalent, for it will take these *in addition* to what I before asked, to decorate the present Table.

I would thank you also for sending to me at the same time fourteen (of what I believe are called) Patent lamps, similar to those used at Mr. R. Morris's, but less costly, two or at most three guineas a piece, will fully answer my purposes. Along with these, but of a more ordinary sort (say at about one guinea each), I should be glad to receive a dozen other patent lamps for the Hall, Entries, and Stairs of my house. These lamps, it is said, consume their own smoke, do no injury to furniture, give more light, and are cheaper than candles. Order a sufficiency of spare glasses and an abundance of wicks.

If I had not in my former letter on this subject offered reasons accompanied with an apology for giving you so much trouble, I would, to keep up

the custom, do it now, although I persuade myself you had rather comply with my request than be troubled with the best apology I could make for giving it.

Being well persuaded that you are regularly informed of the proceedings of the second Session of Congress, the disposition of that body, so far as it has been developed, and of the general complexion of our public affairs, I shall not trouble you with a repetition; but shall with much truth assure you that I am etc.[35]

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35. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On March 1 Washington wrote to Wakelin Welch concerning payment for the articles mentioned. This letter is recorded in the “Letter Book” in the Washington Papers.

On March 1 Lear wrote, by direction of the President, to Gov. Mor: Anseto Antone Freatz, of St. Jagto, Cape Verde Islands, informing him of the capture of the American sloop *Brothers* by the British frigate *Pomona*, and the captain, Thomas Hammond, pilot, and crew imprisoned. The reason for the seizure was that dollars were found on the sloop which were said to have been taken from wrecks on a reef near Bonavista Island. The President asked to be informed in the matter. Lear's letter is recorded in the “Letter Book” in the *Washington Papers*.

On March 4 the Society of Free Quakers, meeting in Philadelphia. delivered a complimentary address to Washington to which he replied at some unknown date. This reply, along with the address. is entered in the "Letter Book." In it Washington wrote: "Having always considered the conscientious scruples of religious belief as resting entirely with the sects that profess, or the individuals who entertain them, I cannot, consistent with this uniform sentiment, otherwise notice the circumstances referred to in your address, than by adding the tribute of my acknowledgment to that of our country, for those services which the members of your particular community rendered to the common cause in the course of our revolution. And by assuring you that, as our present government was instituted with an express view to general happiness, it will be my earnest endeavor, in discharging the duties confided to me with faithful impartiality, to raise the hope of common protection which you expect from the measures of that government."

**To WARNER LEWIS**

New York, March 5, 1790.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 18 of last month, enclosing the copy of one dated the 26 of October came duly to hand. The best, indeed the only apology' I can make for suffering the latter to remain so long unacknowledged, is, that on my return from a tour through the eastern States in November, I found such a multiplicity of public letters and other papers, which required to be acted upon, that those of private concern were laid aside, and in a manner forgotten before they could again be brought into view.

I shall now, though I feel myself unable to give such answers to the queries of Mr. Nicholson, with respect to my land in Gloucester county, as will be perfectly satisfactory to myself, say enough to enable *him* to decide for *himself* .

The Gentleman of whom it was bought valued it (as I believe you have been informed) at £1000; but for particular reasons agreed to take £800. Whether from any favorable change of circumstances it would sell for more now I know not. Less than £800

with interest thereon from the time it ceased to produce it to me in consequence of the transfer, together with the taxes which have arisen since, and the charges of alienation, I would not take even if the whole sum should be paid down, which indeed would be by far the most pleasing mode of disposing of it, but as a purchase on these terms does not appear to be the intention of Mr. Nicholson I will, in the next place, propose £400 in hand, with the incidental expences as before, and

interest on the £800 during its suspension, and £500 payable at the expiration of 4 years without interest, provided it be paid within one month after it shall become due; if not, then with interest from the date of the bond. Or, lastly, I will take £1000 payable at the expiration of 4 years, without interest, if the whole of the purchase money be then punctually paid, otherwise to carry interest as above from the date. In this case, as in the last, the interest of the £800, with the charges, is to be paid up, the intention being not to *lose* by receiving *land* in place of *money* that was lent and bearing interest. As there are no buildings on the premises, I had rather sell than rent, Indeed I prefer the former at any rate having found, from experience, that estates at a distance plague more than they profit the Proprietors of them. With very great esteem etc.[36]

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36. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To CHARLES CARTER**

New York, March 8, 1790.

Dear Sir: Re-examining some letters, which in the hurry of business had been laid by, I find your favor of the 6 ultimo among them, and not being able to recollect whether I gave it an answer in the order of its date, I now inform you, that it will be quite agreeable to me that you should have my lots in Fredericksburg for the sum, and on the terms of payment communicated by you through Colo. Ball. And I hope according to the intimation, there given, that they are now in your occupancy.

I will at any time make deeds of transfer. Present my love to Mrs. Carter and my Sister, in which Mrs. Washington joins me. With great esteem etc.[41]

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41. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To DAVID STUART**

New York, March 23, 1790.

Dear Sir: The only answer I can give to your letter of the 11th Instt. is, that under my present view of the subject, the agreement you have entered into with Mr. Robt. Alexander had better be carried into effect. But I must declare to you at the sametime, that from my imperfect knowledge of the original bargain, of the proceedings which have been had under it, and of the points on which the

dispute between Mr. Custis and Mr. Alexander have turned, that I feel an incompetency, and of course an unwillingness to give a final opinion thereof, with out further information.

All I recollect of this business is, that the former was to have given the latter the sum of (I believe) £12,000 for the Mansion-house tract; to be paid as Mr. Alexander says, with compound interest at the expiration of (I think) 24 years, or, according to Mr. Custis's ideas, *on* or *before* the expiration of *that* period. This difference of opinion has given rise, it seems, to the dispute now subsisting; a highly important one indeed it is, and very interesting in its decision to both parties; but how it came to pass that there should

be this difference of opinion on a point which might, I should suppose, be decided by resorting to written documents, I am at a loss to discover; nor am I better informed with respect to the kind of money in which the payment was to have been made; and yet, as in the last case, one would think this also might be determined by the plainest construction of the Instruments, or by such oral testimony as could be adduced in explanation of the words, if they are found to be ambiguous.

With respect to the first point, if it was optional in Mr. Custis to pay *on* or *before* the expiration of the term, on what ground did Mr. Alexander refuse to receive payment? And if the payment was not to be made in Specie (by agreement) why was any medium that was currt. at the time, refused? The great nominal sum which was to be given for the land, is, to my mind, an unequivocal proof (if nothing is expressed to the contrary) that both parties were Speculating in paper; for the one never could have had the conscience to ask or the other the folly to have given £12,000 specie for it.

If my comprehension of this matter (as here stated) is not right, I wish to be set right. If it is, I could wish,

before I give any conclusive opinion, to receive information on the following points.

First. What are the opinions of those who have been consulted, with respect to the option, claimed by Mr. Custis, to pay *on* or *before* the expiration of the term of 24 years?

Second. Whether in the Articles of agreement, Mortgage, bond, or other evidence, there is an exception of Paper Money, or proviso to pay in any other sort?

Third. At what period was the agreement made? How long after this agreement was the deed dated? and what was the Continental and State Scale of depreciation, at both those periods?

Fourth. In what sort of paper money was the tender made, and how long after the date of the Deed was it, before it was made? Why in the opinion of your Lawyers, was not *that* paper a legal tender?

Was there any other Paper money in being at that time which would have been? and why, unless emitted by the State, and made tenderable by law? In that case, why was not such money tendered?

After the solution of these several questions I shall be able to decide with much more satisfaction to myself than at the present moment, whether it will be best to give £600 to annul the bargain, Pay rent (but this is just), and sustain the loss

of the sums which went to procure the money tendered, or hazard a decision in the high Court of Chancery; by which the whole Sum, of £12,000 with interest might be decreed, if not Scaled, according to the opinion of the Lawyers on the one side, or the other, agreeably to your statement thereof.

My best wishes, in which Mrs. Washington and the Children unite are presented to Mrs. Stuart and yourself and family. With much truth I am etc.[50]

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50. From a photostat of the original kindly furnished by Judge E A Armstrong, of Princeton. N. J.

**To DAVID STUART**

New York, March 28, 1790.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 15.[54] enclosing the act of Assembly authorising an agreement with Mr. Alexander came to my hand in the moment my last to you was dispatched.

I am sorry such jealousies as you speak of should be gaining ground, and are poisoning the minds of the southern people; but admit the fact which is alledged as the cause of them, and give it full scope, does it amount to more than what was known to every man of information before, at, and since the adoption of the Constitution? Was it not always believed that there are some points which peculiarly interest the eastern States? and did any One, who reads human nature, and more especially the character of the eastern people conceive that they would not pursue them steadily by a combination of their force. Are there not other points which equally concern the southern States? If these States are less tenacious of their interest, or, if whilst the eastern move in a solid phalanx to effect their views, the southern are always divided, which of the two is most to be blamed? That there is a diversity of interests in the Union none has denied. That this is the case also in every State is equally certain. And that it even extends

54. Stuart had written (March 15): “A spirit of jealousy which may become dangerous to the Union, towards the Eastern States, seems to be growing fast among us. It is represented, that the Northern phalanx is so firmly united, as to bear down all opposition, while Virginia is unsupported, even by those whose interests are similar to hers. It is the language of all. I have seen on their return from New York. Coll: Lee tells me, that many who were warm Supporters of the government, are changing their sentiments, from a conviction of the impracticability of Union with States, whose interests are so dissimilar to those of Virginia. I fear the Coll: is one of the number The late applications to Congress, respecting the slaves, will certainty tend to promote this spirit. It gives particular umbrage, that the Quakers should be so busy in this business. That they will raise up a storm against themselves, appears to me very certain. Mr. Maddison's sentiments are variously spoke of, so much so; that it is impossible to ascertain whether they are approved of by a majority or not. The Commercial and most noisy part, is certainly against them. It appears to me, to be such a deviation from the plain and beaten track, as must make every Creditor of the Public tremble: His plan of discrimination, is founded too much on principles of equity, to please even those, who have advocated allways a discrimination. If the Public was to gain, what the original holders lost in their sales, I believe it would hare pleased this description of Citizens better.” Stuart's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

to the Counties of individual States can be as readily proved. Instance the southern and northern parts of Virginia, the upper and lower parts of south Carolina, &ca. have not the interests of these always been at variance? Witness the County of Fairfax, have not the interests of the people of that County varied, or the Inhabitants been taught to believe so? These are well known truths, and yet it did not follow that separation was to result from the disagreement.

To constitute a dispute there must be two parties. To understand it well both parties and all the circumstances must be fully heard, and to accommodate differences, temper and mutual forbearance are requisite. Common danger brought the States into confederacy, and on their union our safety and importance depend. A spirit of accommodation was the basis of the present constitution, can it be expected then that the Southern or the Eastern part of the Empire will succeed in all their measures? certainly not; but I will readily grant that more points will be carried by the latter than the former, and for the reason which has been mentioned, namely, that in all great national questions they move in unison whilst the others are divided; but I ask again which is most blame-worthy, those who see, and will steadily

pursue their interest, or those who cannot see, or seeing will not act wisely? And I will ask another question, of the highest magnitude in my mind, to wit, if the eastern and northern States are dangerous *in Union* , will they be less so in separation? If self interest is their governing principle will

it forsake them or be less restrained by such an event? I hardly think it would. Then, independent, of other considerations what would Virginia (and such other States as might be inclined to join her) gain by a separation? Would they not, most unquestionably, be the weaker party?

Men who go from hence without feeling themselves of so much consequence as they wished to be considered, and disappointed expectants, added to malignant, designing characters, who miss no opportunity of aiming a blow at the Constitution, paint highly on one side without bringing into view the arguments which are offered on the other.

It is to be lamented that the Editors of the different Gazettes in the Union, do not more generally, and more correctly (instead of stuffing their papers with scurrility, and nonsensical declamation, which few would read if they were apprised of the contents) publish the debates in Congress on all great national questions, and this with no uncommon pains, everyone of them might do. The principles upon which the difference of opinion arises, as well as the decisions would then come fully before the public, and afford the best data for its judgment.

Mr. Madison, on the question of discrimination, was actuated, I am convinced, by the purest motives, and most heartfelt conviction; but the subject was delicate, and perhaps had better never been stirred.

The assumption of the State debts by the United States is another subject that has given rise to long and labored debates, without having yet taken a final form.

The memorial of the Quakers[55] (and a very mal-apropos one it was) has at length been put to sleep, and will scarcely awake before the year 1808. I am etc.[56]

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55. For the abolition of the slave trade.

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56. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To ANTHONY WHITING**

New York, April 14, 1790.

Sir: By a letter which I have lately received from my Nephew, Major Washington of Mount Vernon, I find you have made a tender of your services to him to overlook one of my farms, and have referred me to Colo. Cadwalader, now in Congress, for your qualifications and character.

This enquiry I have made, and the result of it is that you have a competent knowledge in the business of agriculture, and understand the economy of a farm. That he believes you to be industrious, and has no distrust of your honesty. These undoubtedly are very good and essential requisites in a Manager; but candor, he added, obliged him to inform me that he thought you were too much given to your pleasures, however of the impropriety of this he hoped and believed you were convinced, and of course would reform.

Under this information and persuation I am disposed to employ you on the terms mentioned by my Nephew, to wit, Forty guineas pr annum, and wish you to name the time, in a letter to me, that would be convenient for you to enter on the trust. I must inform you however that the present Managers are engaged till December, but Mr. Bloxham (having had notice that he would be continued no longer than the term for which he is engaged, and intending it is said when he quits

my employ, to return to England wishes I am informed to embark before that period. To this I shall have no objection if his place can be supplied, but not being well enough acquainted with all the circumstances relative to this matter, I can make no arrangement relative thereto until I hear first from you, and next from my Nephew with respect to Mr. Bloxham. After this matters may be precisely fixed so as to place all parties on a certainty.

The reason why I write to you from hence is that a Post goes directly from this city to Chestertown in Maryland (where my Nephew informs me you at present live) whereas a letter written from Mount Vernon might be long on its passage, or perhaps never get to you at all.

That there may be no delay in the business from a misconception of the terms on your part, or for want of knowing the expectations on mine, I have sketched articles of agreement[66] declaratory of both, which my Nephew will, on my behalf subscribe to, if the same is done by you.

From this communication (accompanied with an assurance that I shall make no alteration) you are enabled to say yea or nay to the proposals which I request may be done by letter addressed to me at this place, the result of which I shall communicate to my Nephew that he may know what to depend upon. If it is your determination to accept that he may know at what time (under the existing circumstances) he could receive you, of which I shall delay no time in giving you notice, and shall expect you will repair to Mount Vernon, accordingly. I am etc.[67]

66. These articles agreement follow this letter in the "Letter Book," by which Whiting agrees "to serve the President of the United States as an Overlooker of one or more of his Farms belonging to the estate of Mount Vernon...using his best skill to carry into to effect the present rotation system of cropping, practiced on the said Farms, or such other course as shall be approved of by the said President...but to make no actual change in the rotation system without permission as matters for sometime have been tending to the present mode and ought not to be departed from but under the fullest conviction of the superior advantages of another." The original agreement, signed by George Augustine Washington and Whiting, is dated May 20, 1790, and is in the *Washington Papers*. It contains a renewal (Aug. 8, 1790, to Dec. 25, 1791) and another (Aug. 15, 1791, to Dec. 25, 1792).

67. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To GOUVERNEUR MORRIS**

New York, April 15, 1790.

Dear Sir: Since my last to you, dated March 1st. I have been favored with your letter of the 24 of January accompanied by the surtout of Plateaux &ca. These came very safe, are very elegant, much admired, and do great justice to your taste. Accept my thanks for the attention.

Upon trial it appears that they need no addition, the intention therefore of this letter is to counteract, if it should arrive in time, my request of the first of March of two Plateaux more and ornaments equivalent thereto, but to repeat the other wish contained therein namely "I would thank you &ca.", see paragraph respecting lamps.

Your not having acknowledged the receipt of my commission of a public nature that went from hence at the same time, and was of the same date with the letter, to which yours of the 24. of January is an answer, to wit the 13 of October, gives me some pain, lest it should have been arrested on its passage.

With great and sincere esteem etc.[68]

68. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On the morning of April 20 Washington started what he called a tour of Long Island Crossing to Brooklyn, he drove to Gravesend, thence as far east as Brookhaven township, Coram, and Setauket. He returned to New York on April 24.

***To DAVID STUART**

New York, June 15, 1790.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 2nd Instant came duly to hand.[93] If there are any Gazettes among my files at Mount Vernon which can be of use to you they are at your Service.

Your description of the public Mind, in Virginia, gives me pain. It seems to be more irritable, sour and discontented than (from the information received) it is in any other State in the Union, except Massachusetts; which, from the same causes, but on quite different principles, is tempered like it.

That Congress does not proceed with all that dispatch which people at a distance expect; and which, were they to hurry business, they possibly might; is not to be denied. That measures have been agitated wch. a re not pleasing to Virginia; and others, pleasing perhaps to her, but not so to some other States; is equally unquestionable. Can it well be otherwise in a Country so extensive, so diversified in its interests? And will not these different interests naturally produce in an Assembly of Representatives who are to Legislate for, and to assimilate and reconcile them to the general welfare, long, warm and animated debates? Most undoubtedly; and if there was the same propensity in Mankind to investigate the motives, as there is for censuring

93. Stuart had written: "I shall now endeavor to give you all the information I have been able to collect, respecting the present temper of mind of the people of this state...the late transactions of Congress, have soured the Public mind to a great degree; which was just recovering from the fever, which the Slave business had occasioned, when the later much-agitated question of the State debts came on. With respect to the Slave business...great advantages had been taken of it...by many who wished to purchase slaves, circulating a report that Congress were about to pass an act for their general emancipation. This occasioned such an alarm, that many were sold for the merest trifle... the sellers were of coarse much enraged at Congress, for taking up a subject they were precluded by the Constitution from meddling with for the present, and thus furnishing the occasion for the alarm which induced them to sell. As the people in that part of the Country were before much opposed to the Government, it may naturally be supposed, that this circumstance has embittered to them much more against it.

"As to the assumption of the State debts, I scarce think it would be a measure generally acceptable on any principles....There is I think in general, in consequence of these two instances a strong apprehension that the predictions relative to the grasping of power by unwarrantable construction of the Constitution will be verified. On these two subjects at least, it is observed by most, (for there are some who after a proper liquidation and allowance of credit to the Stages, for what has been paid, approve of the Assumption) that the Constitution appeared so clear, as to be incapable of misconstruction, by those who wished to make it a rule and guide to their conduct. A strong suspicion too is entertained, from the number of Speculators, who have been traversing the State purchasing up State Securities. that there is a good deal of selfishness mixed with the plan. And this perhaps causes it to be viewed with more particular dislike....The slowness with which the business is carried on, is another cause of complaint Congress is said, sit only four hours a day, and like School-boys observe every Saturday as a Holiday. If this is true, it is certainly trilling with their Constituents in the extreme, who pay them liberally, and have therefore a right to expect more diligence from them. It is the more unfortunate as it is represented at the same time, that they generally live for two dollars a day." Stuart's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

the conduct of public characters, it would be found that the censure so freely bestowed is oftentimes unmerited and uncharitable; for instance, the condemnation of Congress for sitting only four hours in the day. The fact is, by the established rules of the House of Representatives, no Committee can sit whilst the House is sitting; and this is, and has been for a considerable time, from ten o'clock in the forenoon until three, often later, in the afternoon; before and after which the business is going on in Committees. If this application is not as much as most Constitutions are equal to, I am mistaken. Many other things which undergo malignant constructions wd. be found, upon a candid examination to wear other faces than are given to them. The misfortune is the enemies to the Government, always more active than its friends anti always upon the watch to give it a stroke, neglect no opportunity to aim one. If they tell truth, it is not the whole truth; by which means one side only of the picture appears; whereas if both sides were exhibited it might, and probably would assume a different form in the opinion of just and candid men who are disposed to measure matters on a Continental Scale.

I do not mean however, from what I have here said, to justify the conduct of Congress in all its movements; for some of these movements, in my opinion, have been injudicious and others unseasonable, whilst the questions of Assumption; Residence and other matters have been agitated with a warmth and intemperence; with prolixity and threats; which it is to be feared has lessened the dignity of that body and decreased that respect which was once entertained for it. Anti this misfortune is increased by many members, even among those who wish well to the Government, ascribing in letters to their respective States when they are unable to carry a favourite measure,

the worst motives for the conduct of their opponents; who, viewing matters through a different medium may, and do retort in their turn; by which means jealousies and distrusts are spread most impolitickly, far and wide; and will, it is to he feared, have a most unhappy tendency to injure our public affairs, which, if wisely conducted might make us (as we are now by Europeans thought to be) the happiest people upon Earth. As an evidence of it, our reputation has risen in every part of the Globe; and our credit, especially in Holland, has got higher than that of *any* Nation in Europe (and where our funds are above par) as appears by *Official* advices just received. But the conduct we seem to be pursuing will soon bring us back to our late disreputable condition.

The introductions of the (Quaker) Memorial respecting Slavery, was to be sure, not only an illjudged piece of business, but occasioned a great waste of time. The final decision thereon, however, was as favourable as the proprietors of that species of property could have expected considering the great dereliction to Slavery in a large part of this Union.

The question of Assumption has occupied a great deal of time, and no wonder; for it is certainly a very important one; and, under *proper* restrictions, and scrutiny into Accounts will be found, I conceive to be just. The Cause in which the expenses of the War was incurred, was a Common Cause. The States (in Congress) declared it so at the beginning and pledged themselves to stand by each other. If then, some States were harder pressed than others, or from particular or local circumstances contracted heavier debts, it is but reasonable when this fact is ascertained (though it is a sentiment I have not made known here) that an allowance ought to be made them when due credit is given to others. Had the invaded, and hard pressed States believed the case would have been otherwise; opposition in them would very soon, I believe, have changed to submission; and given a different termination to the War.[94]

In a letter of last year to the est of my recollection, I informed you of the motives, which *compelled* me to allot a day for the reception of idle and ceremonies visits

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94. To this point the text is from a photostat of the incomplete original in the possession of W. S. Johns and Cornelia Johns Gace of Norfolk, Va.

(for it never has prevented those of sociability and friendship in the afternoon, or at any other time) but if I am mistaken in this, the history of this business is simply and shortly as follows. Before the custom was established, which now accommodates foreign characters, Strangers, and others who from motives of curiosity, respect to the Chief Magistrate, or any other cause, are induced to call upon me, I was unable to attend to any business *whatsoever* ; for Gentlemen, consulting their own convenience rather than mine, were calling from the time I rose from breakfast, often before,

until I sat down to dinner. This, as I resolved not to neglect my public duties, reduced me to the choice of one of these alternatives, either to refuse them *altogether* , or to appropriate a time for the reception of them. The first would, I well knew, be disgusting to many. The latter, I *expected* , would undergo an imadversion, and blazoning from those who would find fault, *with* , or *without* cause. To please everybody was impossible; I therefore adopted that line of conduct which combined public advantage with private convenience, and which in my judgment was unexceptionable in itself. That I have not been able to make bows to the taste of poor Colonel Bland, (who, by the by, I believe never saw one of them) is to be regretted especially too as (upon those occasions) they were indiscriminately bestowed, and the best I was master of; would it not have been better to throw the veil of charity over them, ascribing their stiffness to the effects of age, or to the unskillfulness

of my teacher, than to pride and dignity of office, which God knows has no charms for me? for I can truly say I had rather be at Mount Vernon with a friend or two about me, than to be attended at the Seat of Government by the Officers of State and the Representatives of every Power in Europe.

These visits are optional. They are made without invitation. Between the hours of three and four every Tuesday I am prepared to receive them. Gentlemen, often in great numbers, come and go, chat with each other, and act as they please. A Porter shows them into the room, and they retire from it when they please, and without ceremony. At their *first* entrance they salute me, and I them, and as many as I can talk to I do. What pomp there is in all this, I am unable to discover. Perhaps it consists in not sitting. To this two reasons are opposed, first it is unusual; secondly, (which is a more substantial one) because I have no room large enough to contain a third of the chairs, which would be sufficient to admit it. If it is supposed that ostentation, or the fashions of courts (which by the by I believe originates oftener in convenience, not to say necessity than is generally imagined) gave rise to this custom, I will boldly affirm that *no* supposition was ever more erroneous; for, if I was to give indulgence to my inclinations, every moment that I could withdraw from the fatigues

of my station should be spent in retirement. That they are not proceeds from the sense I entertain of the propriety of giving to every one as free access, as consists with that respect which is due to the Chair of government; and that respect I conceive is neither to be acquired or preserved but by observing a just medium between much state and too great familiarity.

Similar to the above, but of a more sociable kind are the visits every Friday afternoon to Mrs. Washington where I always am. These public meetings and a dinner once a week to as many as my table will hold, with the references *to* and *from* the different Departments of State, and *other* Communications with *all* parts of the Union is as much, if not more, than I am able to undergo; for I have already had within less than a year, two *severe* attacks; the last worse than the first; a third more than probable, will put me to sleep with my fathers; at what distance this may be I know not.

Within the last twelve months I have undergone more, and severer sickness than thirty preceding years afflicted me with, put it all together. I have abundant reason however to be thankful that I am so well recovered; though I still feel the remains of the violent affection of my lungs. The cough, pain in my breast, and shortness in breathing not having entirely left me. I propose in the recess of Congress to visit Mount Vernon; but when this recess will happen is beyond my ken, or the ken I believe of any of its members. I am &c.[95]

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95. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To JAMES WOOD**

New York, June 22, 1790.

