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 Salma Hale to Arthur Livermore, Richmond, Va., 16 May 1818
 Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, Monticello, 17 May 1818
 Thomas Jefferson to Benjamin Henry Latrobe, Monticello, 19 May 1818
 Thomas Jefferson to William Short, Monticello, 29 May 1818
 Thomas Jefferson to Thomas A. Digges, Monticello, 15 June 1818
 Thomas Jefferson to Horatio G. Spafford, Monticello, 28 June 1818
 Saint Andrew's Parish, S.C.: Celebration Toast, 4 July 1818*
 '76 Association, S.C.: Celebration Toast, 4 July 1818*
 Thomas Jefferson to Patrick Gibson, Monticello, 30 July 1818
 Charles G. Haines to Thomas Jefferson, New York, 18 August 1818
 Thomas Jefferson to Martha Jefferson Randolph, Warm Springs, Va., 21 August 1818
 Thomas Jefferson to Patrick Gibson, Monticello, 10 September 1818
 Thomas Jefferson to Francis Eppes, Monticello, 11 September 1818
 George Wyche to Thomas Jefferson, Hicksford Greenville County, Va., 28 October 1818
 Thomas Jefferson to George Wyche, Monticello, 10 November 1818
 Thomas Jefferson to Destutt de Tracy, Monticello, 24 November 1818
 Charles Willson Peale to Thomas Jefferson, Washington, 25 November 1818
 Thomas Jefferson to John Barnes, Monticello, 7 December 1818
 Thomas Jefferson to Joseph Gales, Monticello, 7 December 1818
 Thomas Jefferson to John G. Jackson, Monticello, 27 December 1818
 Simeon DeWitt to Thomas Jefferson, Albany, N.Y., 15 January 1819
 Thomas Jefferson to Vine Utley, Monticello, 21 March 1819
 Thomas Jefferson to Ezra Stiles, Monticello, 25 June 1819

John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, Quincy, Mass., 21 July 1819
 Thomas Jefferson to Henry Dearborn, Monticello, 5 February 1820
 John A. Dix: Diary Account of his Visit to Monticello, 19 February 1820*
 John A. Dix's Description of Jefferson, post-19 February 1820*
 William Short to Thomas Jefferson, Philadelphia, 27 March 1820
 Thomas Jefferson to William Short, Monticello, 13 April 1820
 Thomas Jefferson to William Barraclough, Monticello, 13 May 1820
 Samuel L. Mitchill to Thomas Jefferson, New York, 16 May 1820
 Benjamin J. Barbour: Account of Visit to Monticello, Barbours town, Va., 8 June 1820
 Adam Hodgson: Account of Visit to Monticello, 17 June 1820
 Thomas Jefferson to John Holmes, Monticello, 8 July 1820
 Henry Orne to Thomas Jefferson, Boston, 12 July 1820
 George Watterson: Account of Visit to Monticello, 15 August 1820
 Jared Sparks: Account of Visit to Monticello, 19–20 August 1820
 Thomas Jefferson to Francis Eppes, Monticello, 6 October 1820
 Nathaniel Helme: Account of Visit to Monticello, 7 November 1820
 Isaac Briggs to His Wife and Children, Richmond, Va., 21 November 1820
 Thomas Jefferson to Joel Yancey, Monticello, 4 January 1821
 Thomas Jefferson: Autobiography, 10 February 1821
 Thomas Jefferson to Timothy Pickering, Monticello, 27 February 1821
 Thomas Jefferson to Bernard Peyton, Monticello, 4 March 1821
 Thomas Jefferson to Spencer Roane, Monticello, 9 March 1821
 Thomas Jefferson to John Taylor, Monticello, 14 March 1821
 Thomas Jefferson to Marquis de Lafayette, Monticello, 22 March 1821
 Thomas Jefferson to Bernard Peyton, Monticello, 30 March 1821
 Spencer Roane to Thomas Jefferson, Richmond, Va., 20 June 1821
 John Marshall to Joseph Story, Richmond, Va., 13 July 1821
 William H. Crawford to Thomas Jefferson, Washington, 18 July 1821
 Thomas Jefferson to Francis C. Whiston, Monticello, 24 July 1821
 John Marshall to Joseph Story, Richmond, Va., 18 September 1821
 Thomas Jefferson to William Short, Monticello, 24 November 1821
 Thomas Jefferson to Katherine Duane Morgan, Monticello, 26 January 1822
 Thomas Jefferson to John Barnes, Monticello, 7 April 1822
 David B. Lee to Thomas Jefferson, Philadelphia, 15 April 1822
 Thomas Jefferson to Willie Blount, Monticello, 27 April 1822
 Thomas Jefferson to Samuel Maverick, Monticello, 12 May 1822
 Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, Monticello, 1 June 1822
 Thomas Jefferson to Thomas Ritchie, Monticello, 10 June 1822
 Thomas Jefferson to Ritchie & Gooch, Monticello, 10 June 1822
 John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, Quincy, Mass., 12 July 1822
 Samuel A. Bumstead: Description of Thomas Jefferson, Fluvanna Co., Va., 23 August 1822
 Thomas Jefferson to William Short, Monticello, 19 October 1822
 Thomas Jefferson to Charles Willson Peale, Monticello, 23 October 1822
 Thomas Jefferson to Albert Gallatin, Monticello, 29 October 1822
 Thomas Jefferson to Elbridge Gerry (younger), Monticello, 23 November 1822
 Ellen W. Randolph to John Adams, Monticello, 15 December 1822
 Thomas Jefferson to William Short, Monticello, 29 December 1822
 Thomas Jefferson to Edward Everett, Monticello, 24 February 1823

Thomas Jefferson to William Johnson, Monticello, 4 March 1823
 William Short to Thomas Jefferson, Philadelphia, 17 March 1823
 Thomas Jefferson to William Short, Monticello, 28 March 1823
 Thomas Jefferson to Abiel Holmes, Monticello, 5 April 1823
 Thomas Jefferson to Thomas Leiper, Monticello, 31 May 1823
 Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, Monticello, 12 October 1823
 Daniel Webster: Notes of Conversation with Thomas Jefferson, 1824
 John Finch's Account of a Visit to Monticello, before 5 April 1824
 Thomas Jefferson to William Short, Monticello, 10 April 1824
 Thomas Jefferson to Horatio G. Spafford, Monticello, 1 May 1824
 Thomas Jefferson to Arthur S. Brockenbrough, Monticello, 4 May 1824
 Martin Van Buren's Account of a Visit to Monticello, c. 23 May 1824
 Samuel Whitcomb's Account of a Visit to Monticello, 31 May 1824
 Samuel Whitcomb's Account of a Visit to Monticello, 1 June 1824
 Thomas Jefferson to Charles Willson Peale, Monticello, 18 July 1824
 Thomas Jefferson to William H. Tarpley, Monticello, 26 July 1824
 Horace Holley's Second Account of a Visit to Monticello, 5–6 September 1824
 Horace Holley's Third Account of a Visit to Monticello, 5–6 September 1824
 Thomas Jefferson to Thomas G. Watkins, Monticello, 16 October 1824
 Thomas Jefferson to Charles J. Ingersoll, Monticello, 27 October 1824
 Daniel Webster to Jeremiah Mason, Washington, 29 December 1824
 Daniel Webster to Joseph Hopkinson, Washington, 31 December 1824
 Thomas Jefferson to Francis A. Van Der Kemp, Monticello, 11 January 1825
 Thomas Jefferson to Roger C. Weightman, Monticello, 24 June 1826
 James Madison to Nicholas P. Trist, 6 July 1826
 Timothy Pickering to John Marshall, Salem, Mass., 26 December 1828
 James Kent: Journal to His Son, 30 April 1833
 James Madison to George Tucker, Montpelier, Va., 27 June 1836
 John Marshall to Henry Lee, Richmond, Va., 25 October 1839
 Joseph Story: Autobiography

Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer

Charles Carroll of Annapolis to Charles Carroll of Carrollton, 8 April 1773
 William Pierce: Sketches of Delegates to the Constitutional Convention, c. September 1787

Edmund Jenings

John Adams to Elbridge Gerry, Braintree, Mass., 11 September 1779

Thomas Johnson

John Adams: Diary, Philadelphia, 10 October 1774
 Charles Carroll of Carrollton to Charles Carroll, Sr., Philadelphia, 29 July 1776
 Daniel Carroll to James Madison, 28 May 1788

William Samuel Johnson

Edmund Pendleton to James Madison, Virginia, 9 December 1782
 Samuel Blachley Webb to Jeremiah Wadsworth, New York, 9 March 1785
 William Pierce: Sketches of Delegates to the Constitutional Convention, c. September 1787
 Enoch Perkins to Simeon Baldwin, Hartford, Conn., 15 January 1788
 William Maclay: Journal, 15 May 1789

William Maclay: Journal, 19 August 1789

Samuel Johnston

Samuel Johnston to James Iredell, New York, 24 February 1790

Pierce Butler to Archibald Maclaine, New York, 3 March 1790

Timothy Bloodworth to John Adams, Washington, 13 February 1801

John Coffin Jones

Henry Knox to Thomas Jefferson, New York, 10 December 1788

John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, Braintree, Mass., 2 January 1789

John Paul Jones

John Paul Jones to the Marquis de Lafayette, L'Orient, France, 1 May 1779

John Adams: Diary, 13 May 1779

Benjamin Franklin to John Paul Jones, Passy, France, 15 October 1779

Benjamin Franklin to the Commissioners of the Navy, Passy, France, 17 October 1779

Benjamin Franklin to Cooper, Passy, France, 27 October 1779

Benjamin Rush: Sketches

John Adams to Abigail Adams, Paris, 15 May 1780

Abigail Adams to Elizabeth Cranch, Auteuil near Paris, 3 December 1784

John Paul Jones to Thomas Jefferson, L'Orient, France, 31 July 1785

Luigi Castiglioni: Sketches of American Soldiers, 1787

Edward Carrington to Thomas Jefferson, New York, 10 November 1787

Thomas Jefferson to Edward Carrington, Paris, 27 May 1788

Nathaniel Fanning: Narrative of the Adventures of an American Naval Officer, 1806

Joseph Jones

Martha Dangerfield Bland (Mrs. Theodorick Bland, Jr.) to Frances Bland Tucker (Mrs. St. George Tucker), 30 March 1781

Thomas Jefferson to James Monroe, Monticello, 24 April 1794

Samuel Jones

Alexander Hamilton to Hugh Seton, New York, 18 June 1784

New York Convention, 1 July 1788

Alexander Hamilton to Timothy Pickering, New York, 17 March 1798

Willie Jones

Archibald Maclaine to James Iredell, Wilmington, N.C., 17 November 1788

Johann, Baron de Kalb

Robert Morris to John Hancock, Philadelphia, 17 February 1777

Silas Deane to President of Congress John Hancock, Paris, c. 16 March 1777

Marquis de Lafayette to Henry Laurens, Valley Forge, Pa., 26 January 1778

William Churchill Houston to William Livingston, Philadelphia, 14 September 1780

James Kent

Daniel Webster to Francis Brown, Boston, 20 September 1818

Daniel Kilham

John Quincy Adams: Diary, 16 September 1787

John Quincy Adams to Abigail Adams, Newburyport, Mass., 23 December 1787

William Kilty

William Cranch to John Adams, Washington, 9 May 1801

Rufus King

Elbridge Gerry to John Adams, New York, 5 March 1785

Rufus King to Daniel Kilham, New York, 24 August 1785

Charles Storer to John Adams, New York, 23 November 1785

John Bayard to Samuel Bayard, New York, 1 December 1785

John Adams to Rufus King, Grosvenor Square, London, 23 December 1785

James Monroe to Thomas Jefferson, New York, 16 July 1786

Rufus King: Memorandum About Events on 13 September 1786

William Pierce: Sketches of Delegates to the Constitutional Convention, c. September 1787

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Robert Troup to Alexander Hamilton, Albany, N.Y., 12 July 1789

New York *Daily Gazette*, 20 July 1789

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Thomas B. Wait to George Thatcher, 9 August 1789

Abigail Adams to Cotton Tufts, 1 September 1789

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Alexander Hamilton to John Jay, Philadelphia, 3 September 1792

Richard Harison to Alexander Hamilton, Albany, N.Y., 21 June 1793

John Adams to Charles Adams, Philadelphia, 31 January 1795

Rufus King to Alexander Hamilton, Philadelphia, 2 May 1796

Alexander Hamilton to Timothy Pickering, New York, 10 May 1796

Alexander Hamilton to George Washington, New York, 10 May 1796

George Washington to Alexander Hamilton, Philadelphia, 15 May 1796

Alexander Hamilton to George Washington, New York, 20 May 1796

Alexander Hamilton to Angelica Church, New York, 25 June 1796

Bartholomew Dandridge to George Washington, London, 12 March 1799

John Adams to John Marshall, Quincy, Mass., 30 August 1800

Baltimore *Maryland Gazette*, 16 July 1812

John Adams to John Quincy Adams, Quincy, Mass., 18 February 1825

Henry Knox

John Thomas to John Adams, Roxbury Camp, 24 October 1775

Benjamin Rush to Richard Henry Lee, Bordentown, 6 January 1777

Nathanael Greene to Jacob Greene, Middlebrook, N.J., 4 June 1777

James Lovell to Benjamin Franklin, Philadelphia, 4 July 1777

Committee for Foreign Affairs to the Commissioners at Paris, York, Pa., 1 December 1777

Benjamin Rush: Sketches

Rev. John Murray to Nathanael Greene, Gloucester, Mass., 21 January 1780

John Hancock to Benjamin Franklin, Boston, 27 October 1781

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Alexander Hamilton to George Washington, Philadelphia, 13 February 1783