Dear Sir: I ought to make many apologies to you for not answering a letter which you did me the favor of writing to me some considerable time ago respecting my caveat, and to which reference is made in your letter of the 7th. now before me. I find an excuse exceedingly necessary for me at present for (not having letters of that date by me to refer to) I am obliged to acknowledge that I do not recollect enough of the terms then communicated, to enable me to decide upon the matter now.

Will you permit me then, my good Sir, to ask you once more whether by paying the State price for the land is all that remains for me to do to obtain it, or whether, and what the precise cost to the final completion by Patent (inclusive) amounts to. I will then, without further delay write to you definitively. The land to the best of my recollection is of no great value. The State price therefore is an object of some consideration; but one which has yet more weight in my mind is, not to have my name brought forward in a dispute of this sort before any tribunal, rather than this I would submit to the loss. I am etc.[7]

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7. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To GOUVERNEUR MORRIS**

New York, July 7, 1790.

Dear Sir: This letter will he short. The intent ion of it being little more than to acknowledgement receipt of your several favors from London, dated the 7 and 13 of April and 1 and 2 of May, on the

business which had been entrusted to you of a public nature; and of your other letters of the 12. of April and 3 of May, which more immediately related to my private concerns. Permit me to thank you, my good Sir, for the attention you have paid to the latter; and as far as your intercourse with british ministry had then gone to assure you of my entire approbation of your conduct with respect to the former.

I shall await the answer which your address of the 30 of April will extort from the Duke of Leeds (if he does not mean to be silent) before I shall write to you more fully on that head.[27]

If the Artizan in France can recollect the form of the surtout [ *sic* ] which you sent to me, it will be convenient for me, notwithstanding my late countermand, to be furnished with two more plateaux. Those I already have are found upon trial insufficient for my present table, and are besides too short to receive the ornaments which accompanied, and were designed for them without being crowded. That he may have some data for his government I will add that the Plateaux which have been sent me are two feet in dimensions across way the table and eighteen inches in the other direction from edge to edge, where they join, English measure. I am etc.[28]

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27. A copy of Morris's letter to the Duke of Leeds. Apr. 30, 1790, is in the *Washington Papers*. In this letter Morris dealt with the mutual fulfilment of the Treaty of Peace with Great Britain, Compensation for losses, and the prospects of a commercial treaty.

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28. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To CLEMENT BIDDLE**

New York, July 20, 1790.

Dear Sir: The first request of this letter is that you would burn it as soon as you have read it and keep the contents to yourself; at least for the present.

Some months ago farms lately in the tenure of Mr. Abel James were advertised for sale by you and Mr. Henry Dunker. These farms I have seen; but not, it is to be acknowledged with the eyes of a Purchaser. The [one] near Frankfort you inform the public contains 284 acres, that another called Callenders contains 79 acres, and a third, near the last, contains upwards of 60 acres.

Let me now ask if all or any of these are yet for sale? What is the *lowest* price that would be taken for each? and whether payment would be received in valuable lands, improved, in the counties of

Fayette and Washington in the State of Pennsylvania. One tract of which in Fayette County contains between sixteen and 1700 acres *on* the great road from Fort Cumberland to Pittsburg; distant 75 miles from the former and 40 from the latter place; equal in quality

to any tract in that country, with what has been a very valuable mill and iron ore adjoining, but which is now much out of repair. The other tract (containing upwards of 3000 acres) lyes about 16 miles from Pittsburgh, and is also good in quality, and more level than usual.

I shall candidly declare that to pay money is out of the question with me. I have *none* and would not, if it was to be had, run in debt to borrow, nor would it do for me to dispose of *real* property to obtain it, when that species of property is brought to low ebb and dull market.

An exchange, as proposed, if ready money is not indispensable, might be mutually advantageous to both parties, inasmuch as the probability is, that the price of the exterior will encrease in a full ration with that of the interior lands.

If the farms advertised by you and Mr. Dunker are sold, or if they are not *now* for sale, let me next ask if they will be to be rented? and for what? I ask these questions however more from motives of curiosity than from any expectation of becoming the Renter of either of them; because the principal buildings (which would be of little value to me, in *this* case) might considerably enhance the rent, anti because my objects being for the amusement

of farming, and for the benefit arising from exercise (the distance from the city being convenient for the latter) I should not incline to lay out much money upon a rented farm, for a short tenure; and for a long one, I should have no occasion for a place in that way. Having communicated the matter this far to you, I will, in a few word,; add, as my own opinion, strengthened by those of my Physicians, that my late change from active scenes, to which I had been accustomed, and in which the mind has been agreeably amused, to the one of inactivity which I now lead and where the thoughts are continually on the stretch, has been the cause of more illness and severe attacks of my constitution, within the last twelve months, than I had undergone in 30 years preceding put together. A deviation therefore is necessary. I have not, because you were one from whom the terms of sale of James's lands were to be known, scrupled to make these communications at the moment that I ask the *lowest* price that would be taken for each of those farms. Frankly, I declare it to be my intention, not to give a high price for either of them (depreciated as real property is) nor will I higgle about the price. If it is moderate and I am dealt with candidly, I will say in a word whether it will suit me to become a purchaser, chaffering I shall avoid. The largest farm would be most congenial to my wishes, perhaps one of the others might do. I am etc.[34]

34. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On July 24 Lear wrote to William Irvine. John Taylor Gilman, and John Kean, commissioners for settling the accounts between the individual States and the United States: “I am ordered by the President of the United States to inform you that the Bill for settling the Accounts between the United States and Individual States is not yet brought to him, nor does he know when it will. If inconveniences to you (as hath been intimated to him) from which you wish to be relieved, are felt. the Papers I am directed to add, may be committed to the care or orders of the Secretary of the Treasury.” Lear's letter is recorded in the “Letter Book” in the *Washington Papers*.

**To JAMES WOOD**

New York, August 8, 1790.

Dear Sir: The letter with which you was pleased to favor me, dated July the 8. came duly to hand; but business with Congress and the Senate (in their executive capacity) multiplying as the adjournment approached, and with the Creek-Indians; placed it out of my power to acknowledge the receipt of it until this time.

I perceive by your letter that Thomas Mullen or his representatives, is allowed, by an act of Assembly, until the first of December next, to support his or their claim to the land in Hampshire. Although I am persuaded no equitable claim under him can ever be exhibited, it being many years since he run off, and my caveat (although it is not to be found among the papers of the late Proprietor of the Northern-neck) was entered in consequence thereof: yet as I do not want to hazard a dispute, I am most inclined to wait until the first of December before I enter or take any steps to secure the land. If at that time matters respecting it should remain in statu quo, and so unimportant a thing should occur to your recollection, I would thank you for pursuing the necessary measures to secure the land for me, and immediately upon

notice thereof, I will defray the expence.

The resignation of Major Parker[41] will call for the appointment of another Major to fill his place, without occasioning a change among the other officers of the new battalion.

With great esteem etc.

P.S. I am this instant informed by the Secretary of War, that Ensign Archer[42] has resigned his commission, and that both the Lieutenants from Virginia, in the new battalion, were Seniors to Mr. Heth;[43] if, under these circumstances, Mr. Heth inclines to supply the place of Mr. Archer, I should be glad to be informed of it without delay, and the commission will issue accordingly.[44]

41. Maj. Alexander Parker.

42. Ensign Richard Archer.

43. Lieut. John Heth.

44. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To CLEMENT BIDDLE**

New York, August 9, 1790.

Dear Sir: In consequence of a private letter from Mrs. Bland,[45] I am led to make some enquiries whether you were acquainted with or can recall to your memory any thing respecting the transactions alluded to in the enclosed Certificate and Statement. If you should not be able to recollect any thing distinctly on the subject yourself, I wish you would apply to General Mifflin to learn whether he has any remembrance or documents of these facts which are alledged to have happened, at the time, when, I think, he was Quarter Mastr. Genl. At such a distance from the period in which these transactions arc said to have taken place, I am fully apprised of the difficulties of ascertaining the real circumstances or of doing justice in case it still ought to be done; I should, however, be very glad to render any service in my power respecting this affair to the Lady who has made the application. It is upon this ground I am giving you this trouble. In whatever manner the investigations may result, I request that you will return the Certificate as early as may be in a letter addressed to me, in order that I may answer the letter which I have received from Mrs. Bland. I am etc.

P. S. As I shall send your answer to Mrs. Bland, write the letter accordingly.[46]

[H.S.P.]

45. Mrs. Martha Dangerfield Bland, widow of Col. Theoderick Bland. Her letter of July 4, 1790, is in the *Washington Papers*.

46. In the writing of David Humphreys. The P S is in the writing of Washington

**To MARQUIS DE LAFAYEYETTE**

New York, August 11, 1790.

My dear Marquis: I have received your affectionate letter of the 17 of March[56] by one conveyance, and the token of victory[57] gained by Liberty over Despotism by another: for both which testimonials of your friendship and regard I pray you to accept my sincerest thanks.

In this great subject of triumph for the new World, and for humanity in general, it will never be forgotten how conspicuous a part you bore, and how much lustre you reflected on a country in which you made the first displays of character.

Happy am I, my good friend, that, amidst all the tremendous benefits which have assailed your political Ship, you have bad address and fortitude enough to steer her hitherto safely through the quick-sands and rocks, which threatened instant destruction on every side; and your young King in all things seems so well disposed to conform to the wishes of the Nation. In such an important, such a hazardous voyage, when every thing dear and sacred

56. Sparks prints this letter, which is not now found in the *Washington Papers* "Give me leave, my dear General, to present you with a picture of the Bastille just as it looked a few days after I had ordered its demolition, with the main key of the fortress of despotism. It is tribute which I owe as a son to my adopted father, as aid-de-camp to my general, as a missionary of liberty to its patriarch." The picture was sold at auction in Philadelphia in 1871.

57. Key to the Bastile and picture of the fortress.

is embarked, you know full well my best wishes have never left you for a moment. Yet I will avow the accounts we received through the English papers (which were sometimes our only channels for information) caused our fears of a failure almost to exceed our expectations of success.

How much will the *Concerned* be indebted to the exertions of the principal Pilot, when the Ship shall, at the end of her dangerous course, be securely harboured in the haven of national tranquility, freedom, and glory, to which she is destined, and which I hope she is near attaining.

Congress, after having been in session ever since last fall are to adjourn in two or three days. Though they have been much perplexed in their proceedings on some questions of a local and intricate nature; yet they have done a great deal of important business, and will leave the public affairs in as satisfactory a state as could reasonably have been expected. One of the last acts of the executive has been the conclusion of a treaty of Peace and Friendship with the Creek Nation of Indians, who have been considerably connected with the Spanish Provinces and hostile to the Georgian frontiers since the war with Great Britain. McGillivray and about thirty of the Kings and Head Men are here: This event will leave us in peace from one end of our borders to the other; except where it may be interrupted by a small

refugee banditti of Cherokees and Shawanese, who can be easily chastised or even extirpated if it shall become necessary: But this will only be done in an inevitable extremity; since the *basis* of our proceedings with the Indian Nations has been, and shall be *justice* , during the period in which I may have any thing to do in the administration of this government.

Our negotiations and transactions, though many of them are on a small scale as to the objects, ought to be governed by the immutable principles of equity, as much as your European politics, which are more extended in their compass. How your wars Proceed in the North or in whose favor they are likely to terminate; what probability there may be that the misunderstandings between Britain and Spain should issue in an open rupture, and what other powerful Nations, in that event, will be drawn in to take an active part on one side or the other, are subjects of vast magnitude, on which we, in these distant regions, must abstrain from deciding positively even in our own minds, until we shall have more unequivocal data to go upon. It seems to be our policy to keep in the situation in which nature has placed us, to observe a strict neutrality, and to furnish others with those good things of subsistence, which they may want, and which our fertile land abundantly products, if circumstances

and events will permit us so to do. This letter is committed to Colonel Humphreys to carry to London, whither he is going. Should he, by any accident be in France, he will be able to give you a full state of our affairs and prospects. Gradually recovering from the distresses in which the war left us, patiently advancing in our task of civil government, unentangled in the crooked politics of Europe, wanting scarcely any thing but the free navigation of the Mississipi (which we must have and as certainly shall have as we remain a Nation) I have supposed, that, with the undeviating exercise

of a just, steady, and prudent national policy, we shall be the gainers, whether the powers of the old world may be in peace or war, but more especially in the latter case. In that case our importance will certainty encrease, and our friendship be courted. Our dispositions would not be indifferent to Britain or Spain. Why will not Spain be wise and liberal at once? It would be easy to annihilate all causes of quarrels between that Nation and the United States at this time. At a future period that may be far from being a fact. Should a war take place between Great Britain and Spain, I conceive from a great variety of concurring circumstances there is the highest probability that the Floridas will soon be in the possession of the former. Adieu, my dear Marquis! Believe me to be assuredly and affectionately Your etc.

P.S. Not for the value of the thing, my dear Marquis, but as a memorial and because they are the manufacture of the City, I send you herewith a pair of shoe buckles.[58]

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58. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To MARTHA DANGERFIELD BLAND**

New York, August 25, 1790.

Madam: The letter which you did me the honor to write to me on 4. of July, with its enclosures (which are herewith returned) has been received. This late acknowledgement of the receipt of it requires some apology, which I trust your goodness will perceive is well founded in the uncommon multiplicity of public business which pressed, on all sides, upon me towards the close of the session of Congress, and the time which it required to make the necessary enquiries into the subjects of your letter.

In regard to the boat captured by Colonel Bland; as I had no knowledge of the circumstance myself, or, if I had when it took place, the length of time which has since elapsed has driven all recollection of it from my mind; I wrote to Colonel Biddle, (who was one of the persons mentioned in Colonel Bland's certificate) for information on the subject, and I have the honor to enclose his answer to my letter,

which contains all the information he is able to give or obtain; and the German Officer, (Colonel Lutterloh) who is mentioned, living in Wilmington North Carolina, prevented my getting any information from him so early as you could obtain it yourself, and which I am sure he will give as far as he is able, with pleasure, upon your application to him. You will, Madam, however, permit me to mention a circumstance which I think appears unfavorable to your recovering any thing from

this capture. The length of time which has elapsed without any enquiry having been made into the subject, naturally involves it in that obscurity, to which all events of that nature were liable in those time of confusion and hazard, to say nothing of the want of proper documents, which are considered as necessary to substantiate claims on the public; and whatever may have been Colonel Bland's motives, during his life, for withholding his claim, yet, as he was engaged in public business, and constantly in the way of gaining information on a subject of this nature it does not seem at all probable that any thing can be recovered from this source after his death.

I have caused an examination to be made at the Comptroller's office, relative to the subject of the letter, which Colonel Bland received from Mr. Everleigh,[67] Comptroller

67. Nicholas Eveleigh.

of the Treasury, and find that the sum of money therein mentioned was deposited in the hands of a Committee or Congress in the year 1781, of which Colonel Bland was a Member, and by letters which have been received at the Comptroller's office from several Gentlemen of the Committee in reply to the circular written to them by the Comptroller, it appears that they considered the sum placed in their hands as subject to such expences as might arise in the course of the business which they were sent to transact, and that they were not expected to render in a particular account thereof; and further that they conceive the sum mentioned to have been returned by Colonel Bland into the Treasury, was all that remained after the necessary expenditure of their mission.

It would have been peculiarly pleasing to me, Madam, to have rendered you such service in this business, as would have been commensurate with your wishes; but your good sense will readily point out to you the necessity of confining myself

to my private character in this matter, as any interference in my public capacity would be deemed improper.

Before I conclude I pray you to accept my sincere condolence on your late and great loss, and the assurances of being,

With great respect and esteem, Madam, Your etc.[68]

68. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To CHARLES CARTER**

Mount Vernon, September 14, 1790.

Dear Sir: Your favor of the 2. instant met me on the road to this place.

I beg you to be assured of my sensibility and gratitude for your friendly wishes respecting nay health, which, since I overcame the severe attack in May last, has been better than I had enjoyed for twelve months preceding, for within that time I experienced more, and severer indispositions than i had felt in 25 years before, all put together; owing, I presume, to the (change from an active life to one more sedentary and thoughtful.

To be instrumental, in any degree to the accomplishment of the object, which is mentioned in your letter, would, I (to assure you, give me pleasure; but with truth I can add that [ know no person who has either money to lend, or who steins willing to part with it. The most conclusive proof of which I shall give you: I was much in want of a sum, to answer some call upon me, which I did not care

to have unsatisfied, when I set out for New York the Spring before last; but was unable to obtain more than half of it, (though it was not much I required) and this at an advanced interest with other rigid conditions. After this I took an occasion to sound Mr. Carroll of Carrollton, as the most likely, being the most monied man, I was acquainted with, but without success. He assured me that he could not collect the *interest* of the money that had been loaned, by his father and himself, and his other resources were not *more* than adequate to his own occasions; thenceforward I made no further attempts, not knowing indeed where to apply.

At all times I shall be glad to see you; and, with Mrs. Washington's compliments to Mrs. Carter, yourself, and family, in which I most cordially join, I am etc.[1]

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1. From the “Letter Book” copy in *Washington Papers*.

**To JAMES INNES**

Mount Vernon, September 28, 1790.

Dear Sir: Your letter dated the 17 of August did not come to my hands until Sunday, last, or it should have received an earlier acknowledgement. For an answer to it I beg leave to refer you to Colonel

Warner Lewis (of Gloucester) who, having taken much trouble to ascertain the properties and value of the land, (you wish to know the price of) and asking on what terms it would be disposed of, was sometime ago fully acquainted with my sentiments thereon. Not having the copy of my letter to him,[29] by me at this place to refer to for these terms, nor the circumstances much in recollection, and being unwilling to propose others to you, which may differ from them, is the reason why I put you to the trouble of making this further enquiry. I am etc.[30]

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29. See Washington's letter to Warner Lewis, Mar. 5, 1790, *ante*

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30. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To JAMES DUNLOP[47]**

Mount Vernon, October 29, 1790.

Sir: Sometime before I left Virginia in 1789 I was informed by Mr. Montgomerie that you would pay to me, as surviving Executor of the will of Colonel Thomas Colvill, the money which was due to that estate from the Assignees of Mr. Semple, when you should receive it from the purchases of the Maryland tract of land.

There is now a demand on me from one of the Legatees of Colo. Colvill to the amount of about £220 Sterling, including interest which is accumulating.

The original sum ought to have been paid years ago, and I am exceedingly anxious to do it without further delay, but am unable unless it is by the aid above mentioned. Be pleased therefore, Sir, to inform me if you can supply me with the above sum now, or when? that I may before I leave home be enabled either to comply with the demand, or to say when it may be expected, as the call has been painfully, to me, reiterated. I am etc.[48]

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47. A merchant of Georgetown, Md.

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48. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To ELÉONOR FRANÇOIS ÉLIE, COMTE DE MOUSTIER**

Mount Vernon, November 1, 1790.

Sir: I have had the pleasure to receive your letters of the 11th of May and 12th of July last, together with the flattering mark of your and Madame de Brehan's regard,[50] which accompanied the former, for which, and the obliging satisfaction you express on the restoration of my health, I beg you and her to accept my grateful acknowledgments.

A short relaxation from public business, and an indulgence in the pleasures of a country life, during the recess of Congress, have greatly contributed to improve my health, which is now, thank God, perfectly re-established. From the interest you take in the prosperity of the United States, you will learn with pleasure that their happiness continues to progress, and that there is great reason to conclude it will be lasting. The wisdom and integrity, manifested in the measures of Congress, have secured to them the confidence of their constitutents, and the respect of our domestic Neighbours; with the most considerable of whom, treaties, dictated by justice and National generosity, have been concluded, and will, in all probability, be faithfully maintained. The aggregate happiness

50. Several engravings of Madame de Brehan's portrait of Washington. From William Jackson's translation of Moustier's letter of May 11, 1790, in the *Washington Papers*, is the following: “Mad. de Brehan will profit of the first certain opportunity which presents to address to Madam Washington the medallion intended for her; in the meantime, she will make a copy of the original for herself.”

of the society, which is best promoted by the practice of a virtuous policy, is, or ought to be, the end of all government; such, I am happy in telling you, appears to be the object of our legislative regulations; and such, I am confident in anticipating will be the result to that generous nation of which you are a citizen. Their character, in all its relations, entitles them to prosperity and honor; and the issue of their present endeavors will, I fervently hope, justify the expectation of public and individual happiness. I am &c.[51]

51. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To JAMES TILGHMAN**

Mount Vernon, November 6, 1790.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 6. ultimo came safely, but not expeditiously to hand.

Since my return from the army in 1785, and finding myself under the necessity (being the surviving Executor) of closing the business of the estate of the deceased Colonel Colvill, I have never lost sight of the just claim of Miss Anderson upon that estate; but the suspension of our courts of justice in this State during the war, and being obliged to bring suits for the recovery of money due to that estate, since they were opened has put it out of my power till now to comply with her demand. And even now I ought to add that it depends on a Gentleman, who has had the collection of money for the purpose of discharging a debt due to the estate from the Assignees of Mr. John Semple. But as he has informed me that there will be no disappointment I venture to assure you payment of the legacy with interest up to the 9 of October, which will be 24 years, and, at 5 P. cent, the legal interest of this State will make the whole sum £176 Sterling.

It is far from my wish, Sir, to throw obstacles in

the way of Miss Anderson receiving her legacy. But as Colonel Colvill (after directing his debts and legacies to be paid) did leave the residue of his estate to; the Lord knows who, by description, which has stirred up a number of vexations and impertinent claims, and, as the legacy to Miss Anderson is also by description, not by name, I am informed that it is necessary for my own security that there should be proof of her being the person meant. When this is done, and I hope there will be no difficulty in the way, I will pay the above sum in Georgetown, Potowmac, to her attorney properly authorized to receive the same provided the demand is made before the 22nd. instant. If not I will take the money with me to Philadelphia, and shall be ready to pay it there as above, I am etc.[57]

57. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To JAMES DUNLOP**

Mount Vernon, November 8, 1790.

Sir: Your letter of the 1st. instant in answer to mine of the 29 ultimo came duly to hand, and it is with pleasure I perceive that you can enable me to pay the demand which has been made upon me as Executor of the will of the deceased Colonel Thomas Colvill.

The legacy mentioned in my last is to Miss Anderson and is eighty instead of £100 sterling, as I had conceived. This sum with the legal interest of this State amounts to £176. And the Lady, through her friend (James Tilghman Esquire of Chestertown) is requested to give a power of attorney to receive it. and to apply to you therefor provided the application can be made before the 22nd. instant, if not,

I will, on that day, receive the money from you *myself* in Georgetown, or in *Philadelphia* , if you can make it convenient to pay it at that place on my arrival there.

As the above legacy was given in the words of the enclosed memorandum, it is necessary (as I have informed Mr. Tilghman) that proofs should accompany

the power of attorney, purporting that the Lady applying is the person described by the Testator: If this is done to your satisfaction (and I do not wish to be scrupulously exact in obtaining the proof) the money may be paid as above, upon the passing of such a receipt as I have enclosed, to be endorsed on the power of Attorney, for which I will exchange my receipt to you in the manner you have requested.

Should the proof and the power be defective in your judgment, I would thank you for referring both to me before payment. I am etc.[60]

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60. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To TOBIAS LEAR**

(Private)

Mount Vernon, November 14 1790.

Dear Sir: Having wrote two letters to you on the subject of Page's Stage Coach, one or the other of which, if not both, it is presumable will certainly have got to hand before this can, I shall add nothing more thereto than that Page's Coach is *now* my dependance.

I am, I must confess, exceedingly unwilling to go into any house without first knowing on what terms I do it, and wish that this sentiment could be again hinted, in delicate terms to the parties concerned with me. I cannot, if there are no latent motives, which govern in this case, see any difficulty in the business. *Mr. Morris* has most assuredly formed an idea of what ought, in equity, to be the rent of the tenement in the condition he left it, and with this aid, the Committee ought, I conceive, to be as little at a loss in determining what it should rent for with the additions and alterations, which are about to be made, and which ought to be done in a *plain* and *neat* manner, not by any means in an extravagant style;

because the latter is not only contrary to my wish, but would really be detrimental[67] to my interest and convenience, principally because it would be a mean of keeping me from the use and comforts of the House to a late period, and because the furniture, and everything else would require to be accordant therewith, besides its making me pay an extravagant price, perhaps to suit the taste of another or to the exorbitant rates of workmen; or their blended performances in the two Houses.[68] I do not know, nor do I believe that anything unfair is intended by either Mr. Morris or the Committee; but let us for a moment suppose that the rooms (the new ones I mean) was to be hung with tapestry, or a very rich and costly paper (neither of which would suit my present furniture) that costly ornaments for the Bow-Windows, extravagant chimney pieces &ca. &ca. were to be provided; that workmen from extravagence or the times for every 20/worth of work would charge 40/;[69] and that advantage should be taken of the occasion to new paint

67. *Letters from George Washington to Tobias Lear* (Bixby edition: 1905) prints the word as "repugnant."

68. *Letters from George Washington to Tobias Lear* prints at this point: "(if they sometimes work at one, and sometimes at the other)."

69. *Letters from George Washington to Tobias Lear* prints this: "were to charge a pound for that, which ought not to cost ten shillings."

every part of the house, buildings &c, would there be any propriety in adding ten or 12½ pr Cent for all this to the rent of the house in its original state, for the two years that I am to hold it? If the solution of these questions are in the negative, wherein lyes the difficulty of determining that the houses and lots, when finished according to the proposed plan, ought to rent for so much? When all is done that can be done thereto, the residence will not be so commodious as the House I left in New York (with the additional buildings made there); for, there, (and the want of it will be found a real inconvenience at Mr. Morris's) my Office was in a front room below, where persons on business were at once admitted; whereas now they will have to ascend two pairs of stairs, and to pass by the public rooms to go to it.[70] Notwithstanding which I am willing to allow as much as was paid to Mr. Macomb, and shall say nothing if more is demanded, unless there is apparent extortion. Extortion, if it should be intended by delay is to see to what height rents will rise,[71] I should be unwilling to

70. *Letters from George Washington to Tobias Lear* prints this: "as well as private chambers to get to."