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Marquis de Lafayette to Henry Knox, Paris, 11 May 1785
 Luigi Castiglioni: Sketches of American Soldiers, 1787
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 Otto's Biographies, Fall 1788
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 James Madison to Edmund Randolph, New York, 17 June 1789
 William Maclay: Journal, 28 June 1790
 Alexander Hamilton to Edward Carrington, Philadelphia, 26 May 1792
 Thomas Jefferson: The Anas, 1793
 Thomas Jefferson: Notes on a Cabinet Meeting, Philadelphia, 6 May 1793
 James Madison to Thomas Jefferson, Philadelphia, 21 December 1794
 John Adams to Abigail Adams, Philadelphia, 30 December 1794
 Oliver Wolcott, Jr., to Oliver Wolcott, Sr., Philadelphia, 6 January 1795
 John Adams to Abigail Adams, Philadelphia, 20 January 1795
 Abigail Adams to John Adams, New York, 22 June 1795
 Timothy Pickering to Alexander Hamilton, Trenton, N.J., 21 August 1798
 Timothy Pickering to George Cabot, Trenton, N.J., 20 September 1798
 George Washington to President John Adams, Mount Vernon, 25 September 1798
 Oliver Wolcott, Jr., to Alexander Hamilton, Trenton, N.J., 10 October 1798
 Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, Philadelphia, 3 January 1799
 Mercy Otis Warren, History of the American Revolution, 1805
 John Adams to the Printers of the *Boston Patriot*, June 1812
 John Adams to Richard Rush, Quincy, Mass., 12 December 1813
 Thomas Jefferson to Martin Van Buren, Monticello, 29 June 1824

Lucy Knox

Abigail Adams Smith to Abigail Adams, New York, 15 June 1788

Tadeusz Kosciuszko

George Washington to Henry Laurens, White Marsh, Pa., 10 November 1777
 Benjamin Rush to Horatio Gates, Philadelphia, 25 August 1797
 Benjamin Rush to Horatio Gates, Philadelphia, 3 September 1797
 Thomas Jefferson to Horatio Gates, Philadelphia, 21 February 1798
 Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz: *Travels through America*, 20 August 1798
 William Thornton to Thomas Jefferson, Washington, 20 July 1816
 Thomas Jefferson to M. Julien, Monticello, 23 July 1818

Henry Kuhl

Alexander Hamilton to Thomas Willing, Albany, N.Y., 5 April 1795

Jared Ingersoll

Jared Ingersoll to His Brother Jonathan Ingersoll, 25 February 1779

With regard to the young Lady, there is one Miss Pettit, (I am almost afraid to venture her name in a letter), who is of a good family, has youth, beauty, good sense and the best of dispositions. But. But. No money. Here commences the struggle. Inclination and prudence are upon opposite sides of the question and raise such a disturbance within as sometimes almost over sets me. She is now out of town. Reflection has got the upper hand, and I endeavor to give over all thought of prosecuting any former intentions. But I suppose as soon as I see her, prudence and reflection will be kicked out of doors. Her father [Charles Pettit] is Quarter Master General, married the President's half sister. A very worthy man.

[Editors' Note: "Ingersoll was not poor. His legal practice was growing, and he soon had one of the larger taxable estates in Philadelphia's High Street Ward. He also owned two slaves, but with the war continuing he hesitated, remaining torn between his financial interests and affection." Quoted in Thomas B. Roberts, unpublished manuscript *Jared Ingersoll: Signer of the Constitution and Preeminent Lawyer of the Early Republic*, February 2010. The death of Ingersoll's father with the subsequent inheritance, helped Ingersoll to make up his mind. He married Elizabeth Pettit in December 1781. He was 32; she was 23.]

Ezekiel Cornell to Nathanael Greene, Philadelphia, 21 July 1780

Mr. Ingersoll hath prejudiced me much in his favor; he appears at all times to be governed by principle of the strictest Honor and justice.

William Pierce: Sketches of Delegates to the Constitutional Convention, c. September 1787

Mr. Ingersoll is a very able Attorney, and possesses a clear legal understanding.—He is well educated in the Classics, and is a Man of very extensive reading.—Mr. Ingersoll speaks well, and comprehends his subject fully.—There is a modesty in his character that keeps him back.—He is about 36 Years old.—

Edward Burd to Jasper Yeates, Philadelphia, 8 February 1791

Mr. Ingersoll was then proposed [for admission to the bar of the Supreme Court], and Mr. Randolph state to the Court that he had been a Member of Congress, and of the Federal Convention. Chief Justice Jay observed that he might be a very good Member of Congress, and yet no Lawyer. Mr. Ingersoll then formally withdrew his application for Admission till another period.

After a little while Mr. Wilson said that it was from no difficulty about either that Gentleman's Character or legal Ability, for every body knew that if he said any thing about him, he must have said that he was one of the most eminent at the Bar. He was admitted without any Renewal of his Application; and Mr. Jay also paid him some Compliment.

Jared Ingersoll to John Adams, Philadelphia, 23 February 1801

I was informed on Saturday Evening that you had done me the honor to nominate me to the Senate as Chief-Judge of the Circuit composed of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware

I shall ever consider this circumstance as one of the most honorable incidents of my life—I regret exceedingly that I am obliged to decline the honor you so kindly offer me.

The Salary would not maintain my family I have Sons coming into the business of life; who will want pecuniary assistance from me, I must of course continue at the Bar some time longer.

Harry Innes

William Plumer: Memorandum, 16 January 1807

Mr. [Buckner] Thruston assured me that Judge Innes is a man of a fair irreproachable character—of an amiable disposition—of easy manners—but rather indolent.

James Innes

George Washington to Richard Henry Lee, White Marsh, Pa., 18 November 1777

Innes, I know nothing more of, than his being a Man of spirit, good Sense and education, and recommended by General Woodford.

Thomas Jefferson to James Innes, Philadelphia, 13 March 1791

I wish you would come forward to the federal legislature and give your assistance on a larger scale than that on which you are acting at present. I am satisfied you could render essential service, and I have such confidence in the purity of your republicanism, that I know your efforts would go in a right direction. Zeal and talents added to the republican scale will do no harm in Congress.

George Washington to Alexander Hamilton, Philadelphia, 29 October 1795

Colonel Innis is among the number of those who have passed in review [for appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court]; but his extreme indolence renders his abilities (great as they are said to be of little use.

Alexander Hamilton to George Washington, New York, 5 November 1795

Mr. Innis, I fear is too absolutely lazy for Secretary of State. The objection would weigh less as to Attorney General.

Benjamin Henry Latrobe: Journals, 31 May 1796

Mr. James Innes, Attorney general of the State (also a *Colonel*), ranks I think, first in genius, in force of thought, in power of expression, in effect of voice and manner. He is, at the same time, a man of the most amiable and benevolent disposition, open, generous, and unreserved, more I think of the character of Charles Fox than any other man I ever knew. His only fault is indolence. He has been known to return a fee of 10 guineas, because he had neglected from mere indolence

to give a short opinion, and cared not to leave his bed in which he was reading to consider the case. Speaking of his first rate abilities to *Jack Stewart*, he gave this opinion upon them, which I believe to be founded in truth: “Sir,” said he, “you admire Innes with good reason, for you have heard him only speak on the *right* side, your opinion would change were you to hear him defend a bad cause, you would find him so embarrassed, and embroiled with the honesty of his own heart, *as to make no hand at all of it.*” A Gentleman who was present, repeated to me the following close of a speech upon liberty of conscience, made some years ago in the Virginia Assembly, which is no bad specimen of his manner. “*May she,*” said he, “*lift her head to the footstool of the Almighty, may the whole earth be covered by her Mantle, and may she embrace all Human nature in her arms.*” Has Demosthenes anything more sublime?

James Iredell

Hannah Iredell (Mrs. James Iredell) to Arthur Iredell, North Carolina, late 1775

Do not be uneasy about your Brother. He is too much respected and loved to be in any personal danger. Every body who is acquainted with him esteems him. His good sense and goodness of heart entitles him to it. Most of the King’s other Officers* through their own indiscretion lead disagreeable lives here at present.

*James Iredell was then serving as deputy king’s attorney for Hertford, Perquimans, and Tyrrell counties.

Thomas Hartley to Tench Coxe, York, Pa., 3 March 1788

General Irvine has been spoken of as the Country Senator—he is a Man of Prudence, Understanding and Steadiness and well affected to the Constitution notwithstanding some Insinuations against him upon the latter Head.

When Parties run very high in a popular Assembly a Person is necessarily obliged to act under one Party or another—but when a Gentleman is in a distinct Body as Mr. Irvine lately in Congress and not obliged to give his Sentiments officially, his Silence to the general World should not be an Objection: He stands well with the People beyond the Mountains—he lived with them and protected them—he opposed them in the Council of Censors and so he will (if I am not mistaken in the Man) again in any improper Measures which they may attempt in any public Body of which he may be a Member.

Hugh Williamson to James Iredell, New York, 5 January 1789

Mrs. Williamson, who has at this instant been inquiring to whom I am writing, and been informed that I am writing to an inhabitant of Edenton, who is a particular friend, and one of the best men, as well as best lawyers in America, says that either circumstances would induce her to present you with her compliments, but all of them united engage her to request that I would present you with a tender of her esteem.

Hugh Williamson to George Washington, New York, 19 September 1789

He is in the first Practice as a Lawyer, his Abilities and learning are extensive and he seems generally to be measured as the Standard of Integrity; his private Life is amicable and without Reproach; his Diligence is great and I believe there is not a man in the State who does not think him entitled to ant Degree of public Trust.

David Leonard to Benjamin Bourne, Providence, R.I., 8 November 1792

His Honor Judge Iredell puts on his hat, upon the Bench, when his head is cold, and looks as if he was at home—He has won the affections of the Bar at Boston, by his urbanity and politeness, and every one here seems charmed with his civility & frankness.

***Newport Mercury*, 10 December 1799**

On the 20th [of October] departed this life, at Edenton, after a few days illness, the Hon. James Iredell, Esq; one of the associate Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States. . . .

In the domestic and social virtues, he had but few equals and no superior. The kind and affectionate husband, the tender and indulgent parent, the generous and humane master, the sincere and benevolent friend, the virtuous and honest man, were happily combined in his character, and will induce all those who had the pleasure of his acquaintance to lament his death as a public misfortune.

John Marshall to Archibald D. Murphey, Richmond, Va., 6 October 1827

You have omitted one name which ranks I think among the considerable men of your state. It is that of the late Judge Iredell. I was well acquainted with him too, & thought him a man of real talents.

William Irvine

George Washington: Opinion of General Officers, 9 March 1792

Is sober, tolerably sensible and prudent. It is said he is an economist; and supported his authority whilst he was entrusted with a separate command; but I have no recollection of any circumstance that marks him as a decidedly good, or indifferent Officer.

Ralph Izard

John Adams: Autobiography, 10 April 1778

[According to Benjamin Franklin] Mr. Izard was a Man of violent and ungoverned Passions.

Richard Henry Lee to Arthur Lee, Philadelphia, 27 October 1778

Give my respects to Mr. Izard and tell him I greatly admire his spirit and good sense.

John Adams to James Lovell, Passy, France, 20 February 1779

There is another Character here, exceedingly respectable in Fortune, Education, Travel, Honour, Integrity, Love of his Country and Zeal in its Cause: But Tacitus would say his Passions are always strong, often violent: and he has not Experience in public Life.

James Lovell to John Adams, Philadelphia, 13 June 1779

Mr. Izard has good testimony to his many estimable qualities, but his best friends say he is irascible even when he has not a fit of the gout.

John Adams: Autobiography

Mr. Ralph Izzard was a native of South Carolina. His Grandfather or Great Grandfather was One of Mr. Locke's Landgraves, and had transmitted to his Posterity an ample landed Estate. Mr. Izzard had his Education, I believe at Westminster or Eaton School certainly at the University of Cambridge in England. When he came to the Possession of his fortune he married Miss De Lancy a Daughter of Chief Justice De Lancy in Opposition to the Livingstons, a Lady of great beauty and fine Accomplishments as well as perfect purity of conduct and Character through Life. This accomplished Pair had a curiosity to Travel. They went to Europe, and passed through Italy, Germany, Holland and I know not how many other Countries. Mrs. Izzard, an excellent Domestic Consort, was very prolific, and it was often jocularly said that she had given Mr. Izzard a Son or a Daughter in every great City in Europe. When the American War commenced they were in England, and Mr. Izzard embracing the Cause of his Country with all the Warmth of his Character, passed with his Family over to France in his Way to America. Congress had been advised, by Persons who knew no better, to send a Minister to the Emperor and to the Grand Duke of Tuscany because they were Brothers to the Queen of France. In this measure there was less Attention to the Political Interests and Views of Princes than to the Ties of Blood and Family Connections. Congress however adopted the Measure, and Mr. Izzard was nominated by Mr. Arthur Middleton in the Name of South Carolina and highly recommended for his Integrity, good Sense and Information. The Members from New York and other States supported the nomination and concurred in all the particulars of his Character. Mr. Izzard was accordingly appointed and when he arrived in Paris he found his Commission to the Grand Duke. With an high Sense of honor, and great Benevolence of heart as well as integrity of Principle, Mr. Izzard had a Warmth of Temper and sometimes a violence of Passions, that were very inconvenient to him and his Friends, and not a little dangerous to his Enemies.

But within a few days after I had got settled in my Lodgings Mr. Izzard came out to Passy, and requested some private conversation with me. I accordingly attended him alone. Mr. Izzard began upon the Subject of the disagreeable Situation of our Affairs in France and the miserable Conduct of them by Mr. Deane and Dr. Franklin. . . .

As he enlarged upon the defamations and Persecutions against himself and his Friends he grew Warm. Mr. Izzard, with great honor and integrity, had irritable Nerves and very strong Passions. He either had or at least was reputed to have great pride. There was however more of the Appearance of this Vice in his external behaviour, than in his heart. A hesitancy in his Speech and an

appearance of impatience that was often occasioned by it, contributed very much to the Suspicion and imputation of haughtiness. In enumerating the detractions against himself and his friends, his passions transported him beyond all bounds. He declared and with asserverations which I will not repeat but which all who knew Mr. Izzard may easily imagine, that Dr. Franklin was one of the most unprincipled Men upon Earth: that he was a Man of no Veracity, no honor, no Integrity, as great a Villain as ever breathed: as much worse than Mr. Deane as he had more experience, Art, cunning and Hypocrisy. Mr. Izzard dilated on many of these particulars and his harangue was extended to a great length.

John Adams to James Lovell, Braintree, Mass., 10 September 1779

In your Letter of the 20th, you assure me in strong Terms that “I have not an Enemy amongst you” [in Congress]. I am very Sure there is no Man there who has any just Cause, to be my personal Enemy: But I think there must be many, in political Opposition to me. By the Hint you give of Iz’s over heat, I don’t know what to guess. Is it possible that Iz. should have written, to my Disadvantage? It is very true, that I thought him, sometimes ~~indiscreet and~~ imprudent, and that I uniformly and firmly refused to have any Concern in the Dispute between him and F. either before or after my Arrival in France. But I always told him this and my Reasons for it, so frankly and I always preserved with him and he with me, So friendly a personal Acquaintance, that altho I am very sensible he thinks I ought to have inserted myself more in their Quarells, yet I think it is impossible, he should have written against me. However I thought him too hot, and therefore it is very probable he thought me too cool. Reasonable Men will judge.

John Adams to James Lovell, Braintree, Mass., 21 September 1779

Izard, is till worse [than Arthur Lee]—do you know an Ambassador, we once sent into Canada who negotiated every thing into total Confusion.* Such another is this.

*Probably a reference to Samuel Chase.

John Adams to James Lovell, Braintree, Mass., 17 October 1779

[In response to information that Congress had received a letter from Izard critical of Adams.] To enter into all the Conversation that have passed between Mr. Iz and me, respecting those Articles, and many other Points, in order to give a full and fair Representation of those Conversations would fill a small Volume. Yet there never was any Angry, or rude Conversation between him and me, that I can recollect. I lived with him on good Terms, visited him and he me—dined with his family, and his family with me, and I ever told him, and repeated it often, that I should be always obliged to him for his Advice, Opinions and sentiments upon any American subject, and that I should always give it its due Weight, altho I did not think myself bound to follow it, any farther than it seemed to me to be just.

As Congress has declined giving me the Charges vs. me, by their Authority, and have upon the whole acquitted me, with so much Splendor, it would look like Littleness of soul in me, to make myself anxious or give them any further Trouble about it. And as I have in general so good an opinion of Mr. Iz’s. Attachment to his Country, and of his Honour, I shall not think myself bound to take any further Notice of this Fruit of his Inexperience in public Life, this peevish Ebullition of the Rashness of his Temper.

John Adams to Samuel Adams, Paris, 4 March 1780

He will also give his Opinion very freely concerning American and other Characters here as well as Measures. In many Things his opinions may be just, but in some and those not a few I am sure they are wrong.

Chevalier de la Luzerne to Comte de Vergennes, Philadelphia, 6 August 1780

Mr. Izard, previously designated Minister of the 13 States near the Court of Tuscany, has returned here. This Man, known for his honest intentions but also for his always passionate and often violent character. . . .

James Madison to Edmund Randolph, Philadelphia, 11 June 1782

Mr. Izard, warm & notorious as his predilection for the Lees is, acknowledges and laments the opposition made by them to measures adapted to the public weal.

Thomas Jefferson: Notes on Cabinet Opinions, 26 February 1793

Izard hated Franklin with unparalleled bitterness but humbly adores the President because he is in loco regis. [It was thought that Izard rather than John Adams was the author of a newspaper serial that defended the President by criticizing Benjamin Franklin. President Washington hoped that the author would desist. Izard was thought to be the author], because he is quite booby enough not to see the injury he would do to the President by such a mode of defense.

John Adams to the Boston Patriot, Quincy, Mass., 21 August 1811

It must suffice to say, that Mr. Izzard, with a fund of honor, integrity, candour and benevolence in his character, which must render him eternally estimable in the sight of all moral and social beings was nevertheless the most passionate, and in his passions, the most violent and unbridled in his expressions of any man I ever knew.

Andrew Jackson

Mark Mitchell to Andrew Jackson, Holston, 12 October 1795

Dear Sir, Your Size is against you. I never Knew a man of a Hundred and forty [pounds] in Congress. If you would get you a pair of Cloth Overalls and Wear your Big Coat you might pass. You have loud Speech.

Andrew Jackson to John Sevier, Nashville, Tennessee, 8 May 1797

But Sir behold my surprise; when I returned, and found that amidst, those friendly Communications to me, you had wrote a letter to General James Robertson, and another to Mr. Joel Lewis, in which you had made use of the following Language respecting me, “that you did not regard the

Scurrilous Expressions of a poor pitiful petty fogging Lawyer, and you treated them with Contempt.” Those Sir, are Expressions, that my feelings are not accustomed to, and which my Conduct through life by no means merits, and which, Sir, I will not, tamely submit to.

Aaron Burr to Joseph Alston, 15 November 1815

If then there be a Man in the U.S. of firmness and decision & having standing enough to afford even a hope of success, it is your duty to hold him up to public View [as President]—That man is Andrew Jackson.

Abigail Adams to Louisa Catherine Adams, Quincy, Mass., 21 August 1818

I have just been reading the Life of Genl Jackson—and I admire the Man; as his character is represented—I esteem him, much more highly than I did before, I read it. He appears to have been raised up for the Command he had, and for the defence he made He is as Brave as Buonaparte, without his embridled Ambition—I wonder if my Son has read it?—tho Jackson has lately given him Specimens of his Character—which have some what embarrassed the President, I fancy—

Louisa Catherine Adams to John Adams, Washington, 3 February 1819

Went to the Drawing room but the crowd was so great that I nearly fainted Genl Jackson was the object of attraction which had occasioned this great assemblage He is tall and very thin and when he smiles his countenance is animated and agreeable—The features are strongly marked and very expressive of firmness decision and resolution and his manners from the little I have seen of them are unassuming and affable and betoken a very superior education to what he has the reputation of having enjoyed—Many person’s came up to me with expression’s of astonishment at not finding him *half savage*—

Thomas Jefferson: Conversation with Daniel Webster, 1824

I feel much alarmed at the prospect of seeing General Jackson, President. He is one of the most unfit men, I know of for such a place. He has had very little respect for Laws or Constitutions,— & is in fact an able military chief. His passions are terrible. When I was President of the Senate, he was a Senator; & he could never speak from the *rashness* of his feelings. I have seen him attempt it repeatedly, & as often choke with rage. His passions are no doubt cooler now,—he has been much tried since I knew him—but he is a *dangerous man*.

James Jackson

George Walton and Richard Howley to Nathanael Greene, Philadelphia, 27 July 1781

The appointment of Major Jackson to raise a corps in that State [Georgia] is also a great proof of your discernment. He is a young gentleman particularly distinguished for his inflexible integrity, undaunted bravery, and zealous love for his Country; and we have the highest expectations from the arrangement.

J. G. Noel to William Paterson, Augusta, Ga., 29 March 1789

This will be handed you by Genl. Jackson, one of our Representatives in Congress. As to his Character & Merit no Representation from me would be necessary. His Standing in this Country is high. He is particularly acquainted with Col. [James] White. My reason for addressing this by him is to claim your attention to him as my very particular friend. He is a Person from whom I have received very Singular Instances of friendship & Attention. I venture to say you will find him an honest man & one who will do Justice to the Choice of the People.

Anthony Wayne to George Washington, Richmond, Ga., 6 April 1789

Permit me to introduce Brigadier General James Jackson (a representative from the State of Georgia) who I know to be a valuable Citizen—a good Soldier, & an honest man.

(Wayne writes similar letter to Alexander Hamilton on same date)

Catherine Greene to Jeremiah Wadsworth, 18 April 1789

Col. Jackson is a Lawyer of tolerable repute and an honest Man but has a very hot head.

Tristram Lowther to James Iredell, New York, 9 May 1789

I arrived here on Saturday last. . . . Since then I have constantly attended the debates of the House of Representatives, and have received great pleasure from observing the liberality and spirit of mutual concession which appear to actuate every member of the House. I have not observed the least attempt to create a party, or to divide the House by setting up the Southern in opposition to the Eastern interest, except in Mr. Jackson, from Georgia, the violence of whose passions sometimes hurries him into expressions which have, or appear to have, such a tendency.

A Spectator to the Printer, New York *Daily Advertiser*, 21 August 1789

As Mr. Jackson's name has, without ceremony, been drawn into a news paper, I cannot quit the subject, without declaring that an inconsiderable historical error, in no degree, diminishes my respect for so valuable a character—As a man of honor and spirit, I admire him; as a warm and generous patriot, I esteem him, and as a sensible, natural and impressive speaker, I always listen to him with peculiar pleasure.

Modestus, Philadelphia *Federal Gazette*, 1 April 1790

I am a real admirer of many parts of Mr. Jackson's character. He appears to have naturally a great deal of generous warmth and manliness in his way of thinking.

William Plumer: Memorandum, 10 February 1806

This day James Jackson, the senator from Georgia, was tapped, & four gallons of water was drawn from him. At the commencement of the session although he was weak & sickly there was no appearance of a dropsy. He has for some weeks past used but to no useful purpose, the *Fox glove*. He has been very intemperate—ardent spirits have ruined him.

William Plumer: Memorandum, 19 March 1806

At four o'clock this morning died in this City my friend *James Jackson* one of the Senators from Georgia. He was very unwell when he arrived here on the 9th day of December last. He attended his duty in the Senate until the 7th day of January last. In that day he made a few observations against the claim of the *Yazoo* purchasers—which he ever considered as founded in *fraud & villainy of the deepest die*.

Genl. Jackson was in the 50th year of age. He had been governor of Georgia, & senator of the United States for many years. He was neither poor nor rich.

He was a man of strong passions, & of course of strong prejudices—but he was a man of honor—& of strict integrity. Though his conversation sometime bordered on the extravagant—yet his company was pleasant & agreeable. I never knew him quibble, evade a question, or conceal his opinion. He was open, frank & undisguised. His language expressed the feelings & sentiments of his heart.

Being a man of honor he had fought several duels, I do not recollect that he ever killed a man. He received a wound the effects of which he always felt.

It is to be regretted that for several of the last years of his life he indulged with too much freedom in the use of ardent vinous liquors. These no doubt shortened his days.

This morning as soon as the Journals of the Senate were read, Mr. Baldwin rose & announced the painful event of the death of his colleague. The Senate directed the Secretary to give notice thereof to the House of Representatives—who immediately adjourned. The Senate unanimously resolved that they would for thirty days go in mourning, by wearing crape round the left arm, as a token of their respect & esteem for the deceased. That they would attend his funeral—Appointed a committee to make the necessary arrangements for the funeral—& then immediately adjourned.

I did not visit the deceased during his sickness—He was very unwilling to admit any person into his chamber except his son—indeed he refused it. I own his death affects my heart! For three preceding sessions I never failed a single week of walking several times with him.

He has left four children.

Jonathan Jackson

“A Federalist,” Boston *Herald of Freedom*, 23 January 1789

Mr. Jackson is revered and beloved wherever he is known. Amiable in the private and honest and upright in the public walks of life, his abilities are inferior to few among us, and his patriotism and love of his country indubitably established on a firm foundation.

Alexander Hamilton to George Thacher, Philadelphia, 18 May 1793

Mr. Jonathan Jackson—as a man of sense, probity & delicacy & whose impartiality will be drawn into question by no local circumstances.

William Jackson

Benjamin Rush to Tench Coxe, Philadelphia, 26 February 1789

J[ackso]n is indefatigable—& confident,*—But more unpopular than ever. His appointment would be very Disagreeable to some of the best men in Pennsylvania.

*Jackson was seeking the appointment of secretary of the U.S. Senate.

Robert Morris to Mary Morris, New York, 6 September 1789

Major Jackson is received into the [President's] Family and is as happy as Mortal man can be.

Robert Morris to Mary Morris, New York, 11 September 1789

I expect Major Jackson to Breakfast this morning. He is in *high Glory*.

Tobias Lear to John Langdon, New York, 24 September 1789

We have company to dine here to day—& of course I must quit my pen—Your ld friend Major Jackson is in the family as an assistant Secretary.—and I find him a very agreeable man.

John Adams to Abigail Adams, Philadelphia, 11 January 1797

Dined Yesterday with Major Jackson . . . married to Miss Willing who is an agreeable Woman and comfortably provided for by an office, he lives in a neat & elegant Taste: but I believe prudently.

Abigail Adams to Mary Cranch, Philadelphia, 27 February 1800

On Saturday the 22d [of February] I went to hear Major Jackson deliver his oration [on Washington's death]. It was a very handsome one, and much better delivered than I had any Idea he could perform—It is not yet printed, but when it is, I think it will not suffer by any comparison with any I have yet Seen.

Louisa Catherine Adams to John Adams, Washington, 9 December 1818

Major Jackson of Philadelphia was there [at a presidential reception] he is grown very old and very deaf.

Louisa Catherine Adams to John Adams, Washington, 23 December 1818

Major Jackson also there he is so deaf it is difficult to converse with him in a party—

Charles Jarvis

Theodore Sedgwick to Rufus King, Boston, 18 June 1787

Our present General Court contains the extremes of every description of character, whether of abilities, virtue, honor or firmness on the one hand, or of stupidity, vice, meanness or flexibility on the other. C. Jarvis is at the head of the latter force, and will conduct it so long as he supposes it for his interest. He wishes to discredit the administration of last year, to pay court to the present, and to make his election sure as a delegate. At the same time he manifestly wants the daring fortitude to lead a desperate faction, and he wants the talents necessary to render him dangerous. He possesses the qualities of a handsomely decorated balloon, light, airy, ascending and beautiful, but continually varying his course whenever a steady opposition attacks him.

Brissot de Warville: *New Travels in the United States of America*, 30 July 1788

Among the followers of the governor I also remarked two most estimable men, the Jarvis brothers. One is comptroller general of the state; the other is a doctor and a member of the legislature. The former is calm and deliberate in studying a problem and his judgments are profound; the latter is quick to penetrate to the heart of a matter, handles ideas with dexterity, and expresses himself in a lively style. They have one trait in common, their simplicity, that great virtue of republicans, a virtue which is inborn in Americans but which we French are obliged to acquire!

John Quincy Adams to James Bridge, New York, 21 September 1789

Since my arrival here, I have been very constant in my attendance in the galleries of the House of Representatives and have heard almost all the speakers, upon the various topics of the permanent seat of residence, the amendments, the judiciary system, judges salaries, &c. &c. The greatest speakers in the house, as to *quantity* are, *Gerry*, *Jackson* of Georgia, and *Burke* of S. Carolina; and as to *quality*, *Ames*, *Maddison* and *Vining*. Yet you might search in vain throughout the house, for the flashes of Demosthenes, or for the splendid illumination of Cicero. Nay I frankly acknowledge, that I have as yet heard no speaking equal to what I have heard from Dr. Jarvis in our State legislature.

John Adams to John Trumbull, New York, 25 April 1790

. . . Charles Jarvis a devoted instrument of Mr. H [John Hancock].

Stephen Higginson to Alexander Hamilton, Boston, 26 July 1793

Pacificus [Hamilton's essays] is operating here without interruption. Our Patriots, though pressed to enter the field, dare not venture on more than Street harangues. I am pledged to meet Dr. Jarvis, the Bell Wether of the flock, either in public discussion in person or upon paper, whenever he shall notify the intention of making a formal attack.