71. *Letters from George Washington to Tobias Lear* prints this: “before mine is fixed. In either of these cases I should not be pleased, and to occupy the premises at the expence of” etc.

[submit to] and to take it at the expence of *any* public body I *will not* . There is one expression in your letter of the 4th the meaning of which I do not clearly understand, viz, “The additions, repairs, &ca. of the house, in which Mr. Morris now lives, are likewise to be comprehended in the expenditures to be refunded by the rent of this House.” Is it meant by this that the rent of the house *you* are now in is to be *encreased* by the expenditures on the one Mr. Morris has removed to, or is no more meant by it than that the *rent* of the former is intended as a *security* for the refund.[72] The latter may be very proper, but the former could be submitted to on no other ground than that of dire necessity.[73] I had rather have heard that my repaired Coach was plain and elegant than “rich and elegant." I am &c.[74]

72. *Letters from George Washington to Tobias Lear* has: “only for payment of the latter.”

73. *Letters from George Washington to Tobias Lear* has: “If this is all, have nought to say against it. But dire necessity would only induce me to submit to the other. We all unite in best wishes for you and Mrs. Lear and I am etc.”

74. From the “Letter Book” copy in file *Washington Papers*.

**To JAMES WOOD**

Mount Vernon, November 18, 1790.

Dear Sir: I have been duly honored with your favor of the 6th., and thank you gratefully for your kind recollection of my interest in the survey made for Mullen on Timber ridge in Hampshire county. The enclosed (left open for your perusal) is a request that Colonel Heth, as Collector, would furnish you with the means for securing the land when the term, limited by law shall occlude Mullen, or any person or persons claiming under him.

The conferring of one favor is very apt to beget the request of another, but, without further preface or apology, I will ask you, my good Sir, to enquire at the Register's office, if surveys, of which the enclosed *may* be duplicates (for really I know little about the matter) were ever lodged there, and, if so, what has been done with them. If none such have been lodged there, then what will be the cost of patenting these which are now sent, provided (being on the No. West side of the river Ohio) they

come legally and properly into the Land office of this State? I wish to obtain Patents, and shall be ready to pay the cost of them when it is made known to Dear Sir Yours etc.[75]

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75. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To THE SECRETARY OF WAR**

(Private)

Mount Vernon, November 19, 1790.

My dear Sir: I have received your letter of the 10th. inset, and will declare to you without reserve, that my forebodings with respect to the Expedition against the Wabash Indians are of disappointment; and a disgraceful termination under the conduct of B. Genl. Harmer.[77] I expected *little* from the moment I heard he was a *drunkard* . I expected less as soon as I heard that on *this account* no confidence was reposed in him by the people of the Western Country. And I gave up *all hope* of Success, as soon as I heard that there were disputes with *him* about command.

The latter information is from report *only* ; but the report of *bad* news is rarely without foundation. If the issue of this Expedition is honorable to the Concerters of it, and favorable to our Arms, it will be *double* pleasing to me; but my mind, from the silence which reigns, and other circumstances, is prepared for the worst; that is, for expence without honor or profit.

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77. Josiah Harmar was commander of the Army of the United States from September, 1789, to March, 1791, with the brevet rank of brigadier general.

If any thing *more* than the statement of *this* business for the information of Congress should occur to you, previous to my arrival, be so good as to digest it, for it is my wish to have every matter which may occur to the heads of Departments as well as to myself, ready, if proper to lay before that Body, at the opening of the Session.

With sincere friendship etc.

P.S. I expect to commence my journey for Philadelphia on Monday; but from the State of the Roads after the incessant and heavy rains which have fallen, my progress must be slow.

[MS.H.S. ]

**To THE CHIEF JUSTICE**

(Private)

Mount Vernon, November 19, 1790.

My dear Sir: The day is near when Congress is to commence its 3rd. session; and, on Monday next, (nothing intervening to prevent it) I shall set out to meet them at their new residence.

If any thing in the Judiciary line, if any thing of a more general nature, proper for me to communicate to that Body at the opening of the session, has occurred to you, you would oblige me by submitting them with the freedom and frankness of friendship.

The length and badness of the road to Philadelphia, added to the precariousness of the weather at this season, will, more than probable, render my arrival at Philadelphia uncertain; your sentiments (under cover to Mr. Lear) by the 1st. of December will be in time to meet the communications from the other great Departments,

and with such matters as have been handed immediately to me from other quarters, or which have come under my own contemplation during the recess will enable me to make my communications.

I shall say nothing of domestic occurrences in this letter, and those of foreign import you would receive at second hand from hence.

To add assurances of my regard and friendship would not be new, but, with truth, I can declare etc.[76]

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76. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To JAMES HENRY**

Mount Vernon, November 20, 1790.

Sir: I availed myself a few days ago of the presence of Mr. B. Bassett to acknowledge before him and Dr. Stuart the *original conveyance* from me to the deceased Mr. Custis of the land which you are possessed of by purchase from him in King and Queen County. This acknowledgement in the opinion

of professional men is all that is necessary to give validity to the deed, and all that is proper for me to do under the circumstances which exist.

The deed thus reacknowledged, was put into the hands of Mr. Bassett, but as he was in the act of departure it did not occur to me at that moment, that there were other papers of yours in my possession. These are now enclosed. I beg you to be assured of my sensibility for the polite and flattering terms in which you have been pleased to express yourself of my public services in your letter of the 2 of June 1785, which I am ashamed to add ought to have been acknowledged long ago, but which one circumstance or another prevented until it had escaped me altogether or until reminded of it by your second application through Dr. Stuart. I am etc.[81]

81. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To BENJAMIN HARRISON**

Mount Vernon, November 21, 1790.

Dear Sir: If you serve me by having the deed from Muse[82] to me fully recorded, it will be an acceptable act. The deed is in the Clerk's Office, and will shew what is necessary to be done, and who are the witnesses. If it cannot be accomplished without running me to the expence of subpoenas, I must and will incur that expence.

Enclosed I send you all the Patents which arc in my possession, and which through my means the family of Mr. Fry has obtained. It is a fact *well* known to most of the Patentees that had it not been for my exertions anti decided conduct the proclamation of Governor Dinwiddie, offering a bounty of land, would never have been recognised. for the dereliction of the Governor anti Council to fulfil their promise was such that scarce any thing short of an absolute demand on the score of justice, on the pledged faith of Government. would ever have obtained an order for the survey, and, even then, had it not been for the trouble I took, and the money I advanced, this order

82. George Muse.

would have been nugatory.

This is a short recital of the fact; after having given which, if the Gentleman claiming under Joshua Fry Esquire inclines to pay what is justly due to me, the enclosed list of ballances, which is original, and fur that reason must be returned to me, will shew what my advances are for his proportion of

the land. If he pays this sum with interest since the year 1772 when the patients issued were paid for, and the title became perfect, it will be no more than what is due in *gratitude* , and to *justice* . If he inclines to pay the principal only, let him do it and the matter will close. Or, lastly, if he chuses to do neither, preferring to receive the patents without paying any thing, can let them go forth, for I shall not appear in a Court of law for this, or any of these ballances, which you will perceive are due to me.

The heirs of Colonel Fry, besides the land contained in the enclosed patent, are entitled to 7242 acres, ill a larger tract, patented in the names of the late Genl. Andw. Lewis, Genl. Stephens[83] and others, but this patent is not in my possession, nor do I know in which of the Patentee's hands it is to be found. I am etc.[84]

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83. Adam Stephen.

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84. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To DAVID STUART**

Philadelphia, December 12, 1790.

Dear Sir: On my return to this City, at Elkridge landing (eight miles beyond Baltimore) a Negroe fellow of the name of Paul, (brother to your Rose) came to, and informed me, that he was taken (more probably run away from the White House Quarter) by the Troops under Lord Cornwallis. That he was put on board a British Vessel, was taken by an American one, and carried into Baltimore; where he was sold to a Captn. Godman, who afterwds. disposed of him to his present Master, a Mr. Philip Waters of the landing above mentioned. The fellow is young and likely, and seems desirous of returning to the Estate from which he was taken. The character of him I know not. The facts are, I presume, as I have related; but it is to be feared that time and circumstances have alienated the property. I thought it right however to give you this information.

I have been led to ask myself since you mentioned to me the exorbitant Rent expected by Mr. R Alexander for the place on which you now, or lately did live, upon what foundation it could be?

This naturally led me into another enquiry,

viz, what are the Rents of lands at the distance of 6, 8 or 10 miles from Alexandria? In revolving this matter, no case was more apropos, or seemed more in point, than my contract with Mrs. French;

to whom I pay One hundred and thirty Six pounds pr. Ann for about 600 Acres of land, and ten working hands. The land equal to Mr. Alexanders, lyes as you know on the River, and little, if any, less convenient to the Alexandria market than his. The Negroes as likely as any in the Country, one only excepted, who, by being advanced in years is less able to work than the rest. This bargain originated in or about the year 1783 between Mrs. French and one Robinson, who finding it difficult (tho' an industrious man) to clear any thing by the Bargain, and being always behind hand in the Rent, agreed, after I had purchased the fee simple of the land to relinquish it (for a small consideration) to me. To this Mrs. French readily acquiesced, and for the addition of fourteen pounds to the Rent, has leased it to me for her life; it being let to Robinson for Seven years only; at the expiration of which the rent of £150 commences.

The taxes of the land and Negroes Robinson was, and I am to pay. I am also to Clothe and feed the Negroes. The rent is neither to increase or diminish; the chance of the increase of the Negroes, and consequently of their work, was placed against the decrease; and no deaths have happened, whilst five or Six are now of full size for half sharers. This Bargain as I have been informed was thot. by the friends of Mrs. French to be an advantageous one, for her. I think so too. Upon what principle then can Mr. Alexander talk of the Rent you say he expects? When taxes, unfavorable Seasons, and other contingencies are taken into calculation, he will not find, among those who *mean to pay* , one who will come near his exorbitant ideas. If there is inability in the way, or no intention of doing it, it is a matter of no consequence whether five hundred or fifty pounds, is the Rent stipulated.

With great esteem and regard I am etc.[96]

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96. On December 13 the Senate and the House of Representatives waited upon the President at his house, the Senate at 12 o'clock and the House at 2 p.m., and presented addresses to the President, to which he replied briefly. The Senate's address was agreed to December 10, and that of the House, December 11. These addresses and the President's brief replies are entered in the “Letter Book” and are printed in full in Richardson's *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, as also in the *Annals of Congress*. (See Washington's letter to James Madison, Dec. 10, 1790, *ante*.)

[H.S.P.]

**To GOUVERNEUR MORRIS**

Philadelphia, December 17, 1790.

Dear Sir: An official letter from the Secretary of State of this date, acknowledging the receipt of your public dispatches, will discover to you my sentiments on the views and intentions of the british Cabinet. If the exigencies of the national affairs of that kingdom should excite dispositions in it favorable to a commercial treaty with the United States, and to the fulfilment of the treaty of peace, its Ministers will, of themselves, come forward with propositions. Until these are apparent to them, and press, I am satisfied from the communications you have had with them, that it is not only useless, but would be derogatory to push them any farther on the first point or to say anything more on the latter, until we are in a situation to speak with more decision. If none of my letters to you have acknowledged the receipt of your favors of the 22nd. and 24th. of January last, I have to ask your pardon for giving you the trouble of sending Triplicates; and

for the vexation the supposed loss of them has occasioned. It must be owing to an omission, or to the miscarriage of my letters that this has not been done; for both of them and the duplicates have been received.

Since writing to you on the 7 of July I have been favored with your several private letters of July the 6th. and 16th. 26. and 30 of August. All the letters, the dates of which are enumerated in that of the 6th. have come safe; and I pray you, though late, to accept my thanks for the seeds which you was so obliging as to send to me by Mr. le Couteulx. They were immediately forwarded to my Gardner at Mount Vernon with orders to pay particular attention to them.

There is a *tale* hanging to the coyness discovered in Mr. Welch, not to exceed the ballance which *he* has made of the account between us, which to *me* stands in need of no explanation, and to you the relation of it in detail would be tedious and unimportant. The plain English of it however is, that there are articles of charge in the debits of that House against *me* which reduce the ballance in my favor

some hundreds below what I conceive is just. His knowledge of this circumstance and the probable consequence makes him desirous (by holding the staff in his own hands) to throw the labouring oar upon me; but, as you may have incurred a further expence in the additional plateau, I have requested that Gentleman (Mr. Welch) by the enclosed order, to pay you what *he conceives* to be the ballance due to me.[97]

For the cost of the Coolers and Lamps, Mr. Constable (including a bill of £60. remitted to you by Colonel Humphreys) was immediately paid, together with the freight and other charges, agreeably to the account forwarded in your letter of the 16 of August, and for the trouble you have had in this

business, and advances to accomplish it, I feel myself under peculiar obligations. The articles are elegant; and I am perfectly satisfied with the price of them, pleased too by the addition of decanters.

Congress has commenced its third session. Our affairs assume a good aspect. Public credit is high, and stocks have risen amazingly. Except the disturbances occasioned by a few hostile Indians on our frontiers (western) (instigated thereto I am persuaded

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97. On December 17 Washington wrote briefly to Wakelin Welch & Son to pay this balance to Gouverneur Morris. This letter is recorded in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

by the british Traders) and some remains of the old leaven, the wheels of government move without interruption, and gather strength as they move.

The numbers of our people as far as they can be ascertained from the present stage of the Census, will not fall short, it is said, of five millions, some think more.

Whilst this will on the one hand astonish Europe, it may on the other add consequence to the union of these States. Adieu!

With very sincere esteem etc.[98]

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98. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To CHARLES CARTER**

Philadelphia, December 19, 1790.

Dear Sir: Your favor of the first instant came duly to hand, but it found me under such a pressure of business that I was unable to give it an immediate acknowledgement.

I am sorry for the information you have given me, and wish sincerely it was in my power to relieve you from the disagreeable situation into which you are thrown, but it really is not. The particular object to which your views are pointed, besides its being under some previous arrangement would by no means subserve your purpose. The law authorising the appointment of Commissioners for conducting the federal buildings &ca. supposed that the zeal of those who are friends to the measure, would alone be sufficient to prompt them to undertake the duties of it, and therefore it

has made no provision for the trouble imposed on them. The most therefore that can be calculated upon is an allowance of their *actual* expenses. I am etc.[1]

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1. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To BURGES BALL**

Philadelphia, December 19, 1790.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 7th. instt. came duly to hand, but the multiplicity of matters that pressed upon me at the time, prevented an earlier acknowledgment.

I write to you now respecting an exchange of Lands because you wished to hear from me soon, on that subject, not because I think there is the least probability of such an exchange taking effect. I judge so from the ideas I have formed (from the tenor of your letter) indicative of your expectations; first, because the land I alluded to, lying on Bullskin in County of Berkeley, most congenial I suppose to your wishes, is, *all of it* , under leases. and secondly (supposing that to be the tract you had in contemplation, and was knowing to the quantity contained in it, viz., between 1500 and 2000 Acres) because you have, in my estimation, greatly underrated the value of my land, or over-rated that of your own, by supposing money is to be given to make up the difference. Lands of the quality of those I hold in Berkeley

sell currently at from £3.10 to £5 pr. Acre, which is full as high, I conceive, as yours would do.

How far the leases might impede the Sale, if I was disposed to sell, I know not; but after what you have said, it is incumbent on me to inform you, that I have no land between the Blue ridge and the Western Waters which are not leased. In the County of Fayette, 40 miles this side Pittsburgh on one of the Roads leading thereto from Winchester, and in a thick settled and secure Country, I have a tract of about 1700 Acres equal to any whatever, with good plantations thereon (one of which is large) and other appendages.

In the County adjoining, viz Washington, and about 16 miles from Fort Pitt, I have another tract of estimable land, rather over 3,000 Acres; with 15 or 16 farms on it, well watered and meadowed. This tract is also in a thick settled, and perfectly secure Country. Both lye in the State of Pensylvania, and my Agent near the premises has been authorized to let the tenements for 5 or 7 years (I do not

recollect which) but whether he has done it, or not, I am unable to say. For the first of these tracts I could once have

recd. 40/. Pensa. Curry. pr. Acre, and for the other 30/. like money; but like all other landed property they have fallen in value; tho' I never yet have offered them for less. Beyond these, on the Great Kanhawa, halfway between Pittsburgh or Fort Pitt and Kentucky; and on the Ohio above the Kanhawa; I hold the most valuable River bottoms in all that country of considerable extent, on both those Waters; nearly opposite to which, on the No Wt. side of the Ohio, respectable Settlements are formed, and forming.

I mention these circumstances with no other view than, should your thoughts extend to the Country beyond the Alligany, you may have the greater variety of prospects and offers to chuse from.

Mrs. Washington unites in best wishes for yourself and Mrs. Ball and I am etc.[99]

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99. From a photostat of the original which is in the possession of Breckinridge Long, Washington, D. C.

**To ELIZABETH HAYNIE**

Philadelphia, December, 27, 1790.

Dear Cousin: Your letter of the 19 of October never reached my hands until a few days ago. I am very sorry to hear of the distressed situation in which you are, and have written to Mr. Muse, to whom the management of my Tenements in Berkeley, Frederick, Loudoun and Fauquier is committed to let you have any one of them, that may be unoccupied, rent free during your own and the life of your Daughter Sally Ball Haynie and moreover over to afford you some aid towards putting the place in order.

It is incumbent on me however to observe to you that if there are not in either of those Counties above mentioned any vacant lots belonging to me, it is out of my power to assist you in this way, first because I have no lands in either of the Counties above mentioned except such as have been laid off into Tenements and offered on leases, and secondly because the lands, round about my dwelling house in Fairfax County, are occupied by Negroes for my own support.

My Nephew Major George Augustine Washington will endeavor to see and deliver

this letter to you, if you live any where in the neighbourhood of his Father in Berkeley County, and will receive from you, and report to me a more particular statement of your circumstances than your letter has done. In the interim I can assure you of the good dispositions towards you of Your affectionate kinsman.[4]

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4. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To BATTAILE MUSE**

Philadelphia, December 27, 1790.

Sir: A letter which will be shewn to you by my Nephew (if the facts be true as I presume they are) is from a near relation of mine. Feeling for her situation I am desirous of affording relief, and therefore, request if there is any vacant tenement of mine in Berkeley, Frederick, Fauquier, or Loudoun, under your care that you will give her a lease, for it, rent free, for the natural lives of herself and Daughter, Sally Ball Haynie, and, moreover, by pecuniary aids (to be drawn from your collection of my rents) to enable her to put the place in a little repair. If there are more than one lot vacant, She may take her choice of them. I am etc.[3]

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3. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To WILLIAM WASHINGTON**

Philadelphia, January 8, 1791.

Dear Sir: I have had the pleasure to receive your letter of the 7th of November, and I beg you will be assured that I have a proper sense of your polite invitation to reside with you while in Charleston, if I should pay a visit to the southern States in the ensuing year.

It is my intention to visit the southern States next spring; provided the new Congress should not meet immediately on the rising of the present, which will be on the 3rd. of March. If it should not be in my power to leave this place by the middle of that month, I must give up my tour for this season as setting out at a later period would bring me into the southern States in the warm and sickly months, a circumstance which I would wish by all means to avoid. But, Sir, you will permit me to decline the acceptance of your polite invitation; for I cannot comply with it without involving myself

in an inconsistency; as I have determined to pursue the same plan in my southern as I did in my eastern visit, which was, not to incommode

any private family by taking up my quarters with them during my journey. I am persuaded you will readily see the necessity of this resolution, both as it respects myself and others. It leaves me unembarrassed by engagements, and by a uniform adherence to it I shall avoid giving umbrage to any, by declining all such invitations.

The journey in the manner I shall make it would be too much for Mrs. Washington. She will not therefore accompany me, but joins in compliments to Mrs. Washington and yourself. With very great esteem etc.[19]

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19. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To EDWARD RUTLEDGE**

Philadelphia, January 16, 1791.

My Dear Sir: I can but love and thank you, and I do it sincerely, for your polite and friendly letter of the 11th. of November, which came to my hands the day before yesterday *only* . The sentiments contained in it are such as have uniformly flowed from your pen, and they are not less flattering than pleasing to me.

The present Congress can sit no longer than the 4th of March, and should it not be found expedient to convene the new one immediately upon the rising of it; and should not the old one, by acts of the present session, cut out work for the Executive, which may render my absence from the seat of government (soon after the adjournment) incompatible with my public duties; I shall most assuredly indulge myself in a tour thro' the southern States in the Spring. But it will readily be perceived that this event must depend upon the time I shall be able to *commence* the journey, for I do not hesitate to acknowledge, that I am not inclined to be in the southernmost States after the month of May; and my journey must, on many accounts be made slow and easy.

It was among my first determinations when I entered

upon the duties of my present station to visit every part of the United States in the course of my administration of the government, provided my health and other circumstances would admit of it; and this determination was accompanied with another viz. not, by making my head quarters in

private families, to become troublesome to them in any of these tours. The first I have accomplished in part only, without departing in a single instance from the second although pressed to it by the most civil and cordial invitations. After having made this communication you will readily perceive, my dear Sir, that it is not in my power (however it might comport with my inclinations) to change my plan without exposing myself to the charge of inconsistency, if not something more exceptionable: especially too as it is not more than ten days since I declined a very kind and friendly invitation from my namesake and kinsman Colonel W. Washington of your State, to lodge at his house when I should visit Charleston. With affectionate esteem &c.[22]

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22. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To JOHN ARMSTRONG**

Philadelphia, February 6, 1791.

Dear General: Acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 29th. of December, and offering you my best thanks for the interest it expresses in my behalf, I beg you to be persuaded that neither my late silence nor my present brevity are in any degree the consequence of diminished regard. Your friendship receives from me the same grateful and affectionate return which I have ever made to it; but the multiplied duties of my public Station allow me little or no leizure for the cultivation of private regards; and the necessity of a prior attention to those duties cannot fail, my dear Sir, to excuse me to you.

Having in all cases of application for appointment to office prescribed as an invariable rule to myself, the right of remaining to the last moment free and unengaged, I did not find myself at liberty, even in your regard, to deviate from that rule, which you will be so good as to assign as the reason why I did not answer your letter of last Spring.

I have the best disposition to serve the person[42]

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42. Armstrong's youngest son.

whom you then recommended, and in what may comport with circumstances and public propriety, I shall be happy to do so. At present I know not what offices may be created, and applicants multiply with every new office and some of them come forward under such fair pretensions and pressing wants that a preference is difficult and painful in the extream. In a word, to a man who has no ends

to serve, nor friends to provide for, nominations to office is the most irksome part of the Executive trust.

The concern which you take in my health enhances the pleasure I have in assuring you that it is now perfectly re-established. It will add greatly to my satisfaction to hear that yours is also improved. With affectionate regard and esteem I am etc.[43]

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43. From a photostat of the original kindly furnished by Miss Grace Lee Nute, curator, Minnesota Historical Society.

**To THOMAS MARSHALL**

Philadelphia, February 6, 1791.

Sir: In acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 11th. of September I must beg you to accept my thanks for the pleasing communication it contains of the good disposition of the people of Kentucky towards the government of the United States.

I never doubted that the operations of this government if not perverted by prejudice or evil designs, would inspire the Citizens of America with such confidence in it as effectually to do away those apprehensions, which, under the former confederation our best men entertained of divisions among ourselves or allurements from other nations; I am therefore happy to find that such a disposition prevails in your part of the Country, as to remove any idea of that evil which a few years ago you so much dreaded.

I shall receive with great satisfaction and due thanks any information of a public or private nature, that you may think proper to communicate to me from your district. These communications will be the more grateful as we seldom hear the particulars of any transactions from that quarter, and the intelligence often comes through such channels, as in a great measure to prevent confidence from being placed in it. With very great esteem, &c.[44]

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44. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To BATTAILE MUSE**

Philadelphia, February 6, 1791.

Sir: It has been intimated to me that Mr. Windsor, a Tenant of mine, wishes to relinguish the lease, which he retains for a part of my land in the county of Frederick; and as my Sister Lewis[45] appears anxious to get it for the purpose of concentrating her property adjoining, and agrees to take it upon the same terms by which it is held at present; This will explain to you my approbation of her proposal, provided, Mr. Windsor is still disposed to surrender his occupancy. I am etc.

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45. Elizabeth ("Betty") Lewis.

On February 6 Washington wrote to Sir Edward Newenham an acknowledgment of his letters: "The multiplied public duties which at this time engage my attention, leaving me little or no leisure for the cultivation of private correspondence; I am compelled often to observe a brevity towards my friends, which I trust their goodness will readily pardon. In the number of those indulgent friends I hope Sir Edward Newenham will, on the present occasion, allow me to class him." This letter is recorded in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

***To ANGELICA SCHUYLER CHURCH**

Philadelphia, February 6, 1791.

Madam: As the letter, which you were pleased to address to me on the 27th. of November,[41] relates to an event of public import, yet to be determined, and on which the decision may be governed by circumstances not yet considered, I can only do myself the honor to acknowledge the receipt of it, and to express the respectful consideration with which I am etc.

[H.L.]

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41. Not now found in the *Washington Papers*.