John Quincy Adams to John Adams, Boston, 26 May 1794

Otis had about 200 votes but did not obtain his election. Jarvis was formerly his warm political friend, and probably viewed him as a disciple of his own; but finding him intractable and rather falling into the other scales, he has forsaken him, and of course carried off a powerful interest. Jarvis's *electioneering* influence in this town is very great.

Abigail Adams to John Quincy Adams, Quincy, Mass., 15 September 1795

Jarvis was the Demagogue and orator.

Abigail Adams to John Adams, Quincy, Mass., 9 February 1796

Jarvis went home eat his dinner & fell into strong convulsion fits, from which he was with difficulty recovered. He has not Since been able to attend the House.

Thomas Welsh to John Adams, Boston, 15 February 1796

You will have heard before this reaches you that Dr Jarvis after having caused a Motion to be made in the House of Representatives to take up the Virginia Resolves which he supported with all his Faculties, was seized at his own House after Dinner with an apoplectic Fit. I have not seen him but I am told that he appeared for several Days after much deranged in his Mind but he has recovered so far as to begin to talk politics again and says that the Question which was determined by a large Majority against Mr Fisk would not have gone as it did had he been in the House however he will not be able to attend again this Session.

John Adams to Thomas Welsh, Philadelphia, 27 February 1796

It is to be lamented that a Man of Such popular Talent and such an ardent Spirit as Dr Jarvis, should be always disposed to Seize every Opening and Opportunity to Attack, embarrass and enfeeble the national Government: but the People are so well fixed in opposite Principles that he will meet with nothing but Disappointment and Vexation till he probably falls a sacrifice to his imprudent Zeal and intemperate Exertions. His Constitution is not made for Such a Career.

Thomas Welsh to John Adams, Boston, 30 January 1797

Poor Jarvis has had new attacks of his Fits he also has run his Race.

Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz: *Travels through America*, 20 July 1798

I gave another letter [of introduction] to Dr. Jarvis. He is a famous and fiery democrat as doctors are everywhere. I do not know what is the reason for this, perhaps because war, revolution and medicine have the same object, that is the spilling of blood and death. The hapless doctor was a victim of his own fiery zeal. Both day and night, anxious for the success of the French and their party in this country, he grew thin; he began to turn yellow and then green and now can hardly draw breath.

John Jay

Lindley Murray: Autobiography, 1764

He was remarkable for strong reasoning powers, comprehensive views, indefatigable application, and uncommon firmness of mind.

John Adams: Diary, 22 August 1774

Mr. Jay is a young Gentleman of the Law of about 26, Mr. Scott says an hard Student and a good Speaker.

Thomas Lundin, Lord Drummond: Notes, 3–9 January 1776

Jay had been sent to the Congs. rather by the Suffrages of the more moderate Men as being a Man who had shown himself possessd of good Abilities, and ambitious at many times of distinguishing them, a Church Man and one who they thought might prove some Check to the violent Measures. He had in the Course of the former session renderd himself much considerd in that Assembly by his Readiness in Debate as well as in Composition. How far his Connection (by Marriage) with Mr Wm Livingstone might influence his Condt. was problematical. Duane who was the Man the most likely to have attended to his Political Conduct ranked him as much inclined to Reconciliation.

John Jay to Sarah Jay, Salisbury, 29 July 1776

I always endeavor to anticipate good instead of ill Fortune, and find it turns to good Account. Were this Practice more general, I fancy Mankind would experience more Happiness than they usually do.

John Adams to Abigail Adams, Philadelphia, 19 April 1777

You will see by the enclosed Newspaper, that Duane and Jay have arrived at the Honor of being ranked, with the Two Adams's. I hope they will be duly sensible, of the Illustrious Distinction, and be sure to behave in a manner becoming it.

John Vardill to William Eden, 11 April 1778

Jay . . . is possessed of a strong Understanding though much perverted by the Study of the Law joined to a Temper naturally controversial. You can sooner gain him to your opinion by submitting to be confuted by him, than by a direct attempt to convince him. . . . He is obstinate, indefatigable, & dogmatical, but by his Courage, Zeal & abilities as a Writer & Speaker has much Popularity.

Gouverneur Morris to Robert R. Livingston, Philadelphia, 22 September 1778

I repose myself entirely with you and Jay. You shall act for me. Let me tell you that your Tempers are so very different that you will make the best Friends in the World. You are too lazy, he is too proud. He is too hasty, you too inattentive to the public Affairs. Shall I go on. No. With all the

Faults both of you have I have as many as both of you together. You both pardon me therefore you must pardon each other. And do you hear. None of your Stomaching.

Gouverneur Morris to George Clinton, Philadelphia, 10 December 1778

I have the Pleasure to inform your Excellency that the honorable John Jay Esqr. is elevated to the Chair of Congress, which as well from your Friendship for him, as for Reasons of public Importance will, I am confident, be agreeable to you. The weight of his personal Character contributed as much to his Election as the Respect for the State which hath done and suffered so much or the Regard for its Delegates which is not inconsiderable. The Public will I am confident experience many good consequences from the Exchange.

William Whipple to Josiah Bartlett, Philadelphia, 14 December 1778

Since you left Congress Messrs. Jay & Duane have taken their seats. The first mentioned Gentleman was last Thursday put into the Chair on the resignation of that very worthy Gentleman you left in it. I have so high an opinion of Mr. Laurens that I must confess I exceedingly regretted his leaving the Chair. However, I hope it is again well filled. Mr. Jay is a Gentleman of acknowledged abilities and great application. I have therefore no doubt the Business will be well conducted, so far as it respects the President.

Edward Langworthy to William Duer, Philadelphia, 18 December 1778

I'm sorry we shall in a great measure lose the Oratory of Mr. Jay by placing him in the Chair—he appears to me to be a man of Ability & to have that Ornament of the understanding a lively imagination.

William Carmichael to Charles Carroll of Carrollton, Philadelphia, 16 January 1779

It was late when Congress was ready to vote. As usual we looked to the President to give his opinion before balloting. Mr. Jay is more judicious than his predecessor [Henry Laurens] in the chair, and less prolix.

William Whipple to Joseph Whipple, Philadelphia, 19 January 1779

The late President [Henry Laurens] is really as good a man as I ever knew. He Resigned the Chair on Republican Principles having set in it more than a Year. The Chair is now exceedingly well filled.

John Jay to Catherine W. Livingston, Philadelphia, 27 February 1779

Perseverance in doing what we think Right, and Resignation to the Dispensations of the great Governor of the World, offer a Shield against the Darts of these Afflictions, to every body that will use it.

John Penn to John Williams, c. 10 April 1779

The President [Jay] left me ten days ago, he is a very Sensible, Clever man, so pleasing to every person. . . . The pleasure that I received in his Company more than made amends for the expense or crowd that attended his being with me.

John Adams: Diary, 20 June 1779

I said that Mr. Jay was a Man of Wit, well informed, a good Speaker and an elegant Writer.

John Jay to Governor George Clinton, Philadelphia, 27 August 1779

Popularity is not, among the number of my objects. A seat in Congress I do not desire, and as ambition has in no instance drawn me into public life, I am sure it will never influence me to continue in it. Were I to consult my interest, I should settle here and make my fortune; were I guided by inclination, I should now be attending to a family, who independent of other misfortunes, have suffered severely in the present contest.

Henry Laurens to John Laurens, Philadelphia, 27 September 1779

This Morning Monday the 27th September according to my imaginary foresight will be devoted to the appointment of a Minister Plenipotentiary to treat with the Court of Spain, on Alliance & Amity & Commerce.

Mr. Lee will be, as tis intended & expected, superseded by Mr. Jay, an avowed & inveterate Enemy. God's will be done.

James Lovell to William Whipple, Philadelphia, 5 October 1779

I declared openly that I did not approve Mr. J's conduct in the Chair—some others followed me in like declarations, but I would not go to the dirty work of Yeas and Nays and urged that, if a majority were so disposed, he might receive a Formality.

Sarah Jay to Her Mother, Susannah Livingston, On board the *Confederacy*, 12 December 1779

Your whole family love Mr. Jay, but you are not acquainted with half his worth, nor indeed are any of his friends, for his modesty is equal to his merit. It is the property of a diamond (I've been told) to appear most brilliant in the dark; and surely a good man never shines to greater advantage than in the gloomy hour of adversity; in scenes of that kind I have lately beheld with pleasure, and even admiration, the firmness and serenity of mind that evidently shone out in the countenance of our invaluable friend. May he long, very long, be preserved a blessing to his connections and a useful as well as disinterested friend to his Country; pardon me! mamma, if I appear too prolix in the praises of the person we so highly love and esteem—am I not writing to a partial mother? And is it not a consolation to her, that the guardian of her children is worthy of her confidence?

Jay's Instructions to William Carmichael, Cadiz, Spain, 27 January 1780 (Johnston, I, 268)

Although I have confidence in your prudence, yet permit me to recommend to you the greatest circumspection. Command yourself under every circumstance; on the one hand, avoid being suspected of servility, and on the other, let your temper be always even and your attention unremitted.

John Jay to Robert R. Livingston, Madrid, 23 May 1780

I am approaching the Age of Ambition without being influenced by its Allurements. Public Considerations induced me to leave the private Walk of Life; when they cease, I shall return to it. Believe me I shall not remain here a Moment longer than the Duties of a Citizen may detain me; and that I look forward with Pleasure to the Day when I shall again follow peaceably the Business of my Profession, and make some little Provision for my Family, whose Interests I have so long neglected for public Concerns. My Conduct moves on fixed Principles, from which I shall never deviate; and they will not permit me to leave the unfortunate part of my Family destitute of my Care and Attention longer than higher Duties call me from them.

Don Diego de Gardoqui to Conde de Floridablanca, no date

The American, Jay, who is generally considered to possess talent and capacity enough to cover in great part a weakness natural to him, appears (by a consistent behavior) to be a very self-centered man (*es hombre muy interesado*), which passion his wife augments, because, in addition to considering herself meritoriously and being rather vain, she likes to be catered to (*gusta que la obsequien*), and even more to receive presents. This woman, whom he loves blindly, dominates him and nothing is done without her consent, so that her opinion prevails, though her husband at first may disagree: from which I infer that a little management in dealing with her and a few timely gifts will secure the friendship of both, because I have reason to believe that they proceed resolved to make a fortune. He is not the only one in his country who has the same weakness (*flanco*), for there are many poor persons (*muchos necesitados*) among the governing body, and I believe a skillful hand which knows how to take advantage of favorable opportunities, and how to give dinners and above all to entertain with good wine, may profit without appearing to pursue them.

John Jay to Robert R. Livingston, Madrid, 6 October 1780

My Heart is in America, and I am impatient for the Time when the Rest of my Body will be there also.

John Jay to Benjamin Franklin, Madrid, 30 October 1780

To be active, prudent, and patient is in my power; but whether I shall reap as well as sow and water, God only knows.

John Jay to Silas Deane, Madrid, 1 November 1780

I believe that a wise and good Being governs this World, that he has ordered us to travel through it to a better, and that We have nothing but our Duty to do on the Journey which will not be a long one. Let us therefore travel on with Spirits and Cheerfulness without grumbling much at the Bad Roads, bad Inns or bad Company we may be obliged to put up with on the Way. Let us enjoy

Prosperity when We have it, and in adversity endeavour to be patient and resigned without being lazy or insensible.

I believe firmly the old adage *nil utile nisi quod honestum*,* and therefore before Politicians or others deviate from Integrity they should well consider the Consequences.

*Nothing is useful except what is honorable.

John Jay to Thomas McKean, St. Ildefonso, Spain, 20 September 1781

[On Jay being appointed peace commission with Adams, Franklin and Laurens, and instructed by Congress to keep the French informed of their actions.] So far as personal pride and reluctance to humiliation may render this appointment disagreeable, I view it as a very unimportant circumstance; and should Congress, on any occasion, think it for the public good to place me in a station inferior and subordinate to the one I now hold, they will find me ready to descend from the one, and cheerfully undertake the duties of the other. My ambition will always be more gratified in being useful than conspicuous; for, in my opinion, the solid dignity of a man depends less on the height or extent of the sphere allotted to him, than on the manner in which he may fulfill the duties of it.

But, sir, as an American, I feel an interest in the dignity of my country, which renders it difficult for me to reconcile myself to the idea of the sovereign independent States of America, submitting, in the persons of their ministers, to be absolutely governed by the *advice* and *opinion* of the servants of another sovereign, especially in a case of such national importance.

Benjamin Vaughan to Lord Shelburne, Paris, 31 July 1782

It is some satisfaction to me to say that Mr. Jay is a very pleasant man, who has no unreasonable notions or passions.

Richard Oswald to Thomas Townshend, Paris, 5 August 1782

When I was with the Doctor [Benjamin Franklin], & having told him I had waited on Mr. Jay & happening to say I thought him a good natured Man, the Doctor replied he was so; & also a Man of good sense.

Richard Oswald: Minutes of a Conversation with Benjamin Franklin and John Jay, Paris, 7 and 15 August 1782

I accordingly returned to Paris, and called on Mr. Jay. He is a Man of good sense; of frank, easy and polite Manners.

[15 August] [Jay as] a Man of good Sense and Temper.

Alleyne Fitzherbert to Lord Grantham (Thomas Robinson), Paris, 17 August 1782

Mr. Jay whose disposition seems to be in general much more open & unreserved than that of his colleague, Dr. Franklin.

John Adams to John Jay, The Hague, 2 September 1782

You know very well the Terms upon which you and I have ever been. We have often differed in opinion upon Politicks and Supported our opinions with Ardour: but notwithstanding this I have ever had a full Confidence in your Honour and firm Attachment to the Cause of our Country. And there has never to my Knowledge been any Misunderstanding between us. I Sincerely hope there never will, and on my Part there will never be given any occasion for it. We may differ in opinion again, without diminishing Esteem or Affection. But there are Persons in the World who will use all the Arts of the Devil to breed Misunderstandings between Us. Let Us agree to be upon our Guard against them.

John Jay to Peter Van Schaack, Paris, 17 September 1782

In the Course of the present Troubles I have adhered to certain fixed Principles, and faithfully obeyed their Dictates, without regarding the Consequences of such Conduct to my Friends, my Family or myself; all of whom, however dreadful the Thought, I have ever been ready to sacrifice, if necessary, to the public Objects in Contest.