**To CATHERINE MACAULAY GRAHAM**

Philadelphia, February 10, 1791.

Madam: At the same time that I acknowledge the receipt of your letter of June last, with which I have been honored, I must beg you to accept my best thanks for your treatise on education which accompanied it.

The anxiety which you express for the welfare of this country demands a proper acknowledgement, and tho' political sentiments, which are contained in your letter, merit a more particular reply than the multifarious and important business in which I am constantly engaged, especially whilst Congress are in session will permit me to make. I must, therefore, Madam, rely upon your goodness to receive this short letter as an acknowledgement of your polite attention and beg you to be assured that my not entering at this time more fully into the subject of your favor does not proceed from a want of that consideration, with which I have the honor etc.[49]

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49. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

## To JOHN HOOMES[57]

Philadelphia, February 17, 1791.

Sir: The state of the roads has been such as to have occasioned some delay in the passage of your letter to me, and some matters of importance which have pressed upon me since the receipt of it has retarded my acknowledgement thereof until now.

It was not because I had any doubt of the collection for the services of Royal Gift, for I allow no credit; nor that I inclined to receive a specific sum for them, but to place it in the power of the person, to whom, I might confide him to affix his own terms, and to avoid at the same time all grounds of dispute in a settlement thereafter.

If you incline to take him in this way, no time is to be lost in deciding *at once* the sum you will allow for the use of him from the first day of April until the first day of August, because it is the anxious wish of the people of this and the States northward of it to get him nearer to them, but not mine to have him far removed from Mount Vernon, or in the possession of any on whose care I cannot place entire confidence; and because if your letter does

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57. Of Bowling Green, Va.

not reach this place by the 5 of next month it may come too late for your purpose if you wish to have him.

It is proper you should know that this Jack, (Royal Gift) though *sure* , is *slow* in covering, and that it has been found necessary to have a Jennet or two always at hand during the season, by way stimulus, when he is in those slothful humours.

The "Bill to establish the Post Office and Post roads within the United States" has not yet passed, nor do I know what form it may finally take.

It is highly probable, however, that the Assistants (whether one or more) will be left to the appointment of the Post Master General. I am etc.[58]

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58. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To REVEREND WILLIAM GORDON**

Philadelphia, February 25, 1791.

Dear Sir: However highly I might be gratified by attending to my private correspondencies, as I used to do, yet so numerous and important are the public duties which my situation calls upon me to discharge, that to do justice to one I must, in some measure, give up the other. In this case it requires not the consideration of a moment to decide.

I presume, therefore, it will hardly be necessary to offer an apology to you for the want of punctuality in acknowledging the receipt of your letters. I should, however, be deficient in civility and gratitude was I not to return my best thanks for the elegantly bound volumes of your history, which you have been so polite as to send to me, and for the ardent prayers for my health and happiness which are expressed in your letters. I beg you to be assured that my good wishes attend you, and that I shall always be glad to hear of your prosperity. The forty two sets of your history which you mention to have sent over for the Subscribers have been received, as the within accounts will shew; and you have, enclosed, a bill for [69] Sterling in full of the balance of the accounts, and closes the business. With due regard and esteem I am etc.[70]

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69. Left blank in the "Letter Book."

70. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To DAVID HUMPHREYS**

Philadelphia, March 16, 1791.

My dear Sir: As this letter is wholly of a private nature, I refer you to Mr. Jefferson's official communications for every thing relative to your appointment at the court of Lisbon, &ca. and shall confine myself to acknowledging your two letters, viz. one from London of October 31. and the other from Lisbon of November 30, 1790, and to such general observations as may occur in the course of my writing.

The desponding accounts of our public affairs which you mention to have been transmitted to Europe, by a Person high in office here, are happily contradicted by facts too stubborn to be overturned; and, altho' it is to be regretted that such gloomy relations should be given by a man, who, it may be supposed, is perfectly acquainted with our political situation, yet there is some pleasure in knowing that his better half has asserted things quite contrary.[90]

The remarks of a foreign Count are such as do no credit to his judgment, and as little to his heart. They are the superficial observations

90. A letter reported to have been written by Vice President John Adams to Dr. Richard Price, which Humphreys had not seen; but he had seen a letter from Abigail Adams “of a directly contrary tenor.”

of a few months' residence, and an insult to the inhabitants of a country, where he has received much more attention and civility than he seems to merit.[91]

It gives me pleasure to hear, that Mr. Paine is likely to succeed with his bridge, and Rumsey in his ingenious projects.[92]

Congress finished their session on the 3 of March, in the course of which they received and granted the applications of Kentucky and Vermont for admission into the Union; the former after August, 1792; and the latter immediately; they made provision for the interest on the national debt, by laying a higher duty than that which heretofore existed on spirituous liquors imported or manufactured; they established a national Bank; they passed a law for certain measures to be taken towards establishing a mint; and finished much other business of less importance, conducting on all

occasions with great harmony and cordiality. In some few instances, particularly in passing the law for higher duties mentioned above, and more especially on the subject of the Bank, the line between the southern and eastern interests appeared more strongly marked than could have been wished; The former against and the latter in favor of those measures. But the debates were conducted

91. Comte de Moustier's picture of American affairs “was dark and gloomy” and “Count Andriani has written things monstrously absurd and ill-founded...somebody has written to Paris, describing a person, once a Colonel in the American Army, as now employed here in intrigues relative to the Spanish war.” This pointed to Humphreys and his mission. Humphreys's letter (October 31) to Washington is in the *Washington Papers*.

92. Paine's bridge was of iron, and James Rumsey was perfecting his steamboat.

with temper and candor.

The convention between Spain and England seems once more to have composed the European Powers, except the Empress and the Turks, and the Emperor appears to have settled matters pretty thoroughly in his dominions. Of the state of things in France we can form no just idea, so various and contradictory are our accounts from thence; but we most devoutly wish a speedy and happy termination of the struggle, which has for some time past convulsed that kingdom.

Peace and tranquillity pervade the territory of the United States, except on the N. W. side of the Ohio, where the frequent depredations of the Indians made it necessary to form an expedition against them last fall. But that has not been productive of the consequences which were expected from it. The Indians still continue their hostilities, and measures are now taking to convince them (if they do not see the folly of their ways before they can be carried into effect) that the enmity of the United States is as much to be dreaded as their friendship is to be desired. Our public credit is restored,

our resources are increasing, and the general appearance of things at least equals the most sanguine expectation that was formed of the effects of the present government.

I am about to set out tomorrow or next day on a tour through the southern States. I am under the necessity of commencing my journey with very bad roads in order that I may take such advantage of the season as to be leaving the southern extremity before the travelling shall be rendered disagreeable, and perhaps dangerous by the heat. I expect to return to this city in the latter end of June or early in July. Since the rising of Congress I have been, and shall be till my departure, very busily engaged in making such arrangements with the several departments as will enable me to be

absent for several months, without interrupting public business; and if I have not said every thing in this letter that I intended, or that you might expect, it must be imputed to the hurry of the moment. But at any rate there is one thing I must not omit, which is to tell you, that I am very sincerely your affectionate friend.[93]

93. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To MARTHA DANGERFIELD BLAND**

Philadelphia, March 18, 1791.

With every disposition, my dear Madam, to serve you either in my public or private capacity, I have to regret that such is the nature of the request contained in your letter of the 23 ultimo as to preclude the possibility of my being useful to you in the matter to which it relates. This will more fully appear from an opinion on the subject given by the Attorney General, to whom as a legal character, and a friend, I submitted the consideration of your letter. His answer is herewith transcribed, and will serve, at least, to shew the ready compliance paid to your request by Madam, Your etc.[3]

3. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To WILLIAM TILGHMAN[37]**

Mount Vernon, April 3, 1791.

Sir: The enclosed letters contain all the information I can give respecting the proceedings of Colvil's executors against Mr. Sidney George. It will appear from these (as I think I mentioned to you) that the bond had been considered as lost, and that the only resort, in case of non-payment, was to a Court of Chancery. Whether such a suit was instituted by Mr. Chalmers is more than I am able to inform you, or whether any further correspondence took place between Mr. West and him, does not appear from any papers I possess or have access to.

It will be recollected that our dispute with G. Britain commenced soon after the interchange of the enclosed letters, and that the Courts of justice were long shut up. During this period Mr. John West, the acting Executor, died; Mrs. Francine Colvil, executrix of the will, having died before him. By these events I became the *only* surviving Executor, and it must be noticed that from the year 1774, until the

close of the war I was from home, and unable to give attention to this or any other private concern. That, previous thereto, the execution of the will rested nearby, if not wholly,

37. Of Chestertown, Md.

upon Mr. John West, and that it is but lately that the bond has been recovered.

Under these circumstances I pray you to apply to the Representative of Mr. Sidney George for payment of it, and, in case of refusal to bring suit thereon that, in any event, my administration in this particular may stand justified.

Through any channel you may direct, your fee and the cost of suit shall be paid. I am etc.[38]

38. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY AND EDWARD RUTLEDGE**

(Private)

Columbia, May 24, 1791.

Gentlemen: An address to you jointly on a subject of the following nature may have a singular appearance; but that singularity will not exceed the evidence which is thereby given of my opinion of, and confidence in you; and of the opinion I entertain of your confidence in and friendship for each other.

The office lately resigned by the Honble. Mr. J. Rutledge in the Supreme Judiciary of the Union remains to be filled. Will either of you two Gentlemen accept it?[76] and in that case, which of you? It will occur to you that appointments to offices in the recess of the Senate are temporary, but of their confirmation in such a case there can be *no* doubt.

It may be asked why a proposition similar to this has never been made to you before, this is my answer, your friends whom I have often conversed with on like occasions have

76. In a joint reply (June 12), written and signed by Pinckney, and also signed by Rutledge, both men declined. Their letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

always given it as their decided opinion that no place in the disposal of the genl. Government could be a compensation for the relinquishment of your private pursuits; or, in their belief, would withdraw you from them. In making the attempt, however, in the present instance, I discharge my duty, and shall await your answer (which I wish to receive soon) for the issue. Of my sincere esteem and regard for you both I wish you to be assured and that I am &c.[77]

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77. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On May 25, at Camden, Washington received and answered an address from the inhabitants of Camden. In his answer he said: "Your grateful remembrance of that excellent friend and gallant officer, the Baron de Kalb, does honor to the goodness of your hearts. With your regrets I mingle mine for his loss, and to your praise I join the tribute of my esteem for his memory. Both the address and answer are entered in the "Letter Book."

On May 30 Washington arrived in Salisbury, N. C., where he received and answered an address from the inhabitants of the town. In his reply he said: "Our national glory and our domestic tranquility can never be tarnished or disturbed while they are guarded by wise laws founded in public virtue. Among the measures which an en lightened and patriotic Legislature will pursue to preserve them, I doubt not the means of difusing useful information will be duly considered." Both address and answer are entered in the "Letter Book."

On May 31 Washington left Salisbury and arrived at Salem the same day.

On June 1 the united brethren of Watchovia presented an address which was answered. Both the address and the answer are recorded in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

**To JAMES MERCER**

Mount Vernon, June 21, 1791.

Dear Sir: When I was in Fredericksburg on my way to the southward I received a letter from Mr. Niel McCoull of which, and the letter of his Lawyer, referred to, the enclosed are copies. The verbal answer returned to Mr. McCoull by his son, was that I had conceived so far as I was concerned in the business, that the matter had been settled long ago. But as it appeared otherwise from the application he had then made to me, I would on my return speak to you on the subject, and inform him of the result. This I accordingly intended to have done; but your duties in Richmond

having taken you from Fredericksburg at the time I came thro' it, I am reduced to the necessity of troubling you with a letter, praying that some decision may be had by which I shall be released from this demand, or at any rate, that I may be instructed what answer to give Mr. McCoull, who unquestionably will expect one from Dear Sir, Your etc.[1]

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1. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To THOMAS JOHNSON**

Philadelphia, July 14, 1791.

Dear Sir: Without preface, or apology for propounding the following question to you, at this time, permit me to ask you with frankness, and in the fullness of friendship, whether you will accept of any appointment in the Supreme Judiciary of the United States? Mr. Rutledge's[13] resignation has occasioned a vacancy therein which I should be very glad to see filled by you.[14]

Your answer to this question by the Post (which is the most certain mode of conveying letters) as soon as you can make it convenient, will very much oblige Dear Sir Your etc.

[H.S.P.]

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13. John Rutledge.

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14. Johnson accepted and was commissioned August 5, nominated to the Senate November 1, and confirmed Nov. 7, 1791.

**To REVEREND WILLIAM GORDON**

Philadelphia, July 19, 1791.

Dear Sir: As it has ever been a rule with me to make my private concerns give way to my public duties, when both cannot be accomplished, I now find myself under the necessity, from the weight of public business, which is at this time much encreased by an absence of more than three months, or a tour thro' the southern States, of refraining to enter so fully into my private correspondencies as my inclination would lead me to do.

I am therefore only able to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31. of January, and refer you to a letter which I wrote on the 9 of March on the subject of the subscriptions to your history, and which contained the accounts of the subscription and a bill of exchange of £29. 15/3. Sterling for the ballance of that account.

I now enclose the 3 bill of the set which accompanied your account, and shall only add my thanks for the prayers and good wishes which you offer for my happiness, and assure you that I reciprocate them with very great sincerity. I am etc.[21]

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21. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To CATHERINE MACAULAY GRAHAM**

Philadelphia, July 19, 1791.

Madam: At the same time that I acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the first of march with which I have been honored, let me request you to accept my thanks for your polite attention in sending me the pamphlet. which accompanied it. The importance of the subject, which has called forth your production and numerous others, is so deeply interesting to mankind, that every philanthropic mind, however far removed from the scene of action, cannot but feel anxious to see its termination,[19] and it must be the ardent wish of every good man, that its event may encrease the happiness of the human race.

I often regret, that my public duties do not allow me so much time as my inclination requires to attend to my private correspondences, especially, with you, Madam.[20] But I persuade myself, your goodness will lead you to place the brevity of this letter to its proper account, particularly when I add that I am but just returned from a tour of near 2000 miles thro' the southern States, to perform which took me more than 3 months. I shall only further add to it what I know must give you great pleasure, that the United States enjoy a scene of prosperity and tranquillity under the new government that could hardly have been hoped for under the old; and that, while you, in Europe, are troubled with war and rumors of war, every one here may sit under his own vine and none to molest or make him afraid. I have the honor etc.[21]

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19. The French Revolution.

20. Ford notes that Mrs, Macaulay Graham had died on June 22, 1791.

21. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To DAVID HUMPHREYS**

Philadelphia, July 20, 1791.

My dear Sir: I have received your letters of the 16 of February and 3 of May, and am much obliged by your observations on the situation, manners, customs and dispositions of the Spanish nation. In this age of free inquiry and enlightened reason it is to be hoped that the condition of the people in every Country will be bettered, and the happiness of mankind promoted. Spain appears to be so much behind the other Nations of Europe in liberal policy that a long time will undoubtedly elapse before the people of that kingdom can taste the sweets of liberty, and enjoy the natural advantages of their Country.

In my last I mentioned my intention of visiting the southern States, which I have since accomplished, and have the pleasure to inform you, that I performed a journey of 1887 miles without meeting with any interruption by sickness, bad weather, or any untoward accident. Indeed so highly were we favored that we arrived at each place, where I proposed to make any halt, on

the very day I fixed upon before we set out. The same horses performed the whole tour, and, altho' much reduced in flesh, kept up their full spirits to the last day.

I am much pleased that I have taken this journey as it has enabled me to see with my own eyes the situation of the country thro' which we travelled, and to learn more accurately the disposition of the people than I could have done by any information.

The country appears to be in a very improving state, and industry and frugality are becoming much more fashionable than they have hitherto been there. Tranquillity reigns among the people, with that disposition towards the general government which is likely to preserve it. They begin to feel the good effects of equal laws and equal protection. The farmer finds a ready market for his produce, and the merchant calculates with more certainty on his payments. Manufacturers have as yet made but little progress in that part of the country, and it will probably be a long time before they are brought to that state to which they have already arrived in the middle and eastern parts of the Union.

Each days experience of the Government of the United States seems to confirm its establishment, and to render it more popular. A ready acquiescence in the laws made under it shews in a strong light the confidence which the people have in their representatives, and in the upright views of those who administer the government. At the time of passing a law imposing a duty on home made spirits, it was vehemently affirmed by many, that such a law could never be executed in the southern States, particularly in Virginia and North Carolina. As this law came in force only on the first of this month little can be said of its effects from experience; but from the best information I could get on my journey respecting its operation on the minds of the people (and I took some pains to obtain information on this point) there remains no doubt but it will be carried into effect not only without opposition, but with very general approbation in those very parts where it was foretold that it would never be submitted to by any one. It is possible, however, and perhaps not improbable that some Demagogue may start up, and produce

and get signed some resolutions declaratory of their disapprobation of the measure.

Our public credit stands on that ground which three years ago it would have been considered as a species of madness to have foretold. The astonishing rapidity, with which the newly instituted Bank was filled gives an unexampled proof (here) of the resources of our Countrymen and their confidence in public measures. On the first day of opening the subscription the whole number of shares (20,000) were taken up in one hour, and application made for upwards of 4000 shares more than were granted by the Institution, besides many others that were coming in from different quarters.

For some time past the western frontiers have been alarmed by depredations committed by some hostile tribes of Indians; but such measures are now in train as will, I presume, either bring them to sue for peace before a stroke is struck at them, or make them feel the effects of an enmity too sensibly to provoke it again unnecessarily, unless, as is much suspected, they are countenanced, abetted, and supported in their hostile views by the B—h. Tho' I must confess I cannot see much prospect of living in tranquillity with them so long as a spirit of land jobbing prevails,

and our frontier Settlers entertain the opinion that there is not the same crime (or indeed no crime at all) in killing an Indian as in killing a white man.

You have been informed of the spot fixed on for the seat of Government on the Potomac, and I am now happy to add that all matters between the Proprietors of the soil and the public are settled to the mutual satisfaction of the Parties, and that the business of laying out the city, the grounds

for public buildings, walks &c. is progressing under the inspection of Major L'Enfant with pleasing prospects.

Thus much for our american affairs; and I wish I could say as much in favor of circumstances in Europe. But our accounts from thence do not paint the situation of the Inhabitants in very pleasing colours. One part exhibits war and devastation; another preparations for war; a third commotions; a fourth direful apprehensions of commotions; and indeed there seems to be scarcely a nation enjoying uninterrupted, unapprehensive tranquillity.

The example of France will undoubtedly have its effects on other Kingdoms. Poland, by the public papers, appears to have made large and

unexpected strides towards liberty, which, if true, reflects great honor on the present King, who seems to have been the principal promoter of the business.

By the by, I have never received any letter from Mr. Littlepage, or from the King of Poland, which you say Mr. Carmichael informed you were sent to me last summer.

I yesterday had Mr. Jaudennes,[22] who was in this country with Mr. Gardoqui, and is now come over in a public character, presented to me, for the first time by Mr. Jefferson. Colonel Ternant is expected here every day as minister from France.

I am glad to learn that the air of Lisbon agrees so well with you. I sincerely hope you may long, very long enjoy the blessing of health, accompanied with such other blessings as may contribute to your happiness. I have been in the enjoyment of very good health during my journey, and have rather gained flesh upon it. Mrs. Washington desires her best wishes may be presented to you. You are always assured of those of, my dear Sir, etc.[23]

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22. José de Jaudenes. He was the Spanish chargés d'affaires.

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23. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To ROBERT RUTHERFORD**

Philadelphia, July 20, 1791.

Dear Sir: Your letter dated the 13 of December was received while I was on my journey through the southern States, and until my return to this place it has not been in my power to make any reply to it.

Now the public business which has been accumulating for more than three months during my absence, calls for a constant attention, and will barely allow me to acknowledge the recept of such private, letters as have come to my hands in the course of my tour. You will, therefore, readily perceive, my dear Sir, that it is at this time only in my power to say that your letter has been received, and to request that you will receive my best thanks for the trouble you have taken to transmit to me your observations on our western frontiers, any information relating to which is at all times very acceptable. With very great regard etc.[24]

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24. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To COMTESSE DE ROCHAMBEAU**

Philadelphia, July 20, 1791.

Madam: It is but a short time since I had the honor to receive your letter of the 18 of November, in which you interest yourself in behalf of the Baron Closen that he may be admitted a Member of the Society of the Cincinnati.

You must be sensible, Madam, of the great pleasure it would give me to comply with any request which might come from the Countess de Rochambeau, if it was in my power to do it. But I regret that in this instance I cannot please myself by gratifying you, for, at a general meeting of the Society of the Cincinnati, it was resolved to refer all claims and applications from Gentlemen of the French Nation, for admission into the Society to the Counts Rochambeau and D'Estaing, and the Marquis de la Fayette, as it was justly presumed that they were better acquainted with the claims and merits of their Countrymen than the Americans could be, and, since that resolution all applications of this description which have been made to the Society here, have been referred to these Gentlemen. This being the case I flatter myself you will be persuaded Madam that my declining an interference in this instance will not be imputed to a disinclination to oblige you, but to a necessary adherence to impartiality and propriety. With the highest respect, I have the honor etc.[24]

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24. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE**

Philadelphia, July 28, 1791.

I have, my dear Sir, to acknowledge the receipt of your favors of the 7 of March and 3 of May, and to thank you for the communications which they contain relative to your public affairs.[28] I assure you I have often contemplated, with great anxiety, the danger to which you are personally exposed by your peculiar and delicate situation in the tumult of the times, and your letters are far from quieting that friendly concern. But to one, who engages in hazardous enterprises for the good of his country, and who is guided by pure and upright views, (as I am sure is the case with you) life is but a secondary consideration.

To a philanthropic mind the happiness of 24 millions of people cannot be indifferent; and by an American, whose country in the hour of distress received such liberal aid from the french, the disorders and incertitude of that Nation are to be peculiarly lamented. We must, however, place a confidence in that Providence who rules great events, trusting that out of confusion he will produce order, and, notwithstanding the dark clouds, which may threaten at present,

28. Not now found in the *Washington Papers*. Sparks, however, prints them in his *Correspondence of the American Revolution* and, almost in their entirety, as footnotes in his edition of the *Writings of George Washington*.

that right will ultimately be established.

The tumultous populace of large cities are ever to be dreaded. Their indiscriminate violence prostrates for the time all public authority, and its consequences are sometimes extensive and terrible. In Paris we may suppose these tumults are peculiarly disastrous at this time, when the public mind is in a ferment, and when (as is always the case on such occasions) there are not wanting wicked and designing men, whose element is confusion, and who will not hesitate in destroying the public tranquillity to gain a favorite point. But until your Constitution is fixed, your government organized, and your representative Body renovated, much tranquillity cannot be expected; for, until these things are done, those who are unfriendly to the revolution, will not quit the hope of bringing matters back to their former state.

The decrees of the National Assembly respecting our tobacco and oil do not appear to be very pleasing to the people of this country; but I do not presume that any hasty measures will be adopted

in consequence thereof; for we have never entertained a doubt of the friendly disposition of the french Nation toward us,

and are therefore persuaded that if they have done tiny thing which seems to bear hard upon us, at a time when the Assembly must have been occupied in very important matters, and which perhaps would not allow time for a due consideration of the subject, they will, in the moment of calm deliberation, alter it and do what is right.

I readily perceive, my dear Sir, the critical situation in which you stand, and never can you have greater occasion to show your prudence, judgment, and magnanimity.

On the 6 of this month I returned from a tour through the southern States, which had employed me for more than three months. In the course of this journey I have been highly gratified in observing the flourishing state of the Country, and the good dispositions of the people. Industry and economy have become very fashionable in these parts, which were formerly noted for the opposite qualities, and the labours of man are assisted by the blessings of Providence. The attachment of all Classes of citizens to the general Government seems to be a pleasing presage of their future happiness and respectability.

The complete establishment of our public credit is a strong mark of the confidence of the people in the virtue of their Representatives, and the wisdom of their measures; and, while in Europe, wars or commotions seem to agitate almost every nation, peace and tranquillity prevail among us, except on some parts of our western frontiers, where the Indians have been troublesome, to reclaim or chastise whom proper measures are now pursuing. This contrast between the situation of the people of the United States, and those of Europe is too striking to be passed over, even by the most superficial observer, and may, I believe, be considered as one great cause of leading the people here to reflect more attentively on their own prosperous state, and to examine more minutely, and consequently approve more fully of the government under which they live, than they otherwise would have done. But we do not wish to be the only people who may taste the sweets of an equal and good government; we look with an anxious eye to the time, when happiness and tranquillity shall prevail in your country, and when all Europe shall be freed from commotions, tumults, and alarms.

Your friends in this country often express their great attachment to you by their anxiety for your safety. Knox, Jay, Hamilton, Jefferson remember you with affection; but none with more sincerity and true attachment than etc.[29]

29. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To GOUVERNEUR MORRIS**

Philadelphia, July 28, 1791.

Dear Sir: I have now before me your favors of the 22 of November 1 and 24 of December 1790, and of the 9 of March 1791.

The Plateaux which you had the goodness to procure for me arrived safe, and the account of them has been settled, as you desired, with Mr. Robert Morris. For this additional mark of attention to my wishes you must accept my thanks.

The communications in your several letters, relative to the state of affairs in Europe, are very gratefully received; and I should be glad if it was in my power to reply to them more in detail than I am able to do. But my public duties, which are at all times sufficiently numerous, being now much accumulated by an absence of more than three months from the seat of government, make the present a very busy moment for me.

The change of systems, which have so long prevailed in Europe, will, undoubtedly, affect us in a degree proportioned to our political or commercial connexions with the several nations of it. But I trust we shall never so far lose sight of our own interest and happiness as to become, unnecessarily, a party in their political disputes.

Our local situation enables us to keep that state with them, which otherwise could not, perhaps, be preserved by human wisdom. The present moment seems pregnant with great events; But, as you observe, it is beyond the ken of mortal foresight to determine what will be the result of those changes which are either making or contemplated in the general system of Europe. Altho' as fellow-men we sincerely lament the disorders, oppressions, and incertitude which frequently attend national events, and which our European brethren must feel; yet we cannot but hope that it will terminate very much in favor of the Rights of man; and that a change there will be favorable to this Country I have no doubt. For, under the former system we were seen either in the distresses of war, or viewed after the peace in a most unfavorable light through the medium of our distracted state. In neither point could we appear of much consequence among Nations. And should affairs continue in Europe in the same state they were when these impressions respecting us were received, it would

not be an easy matter to remove the prejudices imbibed against us. A change of system will open a new view of things, and we shall then burst upon them, as it were with redoubled advantages.

Should we under the present state of affairs form connexions, other than we now have, with any European powers, much must be considered

in effecting them, on the score of our increasing importance as a Nation; and, at the same time, should a treaty be formed with a Nation whose circumstances may not at this moment be very bright much delicacy would be necessary in order to shew that no undue advantages were taken on that account. For unless treaties are mutually beneficial to the Parties, it is in vain to hope for a continuance of them beyond the moment when the one which conceives itself to be overreached is in a situation to break off the connexion. And I believe it is among nations as with individuals, the party taking advantage of the distresses of another will lose infinitely more in the opinion of mankind and in subsequent events than he will gain by the stroke of the moment.

In my late tour through the southern States I experienced great satisfaction in seeing the good effects of the general Government in that part of the Union. The people at large have felt the security which it gives and the equal justice which it administers to them. The Farmer, the Merchant, and the Mechanic have seen their several interests attended to, and from thence they unite in placing a confidence in their representatives, as well as in those in whose

hands the execution of the laws is placed. Industry has there taken place of idleness, and economy of dissipation. Two or three years of good crops, and a ready market for the produce of their lands, has put every one in good humour; and, in some instances they even impute to the Government what is due only to the goodness of Providence.

The establishment of public credit is an immense point gained in our national concerns. This I believe exceeds the expectation of the most sanguine among us; and a late instance, unparalleled in this Country, has been given of the confidence reposed in our measures by the rapidity with which the subscriptions to the Bank of the United States were filled. In two hours after the books were opened by the Commissioners the whole number of shares were taken up, and 4000 more applied for than were allowed by the Institution. This circumstance was not only pleasing as it related to the confidence in government; but as it exhibited an unexpected proof of the resources of our Citizens.

In one of my letters to you the account which I gave of the number of inhabitants which would probably be found in the United States on enumeration, was too large. The estimate was then founded on the ideas held out by the Gentlemen in Congress

of the population of their several States, each of whom (as was very natural) looking thro' a magnifying glass would speak of the greatest extent, to which there was any probability of their numbers reaching. Returns of the Census have already been made from several of the States and a tolerably just estimate has been formed now in others, by which it appears that we shall hardly reach four millions; but one thing is certain our *real* numbers will exceed, greatly, the official returns of them; because the religious scruples of some, would not allow them to give in their lists; the fears of others that it was intended as the foundation of a tax induced them to conceal or diminished theirs, and thro' the indolence of the people, and the negligence of many of the Officers numbers are omitted. The authenticated number however is far greater, I believe, than has ever been allowed in Europe, and will have no small influence in enabling them to form a more just opinion of our present and growing importance than has yet been entertained there.

This letter goes with one from Mr. Jefferson, to which I must refer you for what respects your public transactions, and I shall only add to it the repeated assurances of regard and affection etc.[30]

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30. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To CHARLES CARROLL, OF CARROLLTON**

Philadelphia, July 31, 1791.

Dear Sir: Your favor of the 16 only got to my hands on Friday last. Not having my private papers at this place, to refer to, I can say nothing with precision as to the sum, or sums which is due from me on account of my purchase of Clifton's land. It is highly probable, however, that the information given to you by your Attorney is right. Be the amount, however, what it may, I shall be ready at any moment, to pay the same in cash at this place, or in post notes at Baltimore, or Alexandria, as you shall direct.

But you will please to recollect, my dear Sir, that there is a pre-requisite to this payment, which was the original cause, why the money was not paid at the time of the sale. I mean a release of the mortgage, or some conveyance by which the Purchaser should be assured of the legal, or a secure title to the land.

The particulars relative to this transaction are a little out of my recollection at present, but in substance I believe they stand thus. That the land belonging to Clifton, now held by me, was

mortgaged as security to, among others, Mr. Ignatius Digges who, in this case, acted under, or would take no step without applying to, Mr. Carroll,[34] your father; and

34. Charles Carroll.

was the only one of several Mortgagees who refused to quit claim of the land, by which means my legal title to it is yet incomplete.

By to-morrow's post I will write home for these papers; and, as I have observed before, as soon as the impediment is removed, or I am in any manner made secure, the money shall be paid in either of the ways before mentioned; for it cannot be more your wish than it is my desire to bring the matter to a close. With much esteem etc.[35]

35. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To THOMAS JOHNSON**

Philadelphia, August 7, 1791.

Dear Sir: I have been duly favored with your letters of the 27 and 30 of July; the last of which came to hand while the judges of the Supreme Court were with me on an invitation to dinner.

I took this opportunity of laying your letter before the Chief Justice, (as you mentioned your having written to him and to Mr. Wilson[36] on the subject) in order that it might be communicated to the other Judges. After a few minutes consultation together, the Chief Justice informed me that the arrangement had been, or would be so agreed upon that you might be wholly exempted from performing this tour of duty at that time; and I take the present occasion to observe that an opinion prevails pretty generally among the Judges, as well as others who have turned their minds to the subject, against the expediency of continuing the Circuits of the Associate Judges, and that it is expected some alterations in the Judicial system will be brought forward at the next session of Congress, among which this may be one.

Upon considering the arrangement of the Judges with respect to the ensuing circuit and

36. James Wilson.

the probability of future relief from these disagreeable tours, I thought it best to direct your commission to be made out and transmitted to you, which has accordingly been done,[37] and I have no doubt but that the public will be benefitted, and the wishes of your friends gratified, by your acceptance. With sentiments of very great regard, &c.[38]

**To THOMAS JOHNSON**

Philadelphia, August 8, 1791.

Dear Sir: It appearing to me proper that the Commissioners[39] should be apprised of the pretensions, signified in the enclosed letter, I send it to them accordingly, that such prudent use may be made of the information as to them shall seem fit.

I have not given, nor shall I give any answer, at least for the present, to the Writer of it; and no person is knowing to my having received such a letter. I am etc.[40]

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37. As Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

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38. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

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39. Of the District of Columbia.

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40. From the *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

**To WILLIAM MOULTRIE**

Philadelphia, August 9, 1791.

I have had the pleasure, my dear Sir, of receiving your friendly letter of the 10th. of last month, and I reply with affectionate regard to your congratulations and kind wishes. A slight indisposition, since my return, (occasioned by a tumor, not much unlike the one I had at N. York in 1789) of which I am now recovered, does not forbid the expectation that my health may be ultimately improved by my tour thro' the southern States. My happiness has certainly been promoted by the excursion, and

nowhere in a greater degree than while resident among my fellow-citizens of south Carolina. To their attentions (yours in particular) I shall always confess myself much obliged, and particularly flattered by the regards of your fair Compatriots, to whom I wish, upon every occasion, to be remembered with grateful respect.

I shall realize your promise of a visit with sincere satisfaction. Till then, and always I beg you to believe me etc.[41]

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41. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To WILLIAM DARKE**

(Private)

Philadelphia, August 9, 1791.

Dear Sir: I have received your letter of the 24 ulto. Regarding its contents, altho' relating to objects of public import, as private communication, I shall reply to and remark upon them, with that candor which my personal esteem and my public wishes strongly enjoin.

I need not tell you that my regret is seriously excited by learning that any cause of discontent should exist, either on your own part, or that of your Officers, with General Butler, and it is hardly necessary to express my earnest wish that it may speedily subside, and be entirely done away. But, as I rely greatly on your disposition to advance the public interest, tho' even by the relinquishment of private opinions, I shall offer to your consideration some remarks which I am persuaded will have weight with you, and induce your influence with your Officers to dismiss their discontents, and to think only of their public duty.

Let it in the first place be remembered that one common cause engages your service, and requires all your exertions; it is the interest of your country. To that interest all inferior considerations must yield.

As an apology for the seeming inattention of a commanding Officer it should be considered that the variety of objects, which engage him, may produce an appearance of neglect, by no means intended. In General Butler's particular instance some allowance should be made for the effects of bodily indisposition, combined with the cares of his station; and I am satisfied no one, either from temper or reflection, will more cheerfully make this allowance than yourself.

On this belief I rest an expectation, that every uneasiness will be composed, and that the public service will be proceeded in with harmony and zeal. The Secretary of War has directed a board of Officers to decide the question of rank between you and Colonel Gibson[42] and others. I shall at all times be happy to evince the sincere esteem, with which I am etc.[43]

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42. Col. George Gibson, of the Pennsylvania and New Jersey Levies.

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43. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To BENJAMIN LINCOLN**

(Private)

Philadelphia, August 14, 1791.

My dear Sir: As it never has been my intention to bestow double Offices on the same person, and my design that those Marshalls who have received Appointments under the late Revenue Act should hold the former (i.e. the Marshalls office) until the first of the present month (the time by which the Census was to be returned, or until this business should be accomplished) and no longer, it behooves me to look for a successor to Mr. Jackson in the office of Marshall, for the District of Massats. How beneficial this office may be, I know not. At present, the mere emolument of it can not be, I should suppose, an object; but as a step, it may be desired by such as have nothing better in prospect. The purpose of this letter, my good Sir, is to request the favor of you to discover, first, whether General Cobb[44] would accept of the appointment; and 2dly, in case he is disinclined to it, if General Brooke[45] would act in it. I do not incline to issue the Commission to either of them, or to any other on an uncertainty; because, the refusal of Commissions make a bad impression on the public mind. Having observed this, and it occurring to you that the first of August is passed, the expediency of an early answer will readily appear; and I shall be thankful for receiving it accordingly. I am etc.[46]

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44. David Cobb.

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45. John Brooks.

46. From a photostat of the original kindly furnished by Judge E. A. Armstrong, of Princeton, N.J.

***To ARTHUR YOUNG**

Philadelphia, August 15, 1791.

Sir: That I may 'not be thought inattentive to your favor of the 25th. of Jany., which came to my hands about ten days ago only, I avail myself of the first Packet since the receipt of it to inform you that the Annals, and Chicorium Intybus have got safe to my hands. As set of the former I have presented in your name, agreeably to your request, to the Agricultural Society in this City. For the other sett; for the Seeds; and for the manufactured Wool from the fleece I sent you, I pray you to accept my best thanks.

With astonishment hardly to be conceived, I read in No. 86 of your Annals, the account of the taxes with which you are burthened. Had the account come from dubitable authority, the reality of such a tax would not only have been questioned but *absolutely* disbelieved; for I can assure you, Sir, that there is nothing in this Country that has the semblance of it.

I do not, however, mean to dwell on this, or any other part of your letter at this time, the purpose of my writing to you now, is to acknowledge the receipt of the things you had the goodness to send to me, and to assure you, that with great pleasure I will forward, in a short time, such information with respect to the prices of Lands, Stock, Grain, amount of taxes &ca. &ca. as will enable you to form a pretty accurate

idea of the present state and future prospects of this Country. In the meanwhile, I believe I may confidently add, that although our Agriculture, manufactures and commerce are progressing; although our taxes are light; although our laws are in a fair way of being administered well, and our liberties and properties secured on a solid basis by the general Government having acquired more and more consistency strength and respectability as it moves on; yet, that no material change in the prices of the above articles has taken place, except in a few instances of Land, under peculiar advantages; nor is it probable there will be in the latter whilst there is such an immense territory back of us for the people to resort to.

In a word, Sir, when you come to receive full answers to your several enquiries, I am inclined to believe that you will not be unfavorably impressed, or think an establishment in the United States ineligible to those whose views are extended beyond the limits of their own Country.

Having closed my corrispondence with Wakelin Welch Esqr. & Son, I have to request that your communications to me in future may pass through the hands of Mr. Johnson,[49] Consul for the United States in London. With best wishes, and sentiments of much esteem etc.[50]

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49. Joshua Johnson, of Maryland.

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50. From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach, of New York City.

**To JAMES KEITH**

Philadelphia, August 19, 1791.

Dear Sir: You will perceive by the enclosed letter how the matter stands between the Executors of Colonel Thomas Colvill and Mr. Sydney George.

If you think it will be of any avail to make further research among the papers of the deceased Mr. West for an entry of this transaction, or, to prosecute any new enquiry of his Son respecting it, I would thank you for so doing.

At any rate please to advise the steps you think I had best pursue to bring this *particular* matter to a close, and to inform me whether a judgment has been obtained against the Assignees of Semple upon their bond? In that cast, whether for principal and interest or principal only? and, when you think I shall be able to close my administration of that estate, it being a matter I am exceedingly anxious to effect. I am etc.[56]

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56. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To WILLIAM TILGHMAN**

Philadelphia, August 18, 1791.

Sir: Your favor of the 14 ultimo came duly to hand, but a confinement of some weeks,[52] and much business since, has prevented my acknowledging the receipt of it until now.

It has not appeared from any papers I have yet seen that that settlement, which seems to have taken place between Messrs. Chalmers and George[53] was ever communicated to Mr. West.[54] To me it never was. I will, however, again write to the Gent Gentleman, who has them in keeping, to make further search, and as soon as his answer is received, I will trouble you with another letter on this subject.

In the meanwhile I offer you my thanks for the trouble this business must have given you, and for the assurance of your readiness to prosecute it further. I am etc.[55]

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52. See Washington's letter to William Moultrie, Aug. 9, 1791, *ante*.

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53. Sydney George, of Cecil County, Md., and George Chalmers, attorney for the executors of the estate of Thomas Colvill.

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54. John West.

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55. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To SAMUEL VAUGHAN**

Philadelphia, August, 25, 1791.

Dear Sir: At the same time that I acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10 of May, I must beg your acceptance of my best thanks for the publications which accompanied it.

I am glad to learn that the good opinion first entertained of Mr. Rumsey and his inventions still continues, and I sincerely hope as well for his own emolument and the benefit of mankind, as for the credit of our country that he may surmount the obstacles thrown in his way, and receive such consideration as his merits demand.

It is with peculiar satisfaction I can inform you that our public affairs are still in a prosperous train, unclouded by any gloomy prospects of interruption. The convulsed state of Europe at the present moment cannot fail of attaching every American more strongly to his own country, and government; while every heart must be impressed with lively gratitude towards the supreme Ruler of events upon a recollection of the circumstances which have brought us to our present political situation.

Wishing that health and uninterrupted tranquillity may attend you to the close of your days. I am etc.[60]

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60. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To CHARLES CARROLL, OF CARROLLTON**

Philadelphia, August 28, 1791.

Dear Sir: Your favor of the 11 instant came duly to hand, and I have also received the papers from Mount Vernon which, in my letter of the 31st. of July, I informed you I had written for.

Enclosed you have an exact copy of the decree of the Court of Chancery in Virginia, under which I became the purchaser of Clifton's land. I likewise send you the opinion of the Attorney-General of the United States upon it, and other papers which have been laid before him relative to this business.

By the decree it appears that the sums of £243.13/1 and £67.4/7 Virginia currency were ordered to be paid to Messrs. Carroll and Digges; but then the cost of suit viz 4536 lbs. of tobacco at two pence p lb. (so settled by the Commissioners) and 50/. were, by the Decree, to be deducted therefrom, and paid to the Plaintiff, Clifton, and this having been done the sum of £67.4/7. is reduced to £26.18/7 which together with the sterling sum of £243.13/1 I am willing and ready to pay the instant a proper conveyance is made to me and the bond is delivered up agreeably to the requisites of the Court. Nay, Sir, if payment at the time mentioned in

your letter of the 16 of July is more convenient to you, it shall be made upon the passing of your bond to me, ensuring a compliance with the above requisites; or giving an indemnification if they are not; for I have no desire to withhold the money from you one moment.

By the laws of Virginia, to which this transaction is subject, all sterling debts are to be discharged at 33 □ p cent which makes the sum of £243.13/1 when turned into Virginia currency £324.17/5, and this added to £26.18/7. makes 1172 □dollars if my calculations are right.

With great esteem etc.

P.S. In procuring evidence to the Deed k would be well to recollect Characters who attend the Courts in Alexandria, for it is there the record of it must be.[61]

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61. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To THE CHIEF JUSTICE**

Philadelphia, September 4, 1791.

My dear Sir: The indisposition, and consequent absence from Mount Vernon of my Nephew, Majr Washington, to whom the care of my private business is entrusted, makes it indispensably necessary for me to go home before the meeting of Congress. My stay there will be longer or shorter according to circumstances; but it cannot exceed the middle of October as I must be back before the meeting of that Body.

Will you permit me, my dear Sir, to make a similar request to the one I did last year, and to pray that your ideas may not be confined to matters merely Judicial, but extended to all other topics which have, or may occur to you as fit subjects for general or private Communications.[76] With sincere esteem and affectionate regard, I am[77]

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76. Jay's reply to this letter (September 23) is in the *Washington Papers* and is printed by Sparks in the appendix to volume 10 of the *Writings of George Washington*.

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77. From a facsimile of the original, reproduced in Frank Monoghan's *John Jay* (Bobbs-Merrill: 1935).

**To DIEGO DE GARDOQUI**

Philadelphia, September 5, 1791.

Dear Sir: I have had the pleasure to receive the letter which you were so good as to write to me on the 3 of January last.

I am much obliged by the good wishes, which you express in my behalf, and by your favorable sentiments towards our Country; the interest, which you take in its welfare, makes the communication of its prosperity to you, an agreeable duty.

I learn with sensible satisfaction that your Sovereign has warmly approved your services, and distinguished your merit by particular marks of his favor.

Your opinion of Mr. Jaudeunes' merit, from whom I received your letter, cannot raft to procure him a respectful consideration with your friends here. With great regard, I am etc.[79]

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79. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To SIR EDWARD NEWENHAM**

Philadelphia, September 5, 1791.

Dear Sir: I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 31st. of January, and 10 of March last, and to express my obligations to your flattering and friendly assurances of regard.

The interest which you are so good as to take in the welfare of the United States makes the communication of their prosperity to you, a most agreeable duty. You will learn with pleasure that events have justified the most sanguine expectations entertained of the influence of the general government on the political and social happiness of America. Public credit established, Justice promptly and impartially administered, Industry encouraged and protected, Science progressing, Liberty, civil and religious, secured on the liberal basis of reason and virtue, are the rich rewards of the past exertions of our citizens, and the strong incentives to future patriotism.

The manufacture of maple sugar is in a very promising train, and, as the tree grows in several of the States, there is every reason to conclude that its cultivation will be prosecuted with success.

Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth is of Connecticut, and, at present, one of the Representatives of that State in Congress.

The multified cares of my public station do not permit me minutely to indulge the pleasures of private correspondence, and they oblige me to resort to the candor of my friends to excuse a brevity, which might appear abrupt, or a seeming inattention that nothing else could justify.

I shall realise with the most sensible satisfaction your purposed visit to our country, as it will afford me an opportunity personally to assure you of the great regard and esteem, with which I am etc.[81]

81. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To ELÉONOR FRANÇOIS ÉLIE, COMTE DE MOUSTIER**

Philadelphia, September 5, 1791.

Dear Sir: I have had the pleasure to receive the letter, which you were so good as to write to me from Berlin on the 26 of April.

The favorable sentiments which you express of our country and its councils are very agreeable to me. The kind interest, which you take in my personal happiness, excites a grateful sensibility.

You will learn with pleasure that events have realized the most sanguine hopes of our national prosperity. The influence of the general government has extended to every relation of political improvement, and to the promotion of our social happiness. The interesting state of affairs in France excites the sympathy and engages the good wishes of our citizens, who will rejoice to hear that the public deliberations have resulted in the permanent dignity and happiness of your nation. In the joy, which that event will diffuse, no one will participate more sincerely than he who is, with great regard, &c.[80]

80. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To CHARLES ARMAND-TUFFIN**

Philadelphia, September 5, 1791.

Dear Sir: I have had the pleasure to receive your letter of the 22nd. of March last.

Being indisposed on the day when Monsieur de Combourg called to deliver your letter I did not see him, and I understood that he set off for Niagara on the next day.

The interesting state of affairs in France has excited the sympathy and engaged the good wishes of our citizens, who will learn with great pleasure that the public deliberations have eventuated in the permanent happiness of your Nation, and no One will more sincerely rejoice in that event than Dear Sir, Your etc.[79]

79. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To COMTE D'ESTAING**

Philadelphia, September 7, 1791.

Sir: I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 30th of May by the hands of Monsieur de Ternant,[83] and I beg you will be assured, that I have a proper sense of the very polite and obliging manner in which you are pleased to express your personal regard for me. The manner in which you speak of M de Ternant is highly honorable to him, and, from his talents, discretion, and proper views, united with the extensive information which he possesses, there is but little doubt of his rendering good services to both Countries.

Such is the state of your political affairs, by our last accounts that further information must be received to enable us to form an opinion respecting them. But, in any event, the welfare of the french Nation cannot but be dear to this country; and that its happiness may in the end be established on the most permanent and liberal foundation is the ardent wish of every true American, and of none more sincerely than, &c.[84]

83. Jean Baptiste Ternant. He was Minister from France to the United States, 1790 to 1793.

84. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On September 7 Lear wrote to Robert Ballard, surveyor of the Port of Baltimore, who had complained of the trouble and expense of his office for which no compensation was made, that "it is impossible for the President to attend to the minutiae of business which may be communicated by Individuals, he wishes always to receive such information as may be proper to come before him, relating to the several Departments through the heads of the Departments to which the business properly belongs. Upon this view of the matter the President is persuaded, Sir, that you will not consider his declining to reply to the subject of your letter at this time, as a singular case; for he observes the same conduct on all occasions of this nature" Lear's letter is recorded in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

**To THE SECRETARY OF WAR**

Philadelphia, September 8, 1791.

My dear Sir: I have heard of the death of your promising Son with great concern, and sincerely condole with you and Mrs. Knox on the melancholy occasion.

Parental feelings are too much alive in the moment of these misfortunes to admit the consolations of religion or philosophy; but I am persuaded reason will call one or both of them to your aid as soon as the keenness of your anguish is abated.

He that gave you know has a right to take away, his ways are wise, they are inscrutable, and irresistable. I am etc.[85]

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85. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

## To MARQUIS DE LA LUZERNE[86]

Philadelphia, September 10, 1791.

Sir: In acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 15. of May, which reached me but a few days ago, I cannot forbear to express the sensibility with which I receive those warm effusions of personal attachment and respectful remembrance which are contained in it; and at the same time I beg you will be assured, that I reciprocate them with truth and sincerity.

As the happiness of the french Nation cannot be indifferent to the people of this country when we remember the aid which we received therefrom in an hour of distress, you will readily believe that we view with no small anxiety the troubles which, for some time past have agitated that kingdom; and the suspense in which we are held as to what may be the consequence of a late important event[87] which has taken place there, deprives us, in some measure, of the full enjoyment of those feelings, which would naturally result from a reflection on the prosperous situation of the United States. But, however gloomy

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86. Sparks notes that Luzerne died before this letter reached him.

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87. The flight and recapture of King Louis XVI.

the face of things may at this time appear in France, yet we will not despair of seeing tranquillity again restored; and we cannot help looking forward with a lively wish to the period, when order shall be established by a government respectfully energetic, and founded on the broad basis of liberality, and the rights of man, which will make millions happy, and place your nation in the rank which she ought to hold.

In a tour which I made last spring through the southern States I confirmed by observation the accounts which we had all along received of the happy effects of the general government upon our agriculture, commerce, and industry. The same effects pervade the middle and eastern States with the addition of vast progress in the most useful manufactures. The complete restoration of our public credit holds us up in a high light abroad. Thus it appears that the United States are making great progress towards national happiness, and if it is not attained here in as high a degree as human nature will admit of its going, I think we may then conclude that political happiness is unattainable. But at the same time we wish it not to be confined to this Country alone; and, as it expands through the world, our enjoyments will expand with it; and that you may find it in your nation, and realize it yourself, is the sincere prayer of, Sir, &c.[88]

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88. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE**

Philadelphia, September 10, 1791.

The lively interest which I take in your welfare, my dear Sir, keeps my mind in constant anxiety for your personal safety amidst the scenes in which you are perpetually engaged. Your letter of the 6th of June by Monsieur de Ternant gave me that pleasure which I receive from all your letters, which tell me that you are well. But from the account you there gave it did not appear that you would be soon relieved from your arduous labours and from the information we have received of an important event which has taken place since that time it does not appear likely that the clouds which have long obscured your political horizon will be soon dispersed. As yet we are in suspense as to what may have been the consequences of this event; and feeling, as we do in this country, a sincere regard for the french Nation, we are not a little anxious about them. Opinions we are not able to form here, therefore none can be given on the subject. But at any rate, you may be assured, my dear Sir, that we do not view with indifference the happiness of so many millions.

I am glad of M. de Ternant's appointment to this country, for I have a good opinion of his abilities, discretion, and proper views; and, as you observe, as he seems to belong to both Countries, there is not doubt but this joined to the good information which he possesses of the relative and particular interests of both, will enable him to render as much service and be as acceptable to each, as any man can be.