John Adams to Matthew Ridley, The Hague, 29 September 1782

It would give me great Pleasure to See, and converse freely with the Gentleman you mention upon Men and Things. I have long known him a Man of Honour and Abilities. He and I have often differed in opinion, and each of us has Supported his opinion with Ardour: this We may do again without abating a mutual Esteem or Affection, as long as a Perswasion remains of Candour, Integrity and Sincerity, as it does ~~entirely on my Side. But I can have no Confidence whatever in a Man who has learned to lie, to borrow an Expression of your own.*~~

Mr. J is too cautious of Writing.

*Presumably, this last crossed-out sentence referred to Benjamin Franklin.

James Warren to John Adams, Milton, Mass., 1 November 1782

I have a great Opinion of Mr. Jay. He has conducted, if I am well informed, with great dignity.

John Adams: Diary, 5 November 1782

Mr. Jay likes Frenchmen as little as Mr. Lee and Mr. Izard did. He says they are not a Moral people. They know not what it is. He don't like any Frenchmen.—The Marquis de la Fayette is clever, but he is a Frenchman.

John Adams to Francis Dana, Paris, 8 November 1782

Jay is as you would wish him, wise, and firm

John Adams to Jonathan Jackson, Paris, 17 November 1782

A Man and his office was never better united, than Mr. Jay and the Commission for Peace. Had he been detained in Madrid as I was in Holland, and all left to Dr. Franklin as was wished, all would have been lost.—If he is not Supported in Congress, We will both come home together and

see, if We cannot have better Luck by Word of Mouth, than We have had by Letter to convince our Countrymen. The Thanks of Congress, in sound Policy and in perfect Justice ought to be given to Mr. Jay for his Able and faithfull Execution of his Trust both in Spain and for Peace.

Alleyne Fitzherbert to Lord Grantham (Thomas Robinson), Paris, 18 December 1782

I must say in Justice to Mr. Jay that he has always appeared to me to judge with much candour and consistency of the true interests and policy of his Country.

Samuel Flagg Bemis, Pinckney's Treaty: America's Advantage from Europe's Distress, 1783–1800*

Mr. Jay's weak spot is Mr. Jay.

*New Haven, 1926.

John Jay to Sarah Jay, Rouen, 18 January 1783

If my endeavours succeed, I shall be grateful; if not, I shall be resigned.

Marquis de Lafayette to Secretary for Foreign Affairs Robert R. Livingston, Bordeaux, France, 2 March 1783

Herein are joined those copies [of negotiations Lafayette had with Spanish officials], and I keep the original for Mr. Jay whose Political Aide de Camp I have been. I have of course referred to him every thing and this negotiation, wherein he has exercised the virtue of patience, will now require his care and his abilities.

**Alexander Hamilton: Speech in Congress, Philadelphia, 19 March 1783
(From James Madison's Notes)**

[In speaking of the peace commissioners' failure to fully consult France as instructed by Congress.] He observed particularly with respect to Mr. Jay that although he was a man of profound sagacity & pure integrity, yet he was of a suspicious temper, & that this trait might explain the extraordinary jealousies which he professed [of the French].

Thomas Jefferson to John Jay, Philadelphia, 11 April 1783

I cannot take my departure without paying to yourself & your worthy colleague my homage for the good work you have completed for us, and congratulating you on the singular happiness of having borne so distinguished a part both in the earliest & latest transactions of this Revolution. The terms obtained for us [in the Peace Treaty] are indeed great, and are so deemed by your country, a few ill-designing debtors excepted. I am in hopes you will continue at some one of the European courts most agreeable to yourself, that we may still have the benefit of your talents.

John Adams to William Gordon, Paris, 15 April 1783

Your Countryman was never more mistaken than when he spoke slightly of Mr. Jay, whom I would not scruple to pit against the proudest Statesman in Europe. Our Country was never better represented than by him—

John Adams to Abigail Adams, Paris, 16 April 1783

Mr. Jay has been my only Consolation. In him I have found a Friend to his Country, without Alloy. I shall never forget him, nor cease to love him, while I live. He has been happier than I, having his Family with him, no Anxiety for his Children, and his Lady with him, to keep Up his Spirits. His Happiness in this particular, has made me more unhappy for what I know under the Separation from mine.

Comte de Vergennes to Chevalier de la Luzerne, Paris, 21 July 1783

I understand that Mr. Franklin has asked for his recall, but that Congress has not yet acted on his request. I desire that it reject it, at least for the present, because it will be impossible to give Mr. Franklin a Successor as wise and also conciliating as he; moreover, I fear that we will be left with Mr. Jay, and he is the man with whom I would least like to treat of affairs: he is egotistical, and too accessible to prejudices and ill-humor.

Arthur Lee to the Earl of Shelburne, Philadelphia, 23 July 1783

I have flattered myself that your lordship has felt some anxiety about my situation, under the various attacks that have been made upon me. They all originated with the minister [Benjamin Franklin], whose politics so much overshot themselves in the late negotiations for peace, and who was determined on my removal, as one who could not be bent to his purposes. He found, however, my successor [Jay] stubborn; and this country owes immortal gratitude to that gentleman's firmness, spirit and integrity. Yet an attempt was made to sacrifice him, for this very service; and I had the pleasure of defending him against those men, with whom he cooperated in effecting my removal.

Alexander Hamilton to John Jay, Philadelphia, 25 July 1783

Though I have not performed my promise of writing to you, which I made you when you left this country, yet I have not the less interested myself in your welfare and success. I have been witness with pleasure to every event which has had a tendency to advance you in the esteem of your country; and I may assure you with sincerity, that it is as high as you could possibly wish. All have united in the warmest approbation of your conduct. I cannot forbear telling you this, because my situation has given me access to the truth, and I gratify my friendship for you in communicating what cannot fail to gratify your sensibility.

The peace which exceeds in the goodness of its terms, the expectations of the most sanguine does the highest honor to those who made it. It is the more agreeable, as the time was come, when thinking men began to be seriously alarmed at the internal embarrassments and exhausted state of this country. The New England people talk of making you an annual *fish-offering* as an acknowledgement of your exertion for the participation of the fisheries.

John Adams to Abigail Adams, Paris, 4 September 1783

Mr. Jay has been my Comforter. We have compared Notes, and they agree. I love him so well that I know not what I should do in Europe without him. Yet how many times have I disputed Sharply with him in Congress! I always thought him however an honest Man. He is a virtuous and religious Man. He has a Conscience, and has been persecuted, accordingly, as all conscientious Men are. Don't suspect me of Cant. I am not addicted to it. He and I have Tales to tell, dismal Tales: But it will be most for his Happiness and mine to forget them. So let them be forgotten. If the publick Good should not absolutely require them to be told.

John Adams to Samuel Adams, Paris, 10 September 1783

Mr. Jay has, I confess, disappointed me much—for altho' I always thought him a conscientious Man, I did not expect from him so much Wisdom, Intrepidity, Perseverance and Disinterestedness, as I have found in him.

John Jay to Gouverneur Morris, Passy, France, 24 September 1783

I have, as yet, met with neither men nor things on this side of the water which abate my predilection, or, if you please, my prejudice, in favour of those on the other. I have but few attachments in Europe much stronger than those we sometimes feel for an accidental fellow-traveller, or for a good inn and a civil landlord. We leave our approbation, and good wishes, and a certain degree or regard with them, by way of paying that part of the reckoning and travelling expenses which money cannot always defray. My affections are deeply rooted in America, and are of too long standing to admit of transplantation. In short, my friend, I can never become so far a citizen of the world as to view every part of it with equal regard; and perhaps nature is wiser in tying our hearts to our native soil, than they are who think they divest themselves of foibles in proportion as they wear away those bonds. It is not difficult to regard men of every nation as members of the same family; but when placed in that point of view, my fellow-citizens appear to me as my brethren, and the others as related to me only in the more distant and adventitious degrees.

Chevalier de la Luzerne to Comte de Vergennes, Philadelphia, 26 September 1783

Mr. Jay . . . has always exaggerated the rights of the United States. . . . do not think that he has any gratitude to us, but he is incapable of preferring England to us; he prides himself on being independent, and his desire to show his attachment to his Country renders him sometimes unjust, but we should not fear from him any premeditated act capable of being prejudicial to the alliance.

John Jay to Kitty Livingston, Bath, England, 24 December 1783

Experience has taught me reserve.

Arthur Lee to John Adams, In Congress, 14 January 1784

Dr. F. has desired leave to resign unless his grandson is appointed Minister to some Court. Neither of these things has been yet noticed. The latter I believe will hardly be agreed to. The resignation many desire to accept, & if it can be carried Mr. Jay's merit, will probably place him in the old man's place. We are sensible that to the firmness & integrity of yourself & of the former

Gentleman, we owe the peace, the good conditions, & our escape from the snares of an artful friend. Snares infinitely more dangerous to the Independence, honor & happiness of the U.S. than the arms of the most powerful Enemy can ever be. . . . If you think it will be acceptable to Mr. Jay, I should wish you to make my respects to him. His conduct abroad has given me the highest opinion of his abilities & virtue.

John Jay to Gouverneur Morris, Paris, 10 February 1784

Pecuniary considerations ever held a secondary place in my estimation. I know how to live within the bounds of any income, however narrow.

John Jay to Silas Deane, Chaillot near Paris, 23 February 1784

I love my country and my honor better than my friends, and even my family, and am ready to part with them all whenever it would be improper to retain them.

John Adams to Arthur Lee, The Hague, 6 April 1784

Mr. Jay merits every Thing you meditate for him: and his Country merits to have him placed, where his Abilities and Fortitude, may be a Barrier to her, where she is in danger.

John Beatty to William Livingston, Annapolis, Md., 6 April 1784

[Despite Jay's desire to come home from Europe and retire to private life, Beatty hopes Jay will stay abroad in public service.] I have however so good an opinion of Mr. Jay's Heart & Head & withal youth being on his side) that if it is not wholly incompatible with his Health, domestic Concerns, or his wishes; I cannot assent to his being recalled.

Virginia Delegates to Congress to Governor Benjamin Harrison, Annapolis, Md., 13 May 1784

. . . Mr. Jay, who at his own request returns to America & who was at the same time appointed Minister of the United States for Foreign Affairs. The uncommon talents of this Gentleman, & the experience he has no doubt gained in foreign Politics, will render his services in this Department momentous, at a period when our Negotiations with Europe are like to become so complicated.

John Adams to Thomas Barclay, Amsterdam, 24 May 1784

Our worthy Friend Mr. Jay, returns to his Country like a Bee to his Hive, with both Legs richly loaded with Merit and Honour.

Philip Mazzei to Thomas Jefferson, c. June 1784

. . . Mr. John Jay who at my first and only visit, which he did not return (probably because he supposed me as obscure as he knew I was in need of money) bore himself toward me very coldly. When he later discovered that he had erred it was too late to return my call, a fact which he perhaps thought he could make me forget by showing himself almost nauseatingly attentive every time we

met at the home of the Marquis de la Fayette, of Mr. Adams, and of Mr. Laurens, to which solicitude I constantly opposed a gentle or civil reserve.

Charles Thomson to John Jay, Philadelphia, 18 June 1784

I have the pleasure to inform you that on the 7th of May Congress elected you Secretary for Foreign Affairs. I do not know how you will be pleased with the appointment, but this I am sure of—that your country stands in need of your abilities in that office.

John Adams to James Warren, The Hague, 30 June 1784

Jay is minister of foreign Affairs. This is a great Point gained in favor of our Country. Wisdom and Virtue have triumphed, for once. And I hope and believe, he will give an entire new Cast, to the Complexion of our foreign Affairs, and you may depend upon it, that for some time to come as for a long time past, the Character and the System of our Country has been entirely decided by our foreign affairs.

John Jay to Robert R. Livingston, New York, 18 August 1784

When I resigned my Appointment in Europe I purposed to return to the Practice of the Law—What Effect the unexpected offer of Congress (of which I was ignorant 'till after my arrival here) may have on that Design, as yet remains undecided. How far either of us have been influenced by Ambition, are Questions which however clear to ourselves, must necessarily be less so to others.

Marquis de Lafayette, to John Jay, Albany, N.Y., 7 October 1784

Until a few days ago, I had no doubt but to hear you had accepted the appointment conferred upon you. My fears, however, have been raised, and with my usual frankness I assure you that your refusal could not but be attended with very bad circumstances. Setting compliments apart, I am sensible of the great injury such a denial would cause to the public, not only on account of the loss made by the United States in your person, but also for other motives. I hope you will accept; I know you must.

John Jay to Charles Thomson, New York, 20 October 1784

I am influenced, not by particular Views, but by general Principles of Prudence, which (*entre nous*) have been much confirmed by Experience—

Abigail Adams to Cotton Tufts, 8 March 1785

Mr. Jay's acceptance as minister for Foreign affairs gives us hopes that his wisdom and integrity will have a happy influence upon our affairs.

John Adams to John Jay, Auteuil near Paris, 24 April 1785

I think myself extremely happy in common with our Countrymen, that I have to correspond with a Gentleman to whom our foreign Affairs are very familiar by long Experience, who knows

where our Difficulties and Dangers lie, and who has proved himself upon all Occasions Superiour to them.

John Adams to William Gordon, Auteuil near Paris, 27 April 1785

The Office of foreign Affairs is in so good Hands that I think our Affairs abroad were never so likely to be well managed.

Louis Guillaume Otto to Comte de Vergennes, New York, 6 September 1785

Mr. Jay's report will not be adopted lightly, that this Minister, in whom much ability cannot be denied, nevertheless allows himself to be drawn into the party of the East, that he wishes to acquire popularity by proving himself the most zealous partisan of Democracy and the declared Enemy of all foreign influence, that nonetheless an inclination toward England is perceived on his part, which has been disagreeable to several delegations, and that his reports have not always been received as he might.

John Jay to Richard Price, New York, 27 September 1785

All that the best men can do is, to persevere in doing their duty to their country, and leave the consequences to Him who made it their duty; being neither elated by success, however great, nor discouraged by disappointments however frequent and mortifying.

Louis Guillaume Otto to Comte de Vergennes, New York, 1 October 1785

If this system of reserve is adopted by most of the members of Congress, it is so still more particularly by Mr. Jay. This Minister appears to have entirely embraced the Northern party; he joins to a great prejudice for the importance of his homeland an extreme distrust of our principles and our measures. He rarely responds to the questions that are put to him, and the few words that he permits himself to say, are so laconic that it is difficult to divine the sense of them.