I shall next week set off for Mount Vernon with Mrs. Washington and the Children, where I shall, if possible, enjoy a few weeks of retirement before the meeting of Congress in the last of October. Indeed my presence there (as it will not at this time interfere with my public duties) is necessary for my interest, as George, your old Aid, has for some time past been too much indisposed to pay attention to my concerns, and is now over the mountains for his health. The last account from him was favorable; he had received benefit from his journey. I sincerely wish, my dear Sir, that the affairs of your country were in such a train as would permit you to relax a little from the excessive fatigues to which you have of late been exposed; and I cannot help looking forward with an anxious wish, and a lively hope to the time when peace and tranquillity will reign in your borders, under the sanction of a respectable government founded on the broad basis of liberality and the rights of man. It must be so; the great Ruler of events will not permit the happiness of so many millions to be destroyed; and to his keeping I resign you, my dear Sir, with all that friendship, and affectionate attachment, with which you know me to be, &c.[89]

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89. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To ANTHONY WAYNE**

Philadelphia, September 12, 1791.

Dear Sir: Your letter of yesterday was presented to me this day, but at a time when I was in conversation with a Gentleman on business.

I embrace the first moment of leisure to acknowledge the receipt of it, and to add assurances of my belief that the account given by Mr. Sheuber[92] of his leaving the british service, and bringing letters to me whilst my quarters were at Rocky Hill is true.

I have *some* recollection of the circumstance, but not enough to give a formal certificate to the fact.

The variety of occurrences, which, in those days, almost overwhelmed me. The time which has elapsed since, and an unwillingness to certify things that I am not positively sure of are my reasons for not complying with Mr. Sheuber's request in a formal way; but if the sentiments, herein expressed, can be of service to him, I have no objection to his making use of them as coming from

Dear Sir, Your etc.[93]

92. Justus Harman Sheuber, of Savannah, Ga.

93. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To GOUVERNEUR MORRIS**

Philadelphia, September 12, 1791.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 27th of May with its enclosures came duly to hand.

During my absence on my late Southern tour the proposals of Messrs. Schweizer and Jeannerett, made their appearance here, as well through Mr. Otto,[94] Chargé des Affaires of France, to the Secretary of State, as through Mr. Short, to the Secretary of the Treasury.

In pursuance to certain arrangements, made previous to my departure, an answer was given: which answer was in substance that it did not appear to be for the interest of the United States to accept those proposals.

The reasons which have been assigned to me as having dictated this answer are as follow.

First, That the rate of interest to be stipulated in the new contract, as well upon the part of the debt which had not fallen due, as upon that which had fallen due was 5 pr cent. It was a question whether a contract stipulating such a rate of interest with regard to the first mentioned part of the debt was fairly within the meaning of that clause of the law which requires that the payment of it should be made upon "terms *advantageous* to the United States," and while there was no reason to apprehend that it would be necessary to allow a higher interest than 5 pr cent. on any loans, which might

94. Louis Guillaume Otto.

be made to discharge the *arrears* of principal and interest, it did not appear expedient to forego the chance of a *lower rate* .

2nd. The commission or premium of 5 pr ct. demanded in the proposal is one pr ct. more than is given up on the loans going on in Holland. This would amount to a loss of one pr ct. on the part, which the United States were bound immediately to pay; and in respect to that, which had not become due, would be an unnecessary sacrifice of 5 pr cent.

3rd. The immediate proposers are understood to be a House not of primary consequence themselves, and though they alledged, they did not prove, that they were supported by others who could be deemed Capitalists equal to the undertaking. From the difference of exchange between Holland and Paris they could afford sacrifices in the sale of the bonds of the United States; and if there was not great force of capital among those engaged in the undertaking, such sacrifices were to be expected. A great quantity of bonds, thrown suddenly into the market, by persons who were pressed to raise money from them, could not but have effects the most injurious to the credit of the U.S.

4th. Paris being the stipulated place

of payment, if, from the state of exchange payments could be made *there* in *gold* and *silver* with a saving to the United States, there could be no good objection to profiting by the circumstance; but this advantage, and more, even to the full extent of the depreciation of the Assignats, would be transferred by the proposed bargain to the undertakers.

5th. The single advantage which the proposals held out, of a prolonged period of reimbursement, would be obtained of course by loans in the ordinary way: and as to the effect of the measure upon loans for the redemption of the domestic debt, this would be good or bad according as the undertakers might or not have occasion to bring the bonds of the United States to market.

The foregoing reasons appeared to me to have so much weight that I saw no ground for directing any alterations in what was done.

It appears in their letter to you that the gentlemen in question are willing to wave the claim of premium or commission on the part of the debt not yet due; but this obviates only one of the objections which have been stated.

You observe also that they had given you proofs that persons of the first fortune were connected with them in the business. They were deficient in not having given the like proof to Mr. Short,

whose enquiries had been directed to this object.

The observations you make concerning the views, which ought to govern the United States in their reimbursements to France are founded in propriety. You may conclude that no unequitable advantage will be taken; and it is hoped that the measures now in execution will be more conducive to the real interests of that country than would have been an acceptance of the proposals of Messrs. S. & J., who, it is presumable, founded their speculation chiefly upon the idea of availing themselves of the full benefit resulting from the depreciation of the Assignats.

Thanking you for the communication you have made me on the subject, I assure you that I do justice to the motives which dictated it.

Your other letter of the 27. of May by Mr. Ternant and that of the 8th. of June from London, have both been received. I am much pleased that you drew the balance *only* from Welch and Son. The deficiency was paid to Wm. Constable & Co. as soon as this circumstance was made known to Dear Sir your etc.[95]

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95. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To CHARLES CARROLL, OF CARROLLTON**

Philadelphia, September 11, 1791.

Dear Sir: I have been duly favored with your letter of the 6th. instant.

The indisposition and consequent (unexpected) absence of my Nephew from Mount Vernon, to whom my concerns there are entrusted, will oblige me to visit that estate before the meeting of Congress.

Thursday I propose to leave this city, and on Sunday afternoon expect to arrive in Baltimore, I shall come provided with 1172 □ dollars for your use; but must again take the liberty of calling your attention to the Decree of the High Court of Chancery in Virginia, copy of which I transmitted to you in my last. By this decree you will perceive that the surrender of Clifton's bonds among which is one to Ignatius Digges in the penalty of £1268.10.8 sterling, conditioned for the payment of £634..5/4. sterling and interest together with such counterbonds as the Plaintiff entered into &ca. &ca. is made a condition of the payments.

I do not know that Clifton's bond to Mr. Digges is of *much* consequence to any of the Parties, but, without the surrender of these bonds, the Commissioners would not at the time, nor could not legally have paid the several sums they did, agreeably to

the decree under which they acted, consequently, as I am now acting in the double capacity of Commissr. and purchaser of the land, it behooves me to call in Clifton's bond to Mr. Digges, as was the case with the others, or to require an indemnification against it.

For the general purpose of security against any claim from the Representatives of Mr. Carroll and Mr. Digges, it was that I meant to ask your indemnification, if there should be any difficulty in obtaining a releasement of the mortgage, or surrender of the papers, as required by the decree.

If you could make it convenient to be in Baltimore on Sunday afternoon, I am persuaded every thing could then, or early on Monday morning, be settled without difficulty, and to our mutual satisfaction, being well convinced that both of us mean to do what is right. I have mentioned *Sunday* afternoon because I shall leave Town *early* next morning. I do not intend to give Mr. Lee[90] any trouble in this business.

With very great regard etc.[91]

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90. Charles(?) Lee.

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91. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE[5]**

Philadelphia, March 19, 1791.

Renewing to you, my dear Sir, assurances of the most perfect esteem and affection, I desire to refer the interruptions which our correspondence has lately sustained, on my part, to causes which I am persuaded you will readily admit as excusable. To the fulfilment of public duties, too interesting to be neglected, and too multiplied to allow me much leisure, I am forced to sacrifice the wishes of friendship, and the pleasures of private life. This reason to you, who suffer the same privations, will apologize for the abridgment of an intercourse, ever grateful to my feelings, and conducive to my happiness.

The tender concern, which you express on my late illness, awakens emotions which words will not explain, and to which your own sensibility can best do justice. My health is now quite restored, and I flatter myself with the hope of a long exemption from sickness. On Monday next I shall enter on the practice of your friendly prescription of exercise; intending at that time to begin a journey to the southward, during which I propose visiting all the southern States.

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5. The “Letter Book” address is to “Monsieur de la Fayette” in recognition of the abolition of the noblesse of France by decree of the national assembly, June 19, 1790; but for consistency, Washington's letters to Lafayette will continue to be to the “Marquis” in this edition of the *Writings of Washington*.

Our country, my dear Sir, (and it is truly yours) is fast progressing in its political importance, and social happiness. The last session of Congress has been occupied in additional arrangements of finance, to establish the public credit, and provide for the expenditures of government; a small increase of our military establishment has also been judged necessary, to reclaim, if possible, and to chastise, if required, the irregularities of some indian tribes on the western waters. Your friend, General St. Clair resumes his functions as Major General.

The laws of the United States, adapted to the public exigencies, are framed with wisdom and moderation, and acquiesced in with cheerfulness. The administration of them, aided by the affectionate partiality of my countrymen, is attended with no unnecessary inconvenience, and every circumstance is auspicious to the felicity of your fellow-citizens in this section of the globe. They are not less so, I devoutly hope in that country, which is more immediately the object of your patriotic attentions.

The distance, which separates us, joined to the delicacy of the subject, has always suspended my opinion on your national affairs.

I am well aware, that it is impossible to judge with precision of measures, the motives of which are sometimes unknown, and the necessity of them not always understood. But there is one circumstance, on which I find it difficult to suppress an anxious wish; that the present National Assembly may not protract their own existence so long, as to beget any uneasiness on that score. The confirmation of their decrees will be best made by a second representation of the People, and that representation, to act efficiently, as a legislative body, may possibly be required to be re-organized. My affection for the French nation, my sincere wish that their government may be respectable, and the people happy, will excuse the disclosure of this sentiment, the only one, I believe, that I have ventured to offer on the subject of the revolution.

Like you, my dear Sir, I sighed for retirement; like me, I am afraid, you must continue the sacrifice. I have obeyed your request in communicating your remembrance to the friends mentioned in your letter of the 26th of August. Mrs. Washington joins me in respectful compliments to Madam de la Fayette; and I entreat you to be assured of the inviolable respect and esteem &c.

P. S. Your old Aid de Camp Geo: Augt. Washington, has got another Son[6] to whom he has given your name.[7]

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6. George Fayette Washington.

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7. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To ELIZABETH WASHINGTON LEWIS**

Mount Vernon, March 25, 1789.

My dear Sister: Since you were speaking to me concerning your Son Bob, I have thought it probable that I may have occasion for a young person in my family of a good disposition, who writes a good hand, and who can confine himself [to] a certain reasonable number of hours in the 24 to the recording of letters in books, which will be provided for their reception from the separate papers on which they now are and will be first draughted.

If Bob is of opinion that this employment will suit his inclination, and he will take his chance for the allowance that will be made (which cannot be great) as there are hundreds who would be glad to come in. I should be very glad to give him the preference. He will be at no expence (except in the article of clothing) as he will be one of the family and live as we do.

Should he incline to engage I could wish to know it by the first post after this letter gets to you, because I shall have many solicitations on this head at or before I get to New York, at which place direct for me, as I presume a letter

cannot reach Mount Vernon before I shall have set out.

If he comes, it may be with his Aunt, (and at her expence, as she will want some body to accompany her) when I send my horses back after I am fixed in New York.

He will want no horses there himself, for which reason those or the one that he takes on, should be such as will sell. I am etc.[75]

75. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To ROBERT DICK[83]**

Mount Vernon, March 21, 1789.

Sir: I am much obliged to you for the trouble you was so good as to take in forwarding to me the report of the Committee of Council at Quebec to Lord Dorchester.[84] The paper contains many things of importance, and, although I do not doubt in the least its authenticity; yet, if there should not appear to be any thing indiscreet in the request, I should be glad to be more particularly ascertained of the evidence, or circumstances indicative of its authenticity. With great regard, I am etc.[82]

83. Of Bladensburg, Md.

84. A copy of this report, in the writing of Robert Dick, is in the *Washington Papers* at the end of the year 1787.

82. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To ANNIS BOUDINOT STOCKTON**

Mount Vernon, March 21, 1789.

My dear Madam: Upon taking up my pen to express my sensibility for the flattering sentiments you are still pleased to entertain of me, I found my advocations would only permit me to blend the demonstration of that grateful feeling with an acknowledgement of the receipt of your polite letter and elegant poem.[85]

Be pleased then to accept my thanks for them.

The joint good wishes of Mrs. Washington and myself for yourself and family conclude me, My dear Madam, With great esteem and regard, Your etc.[86]

85. Mrs. Stockton's letter of March 13, and her ode, are in the *Washington Papers*.

86. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

***To ROBERT LEWIS**

Mount Vernon, March 24, 1789.

Dear Bob: Your letters of the 18th. to your Aunt and myself, found me at this place, where it is not likely I shall remain much longer.

It is not very probable, as I shall want to be well fixed at New York before I send for your Aunt, and the same Horses will have to carry us both there, that she will be able to commence her journey for that place before the first of May. But in this, as in every dependent event of your life, I would advise you to prepare for it in time. If you are ready before it happens, no possible injury will be sustained thereby; but if the event is too forward for your preparations, very great inconveniences may. As soon as your Aunt is advised by me, of the time my horses will set out, your Couzen George will give you notice of it, that you may be here in time to commence your Squire-ship.

She joins me in love to my Sister, and requests that she and Mrs. Willis[94] may be informed of the pleasure she shall have in their companies. I am etc.

PS. I should be glad if you would send the enclosed Letter to Mr. Fitzhugh.[95]

[N.Y.P.L.]

94. Mrs. Francis Willis.

95. Of Chatham, Va. The address sheet bears this note by Washington: "If he is not at home the letter is to be opened by Mrs. Lewis."

**To JAMES MERCER**

Mount Vernon, March 18, 1789.

Dear Sir: In receiving you cannot feel more pain than I do by communicating the following information; but as necessity, it is said, has no law, we both must submit to it.

It is now several years since I have been looking for payment of the debt which is due to me from the estate of your deceased father John Mercer Esquire. I have been promised, it is true, considerable sums from time to time by Colonel John Mercer; but it is equally true that I have either not received the money, or received, in such a manner, so disproportionate to his promise, as to be of very little service to me. and for the last twelve months I have not obtained a shilling, nor heard one tittle from him, although at his own request I agreed to receive money in small driblets merely to accomodate him. A mode by no means answering the most valuable purposes for which it was wanted.

This being a true state of the case, and my necessities growing more and more pressing (which I have repeatedly in a full and friendly manner communicated to that Gentleman) candor obliges me

to declare to you that unless matters are placed upon a very different footing than what they now are, and in a very short time too, I shall resort to other expedients than fruitless applications.

Did it suit my purposes to *lend money* at interest, that interest, it will be granted, ought to be paid with punctuality, but lending money is so far from being the case with me, that I have been *obliged* from dire necessity to borrow money at 6 *pr. ct* ., with very *hard* conditions annexed to it, and even under these disadvantages I am unable to supply my urgent wants. I am thus explicit for the purpose of evincing to you that necessity *alone* prompts me to make this plain, and unequivocal declaration, and because I would not, if the bond &ca. are put in suit have improper motives ascribed to the act, more especially as it can be proved that I have done, and am still willing to do every thing which in reason can be expected from me, under the circumstances I have mentioned to avoid it. With very great regard etc.

P.S. If the deed of confirmation for the land on 4 mile-run which I bought from the Attornies of your Brother Colo. George Mercer, is in your possession I should be glad to receive it, and if you can inform me from recollection whether Deeds passed to me, at the sale of the Shenandoah land, for the two lots I bought there, it would oblige me; I can find none among my land papers, and could wish to have the title to it secured.[81]

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81. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To THOMAS MARSHALL**

Mount Vernon, March 27, 1789.

Dear Sir: I have duly received your letter dated the 12 of February.[97] If I was greatly alarmed at the nature of the transactions mentioned in it, I was not less obliged to you for communicating so clear an account of them. It is true I had previously received some verbal and written information on the subject of a similar tenor; but none which placed the affair in such an alarming point of view, as that in which I now behold it. Not knowing of any certain conveyance for this letter, which might justify me in being more explicit, I will delay writing more fully until some safer method of bringing my sentiments to you can be obtained. In the meantime, as I know you are sincerely devoted to the interests of your country, and warmly attached to the prosperity of the Union at large, I shall hope you will persist in taking the most *discreet* and *effectual measures* for obtaining as accurate a knowledge as possible of the transactions in your quarter. A *Report* of which I shall earnestly request to be favored with, whenever you shall have the power of transmitting it through a confidential channel, or, if it shall be found necessary, whenever a cypher shall be established between us. For, without some such precautions, a miscarriage of letters on such delicate subjects, might be attended with very disadvantageous consequences. With the greatest esteem etc.[98]

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97. In the *Washington Papers*. Marshall describes James Wilkinson's dealings with the Spanish governor at New Orleans and the British activities from Canada. Washington inclosed his answer in a note dated March 27, addressed to John Marshall, at Richmond, requesting its forwarding "with safety and expedition." A photostat from the original of this note, which is in the Hunterian Library, Glasgow, is in the "Washington Photostats" in the *Washington Papers*.

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98. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To ROBERT DICK**

Mount Vernon, April 1, 1789.

Sir: In acknowledging the receipt of your obliging favor of the 28 ult. I pray you to be assured that no improper use shall be made of the important disclosure it contains, and of the sense I have of the confidence reposed in me by the communication.

Your sentiments with respect to the policy which ought to be observed towards the Settlers of the Western Country appear to be exceeding just; and, as the subject merits it, so I have little doubt of its obtaining the serious attention of the new government. With great esteem, I am etc.[12]

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12. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To DANIEL BRODHEAD**

Mount Vernon, April 12, 1789.

Sir: Your letter of the 4th instant came duly to hand. It would be an arduous, if not an impracticable, task for me to travel over the ground of services rendered by *all* the Officers of the American Army (for no line of discrimination, when the business was once begun, could be drawn) in order to form certificates that would apply to every character, and do equal justice to merit on the one hand, and to candor on the other. Nor indeed would my memory, if it is on this I am to depend, enable me to do it. For these reasons, and because (viewing myself in the character of a private citizen) I have had doubts of the propriety of the measure, few, very few certificates have passed from me since my return to private life, and these wholly, I believe, [to those who] might have greater occasion for them than those who remained at home, where their conduct was known, and where their commissions would be sufficient evidence to posterity of the rank they sustained in the accomplishment of the revolution. I am etc.[33]

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33. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To THE PRESIDENT OF THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA[44]**

City-Tavern, Tuesday Morning, April 21, 1789.

General Washington presents his compliments to the President of the State, and requests his Excellency to communicate the General's best thanks to the Officers and Gentlemen of the several Corps who did him the honor to form his escort to Philadelphia. General Washington having made his arrangements to be at the place of embarkation for New York, at a particular hour, will find himself under the necessity of leaving this City about ten o'clock. But, as the weather is likely to prove unfavorable, he must absolutely insist that the military Gentlemen of Philadelphia will not

attend him in the manner they had proposed. He is so perfectly satisfied with their good intentions, that it will be impossible for them, by taking any unnecessary trouble, to make any addition to the proofs of their attachment, or the motives of his gratitude.[45]

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44. Thomas Mifflin.

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45. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To JOHN CAMPBELL**

New York, May 10, 1789.

Sir: If a white horse, which your Servant was on the day I travelled with you from Bladensburg to Baltimore, has recovered of his lameness, and you have no particular predilection for him, I should be glad, as he is so good a match for the one I had of Mr. Prescott, if you would sell him to, or swap him with me.[81]

Mrs. Washington, with a Nephew of mine (Mr. Lewis) will, I expect be in Bladensburg on the morning of the 18th., on their way to this place, when the matter may be effected, if agreeable to you. If it is by way of exchange, which would be more convenient to me than to pay the cash, it will be for the horse on which Mr. Lewis will ride, and which will be either one of his own, of which I know nothing, and therefore can say nothing, or one of my chariot horses now 7 years old this spring, spirited and good, but by an accidental stroke of his hind foot against the cock of his foreshoe (in a mud hole) a day

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81. Robert Lewis's diary, a copy of which is in the *Washington Papers*, mentions that Mr. Campbell's horse was purchased.

or two before I left home, was rendered unfit for the journey and left, but now is, I am informed, quite well. If it is for cash only you would part with your horse I must give what you shall think a horse of his age (which I was told was 10 or 11) is worth, and will pay your draft upon me at this place for the amount.

I feel the necessity of making an apology for offering to buy without knowing you were disposed to sell, and shall rely on your goodness for an excuse. I am etc.[82]

82. From the “Letter Book” copy in' the *Washington Papers*.

**To WILLIAM HETH**

New York, May 14, 1789.

Sir: I have duly received your favor of the 3 inst dated at Mount Vernon.

I am much pleased with the arrangement you have made for Mrs. Washington's coming on here with stage horses, and must beg you to accept of my best thanks for your attention and trouble in this business. The previous settlement of the price with the proprietors of the horses was a very prudent and a very necessary step, and I think the rate at which you have fixed it with them is exceedingly reasonable.

You will please, Sir, to receive my best wishes for your health and happiness, and believe me to be With very great regard etc.[92]

92. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington papers*.

**To MATHEW CAREY**

New York, May 21, 1789.

Sir: However desirous I am to encourage or promote useful publications, it is not in my power to comply with the request made in your letter of the 21. ult. to select from my papers such documents of interesting circumstances, skirmishes, and battles of the revolution; as would enable you to prosecute the design, which you have begun of publishing in the American Museum a series of documents and public papers. for all the papers in my possession, relative to the revolution, are packed up in trunks and boxes at Mount Vernon. I am etc.[5]

5. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To JOHN CAMPBELL[23]**

New York, May 31, 1789.

Sir: I have received your very polite letter of the 18th, and the obliging manner in which you have consented to dispose of your favorite horse to me deserves my warmest acknowledgments and best thanks.

I am perfectly satisfied with the price (of thirty five guineas) and shall forward the money to you by Mr. William Hunter junior, of Alexandria, who says he shall set off for that place tomorrow.

The attachment which one feels for a good horse that has for any time been considered as a favorite I know is very great; I can, therefore, readily conceive that the only inducement you could have to part with yours was a desire to gratify the inclination which I had expressed to possess him, and I feel on that account the full force of the obligation.

If it will afford you any satisfaction to know that he will have the greatest care taken of him, and every necessary attention paid to him, you may be assured that it will be done while he is in my possession. With great esteem, I am etc.[24]

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23. Of Bladensburg, Md.

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24. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To GABRIEL P. VAN HORNE[25]**

New York, May 31, 1789.

Sir: The particular care which you have taken in furnishing horses to bring Mrs. Washington from Virginia to this place, and more especially the very polite attention which you were so good as to pay her personally through the most dangerous and difficult part of the journey, has made a gratful impression upon her, and she desires you will please to accept of her warmest acknowledgments and best thanks, to which I must beg leave to join mine, and assure you that I am with very great esteem etc.[24]

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25. Of Harford County, Md,

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24. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To WILLIAM LYLES**

New York, June 8, 1789.

Sir: Enclosed is the draft which I received of you in Virginia on Mr. William Hunter junior for three hundred pounds Virginia money.

Two hundred pounds have been paid by Mr. Hunter as you will see noted on the back of the draft, and, as it was not convenient for him to pay the whole here, I have remitted it to you, having received it upon the condition that I should be put to no trouble in the business if it was not paid readily. I am etc.[33]

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33. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To JOHN DANDRIDGE**

New York, June 24, 1789.

Sir: The indisposition of the President of the United States prevents his acknowledging the reception of your letter of the 3rd instant enclosing an order in his favor on the honorable John Brown for £800 Virginia money, he has therefore directed me to do it, and to inform you that Mr. Brown has since arrived in this place. Your letter to him under cover to the President has been delivered and the order presented to him. Mr. Brown says he expected to have met you in Philada. upon the business of the order, when he passed through that place, but, as he did not, he thinks you will be there soon, and the order can be accommodated.

I am happy to inform you that the President's indisposition, which has been very severe, is now removed, and the only inconvenience he now labours under is the weakness consequent on his fever, and the effects of a large tumor on his thigh, which will perhaps confine him sometime yet although the danger is removed.[38]

Your Aunt desires me to give her love to you

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38. The tumor was stated to be a severe case of anthrax.

The house occupied by the President was No. 3, Cherry Street, on Franklin Square. It was then owned by Samuel Osgood, and was torn down in 1856. The *Pennsylvania Packet* (June 22) stated that "a chain extended across the street to prevent the passing of carriages before his door."

and your friends. You will be so good as to present my friendly and best wishes to your Sister Martha, together with those of Miss Eleanor and Master Custis. They desire that their Cousin may be informed that they are at very good schools, and are extremely fond of them and the Companions which they meet there, but they cannot help wishing for a return of their happy hours at Mount Vernon. I am etc.[39]

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39. This letter was signed by Lear, and is entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

On June 24 the Corporation of Visitors and Governors and the principal and faculty of professors of Washington College, in Maryland, addressed Washington, who answered, in part: "As in civilized Societies the welfare of the State and happiness of the People are advanced or retarded in proportion as the morals and good education of the youth are attended to...It affords me peculiar pleasure etc." The address and this answer are entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

**To JOHN DANDRIDGE**

New York, July 1, 1789.