It is not only from my own observations that I judge this Minister. My predecessor always found him difficult and little communicative.

Louis Guillaume Otto to Comte de Vergennes, New York, 25 December 1785

The inconsistency of Congress, My Lord, is gradually giving the Ministers of the various departments a power incompatible with the spirit of liberty and jealousy that reigns in this land. They do not want Members of Congress to hold office for more than three years, but the Secretaries of State are removable only for bad conduct. It follows that these Ministers, perfectly informed about current affairs, enjoy a great superiority over the delegates that chance has assembled from all parts of the Continent, and who are for the most part strangers to their task. Mr. Jay especially has already acquired a particular ascendancy over the members of Congress. All the important business passes through his hands; he makes his report on it, and it is rare that Congress is of an opinion different from his own. Instead of appointing Committees, they will gradually become accustomed to see only through the eyes of Mr. Jay, and although this Minister may be as capable as anyone to direct the conduct of the United States well, his influence must necessarily strike a blow to the liberty and the impartiality that should reign in the national Senate.

James Monroe to James Madison, New York, 26 December 1785

His character is too well established to be called in question upon any unimportant or trivial occasion.

Louis Guillaume Otto to Comte de Vergennes, New York, 10 January 1786

Mr. Jay's political importance increases every day. Congress appears to govern itself only by his impulses, and it is as difficult to obtain anything without the concurrence of this minister as to have a measure that he has proposed rejected. The indolence of most of the members of Congress and the ignorance of some others occasion this Superiority. It is much more convenient to ask the opinion of the minister of foreign affairs regarding all current business than to resolve themselves into a Committee, so that Mr. Jay's prejudices and passions insensibly become those of Congress, and that without being aware of it this Assembly is no more than the instrument of its first Minister. Happily Mr. Jay is a patriot and generally well disposed, but his grievances against France render him highly inflexible regarding our most just requests. I have already had the honor to inform you that neither M. de Marbois nor I have received any response to the various memoranda that we have delivered for nearly a year. This minister always tells me that Congress is too busy to take them into consideration, but I know that this Assembly has not had anything very important to decide for a long time, and that these delays are due only to the ill will of Mr. Jay. I would not complain, My Lord, if I did not have reason to fear that the long silence of Congress may be attributed to my inactivity, but I am pained to see that for the simplest things, and what requires only two hours of discussion, this minister has put off responding for several months. Such is among others the Treaty proposed by M. le Baron d'Ogny [over postal matters between France and the U.S.] I have not yet obtained any response on this Subject, and I cannot importune Mr. Jay since his response is always ready; it is to say that he will seize the first occasion to bring this affair to the attention of Congress. Besides, this Minister has the character, for which the Quakers are reproached, of never responding directly to any question that is put to him. As he never makes his opinion known, it is impossible to rectify it, and although it may be he who inspires most of the resolutions of Congress, he always has the air of referring to this assembly for all clarifications that are asked of him. It is very troublesome for us, My Lord, that for so important a position, the choice of Congress has justly fallen on a man who does not like us. The article of the fisheries is always on his mind, and it is impossible to make him see reason regarding a subject on which we have not really been prejudicial to the United States. Besides, whatever this minister's prejudices may be in our regard, I cannot deny that there are few men in America more able to fill the position that he occupies. The veneration that he has inspired in almost all members of Congress proves more than anything else that even the jealousy so inseparable from the American character has not found a hold on him, and that he is as circumspect in his conduct as he is firm and unshakeable in his political principles and in his coldness for France.

Louis Guillaume Otto to Comte de Vergennes, New York, 20 May 1786

Mr. Jay . . . is only the echo of the delegates of Massachusetts Bay.

William Livingston to John Jay, Elizabethtown, N.J., 28 August 1786

Are you totally discouraged from coming to Elizabeth Town by our bad luck at fishing on our last jaunt? Pray let us try again, and I can almost assure you of better success.

Founders on the Founders

George Washington to James Madison, Mount Vernon, 31 March 1787

From the acknowledged abilities of the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, I could have had no doubts of his having ably investigated the infractions of the Treaty on both sides.

New York Daily Advertiser, 24 April 1787

In our paper of the 19th instant we gave the following account of Mr. Hamilton's motion for a resolution to send additional delegates to the [Constitutional] convention.

"Mr. Hamilton moved for a resolution to appoint additional delegates, to represent this state in convention.

"He mentioned the great benefits that would result from sending, either Mr. Chancellor Livingston, Mr. Benson, Mr. Duane, or Mr. Jay, particularly the latter. These names he threw out for the consideration of the members."

On review of our notes we find there is an idea conveyed in the above short account of the matter which does not correspond with what was said.

Mr. Hamilton after several introductory observations went on thus.—

I think it proper to apprise the house of the gentlemen on some of whom I wish their choice to fall, and with a view to which I bring forward the present motion. Their abilities and experience in the general affairs of this country cannot but be useful upon such an occasion.—I mean Mr. Chancellor Livingston, Mr. Duane, Mr. Benson, and Mr. Jay. The particular situation of the latter may require an observation or two. His being a servant of Congress might seem an objection to his appointment, but surely this objection if it had any weight would have applied with equal force to the appointment of a member of that body. In the case of Mr. Lansing the two houses appear to have thought there was no force in it; and I am persuaded there can be no reason to apply a different rule to Mr. Jay. His acknowledged abilities, tried integrity, and abundant experience in the affairs of this country, foreign and domestic will not permit us to allow any weight to any objection which would imply a want of confidence in a character that has every title to the fullest confidence.

John Jay to Matthew Ridley, New York, 4 January 1788

We have not yet tried the Beer you were so kind as to send us, thinking it best to let it rest a while before we tap it—However it may turn out you have our Thanks for your friendly attention. There is at present a Scarcity of Segars [cigars], & one of the best kind to be had—a sample of some of the highest Price is sent [to you] by Capt. White; but I doubt your being much pleased with them—my Stock is consumed, & I will endeavor to supply you & myself out of the first Parcel of good ones that may arrive from the Havannah.

New York Daily Advertiser, 20 February 1788

[Nominated for state ratifying convention] From his long services abroad and at home, and the nature of his present office as minister of foreign affairs, must be supposed to possess the best information of any man in the United States, on our relative situation with foreign nations.

“A Citizen, and real Friend to Order and good Government,” *New York Daily Advertiser*, 21 March 1788

The distinguished abilities, and unshaken integrity of Mr. Jay, recommended him at an early period in life, to all his acquaintance, as well as to the notice of the British Government, in the late Province of New York, antecedent to the war; insomuch, that he would have been appointed to one of the first offices in that Province, upon the first vacancy that should happen: Nevertheless when the rights of his country became invaded by the British, he took a decided and active part in her favor; his uniform services since, both at home and abroad, particularly in the formation of the Treaty of Peace, so peculiarly advantageous and beneficial to the interest of the United States; in the management and prosecution of which, he had a principal share. Mr. Jay’s legal knowledge is incontrovertible; his arguments are methodically arranged and drawn forth with judgment; he reasons logically and well, and excels most men in dissecting the arguments of his opponents, and rendering them futile and nugatory; he is able and pointed in reply, and possesses the powers of persuasion in an eminent degree; in short, Mr. Jay is endowed with the necessary qualifications to constitute a Statesman.

Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, Paris, 25 May 1788

He was of a disposition . . . to restrain himself within any limits of expense whatever, and it suited his recluse turn.

Patrick Henry: Speech in Virginia Ratifying Convention, 13 June 1788

As to the American Secretary [for Foreign Affairs], the goodness of his private character is not doubted.—It is public conduct which we are to inspect. The public conduct of this Secretary goes against the express authority of nine States.—Although he may be endowed with the most brilliant talents, I have a right to consider his politics as abandoned. Yet his private virtues may merit applause.

Charles Tillinghast to John Lamb, Poughkeepsie, N.Y., 21 June 1788

I am happy to inform you that our Friends here continue firm in the opposition, and that all the Arts of a Hamilton &c will have no effect, although he, the Chancellor, & Mr. Jay are continually singling out the Members in Opposition (when out of Convention) and conversing with them on the subject. The latter’s manners and mode of address would probably do much mischief, were the members not as firm as they are—

“Extract of a letter from a Gentleman at Poughkeepsie,” *New York Daily Advertiser*, 28 June 1788

Mr. Jay arose [in the New York ratifying convention], commanding great respect and remarkable attention, he was heard with great pleasure and satisfaction; and, no doubt, he spoke convincingly on the points raised. He has the most peculiar knack of expressing himself I ever heard. Fancy, passion, and in short every thing that marks an orator, he is a stranger to; and yet none who hear but are pleased with him, and captivated beyond expression. He appears to me not to speak as a scribe, but as a man having a right to speak, and at the same time having authority to command them to obey:—he was up about fifteen minutes.

Peter Van Schaack to Henry C. Van Schaack, 29 June 1788

I am told Mr. Jay's Arguments like the Rock of Ajax knocked down all opposition, and like the Pillar of Fire which conducted the Israelites through the Wilderness, showed Us the Way out of our many Embarrassments.

Otto's Biographies, Fall 1788

Formerly a distinguished lawyer; member of the principal committees at the beginning of the Revolution, president of Congress, minister plenipotentiary to Spain and one of the commissioners to negotiate the peace; at present Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Profound, farsighted, circumspect, excellent writer. His influence in Congress is very great.* He has always been of the Eastern Party, this is to say that he wanted to prolong the war in order to obtain more favorable advantages to the New Foundland fisheries. He succeeded in persuading Congress that M. de Rayneval was in England only to oppose Britain giving the United States the fisheries and the land in the West. They even discovered an alleged plan for a treaty which Mr. [Richard] Oswald must have communicated confidentially to the American negotiator which seemed to verify the intentions that he attributed to our Court. This piece of information served as the pretext for coming to a conclusion with the English without consulting us, even though their instructions directed them to positively take no course of action unknown to our minister. Although he would deny it, the confidence that we have given Mr. Franklin might be the principal cause of Mr. Jay's coldness toward us since. He is naturally not very flexible and consequently hardly proper in the position he occupies. Nothing is more stiff, more reserved, more repulsive than his deportment; one would say that he is sulky with everyone, and he wants to be respected for his arrogance, his coldness, his silence, rather than by some amiable qualities. It is possible to finish nothing with him and he has between his hands _____ there is more than one to whom he has not made a word of response. All foreigners complain about his silence and Mr. Van Berkel Has often been tempted to address Congress directly without passing his remarks through Mr. Jay.

If Mr. Jay does not change his conduct in our regard, it will not be impossible to have him removed. Most of the members of Congress respect him for his talents, but they don't like him at all. Southerners especially are not in favor of him since he has worked vigorously to sacrifice the navigation of the Mississippi in favor of Spain. Some of them even wanted to force Mr. Jay's dismissal; the Southern delegates have long insisted on the removal of Congress from New York, where Mr. Jay has built a grand house; but they relented when they saw that this secretary of state was disposed to follow Congress.

*Formerly, important affairs were submitted to a committee, but Congress is now in the sensible habit of asking for a report from Mr. Jay on all the affairs relative to his department and this assembly is almost always of the sentiment of its secretary. The ignorance of some members, the indolence of many others and the great opinion that they have of Mr. Jay's talents, gives him much more power than is becoming a servant of a Republic.

John Jay to Robert R. Livingston, undated

When our friendship first commenced, or rather when it was particularly professed to each other (the 29 March 1765) and for sometime after, I took it into my head that our dispositions were in many respects similar. Afterwards I conceived a different opinion. It appeared to me that you had more vivacity. Bashfulness and pride rendered me more staid. Both equally ambitious but pursuing it in different roads. You flexible, I pertinacious. Both equally sensible of indignities, you less prone to sudden resentments. Both possessed of warm passions, but you of more self-possession.

You formed for a citizen of the world, I for a College or a Village. You fond of large acquaintance, I careless of all but a few. You could forbid your countenance to tell tales, mine was a babbler. You understood men and *women* early, I knew them not. You had talents and inclination for intrigue, I had neither. Your mind (and body) received pleasure from a variety of objects, mine from few. You was naturally easy of access, and in advances, I in neither. Unbounded confidence kept us together—may it ever exist!

William Samuel Johnson: Conversation with George Beckwith, New York, 1789

I regret Mr. Jay's removal from the Department of Foreign Affairs, as he is a man of a just and firm character; his successor Mr. Jefferson I do not so much approve of.

George Washington to John Jay, New York, 5 October 1789

It is with singular pleasure that I address you as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, for which office your commission is enclosed.

In nominating you for the important Station, which you now fill, I not only acted in conformity to my best judgment, but I trust I did a grateful thing to the good citizens of these United States; and I have a full Confidence that the love which you bear to our country, and a desire to promote the general happiness, will not suffer you to hesitate a moment to bring into action the talents, knowledge, and integrity which are so necessary to be exercised at the head of that department which must be considered as the keystone of our political fabric.

Robert Barnwell to John Kean, New York, 10 January 1789

I have had the satisfaction of being introduced to a number of valuable characters, and amongst them though at the head in my opinion is Mr. Jay, from some cause unknown to my self I had ever entertained the highest estimation of the Ability and Principle of this gentleman. Neither his Official writings nor his conversation gave me room to think this predilection misplaced. The most happy talent in the distribution of his Subjects, the closest reasonings and the most impartial Reports combine to render him the most proper person for the Office which he holds, and on seeing him and hearing him speak (the purity of his language excepted) could I believe the transmigration of souls. I could readily distinguish the same Spirit and appearance which belonged to and inspired a Hamden and a Pym.

Abigail Adams to John Adams, New York, 12 January 1789

Mr. and Mrs. Jay desire their affectionate Regards to you. He is as plain as a Quaker, and as mild as New Milk, but under all this, an abundance of Rogury in his Eye's. I need to say to you who so well know him, that he possesses an excellent Heart.

Tench Coxe to James Madison, New York, 27 January 1789

Mr. Jay who is the only candidate besides [John Adams] that is talked of [for U.S. Vice President will have but little support in this Matter left. He appears to have no Views himself. Though well qualified for more important station than the proper Duties of the VP. render that yet I think it would be wrong to draw him for the Office of foreign affairs. Our treaties are all unformed—he alone knows the whole Negotiations—he is among the very few who have been in the way of qualifying themselves for foreign negotiations. He is much esteemed in Pennsylvania but her votes

& influence would be exerted against him in the present state of the question on the seat of Government.