Sir: I wrote to you on the 24 ult. by direction of the President of the United States, acknowledging the reception of your letter to him of the 3rd. of June, and informing you that Mr. Brown expected some further advice respecting your order on him in favor of the President for eight hundred pounds Virginia money, before he could discharge it.

I am now directed to inform you that Mr. Brown says he has received a letter from the Gentleman in Philadelphia, on whom Mr. Innes's bill was drawn advising him that he had not effects in his hands to enable him to discharge the bill, and it will therefore be regularly protested. Your order on Mr. Brown is herewith returned to you by direction of the President, that you may take such steps in the matter, on your own part, as you shall think best.

I am happy to inform you that the President has recovered his health, but still labours under the inconvenience of the incision that was made in the tumor on his thigh, which will not yet permit him

to sit or exercise; however the Physicians say that nothing but the necessary time and patience are now requisite to remove this evil. I am etc.[41]

41. This letter was signed by Lear, and is entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

**To JAMES McHENRY**

New York, July 3, 1789.

Dear Sir: I have received your very friendly letter of the 28th of June, and feel a grateful sense of the interest which you take in my welfare and happiness, and the kind solicitude which you express for the recovery of my health. I have now the pleasure to inform you that my health is restored, but a feebleness still hangs upon me, and I am yet much incommoded by the incision which was made in a very large and painful tumor on the protuberance of my thigh; this prevents me from walking or sitting; however the Physicians assure me that it has had a happy effect in removing my fever, and will tend very much to the establishment of my general health; it is in a fair way of healing, and time and patience only are wanting to remove this evil. I am able to take exercise in my coach, by having it so contrived, as to extend myself the full length of it.

I thank you, my dear Sir, for the anxiety which you express that I should have some person about me, who is well acquainted with my constitution, and who has been accustomed to my confidence. The habits of intimacy and friendship, in which I have long lived with Dr. Craik, and the opinion

I have of his professional knowledge, would most certainly point him out as the man of my choice in all cases of sickness. I am convinced of his sincere attachment to me, and I should with cheerfulness trust my life in his hands; but, how far circumstances *at present* would justify his quitting his practice in Alexandria, and its vicinity to gratify his inclinations and my wishes, I am not able to say; but could it be made consistent with his advantage to be near me, I am sure it would be highly pleasing to me. I must, however, in justice to Dr. Bard,[42] who has attended me during my late indisposition, declare, that neither skill nor attention has been wanting on his part, and, as I could not have the assistance of my good friend Dr. Craik, I think myself fortunate in having fallen into such good hands.

You have my sincere wishes, that your intended journey to the sweet springs may be the means of restoring the health of your Brother, and that it may be pleasant and healthful to yourself. I am, etc.[43]

42. Dr. Samuel Bard.

43. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To ABRAHAM HUNT**[51]

New York, July 20, 1789.

Sir: Being desirous of purchasing a number of good brood mares to send to Virginia, I have been advised by several Gentlemen to make application to you for this purpose, with assurances that I might depend upon your judgment and fidelity in the business.

I would wish to obtain from 10 to 20 good, likely, strong, and well made mares, none of which should exceed 6 years old, or be less than 15 hands high, unless their form and other good qualities would warrant a small deviation from this height. My object in procuring these mares is to raise mules from them by my Jack-Asses. It is therefore necessary that their form and strength should be peculiarly attended to.

My present object in writing to you is to request that you would inform me if mares of the above age and description can be obtained in your vicinity on reasonable terms; for I am not inclined to go to any extravagant prices in them, and to let me know, as near as may be what they can be had for per head, and what other expences, besides their first cost, would be incurred in procuring and sending them to Virginia.

51. Of Trenton, N.J.

You will be so good as to give me information on these points as soon as you can, that I may direct my enquiries to some other quarter if they should not succeed here. I am etc.[52]

52. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To WAKELIN WELCH & SON**

New York, August 16, 1789.

Gentlemen: I will thank you to forward the enclosed letter to Messrs. Fenwick, Mason & Co.,[89] merchants in Bourdeaux, by the earliest conveyance.

I have requested the above Gentlemen to send me Twenty six dozen of claret and the same quantity of champagne (if the latter can be had of the best quality at Bourdeaux)[90] and have directed them to draw upon you at 30 days sight for the cost and charges of the before mentioned quantity, you will therefore be so good as to answer their drafts for that amount, and charge the same to the account of Gentlemen, Your etc.

P.S. I will thank you to send me by the first vessel, which sails for New York, a terrestrial globe of the largest dimensions and of the most accurate and approved kind now in use.[91]

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89. This letter is recorded in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers* under date of August 18.

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90. On August 25 Washington wrote to Fenwick, Mason & Co., cancelling the champagne item as "I have been informed that Bourdeaux is not the place where champagne wine can be furnished on the best terms, or from whence it is usually shipped." He substituted "12 dozen of vin de Grave" in place of the champagne.

On August 25, also, he wrote of the change of order to Wakelin Welch & Co. These letters are recorded in the "Letter Book."

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91. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To JOHN CANNON**

New York, September 24, 1789.

Sir: Sometime last winter I received a letter from you by the hands of Major McCormack, giving me a statement of the situation of my lands under your care in the Counties of Washington and Fayette, with the names of the persons to whom they were leased and the terms on which they held them.

You likewise informed me that the Tenants would pay the rents in wheat at your mill, which you would turn to the best advantage for me. In consequence of these arrangements I expected to have received remittance from you before this time, or, at least to have heard from you, in both of which I have been disappointed, you will therefore, Sir, not think it strange that I should express my surprise

at your conduct in this respect, and more especially as I was induced to put this business into your hands from the favorable information which I received of your punctuality and attention.

I think I have received but two letters from you since I empowered you to act for me in

that country, which is now almost three years. Opportunities certainly have not been wanting, for the post affords them from Pittsburg, if private ones should not offer: and I have repeatedly written to you requesting information relative to my property under your care.

Mr. Smith will do me the favor to hand this to you, and will be so good as to take charge of, and convey to me any communications you may have to make, and I trust, in future, I shall not have cause to complain of your want of attention in writing.

Any remittances you may have to make can be sent either to me here, or to my nephew Major George Aug. Washington at Mount Vernon as opportunity may make it convenient. I am etc.[40]

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40. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To THOMAS SMITH**

New York, September 23, 1789.

Sir: I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24 of July, enclosing a general statement of the monies received for, and paid to my order, and likewise the receipt of a letter from you of the 19 of April last, which has not been acknowledged.

It is unnecessary for me to repeat to you the satisfaction which you have given me in conducting the business that was committed to your hands, as a proof of it I must request your further attention to the recovery of the enclosed bond given by John Stephenson, and Hugh Stephenson on the 22 of August 1765 for seventy pounds ten shillings Virginia currency. I likewise enclose a statement of an account, which relates to the said bond. Colonel John Stephenson, the principal in the bond, lives in Fayette County State of Pennsylvania, and is undoubtedly known to you. The repeated applications which have been made to Colonel Stephenson for the payment of the bond, and the more than repeated assurances which he has given that he would immediately discharge it, render any further delay not only unnecessary,

but improper, and, therefore, if he neglects to pay it upon application, you will not rely upon promises, but put the bond in suit.

Colonel Cannon, of Washington county whom I have employed to superintend my property there, and in Fayette, was recommended to me as a very active, attentive, and *punctual* man. I wish I could say, from experience, that I have found him so. but it is the reverse. It is now almost three years since he was empowered to take care of my property and collect my rents in that country, during which time I have repeatedly written to him, not only by the post, but by opportunities that must have conveyed the letters to his hands, and so far have I been from receiving regular answers to them, that, I think, I have only had two letters from him since he has conducted my business, the last of which was handed to me in the past winter, in which he mentioned the terms on which he had leased my lands, but I have never heard from him since, or ever received the remittance of one shilling for my rents. I will therefore thank you, Sir, when you are in that part of the country to make some enquiries of Colonel Cannon, relative to the state of my property under his care, and remind him of the necessity there is of his being more frequent in his communications to me, and more punctual in the remittance of my rents. I have enclosed a letter to him, which I will thank you to deliver when you have an opportunity. I am etc.[39]

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39. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To HENDRICK WILMANS**

New York, October 12, 1789.

Sir: I have now before me your several favors of the 19th of March, the 12. and 24 of June, and must beg your acceptance of my best thanks for the satisfactory manner in which you have executed the commission that you was so polite as to take upon yourself. I also feel myself obliged by the offer of your future services.

The Gardner who you have been so good as to procure for me arrived here on the 14 of September, and set off a few days after for my seat in Virginia, where he will enter upon his duty, and, from the account which you have given of him, I have no doubt but I shall be pleased with his services. The plants and seeds, which you were so good as to send to me arrived safe, and the Gardner has taken them to Virginia with him.

In your letter of the 13 of June you observed that you were in treaty with a Weaver who you expected to engage for me, but as you mentioned nothing more of the matter in your subsequent letter, I presume that you were disappointed in your expectations of engaging him. However, if you should in future have an opportunity of procuring a good linen weaver for me, upon reasonable terms, I will thank you to do it, and, in that case, it is my wish that he should be sent over in some vessel bound to the Potomac, for the expence of transporting a person from hence to Virginia is no inconsiderable addition to the cost of obtaining him. I am etc.[87]

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87. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To REVEREND WILLIAM McWHIR**

New York, October 12, 1789.

Sir: I have received your letter of the 18 ult. and am glad to learn from it, that my Nephews apply with diligence to arithmetic and English composition. These are two branches in which I have always thought them deficient, and have ever been pressingly desirous that they should be made well acquainted with them. George may be instructed in the french language, but Lawrence had better apply himself, for the present, to his arithmetic, writing, and composition.

As you have failed in your endeavours to obtain a Mathematical Instructor, it is not probable that any success would attend an advertisement in a paper here; however, I will have one inserted. I can give no particular opinion respecting the Boy whom you represent to be an uncommon Genius; but I would cheerfully give any reasonable encouragement towards the cultivation of talents which bid fair to be useful. I am &c.[86]

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86. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To THOMAS NEWTON, JUNIOR**

New York, November 23, 1789.

Sir: Your letter of the 24th of October, containing an estimate of the cost of a Light-house which was to have been erected on Cape Henry; a draft of the same, and an Account of materials placed upon

the spot for the purpose of building, has been duly received; and I beg you to accept my thanks for your trouble in preparing and forwarding them. I am etc.[31]

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31. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To MRS. SARAH BOMFORD**

New York, January 6, 1790.

Madam: In answer to your letter of the 23 of August last, which came to my hands but a few days ago, I must observe that, from the year 1775. to the close of the war with great Britain, my public duties totally precluded me from attending to any kind of private business whatever, and from the latter period to the time of my entering again into public life, I was occasionally so much engaged in correspondencies, and other matters consequent on the station which I had held, that, with the greatest industry I could not find time to pay that attention to my *own* private affairs which they required.

Under these circumstances I had it not in my power to attend particularly to the affairs of Mrs. Savage, and, of course, have not that knowledge of the situation of them that Mr. Fairfax has, to whom I have transmitted your letter with a request, and not doubting, that he will give it the attention which it deserves, and which the situation of Mrs. Savage's affairs will admit of. And I must request that in future you will correspond with him upon this business. I am etc.[84]

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84. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To REVEREND BRYAN FAIRFAX**

New York, January 6, 1790.

Dear Sir: I received the enclosed letter a few days since from Mrs. Bomford, upon the subject of a legacy which was left her by the late Mrs. Savage, and likewise requesting payment may be made to her for the diet, lodging &ca. of that unfortunate woman for upwards of four years.

In my answer to the above letter I have informed Mrs. Bomford that circumstances have put it out of my power to pay particular attention to the affairs of Mrs. Savage, and that I should transmit her letter to you, not doubting but you would give it that attention which it deserved. You will,

therefore, my dear Sir, be good enough to give Mrs. Bomford such an answer to her letter, as from your knowledge of the situation of Mrs. Savage's affairs you may be enabled to do, and permit me to add, if this business could be brought to a close it would be a most desirable thing. You will please to make my best compliments acceptable to Mrs. Fairfax and your family, in which I am joined by Mrs. Washington, and I assure you we are not a little pleased to hear that you are about to establish yourselves in the neighbourhood of Mount Vernon, promising ourselves a new source of pleasure from that circumstance whenever we are permitted to return home. With very sincere regard, I am etc.[85]

85. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To SIR EDWARD NEWENHAM**

New York, January 15, 1790.

Dear Sir: I have now before me your several letters of the 23 of February, 24 of July, 14 of August, and 10 of October 1789, the last of which but lately reached my hands.

I should feel myself guilty of a great impropriety in suffering your letters to lay so long without an acknowledgement, was I not conscious that the new and busy scenes in which I have been engaged for these 9 or 10 months past, by engrossing my whole attention, would excuse me in your mind from any apparent neglect, and I trust that the same cause will apologise for my not entering at this time, into a particular response to the matters contained in your several letters.

I cannot however avoid observing that it must afford a most pleasing satisfaction to the friends of the human race to view the enlightened spirit of liberty which seems to have pervaded a great part of your European world, and, at the sametime the philanthropic mind cannot but feel anxious for the issue of those novel and patriotic exertions.

The government of the United States seems now to want very little more than the sanction of time to give it all that stability which can be expected

from any human fabric. The people meet it with as much fondness as its most sanguine friends could anticipate, because they are convinced that it is founded in principles of national happiness, and the recent accession of the State of North Carolina (which has ratified the Constitution of the United States with marks of peculiar good will) leaves the little State of Rhode Island by herself,

how long she will be able to stand in that forlorn condition must depend upon the duration of that infatuation and evil policy of which she appears to have been guided.

I was pleased to hear of Mrs. Montgomery's safe arrival, and the satisfaction which she enjoyed in her visit to Ireland. Should she be in your neighbourhood when this letter gets to your hands, you will be good enough to present the best compliments of Mrs. Washington and myself to her, and likewise make the same acceptable to Lady Newenham. With very great regard etc.

P. S. In answer to your quere, why has Mr. Thomson resigned? I reply. That it was his earnest wish to retire from the bustle of public life, and enjoy the evening of his days in domestic tranquillity, after having faithfully served his country for a series of years in an important station.

The journals of Congress, which you request, will accompany this.[4]

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4. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To CATHERINE MACAULAY GRAHAM**

New York, January 9, 1790.

Madam: Your obliging letter, dated in October last, has been received; and, as I do not know when I shall have more leisure than at present to throw together a few observations in return for yours, I take up my Pen to do it by this early occasion.

In the first place I thank you for your congratulatory sentiments on the event which has placed me at the head of the American Government; as well as for the indulgent partiality, which it is to be feared, however, may have warped your judgment too much in my favor. But you do me no more than justice in supposing that, if I had been permitted to indulge my first and fondest wish, I should have remained in a private Station. Although neither the present age or Posterity may possibly give me full credit for the feelings which I have experienced on the subject; yet I have a consciousness, that nothing short of an absolute conviction of duty could ever have brought me upon the scenes of public life again. The establishment of our new Government seemed to be the last great experiment for promoting human happiness by reasonable compact in civil Society. It was to be,

in the first instance, in a considerable degree a government of accommodation as well as a government of Laws. Much was to be done by *prudence* , much by *conciliation* , much by *firmness* . Few who are not philosophical spectators can realize the difficult and delicate part which a man

in my situation had to act. All see, and most admire, the glare which hovers round the external trappings of elevated office. To me there is nothing in it, beyond the lustre which may be reflected from its connection with a power of promoting human felicity. In our progress towards political happiness my station is new; and, if I may use the expression, I walk on untrodden ground. There is scarcely any part of my conduct wch. may not hereafter be drawn into precedent. Under such a view of the duties inherent to my arduous office, I could not but feel a diffidence in myself on the one hand; and an anxiety for the Community that every new arrangement should be made in the best possible manner on the other. If after all my humble but faithful endeavours to advance the felicity of my Country and mankind, I may indulge a hope that my labours have not been altogether without success, it will be the only real compensation I

can receive in the closing of life.

On the actual situation of this Country under its new Government I will, in the next place, make a few remarks. That the Government, though not absolutely perfect, is one of the best in the world, I have little doubt. I always believed that an unequivocally free and equal Representation of the People in the Legislature, together with an efficient and responsable Executive, were the great Pillars on which the preservation of American Freedom must depend. It was indeed next to a Miracle that there should have been so much unanimity, in points of such importance, among such a number of Citizens, so widely scattered, and so different in their habits in many respects as the Americans were. Nor are the growing unanimity and encreasing goodwill of the Citizens to the Government less remarkable than favorable circumstances. So far as we have gone with the new Government (and it is completely organized and in operation) we have had greater reason than the most sanguine could expect to be satisfied with its success.

Perhaps a number of accidental circumstances have concurred with the real effects of the Government to make the People uncommonly well pleased with their situation and prospects. The harvests of wheat have been remarkably good, the demand for that article from abroad is great, the encrease of Commerce is visible in every Port, and the number of new manufactures introduced in one year is astonishing. I have lately made a tour through the Eastern States. I found the country,

in a great degree, recovered from the ravages of War, the Towns flourishing, and the People delighted with a government instituted by themselves and for their own good. The same facts I have also reason to believe, from good authority, exist in the Southern States. By what I have just observed, I think you will be persuaded that the ill-boding Politicians who prognosticated that America would never enjoy any fruits from her Independence, and that she would be obliged to have recourse to a foreign Power for protection, have at least been mistaken.

I shall sincerely rejoice to see that the American Revolution has been productive of happy consequences on both sides of the Atlantic. The renovation of the French Constitution is indeed one of the most wonderful events in the history of mankind; and the agency of the Marquis de la Fayette in a high degree honorable to his character. My greatest fear has been, that the nation would not be sufficiently cool and moderate in making arrangements for the security of that liberty, of which it seems to be fully possessed.

Mr. Warville, the French Gentleman you mention, has been in America and at Mount Vernon; but has returned sometime since to France.

Mrs. Washington is well and desires her compliments may be presented to you. We wish the happiness of your fireside, as we also long to enjoy that of our own at Mount Vernon. Our wishes, you know, were limited; and I think that our plans of living will now be deemed reasonable by the considerate part of our species. Her wishes coincide with my own as to simplicity of dress, and everything which can tend to support propriety of character without partaking of the follies of luxury and ostentation. I am, etc.[91]

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91. From the printed text in *Notes and Queries* (London: 1878), vol. 9, p. 421.

**To PAUL ZANTZINGER AND ADAM REIGART**

New York, April 10, 1790.

Gentlemen: Colonel Hartley has put into my bands the account of the mares, which you have been so obliging as to purchase for me, and I have paid to that Gentleman the balance due upon your account. I have received from my nephew, Major Washington, information of the safe arrival of all the Mares at Mount Vernon, and he appears to be much pleased with them.

When I expressed to Colonel Hartley my wish to procure a number of mares for breeding from your quarter, I fully expected to compensate the trouble of the person who might purchase them for me, by commission or otherwise. But, Gentlemen, your declining to accept any thing more than an indemnification for the cost and expence which attended the purchase of them, has added to the obligation which I feel for your having executed the commission in so satisfactory a manner, and I beg you to be assured that I have a proper sense of your politeness on this occasion. I am etc.[62]

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62. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To GODDARD & ANGELL**[38]

New York, March 6, 1790.

Gentlemen: You will be pleased to insert the enclosed advertisement[39] in your paper for six weeks successively and charge the same in your annual account with the President of the United Stakes, which account you will be good enough to present whenever it becomes due. I am etc.[40]

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38. William Goddard and James Angell, publishers of *The Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*.

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39. The advertisement was dated Mar. 1, 1790, and announced that "Royal Gift and the Knight of Malta will cover Mares and Jennets, at Mount Vernon, the ensuing Season—Thereafter one of thorn will be removed from thence—The Price for Mares will be *Ten Dollars, Half a Dollar* per Week for Pasturage, and *Two and Six Pence* to the Groom; and for Jennets *Three Guineas*, and *Two and Six Pence*. No Charge will be made for Pasturage of the latter, provided they are taken away by the first of August; bur of longer continued the above Price will be demanded thenceforward per Week. The Pasture and Fences are good, but no Warrants will be given against Escapes or Accidents. The Qualities and Sizes of these two Animals have been often described; it is only necessary, therefore, to add, that they have increased in Size since last Year. John Fairfax. Manager." This same advertisement was published in the *Virginia Gazette and Alexandria Advertiser* about the same period of time.

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40. This letter was signed "Tobias Lear." and is entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

On March 6 Lear wrote to Col. Samuel Carleton, of Salem, Mass. that in answer to his letter of February 12, and by command of the President, he is informed that it is out of the line of the President's official duty "to take any part in the settlement of accounts: and altho he sympathizes with those who still feel the distresses occasioned by the late war particularly where they were brought on by their exertions in behalf of their country; and would experience a singular happiness in knowing that their losses were retrieved and sufferings were at an end, yet the impropriety of his interfering in any degree with the claims of Individuals up in the public is too obvious to escape observation, to say nothing of the impracticability of his attending to all the applications which would appear equally meritorious." Lear's letter is recorded in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

**To DANIEL GRANT**

New York, April 8, 1790

Sir: I have been duly favored with your letter of the 7 of March, and should have given it an earlier acknowledgment had I received an answer from Mr. Moyston of Philada. to whom I wrote upon receiving your letter to know the character and qualifications of the Cook whom you mentioned, as you informed me that he had lived with him several years. Not having received the information of which I expected from Mr. Moyston, and daily experiencing the inconvenience of wanting an established and good Cook in the family. The President has again directed me to write to you upon the subject, requesting that you will be so good as to learn from the Man whom you mentioned the precise terms upon which he would engage to come into this family, what he expects or wishes to do with his wife and Children if he should come, and to let me know your opinion respecting the mans qualifications

as a Cook, and his dispositions as a domestic, for the great confidence will be placed in your character of him.

The highest wages we have given for the best Cook (and I am informed that none higher have been given in this place) is twelve dollars p month with his washing, lodging &ca. I mention this circumstance that if the man should think of making an extravagant demand to serve in the *President's* family, he may know what has been given.

Your attention to this matter, as soon as convenient, will oblige the President, and upon receiving your letter, an immediate and decisive answer will be given thereto. With my best thanks for your trouble in this business I am etc.[60]

P.S. The duties of a Cook are far from being hard or complicated, for we entertain company but seldom, and that regularly. You will please to put your letter to me, unsealed, under a cover to the President of the United States, as it is possible I shall be absent from this place when it arrives. "The enclosed you will be so good as to hand to Messrs. Goddard and Angell.[61]

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60. The letter was signed "Tobias Lear," and is entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

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61. Lear's letter to Goddard and Angell inquired about the advertisement of Royal Gift and the Knight of Malta, which then (April 8) had not yet appeared in their papers.

On April 9 Washington issued a proclamation announcing the Consular Convention with France was in force. A contemporary copy of this proclamation is in the *Jefferson Papers* in the Library of Congress.

**To CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY**

New York, April 26, 1790.

Dear Sir: I comply with your wishes in giving letters introductory of your Nephew[69] to several Gentlemen in France and Spain.[70] They are under flying seals, but, as I mean letters of this sort shall be rare, I pray you to close them before they go out of your hands, lest the indiscretions of youth should make an improper use of them before they are delivered to their address.

Wishing the young Gentleman success, and yourself health and happiness. I remain etc.[71]

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69. Daniel Horry.

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70. On April 16 Washington wrote letters of introduction for Horry to William Carmichael, William Short, Lafayette, and Rochambeau. These letters are entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*; that to Rochambeau is in the *Rochambeau Papers* in the Library of Congress.

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71. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On April 27 Washington answered a congratulatory address from the General Assembly of Virginia, the original of which is in the Huntington Library.

**To HENRY HILL**

New York, June 3, 1790

Sir: The severe indisposition from which I am just recovering[79] will excuse this late acknowledgment of your letter of the 7 instant,[80] which accompanied the cane[81] left me by the great and invaluable Dr. Franklin.

As a token of remembrance and a mark of friendship, I receive this legacy with pleasing sensations and a grateful heart, and the words in which it was conveyed were highly flattering, as coming from a man, of whom the world justly entertained an exalted opinion, and whose favorable sentiments could not fail of being grateful to the person upon whom they were bestowed.

To you, Sir, my best acknowledgments are due for the polite manner in which you have executed your trust, and I beg you to accept the thanks of Your etc.[82]

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79. Washington was indisposed with a bad cold on May 9 and on May 10 suffered a severe illness which, from its violence, duration, and after effects seems to have been pneumonia. On May 15 his life was dispaired of, according to William Maclay: but by May 24 the President had so far recovered as to ride out in his carriage.

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80. A mistake of the copyist. Hill had written from Philadelphia (May 7): "I have the honor as one of the Executors of the late Doctor Franklin to present you by the hands of Major Clarkson a token left by him in the following words: 'My fine Crabtree walking stick with a gold head curiously wrought in the form of the cap of Liberty I give to my friend and the friend of Mankind General Washington. If it were a sceptre, he has merited it, and would become it.'" Hill's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

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81. The cane is now in the United States National Museum Washington. D. C.

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82. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To GEORGE CLENDINEN**

New York, June 25, 1790.

Sir: I have upon the great Kanawa and Ohio river, between the two Kanawas several large and valuable tracts of land, which I have been long endeavoring to settle, but without effect. Some three or four years ago I wrote to Colonel Thomas Lewis, who lives in that neighbourhood, requesting his assistance or agency in this business, transmitting to him at the sametime instructions expressive of my wishes as to the mode or terms of settlement together with such other papers respecting the lands as were necessary for his information. After a considerable lapse of time Colonel Lewis returned the instructions and papers declining any agency in the business, lest he should not be able to transact to my satisfaction, as he had lands of his own to settle in that neighbourhood, which might cause a clashing or interfering of interests that would be disagreeable or inconvenient to him.