Tench Coxe to Benjamin Rush, New York, 12 February 1789

Mr. Adams will undoubtedly be V. President. Mr. Jay (entre nous) would not have objected I think—and is not without views of a higher situation at a future day. A good use may be made of this in the Business of the Government.

John Adams to Benjamin Rush, New York, 17 May 1789

Mr. Wilson I have long known, esteemed, and respected; but if I had a vote, I could not promise to give it for him to be Chief Justice. All things Considered that have ever come to my knowledge I feel myself inclined to wish, because I am fully convinced, that Services, Hazards, Abilities and Popularity, all properly weighed the Balance is in favour of Mr. Jay—One of the judges, I wish Mr. Wilson to be: and the difference is not great between the first and the other Judges.

I should inform You, Sir, that, in spite of Mr. Adams's tenacious opinions and the haughty republicanism that he shares with his countrymen I find him much more open and disposed to good sense than Mr. Jay who established in principle, that it is not necessary to get entangled with the European Powers, that Americans are Americans who should do all that suits them without worrying about what goes on elsewhere and that it is up to the Ministers of Foreign Powers to reconcile themselves to whatever the Americans establish for their own convenience. Nothing resembles soft wax less than Mr. Jay, whom You know better than I and who did not hold back from avenging himself on me as a Foreign Minister for unpleasantries he suffered in Europe and who, I believe, would like nothing more than to reproach me further for this if it meant he retained his status and gained esteem.

James Madison to Thomas Jefferson, New York, New York, 27 May 1789

[Jay] is more known [than Hamilton] by character throughout the U.S.

Benjamin Rush to John Adams, Philadelphia, 4 June 1789

I highly respect Mr. Jay but supposed he would have been continued in his present office.

James Madison to Edmund Randolph, New York, 17 June 1789

High as the existing President stands, I question whether it would be very safe for him even not to reinstate J—y or K——x.

Comte de Moustier to Comte de Montmorin, New York, 29 June 1789

It is not unlikely that this Minister Plenipotentiary [Thomas Jefferson] would become, upon his return, Minister of Foreign Affairs, if Mr. Jay obtains the post of Chief Justice as expected. Although Mr. Jefferson has been delayed, there will be nothing lost for him because the slowness of the Congress in all its operations will give him time to arrive, perhaps even well before all the departments, and especially the judiciary department are formed and organized. However, Mr. Jefferson's views on the post of Secretary of Foreign Affairs are unknown. It is generally believed

only that if he is disposed to accept it, it will be offered to him, just as it is believed that Mr. Jay would like a permanent position better than one that could be revoked without process. This change suits us in every regard. Mr. Jefferson being better informed about the customs and conventions between Sovereigns and Nations, having more elevated sensibilities, more conciliatory manners, and inclinations that are more suitable to the good of his country (which demand the approbation of the King) than the man he would replace.

Comte de Moustier to Comte de Morin, New York, 8 September 1789

Mr. Jay is fulfilling the functions [of the Department of State] while awaiting the nomination that will be made by the President. This Secretary has not suppressed anything of his repulsive manners, his unpleasant character or his extreme bias against France. Born into a refugee family, he retained the feelings of a religious persecutee and he is the only man from the State of New York, who is opposed to tolerance of the Catholic religion, saying that the lands cleared by his ancestors would never be used to nourish those who chased them from their homeland. Although Mr. Jay never ceases to demand generosity from those who negotiate with him, he gives none in return. Attached to the New England party, he is easily tempted by the smallest gains and he neither can nor will see the big picture. His reserve, taciturnity, and grave demeanor give him greater regard than he seems to merit; he is neither an Orator, nor a good writer, nor assiduous in his office and the Department of State will not make him more approachable or more hard-working. I believe that, in spite of the arrogance of this Secretary, it would be possible to win him over if as much account is taken of his personal interest, as he seems to take himself.

Paine Wingate to Timothy Pickering, New York, 14 September 1789

The Secretary of State is not yet nominated. The reason of that I conclude is that Mr. Jay is designed for chief Justice when the birth is provided, if the emoluments should be better than the place he now holds.

Samuel A. Otis to John Langdon, New York, 20 September 1789

The *Keeper of the Tower* is waiting to see which Salary is best, that of Lord Chief Justice or Secretary of State.

Samuel A. Otis to Caleb Strong, New York, 20 September 1789

Mr. Jay is to be chief Justice, or Secy. of State, at option—Suppose he will take that which gives the *best Salary*.

Comte de Moustier to Comte de Montmorin, New York, 3 October 1789

Mr. Jay whose spite is more active and whose conduct is more cautious, would have been more dangerous if he had held on to the department of Foreign Affairs. Fortunately, he was just replaced by the man whom we could most hope to see at the head of this department. Mr. Jefferson whose return we expect at any moment is named Secretary of State and it is presumed that he will accept this post to which Interior Affairs other than Finance and War are attached as well as foreign affairs. Mr. Jay is named Chief Justice, a permanent position and third in dignity. He is well known for his Jurisprudence and well suited to the important position he is going to fill. His personal

qualities, the dryness of his manner, his irascible character and his tendency to put himself first render him inappropriate for the position that he formerly occupied, rather than filled well. He has shown me greater regard recently than he was accustomed to, and I think Gen. Washington must have insinuated to him not to give the King's Minister reason to believe that Mr. Jay harbored prejudices against France, because my personal conduct toward him, which never varied, could not induce him to treat me either better or worse. It will always be of interest to maintain a good outward relationship with Mr. Jay, while waiting for an inner change, because of the great influence his position gives him on the decision of many questions that must be decided by the federal courts of which he is the first Judge and where he will try to raise himself up as an Oracle.

Edward Rutledge to John Jay, Charleston, S.C., 31 October 1789

For all the good Qualities which you possess my dear Friend, there was none which fixed you more firmly in my Esteem, than the inflexible Integrity which you discovered on all occasions.

John Trumbull to John Adams, Hartford, Conn., 30 March 1790

I doubt with You, whether any Man but Washington could at present support the Constitution [as President of the United States]—But were he dead, I am sure none who has been thought of as your Rival, could support it while You were living & neglected. . . . Mr. Jay is the only Man, who possesses in any considerable degree the general confidence of the Northern States, or is talked of among us as qualified for that Office—But no Party could be formed against *You* in his favour among us.

Joshua Loring to Jonathan Palfrey, Boston, 13 May 1790

We have had the first Circuit Court opened here lately; Jay of New York Chief Justice; who appears quite in Court Style with respect to attendance, having Mr. Jackson the Marshal, Col. Samuel Bradford Deputy Marshal always attending him upon his excursions or visits; otherwise he is a plain dressing Man & makes but a poor figure, being rather of a small size, remarkably thin & in my opinion looks more like an high Lad alias a worn out Buck* than a Judge of the first Court in America. This proves the falsity of judging by appearances as it is allowed he is a man of superior abilities & understanding.

*A dandy or a fop.

Christopher Gore to Rufus King, Boston, 15 May 1790

The Chief Justice hath delighted the people of Massachusetts—they regret that Boston was not the place of his nativity—and his manners, they consider, so perfect as to believe that New York stole him from New England.

Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, Philadelphia, 1791

Jay [has been] nominated Chief Justice. We were afraid of something worse.

Thomas Jefferson to James Monroe, Philadelphia, 1791

Jay covering the same [monarchical] principles under the veil of silence, is rising steadily on the ruins of his friends.

John Jay to Catharine Ridley, Philadelphia, 1 February 1791

My Life has for many Years past been in several Respects various—It is the Fortune of few to choose their Situations—it is the Duty & Interest of all to accommodate themselves to the one which Providence chooses for them—on my Return from Europe I was placed in an office which confined me to my Desk & Papers—I am now in one which takes me from my Family half the Year, and obliges me to pass too considerable a part of my Time on the Road, in Lodging Houses & Inns.

Robert Troup to Alexander Hamilton, New York, 19 March 1792

The Moment Jay came forward [as a candidate for the governor of New York] I abandoned all ideas of Burr & have constantly been doing every thing in my power to promote Jay's election. If we can carry it the state will be blessed. He is one of the worthiest of men—& independent of his character I owe him obligations which my heart tells me I never can discharge.

Peter Van Gaasbeek to Aaron Burr, 28 March 1792

[Considering the New York gubernatorial election in Ulster County, N.Y.] Permit me to declare to You that it was with the greatest reluctance we agreed to relinquish You as our Candidate for Governor. In fact it was not complied with until we were fully authorized so to do, upon which a few friends agreed to Unite in favor of Mr. Jay. with hardly the appearance of the smallest prospect of success, However great the Abilities of Mr. Jay, his popularity was lost, or totally absorbed in consequence of his exertions as is said in favor of Manumitting the Slaves. We have had to encounter many difficulties on that score, the General prevailing wish However for a Change in the administration appears to be predominant in as much that altho I had no grounds to calculate that Mr. Jay would have one Vote out of five, I think I can safely assert that in my humble opinion we will nearly be one for one, and if we succeed in converts to the Day of Election—as we have hitherto, I pronounce a decided Majority will appear in favor of Mr. Jay—had You remained the Candidate I would have pledged myself that three-fourths if not four-fifths of the County would have been in Your favor.

James Madison: Memorandum on a Discussion with President Washington about his Retirement, Philadelphia, 5 May 1792

With respect to Mr. Jay his election [as President] would be extremely dissatisfactory on several accounts. By many he was believed to entertain the same obnoxious [monarchical] principles with Mr. Adams, & at the same time would be less open and therefore more successful in propagating them. By others (a pretty numerous class) he was disliked & distrusted, as being thought to have espoused the claims of British Creditors at the expense of the reasonable pretensions of his fellow Citizens in debt to them. Among the western people, to whom his negotiations for ceding the Mississippi to Spain were generally known, he was considered as their most dangerous enemy & held in peculiar distrust & disesteem.

John Jay to Sarah Jay, East Hartford, Conn., 18 June 1792

[On his lost to George Clinton in the disputed New York gubernatorial election of 1792.] The reflection that the majority of the Electors were for me is a pleasing one; that injustice has taken place does not surprise me, and I hope will not affect you very sensibly. The intelligence found me perfectly prepared for it. Having nothing to reproach myself with in relation to this event, it shall neither discompose my temper, nor postpone my sleep. A few years more will put us all in the dust; and it will then be of more importance to me to have governed *myself* than to have governed the *State*.

Edmund Randolph to James Madison, Germantown, Pa., 12 August 1792

An opinion, which has been long entertained by others, is riveted in my breast, concerning the C.J. [Chief Justice]. He has a nervous [i.e., strong] and imposing elocution; and striking lineaments of face, well-adapted to his real character. He is clear too in the expression of his ideas. But that they do not abound on legal subjects has been proved to my conviction. In two judgments, which he gave last week; one of which was written, there was no method, no legal principle, no system of reasoning.

John Adams to Abigail Adams, New York, 2 December 1792

The C[hief] J[ustice] has been very Sick but is recovered. He looks very thin and pale however.

James Iredell to Hannah Iredell, Richmond, Va., 20 May 1793

We are just arrived, perfectly well but extremely fatigued—We have each of us got an excellent room in the same house. Mr. Jay grows infinitely upon intimacy.

Alexander Hamilton to George Washington, Philadelphia, 14 April 1794

[On the choice of treaty negotiator to Great Britain] I beg leave to add that of the persons whom you would deem free from any constitutional objections—Mr. Jay is the only man in whose qualifications for success there would be thorough confidence and him whom alone it would be advisable to send. I think the business would have the best chance possible in his hands. And I flatter myself that his mission would issue in a manner that would produce the most important good to the Nation.

John Alsop to Rufus King, New York, 17 April 1794

[On the appointment of an envoy to negotiate with Britain.] I wish Mr. Jay was appointed and would accept; we all know his abilities and firmness.

John Adams to Abigail Adams, Philadelphia, 22 April 1794

The President has appointed Mr. Jay to go to England as Envoy Extraordinary, in hopes that Satisfaction may be obtained for the Injuries done Us in the Capture of our Vessells. I have no very Sanguine hopes of his Success, but if any Man can Succeed I presume he is as likely as any. At least he will give as much Satisfaction to the American People as any Man.

John Adams to Abigail Adams Smith, Philadelphia, 1 May 1794

Mr. Jay is to carry no sword, that I know of, offensive or defensive [in negotiating with Great Britain]; he is to require justice, and I hope will obtain it: if not, as he is generally thought to be a man of as much political prudence as any in our States, the people will be satisfied that nothing has been neglected or omitted by government, which ought to have been done in the way of negotiation.

Abigail Adams to John Adams, Quincy, Mass., 3 May 1794

I was much gratified by the appointment of Mr. Jay as Envoy extraordinary. I know not how the President could have made a more judicious choice.

Andrew Elliot: Sketch of Jay Sent by Lord Auckland to Lord, Grenville, Beckenham, England, 22 June 1794

I have known Mr. Jay's character intimately from his outset in public life. He was originally under me in adjusting some boundary lines of the Province.* He has good sense and much information; has great appearance of coolness, and is a patient hearer with a good memory. He argues closely, but is long-winded and self-opinionated. He can bear any opposition to what he advances, provided that regard is shown to his abilities. He may be attached by good treatment, but will be unforgiving if he thinks himself neglected; he will expect to be looked up to, not merely as an American agent, but, as Mr. Jay; who was in Spain; who has been high in office from the beginning. On the whole they could not have made a better choice, as he certainly has good sense; but almost every man has a weak and assailable quarter; and Mr. Jay's weak side is Mr. Jay.

*In the boundary dispute between New York and New Jersey (1769–1770) Jay was a clerk and Elliot was a commissioner.

John Jay to Colonel Read, London, 14 August 1794

To see things as being what they are, to estimate them aright, and to act accordingly, are of all attainments the most important.

John Jay to Lindley Murray, Royal Hotel, Pall-Mall, London, 22 August 1794

I perceive that we concur in thinking that we must go home to be happy, and that our home is not in this world. Here we have nothing to do but our duty, and by it to regulate our business and our pleasures, and travellers through the world (as we all are) may, without scruple, gratefully enjoy the good roads, pleasant scenes, and agreeable accommodations with which Providence may be pleased to render our journey more cheerful and comfortable; but in search of these we are not to deviate from the main road, nor, when they occur, should we permit them to detain or retard us. The theory of prudence is sublime and in many respects simple. The practice is difficult; and it necessarily must be so, or this would cease to be a state of probation.