I however returned the same papers to him requesting that he would accept the trust, and at the sametime put the matter upon such a footing as I conceived

would do away the objections which he had stated. It is now almost two years since the papers were last deposited in Colonel Lewis's hands, and I have not heard a syllable from him upon the subject, which leads me to believe that he still wishes to decline the trust. It is therefore necessary for me to place this business in other hands, and your residence in that vicinity with the knowledge which you must have of the Country and the very favorable representations I have received of your character have induced me to request, Sir, that, you would assist me in the settlement of these lands, which, if you incline to do, I have requested Colonel Lewis (in the enclosed letter, left open for your perusal, and which, if you accept the trust, you will please to seal and forward to him) to deliver into your hands or to your order, the instructions and other papers respecting my lands which he received from me. These will shew you my *general* ideas on this subject, and give you better information respecting it than I am able to do here, as all my land papers &ca. are at Mount Vernon. I must however add that altho' I may, in my instructions to Colonel Lewis, have mentioned sonic particular terms upon which I wished to have the lands rented, yet in

my letters to him, if my recollection serves me, I desired him to be governed by the custom of the country in this business rather than by my instructions, and to get him settled on the best terms he could, provided the leases were not given for too long a period, and the taxes were paid by the Tenant. This I would repeat to you for my great object at present is to have the lands settled, and be exonerated from the Taxes. I do not expect they will yield me an immediate profit, I would not however wish to have the lands incumbered with long leases, for it is my opinion that property in that country will fast increase in value, and, in that case, long leases upon the terms which they will probably be given to first settlers will be much against the landlord, and they are always considered as an obstacle to the sale of lands.

I will thank you, Sir, for an answer to this letter as soon as it gets to your hands, that I may know upon what ground I stand as to my property in that country. I am etc.[9]

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9. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To THOMAS LEWIS**

New York, June 25, 1790.

Sir: When I returned to your hands the instructions and papers respecting my lands in your neighbourhood, I thought I had sufficiently obviated the reasons which first induced you to decline any agency in that business, by putting it on a footing which might render it perfectly compatible with your own interest and convenience, and I was in a measure confirmed in the opinion that you had accepted the trust, and would comply with my wishes by your not having again returned the papers to me. But near two years have elapsed since that time, and I have not received a line from you, nor heard a syllable respecting the matter. This leads me to believe that it is not convenient for you to serve me in this business, and, as it is necessary for my interest that some person in that country should superintend my lands there, and promote the settlement of them in some way or another I have requested Colonel George Clandenen of Kanawacounty to undertake it, and, if he inclines to do it, he will call upon you for the instructions and papers, which are in your hands, respecting this business, and which I request may be delivered to him or to his order. I am etc.[10]

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10. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To MERCY OTIS WARREN**

New York, June 4, 1790.

Madam: I did not receive before the last mail the letter where in you favored me with a copy of the dedication, which you propose prefixing to a work prepared for publication.[91]

Although I have ever wished to avoid being drawn into public view more than was essentially necessary for public purposes, yet, on the present occasion duly sensible of the merits of the respectable and amiable Writer, I shall not hesitate to accept the intended honor.

With only leisure to thank you or your indulgent sentiments, and to wish that your work may meet with encouragement which I have no doubt it deserves; I hasten to present the compliments of Mrs. Washington and to subscribe myself with great esteem and regard, Madam, Your etc.[92]

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91. *Poems, Dramatic and Miscellaneous* (Boston. 1790). Mrs Mercy Otis Warren was the wife of James Warren.

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92. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On June 4 the Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers of Providence, R.I., sent a congratulatory address to Washington, to which he replied at some unknown date. Both the address and the reply are entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

One this same day (June 4) Washington sent a message to the Senate nominating the consuls and vice consuls for the United State abroad.

On June 7 Washington sent a message to the Senate, nominating the judiciary for North Carolina and the governor and other officers for the Territory South of the Ohio. This message is entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

On this same day (June 7) Washington went on a fishing trip off Sandy Hook. He did not return to New York until June 9.

On June 14 Washington wrote briefly to Gov. Beverly Randolph thanking him for a copy of the letter of May 31 from the Governor of New Orleans (Estéban Muó) to Benjamin Sebastian, of Kentucky. "I thank your Excellency for this communication, as I shall for such further information respecting the Western Country as you may from time to time receive, and which the interest of the Union require to be known." This letter is recorded in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

On this same day (June 14) Lear wrote to Robert Aitken, the Philadelphia printer, that the President as "sorry for the losses you mention to have sustained by the depreciation of public securities, and the large impression was undertaken in conformity to the wishes and under the patronage of the then Congress....Yet it is not in his power to gratify his own feelings by affording relief in every instance; and can only be answered by your application to that Body. in the appointment of whose particular Officers he is no longer interfere." Lear's letter also recorded in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

**To JOHN CANNON**

New York, June 25, 1790.

Sir: Your letter of the 2 instant has reached my hands and in consequence thereof I have applied to Mr. Scott for fifty pounds as you desired, who informs me that he did not expect a draught to exceed £15. or £20. and therefore had not made his arrangements for 50. however he says he will pay it if he can make it convenient.

As the rents of my lands under your care were to be paid in wheat, and the demand for, and high price of that article having been very extraordinary the year past, I did not conceive there could have been any difficulty in making payments or in obtaining cash and a good price for the wheat after it was deposited in your hands, for I presume the payment is not commuted from wheat to cash at the customary price, when it would fetch more than double what it does in common years; This would be hardly doing justice to the Landlord, and I always wish for his, and the tenants' interest to be reciprocal.

By a letter which I received from you before I left Mount Vernon, if I recollect the substance of it, the Tenants then upon my lands were to furnish a certain number of rails besides a stipulated quantity of wheat for their rent, and, from that circumstance I thought there might be but little deduction in future on that account; however, I find by your last letter that you expect a considerable portion of the rents will be deducted on that account for the present year. I should wish to have the mailer of fences, repairs &ca. finished and done away that I might have what net proceeds to calculate upon, which can never be done so long as these annual and uncertain deductions are to be made. I am etc.[8]

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8. From the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To GEORGE STEPTOE WASHINGTON**

Philadelphia, December 5, 1790.

Dear George: Agreeably to the promise which I gave to you in Virginia, I have made the necessary enquiries respecting the course of studies and expences, which would enable you and your Brother Lawrence to finish your education at the college in this place, provided you are Masters of those books and studies, which you informed me you had passed through.

The enclosed account of studies and expences, which I wish you to return to me, you will see is under the hand of the reverend Dr. Smith Provost of the College, and may therefore be relied upon for its accuracy. After you and Lawrence have carefully perused and well considered the enclosed statement, I wish you to determine whether you will come or not. If your determination should be in favor of coming on, I must impress this upon you both in the strongest manner viz. that you come with good dispositions and full resolutions to pursue your studies closely, conform to the established rules and customs of the College, and to conduct yourselves on all occasions with decency and propriety.

To you, George, I would more particularly address myself at this time, as from your

advanced age it may be presumed that such advice, as I am about to give will make a deeper impression upon you than upon your Brother, and your conduct may very probably mark the line of his; But, at the same time Lawrence must remember that this is equally applicable to him.

Should you enter upon the course of studies here marked out you must consider it as the finishing of your education, and, therefore, as the time is limited, that every hour misspent is lost for ever, and that future *years* cannot compensate for lost days at this period of your life. This reflection must shew the necessity of an unremitting application to your studies. To point out the importance of circumspection in your conduct, it may be proper to observe that a good moral character is the first essential in a man, and that the habits contracted at your age are generally indelible, and your conduct here may stamp your character through life. It is therefore highly important that you should endeavor not only to be learned but virtuous. Much more might be said to shew the necessity of application and regularity, but when you must know that without them you can never be qualified to render service to your country, assistance to your friends, or consolidation to your retired moments, nothing further need be said to prove their utility.

As to your clothing, it will, I presume, cost much the same here as in Alexandria. I shall always wish to see you clothed decently and becoming your stations; but I shall ever discountenance extravagance or foppishness in your dress. At all times, and upon all occasions I shall be happy to give you both such marks of my approbation, as your progress and good conduct merit.

If you determine to come on, you had better do it immediately, and Major Washington will furnish you with such money as may be necessary for the Stage and expences from Alexandria to this place. But I must repeat what I have before enjoined, that you come with good dispositions and determined resolutions to conform to establishments and pursue your studies.

Your aunt joins me in love to you both, and best wishes to Dr. Craik and family. I am, dear George, your sincere friend and affectionate uncle.

P.S. The Gentleman at whose house you can board, as mentioned in the enclosed paper, is, I am informed, well acquainted with Dr. Craik, from which circumstance you may be able to learn something of him.[90]

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90. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To GEORGE STEPTOE WASHINGTON**

Philadelphia, December 19, 1790.

Dear George: From the tenor of your letter of the 10 inst. which came to my hands on Thursday last, it does not appear that Lawrence is to come on to this place with you, for he is not mentioned in any part of the letter. It is my intention that you should both enter the College together, and if you look over my letter of the 5th. instant you will see that both are mentioned. If therefore any thing should occur to prevent you setting off on Monday as you had determined, and this letter should reach you before you leave Alexandria, I request that Lawrence may come on with you. I am etc.[2]

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2. Practically this same letter was written to Dr. James Craik, requesting that Lawrence be sent "in the stage as soon after the receipt of this letter as he can be prepared to come." This letter is recorded in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

On December 21 Lear wrote to Joseph Cook, of Philadelphia: "It having been intimated to the President of the United States that you are about to have his arms fixed over your shop, with the addition of your being silver Smith to the President. He has therefore directed me to inform you that the carrying the foregoing intention into effect will be very disagreeable to him and he requests you would not do it." Lear's letter is recorded in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

On December 22 Lear wrote to the Postmaster General that the President approved his discretion in letting mail contracts. "There does not appear to the President (especially *where circumstances vary*) to be a strict obligation to prefer the lowest offer, and in the case of Mr. Inskeep, the greater frequency of conveying the Mail, the concentration of the business under one direction, and the past experience of good conduct are weighty reasons for the preference of his offer meditated by the Post Master General." Lear's letter is also recorded in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

On December 23 the President sent a message to the Senate and House of Representatives on the report of the Secretary of the Northwest Territory concerning certain land grant cases "which require the interference of the Legislature of the United States." This message is entered in the "Letter Book," where the following note is added: "N. B. As the foregoing Report and papers are very voluminous, one Copy only was made out, and that delivered to the House of Representatives, with a request to the Speaker that they might be communicated to the Senate."

On December 25, or shortly thereafter, Washington drew up a tabular statement of his "Losses in Horses, Cattle and Sheep since the 16th day of April 1789." This document is in the *Washington Papers*.

**To GEORGE CLENDINEN**

Philadelphia, February 21, 1791.

Sir: I have received your letter of the 1st. of December, and thank you as well for the readiness with which you have complied with my request to undertake the letting of my lands in your neighbourhood, as for the disposition which you express to render your best services in this way.

In my letter to you of the 25 of June last (a duplicate of which was committed to the care of Mr. Moore in August) I could not point out the precise terms upon which I wished to have my lands settled; because I knew that they must depend upon the custom of the Country, and what that was I knew not. I therefore spoke generally upon the subject, and referred you to the papers in Colonel Lewis's hands. But it was not my intention that you should be strictly confined to the terms which were there expressed. They were my own ideas on the matter, unassisted by a knowledge of the custom of the Country, which I knew must always govern in the seating of new lands. I can therefore only repeat the sentiment expressed in my former letter, which was that I wished the lands to be in a train of improvement by being settled, and that I should be relieved from the taxes of them. It was my wish that the term

of time for which they might be leased should be as short as could be obtained to answer the purpose of settlement. Perhaps the quality of my lands might be an inducement for shortening the term, as more profit might be derived from them in eight years by the Cultivator than from common land in ten years. This, however, I must not calculate upon; but leave it to your judgment to seat them upon the best terms you can. I would just make one observation, which is that if it is at present dangerous[64] to make settlements in that part of the Country, as it is represented to be, might it not be advisable to delay the attempt to settle until it can be done with more security; when it is highly probable that it may be done more to my advantage. But in this, as in other respects on the subject, you must have better grounds to found an opinion upon than I am possessed of and I trust that your best judgment will be exercised for my interest. With great regard, I am etc.[65]

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64. Because of Indians.

65. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To MARY BRISTOW**

Philadelphia, February 1791.

Madam: I am very sorry that it is not in my power to comply with the request made in your letter of the 22nd. of October to prevail on the Assembly of Virginia to restore a part of your son's estate that had been confiscated. However desirous I may be to render you a service in this way, yet my public situation totally forbids an application of the nature you mention; and I am persuaded, Madam, that upon reflection, you will be convinced of the impropriety of such a measure, and will be assured that my declining your request does not proceed from the want of an inclination to oblige you. I have the honor etc.[74]

74. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

The following note is also entered in the "Letter Book:"

"Tuesday, March 1, 1791. The President of the United States having thought proper to convene the Senate on the 4th. of March, for the dispatch of public business of an Executive nature, the following Summonses were sent to the President of the Senate, and to each member of that body who were in the City of Philadelphia. A Summons was likewise addressed to every member of the Senate who was absent; but as the business for which they were about to be convened would not probably engage the Senate more than one or two days, it was not thought proper to send them to the States where the absent members resided; the Summonses of this nature were, therefore left in the Senate Chamber, when the others were sent to the residence of each individual in the City of Philadelphia."

A copy of the summons is also entered in the "Letter Book." It reads: "Certain matters touching the public good requiring that the Senate shall be convened on Friday the 4th Instant, you are desired to attend at the Senate Chamber in Philadelphia on that Day, then and there to receive and deliberate on such communications as shall be made on my part."

A separate summons in slightly different wording was sent to the Vice President, as president of the Senate. This also is entered in the "Letter Book."

**To EBENEZER HAZARD**

February 28, 1791.

By the command of the President of the United States T. Lear has the honor to return to Mr. Hazard the enclosed proposals for printing by subscription a collection of State-Papers, which Mr. Hazard submitted to the President and which have been subscribed by him.

The whole or any part of the money for the President's subscription will be paid by T. Lear whenever Mr. Hazard may chuse to receive it.[73]

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73. From the draft in the writing of Lear.

**To GEORGE CLENDINEN**

Philadelphia,[14] March 31, 1791.

Sir: Since writing to you on the 21st. of February by Mr. Moore, (in which letter I gave some instructions respecting my lands in your neighbourhood) I have disposed of all my lands on the Ohio and great Kanawa to Mr. de Barth a french Gentleman. I have therefore to request that you will stop all measures, which you may have taken, or may be about to take relative to the settling or otherwise disposing of my lands agreeably to any instructions which I may have given for that purpose. As I have engaged to deliver them to Mr. de Barth free from all incumbrances. And, should any steps have been taken in the business, I must beg you to withdraw them so as to leave the lands entirely free. You will likewise be so good as to return me the draughts &ca. of the land, which you received from Colonel Lewis.

I must in the meantime beg you to be assured, Sir, that I have a proper sense of your attention and goodness in the readiness with which you have given me your assistance towards my arranging this property, and my best thanks are offered therefor. With very great esteem etc.[15]

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14. A mistake of the “Letter Book” copyist. The place should be Mount Vernon.

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15. From the “Letter Book” in the *Washington Papers*.

**To THOMAS SMITH**

Philadelphia, July 8, 1791.

Sir: I received your letter of the 20 of April, while I was on my journey to the southward, and until my return to this place it has not been in my power to acknowledge the receipt of it.

I must now beg, Sir, that you will receive my best thanks for the particular attention which you have paid to such business as I have had occasion to place in your hands, and to be assured that you have accomplished it entirely to my satisfaction.

The sum of 276 20/100 dollars which you mention to have lodged in the Bank of North America, subject to my order, I find is there. With very great esteem and regard, I am etc.[6]

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6. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To JEREMIAH WADSWORTH**

Philadelphia, July 13, 1791.

Dear Sir: On the 15. of May 1 had the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letter to me of the first of that month, and informed you that I had transmitted it to the President.

In reply to the subject of your enquiries the President now directs me to inform you that it is not his intention to part with his young Jack, the offspring of the Spanish Jack and the Maltese Jenny; but that in case a *very handsome offer* should be made he would (tho' previous to your application the matter had not been contemplated) dispose of his large Spanish Jack. The President has hitherto bred almost entirely from this Jack, and the Mules, which have descended from him are large boned, stout, and perfectly well tempered, he means however to breed next season from the Maltese Jack, after which the young Jack (now 3 years old) and which promises to be very large, will be old enough to take up, or assist in the business as shall be judged best, and this is his reason for inclining to part with the Spanish Jack in preference to the young One. But it must be understood that it is not a *small price* which will induce the President to dispose of this animal.

The manner in which he came to the President, proving him to be of the very first quality, his size (upwards of fifteen hands high) and his form indicating strength and firmness almost beyond

conception, his age, being now about nine years old, is said to be far short of their prime for the business for which they are wanted, and the vast advantage which must accrue to the Owner of such a creature, especially in a Country where mules are raised for exportation and Jacks of all kinds much in demand, are circumstances which will have their weight with the President in his expectation for him, and the same things will undoubtedly be well considered by the purchaser.

You will be so good, my dear Sir, as to communicate this to the persons who proposed purchasing the young Jack, and if they incline to come forward with such an offer in *cash* as may be thought adequate to so valuable an animal, they must do it *immediately* ; for when the President was to the southward he was much pressed to send this Jack there for a season, and so strong was the importunity on this head that he engaged to send him to Colonel W. Washington of South Carolina the ensuing fall unless prevented by some occurence which he did not know of at that time. If therefore such a proposition should not come forward in the course of two months as will induce the President to dispose of him, he will be sent to Carolina agreeable to promise. It is but right it should be known that this Jack is slow in covering, and must have a she ass to stimulate him to the performance of the duties expected from him. I am etc.

P.S. What would the persons, in whose behalf you interest yourself, give in *Cash* for the young Jack?[12]

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12. This letter is signed “Tobias Lear” in the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On July 13 Lear wrote to the marshals of the districts of Rhode Island, Vermont, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina; and to the marshals of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, and Kentucky, asking that “if the enumeration...has been so taken as to enable you to give the number of souls in each county and town...the President of the United States requests that you will be so good as to transmit to him a return of that description merely to gratify his private curiosity.” These letters are recorded in the “Letter Book.”

**To — PERKINS**

Philadelphia, August 18, 1791.

Sir: I communicated to the President the information you gave me this afternoon of your determination respecting the Jacks, and he directs me to inform you that having offered the young Jack at £500 virginia currency, he conceives himself now bound by that offer if you should think

proper to close with it at this time, and that it is *possible* he may accept it, if you should determine upon taking him as soon as you get to Connecticut, and give him immediate information thereof. But he shall not consider himself in any degree *bound* to accept it after you leave this place. The President says there is scarcely any thing that would prevail upon him to part with the Knight of Malta, as he intends breeding from him altogether next season. And that the reason of his wishing for a speedy decision respecting the young Jack is that he has great expectation, and indeed is under a conditional agreement to let the old Jack go to Charleston in South Carolina, from which he is in daily expectation of Colonel Washington sending for him. Should this be the case before he parts with the young Jack, he would suffer him to go; but then he would not dispose of the young Jack. Should he part with the young Jack before the old One is sent for, he will not permit him to go; because he would on no account be left without one or the other. I am etc.[51]

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51. This letter is signed "Tobias Lear" in the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To OLIVER EVANS[62]**

Philadelphia, August 29, 1791.

Sir: The President has been informed by his manager at Mount Vernon that the work of his mill is in such a stage as not to admit of any delay in erecting your improvements without stopping the whole progress of the work, which at this time would be a serious inconvenience. The mill-wright who has been employed in repairing the President's mill has been to view your improvements at the Ochoquan mills, and with the insight he has obtained from that view, aided by a plate of the improvements, he has no doubt of his being able to execute the work completely, and he has the character of being an excellent workman; but, as the President is desirous of having it done in the most perfect manner without a hazard of its not answering the purpose fully, he wishes to know if you still hold your determination of going into that part of the Country as you mentioned your Intention of doing so, and in case you should, and would go on *immediately* , he will give directions to the mill wright to wait your arrival before any thing is done to the improvements. But if

you do not go *immediately* the President must give orders for the person now engaged to go on with the work himself, as the season will admit of no delay.

Let me know whether you go to Virginia directly or not, that if you should a letter might be sent to you on Wednesday for Mount Vernon. I am etc.[63]

**To OLIVER EVANS**

Philadelphia, September 4, 1791.

Sir: In reply to your letter of the 1st. instant, which has been duly received, the President directs me to inform you that having procured of Mr. Leslie a patent for erecting your improvements at his mills, he shall forward it this day to Mount Vernon with directions for the Mill Wright to proceed in the execution of the work, for it will admit of no further delay, the work of the mill being in that state as to make it necessary to erect the improvements now or lay them aside altogether.

As the man who is now engaged in the President's mill seems fully confident of his being able to execute the whole of the work in a proper manner the President thinks it would not be necessary for your brother

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63. This letter is signed “Tobias Lear” in the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

to attend to it, which must be a considerable encrease of the expence. As you mentioned when you were here that you intended to be in that part of Virginia about the time that the improvements would be erecting, the President wished in that case that you might be present when the works at his mill were executing. But he does not think it would be necessary for you to quit your own business, which you say is at this time very pressing, for the *sole* purpose of directing the execution of this piece of work. I am etc.[78]

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78. This letter is signed “Tobias Lear” in the “Letter Book” copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On September 9 Lear wrote to Evans, asking that Evans's brother be sent to Mount Vernon, “In consequence of the representation made in your letter of the 7 instant, respecting the erecting of your improvements.” Lear's letter is recorded in the “Letter Book” in the *Washington Papers*.

**To JOHN CANNON**

Philadelphia, September 7, 1791.

Sir: I have received your letter of the 10 of August, and am very sorry to find that so far as it relates to my property under your care, i have no further satisfaction than the assurance which you have given in all the letters received from you, that *I shall have* a statement of my interest committed to

your care. But Sir, I surely had a right to expect something more than the *promise* of a statement before this time; as it is now better than four years since my lands were committed to your care. As the rents were to be paid in wheat it was certainly proper that time should be allowed for converting it into cash before I could receive any thing from you. But as yet I have received *only fifty pounds* , and, considering the length of time that you have had an agency in this business, and the great demands for wheat and flour, particularly last year, when, it is a fact known to every one that it not only commanded a higher price in that part of the country than perhaps had ever been before known there, but ready money also, I am persuaded you will yourself allow that I have just cause to complain.

I hope, Sir, you will, therefore, for your own sake,

take such steps in the business as will put it upon a footing satisfactory to me as well as to yourself and as you see the unfavorable impression which the thing, in its present state, makes upon my mind, I trust it will not be long before you endeavor to remove this impression by putting the business in the situation where it ought to be.

As I intend to leave this place next week for Mount Vernon and shall not return until the latter part of October, I shall not probably see you here unless you should be in this place the last of that month, but this will make no difference as the business can be equally well done with Mr. Lear.

In reply to your request that I would mention your name to the Governor of this State as one of the County-Judges, I must inform you that I make it a point never to interfere, on any occasion, in any State appointments. I am etc.[82]

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82. From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

**To DAVID STUART**

Philadelphia, August 25, 1791.

Dear Sir: Some enquiries having been made of me by important Characters on the state of agriculture in America, comprehending its several relations, and intended to ascertain the value of our lands, with their yield in the several kinds of grain, grass, etc., the prices of farming stock, the prices of produce, etc., together with a list of the Taxes in the different states, which may in any way affect the Farmers.

As an object highly interesting to our country, I have determined to render the most just and satisfactory answers that the best information, which I can obtain from different parts of the United States will enable me to give.

With this view my confidence in your disposition and knowledge leads me to offer to your enquiry and to request from your intelligence as early information as may be convenient on the following heads.

1. The fee simple prices of farming lands in picked parts of the State of Virginia, as are neither so near to large towns as to enhance their value nor so distant from market as greatly to reduce it, or to make the situation inconvenient. In your answers to this enquiry, be pleased to note generally the situations, the soil, and if it be practicable, the proportions of arable, pasture, and wood land.

2. The rents of the same lands, when leased, and, generally, the terms of lease.

3. The average product of the same lands in wheat, rye, barley, oats, buckwheat, beans, pease, potatoes, turnips, grasses, hemp, flax etc., in the common mode of husbandry now practised.

4. The average prices of these articles when sold at the Farm, or carried to the nearest market.

5. The average prices of good working horses, working Oxen, milch-cows, sheep, hogs, poultry, etc.

6. The average price of beef, pork, mutton, veal, and butter and cheese in the neighbourhood, or at the nearest market Towns.

7. The price of wrought iron, whence the prices of farming utensils may be inferred.

8. A list of the taxes laid in the State of Virginia.

The tendency of this enquiry will be my apology for the trouble it may give you. With great regard, I am etc.

P.S. If you were to confine yourself to the Counties of Fairfax, Loudoun, Berkeley, Prince William and Fauquier, or even to the three first, my object will be answered by these enquiries of *you* .[59]

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59. In the writing of William Jackson. The P.S. is in the writing of Washington. From a photostat of the original in the possession of W. S. Johns and Cornelia Johns Grice, of Norfolk, Va. (1932). This same letter, minus, of course, the postscript, and with the necessary change in the name of the State, was

sent to Philip Schuyler in New York, Thomas Lowrey in New Jersey, Thomas Hartley in Pennsylvania, and Thomas Johnson in Maryland.