John Quincy Adams to John Adams, Boston, 23 October 1794

The confidence reposed in me by Mr. Jay on this occasion has been flattering in the highest degree, and I hope he will have no occasion to regret it. His kindness and civilities to my brother

and me since our arrival, have been fully correspondent to the friendship which has so long subsisted between him and you, and to the benevolence which I have always experienced from him.

Charles Adams to John Adams, New York, 30 December 1794

In a former letter you ask why I suppose Mr. Jay less a Livingston than Hamilton a Schuyler.* I believe you could answer that question much more satisfactorily than myself. Whatever influence the aggrandizement of one's family may have on men yet it would be looking too much on the dark side of the picture of human nature to suppose that every man would give up honest principles to attain their objects. Mr. Jay is an object of envy to the Livingstons. He is an outcast from the family a circumstance which as much as any other raises him in my opinion. I should acquiesce in the Government of Mr. Hamilton. Yet I do not think it derogatory to his character to say I prefer Mr. Jay.

*Jay was the son-in-law of William Livingston; while Hamilton was the son-in-law of Philip Schuyler.

Alexander J. Dallas: Features of Mr. Jay's Treaty, 1795

We heard of Mr. Jay's diplomatic honors; of the royal and ministerial courtesy which was shown to him; and of the convivial boards to which he was invited; but, no more! Mr. Jay enveloped by a dangerous confidence in the intuitive faculties of his own mind, or the inexhaustible fund of his diplomatic information, neither possessed nor wished for external aid.

John Adams to John Trumbull, Philadelphia, 24 January 1795

Ld. Bacon once Said that a Man and his office were never better united than Ld. Coke, and the office of C.J. [i.e., Chief Justice] in a certain Cause. I say too that a Man and his office were never better matched, than Mr Jay and the Commission for Peace. No Man did or could behave better.

Jeremiah Smith to William Plumer, Philadelphia, 7 February 1795

The Supreme Court commenced their session on Monday.—Much of the dignity of the Court is lost by the absence of the Chief Justice—

Jeremiah Smith to William Plumer, Philadelphia, 24 February 1795

I shall attend the Supreme Court today—I am told that the Judges will this day deliver their opinions *seriatim* in the McClary Cause—This indicates that a difference in opinion exists on the Bench—They miss the chief-Justice—He was the ornament of the Bench—

John Adams to John Jay, Quincy, Mass., 26 April 1795

I am uninformed of the Contents of the Treaty: but have no Hesitation to congratulate you on your Success in accomplishing it: because I can have no doubt it will prove a fresh illustration of that Candour Honour, Equity Moderation, Magnanimity, as well as Address and Penetration which constitute your general Character and to which I have so often been a Witness.

Peter Augustus Jay to Essex Ridley, Philadelphia, 10 June 1795

My Father is now here perhaps for the last time—He has been chosen during his absence to an Office which will not oblige him to be at a distance from Home, and you know his disposition too well to suppose that he will again wish to quit his family & friends—

Gouverneur Morris: Diary, London, 14 June 1795

[Referring to the Jay Treaty] I presume that it will be confirmed by a feeble Majority but it will I imagine hang about Mr. Jay's Neck like a Mill Stone in his political Voyages.

John Adams to Abigail Adams, Philadelphia, 18 June 1795

His Excellency Governor Jay returned Yesterday to N. York. He has been very sociable and in fine Spirit. His Health is improving. We have no C.J. as yet nominated. It is happy that Mr. J. Election was over before the Treaty was published for the Parties against him would have quarrelled with the Treaty right or wrong that they might give a Colour to their Animosity against him.

“The Defence” No. I (Alexander Hamilton), New York *Argus*, 22 July 1795

No man is without his personal enemies. Pre-eminence even in talents and virtue is a cause of envy and hatred of its possessor. Bad men are the natural enemies of virtuous men. Good men sometimes mistake and dislike each other.

John Adams to Charles Adams, Philadelphia, 13 December 1795

[Give] My Friendship to your excellent Governor. His Palace at New York will not be the largest he will ever inhabit as I guess. While the idols of Jacobinism & Democracy, Jefferson and Clinton think themselves dying of Rheumatism amidst the Huzzas of the Mob. I fancy that Health and Spirits will be given to the Man [Jay] whose Effigies have been so much honoured, that he will live to see the Federal City and inhabit its proudest House.

John Adams to Abigail Adams, Philadelphia, 31 January 1796

Jay was to have written a concluding Peroration [in defense of the Jay Treaty]: but being always a little lazy and perhaps concluding the whole that it might be most politic to keep his Name out of it, and perhaps finding that the Work was already well done he neglected it.

John Jay to John Adams, New York, 2 February 1796

To be with my Family is a Comfort, and yet I have too much to do with public affairs to be comfortable—You can retire from the Senate to your Country Seat, and pass six months of Otium cum Dignitate—We have both had busy lives, and I apprehend that in the Fluctuation of human affairs, I am not to expect to enjoy the Tranquility and Repose which all wish for, but which few find until they pass to that Country where the weary rest from their Labors—and where parties and Politics have no admittance. I suspect that young nations like young people are apt to burn their Fingers; and that we have yet much wisdom to learn, and to pay for—I think I see in this Country the Seeds of Trouble; and that our political machines will in more Senses than one get out of

order.—But be these things as they may, I believe it to be wise to do all the Good we can, and to enjoy all the Good we meet with—

John Adams to Abigail Adams, Philadelphia, 31 December 1796

With respect to Mr. Jay you know that I believe him an upright honest Man, not given to intrigue, and incapable of deserting an old and long tried Friend, a Man of Honor, a Man of principle, a Man of Religion.

John Adams to Abigail Adams, Philadelphia, 18 January 1797

Mr. Jay, if I mistake not, will be a glorious Being in this Contry before very long.

William Pulteney to Nicholas Romaine, Weymouth, England, 20 January 1797

I am extremely glad that Mr. Jay enjoys now that good opinion of his countrymen, which he always deserved. Indeed it was to be expected, as truth will always at last prevail.

George Washington's Comments of James Monroe's Pamphlet *A View of the Conduct of the Executive of the United States*, c. March 1798

[Washington's defense of Jay's appointment to negotiate with the British in 1794.] Did the then situation of our affairs admit of any other alternative than Negotiation or War? Was there an abler man, to be found to conduct the former, or one more esteemed?

Aaron Burr to Timothy Green, Albany, N.Y., 5 March 1798

[On the approaching New York gubernatorial election.] There will be little or no opposition to Jay though he has lost many friends—but no suitable Candidate can be found to put in opposition—Your friend B. has other Views & declines—the others who were spoken of do not appear to be espoused with sufficient Zeal.

Timothy Pickering to Rufus King, Philadelphia, 4 May 1799

We are looking forward with anxiety to the next election for Governor. . . . The idea is that Mr. Jay will retire from public life. . . . Would you believe, my good friend, that our influence on a general scale has been considerably diminished by Mr. Jay's administration? This, I am persuaded, will to you appear incredible: the fact nevertheless is so. With the best intentions his administration has injured his reputation and lessened our weight. This disappointment has contributed more than any event that has ever occurred to shake my confidence in our present system of government. I have long been anxious to communicate this extraordinary fact to you, but I have been restrained by motives which will readily occur to you. I can conceal it no longer. His last election bore no sort of comparison in point of zeal and exertion with the one preceding it. . . . The opinion I give you is not confined to a few of our friends.

John Adams to John Jay, Washington, 24 November 1800

Among the very few truths, in a late pamphlet, there is one which I shall ever acknowledge with pleasure, namely, that the principal merit of the negotiations for peace was Mr. Jay's. I wish you would permit our Historical Society to print the papers you drew up on that occasion. I often say, that, when my confidence in Mr. Jay shall cease, I must give up the cause of confidence, and renounce it with all men.

John Adams to John Jay, Washington, 19 December 1800

Mr Elsworth afflicted with the Gravel and the Gout and intending to pass the Winter in the south of France after a few Weeks in England, has resigned his office of Chief Justice, and I have nominated you to your old station. This is as independent of the Inconstancy of the People, as it is of the Will of a President. In the future Administration of our Country the firmest Security We can have against the Effects of visionary Schemes or fluctuating Theories, will be in a solid Judiciary; and nothing will cheer the hopes of the best Men so much as your Acceptance of this appointment. You have now a great Opportunity to render a most signal service to your Country. I therefore pray you most earnestly to consider of it, seriously and Accept it. You may very properly resign the short Remainder of your Gubernatorial Period, and Mr Van Renselaer may discharge the Duties. I had no permission from you to take this Step, but it appeared to me that Providence had thrown in my Way an Opportunity not only of marking to the Public, the Spot, where, in my Opinion the greatest Mass of Worth remained collected in one Individual but of furnishing my Country with the best Security, its Inhabitants afforded, against the increasing dissolution of Morals.

John Jay to John Adams, Albany, N.Y., 2 January 1801

I left the Bench perfectly convinced that under a System so defective, it would not obtain the Energy weight and Dignity which are essential to its affording due support to the national Government.; nor acquire the public Confidence and Respect, which, as the last Resort of the Justice of the Nation, it should possess. Hence I am induced to doubt both the Propriety and Expediency of my returning to the Bench under the present System, especially as it would give some Countenance to the neglect and Indifference with which the opinions & Remonstrances of the Judges on this important subject have been treated—

Altho' I wish and am prepared to be and remain in Retirement, yet I have carefully considered what is my Duty, and ought to be my conduct on this unexpected and interesting occasion. I find that, independent of other Considerations, the State of my Health removes every Doubt—it being clearly and decidedly incompetent to the Fatigues incident to the office—

Committee of Federal Freeholders of the City of New York to Governor John Jay, New York, 13 January 1801

We have been long accustomed to contemplate, sentiments of exalted satisfaction, the virtues, public and private, which adorn your character, and the distinguished talents and services which place you in the first rank of citizens eminently useful to their Country. To attempt to retrace the variety of arduous and honorable exertions which have marked your public career, would be an office to which we do not feel ourselves equal. Neither does it require our testimony to record, what will ever find an indelible memorial in the minds and hearts of the enlightened and just, that

in the great events which accomplished the American Revolution, you were among the most conspicuous, and that your abilities, patriotism and energy, then and since, have been repeatedly displayed with luster, as well in the councils of this State and of the United States, as in the different diplomatic trusts confided to your charge. The part you acted in forming the constitution of the State, and in promoting the adoption of the National Government, the important treaty which terminated the controversy for independence, and the Convention which lately preserved your Country from being involved in a pernicious war (defeating the predictions of evil, and confirming the anticipations of good), are a few of the many Acts that bear witness to the truths we have mentioned.

John Jay to Lindley Murray, Bedford, N.Y., 12 June 1805

For a long course of years I had been looking forward with desire to the tranquil retirement in which I now live, and my expectations from it have not been disappointed. I flatter myself that this is the inn at which I am to stop in my journey through life. How long I shall be detained is uncertain, but I rejoice in the prospect of the probability of being permitted to pass my remaining time in a situation so agreeable to me.

Thomas Boylston Adams to John Quincy Adams, Quincy, Mass., 19 February 1808

I should prefer John Jay to any man in the Union. He is out of the question, as much as if he had been dead for a Century.

John Adams to the *Boston Patriot*, Quincy, Mass., 22 June 1809

God forbid that I should attempt to diminish a ray of the solid glory of Mr. Jay, in this or any other transaction of his life. A man and his commission were never better united than Mr. Jay and the commission for peace. No man ever fulfilled the duties of a trust, with more integrity, constancy, fortitude, intelligence or address.—I have constantly said this in all companies and upon all occasions, for six and twenty years, and now rejoice in an opportunity of transmitting it to posterity.

John Jay to William Wilberforce, Bedford, N.Y., 8 November 1809

To see things as they are, to estimate them aright, and to act accordingly, is to be wise.

John Adams to the *Boston Patriot*, Quincy, Mass., 13 November 1811

Mr. Jay . . . is a modest, discreet man; nothing assuming in his nature, his habits or his manners.

John Adams to the *Boston Patriot*, Quincy, Mass., June 1812

That “the leading Men of the federal Party,” had “turned their Eyes to Mr Jay, and would have nominated him for the Presidency is as gross a lie as ever was told by Hamilton or [John] Henry. This is so false, So grossly and impudently false, that Mr Jay was deliberately Sett aside. I myself frequently proposed to these “leading Men of the Federal Party to nominate Mr Jay. I asked in particular one of the most intimate and confidential Friends of Alexander Hamilton, why do you not run Mr Jay? I was answered, “Why! We really look upon Mr Jay as a degraded Character.

Degraded? what do you mean? How degraded? “Why he has given Offence to the Southern States, by his negotiations concerning the Mississipi; his Treaty with Great Britain is extremely unpopular; and he is moreover become a religious Fanatick and devotes his time to the Study of the Prophesies.”

John Jay to Rev. S. S. Woodhull, Bedford, N.Y., 7 December 1821

It has long and uniformly been my opinion, that no person should accept of an office or place unless he be both able and willing to do the duties of it.

Jared Sparks Conversation with James Madison, April 1830

In speaking of Mr. Jay’s suspicions respecting the policy of the French Court at the time of making peace, Mr. Madison observed, that “he had two strong traits of character, suspicion and religious bigotry.”

Sarah Jay

John Jay to Catharine Livingston, Philadelphia, 27 February 1779

Accept my thanks for your friendly Letter of the 20th Inst. I am happy to hear that Sally has enjoyed so great a Share of Health during the Winter. It is a Blessing which has been sparingly dispensed to her for these three Years past; tho I still flatter myself that by Care & Attention it may yet be re-established. Her want of Spirits is an unfortunate Circumstance, and I lament it the more, as it results from a Cause in which I am nearly concerned.

Abigail Adams (Nabby): Journal in France, 21 February 1785

Speaking of Mrs. Jay, on whom every person who knew her when here bestows many encomiums, Madame de la Fayette said, she was well acquainted with, and very fond of Mrs. Jay; she added, Mrs. Jay and she thought alike; it was Mrs. Jay’s sentiment, that pleasure might be found at abroad—but happiness could only be found at home—in the society of one’s family and friends. She told my papa that Mrs. Jay did not like the French ladies—neither do I, said she.

Abigail Adams to John Adams, New York, 12 January 1789

Mrs. Jay has all the vivacity of a French woman blended with the modesty & Softness of an American Lady.

Martha (Patsy) Jefferson

Abigail Adams (Nabby): Journal in France, 27 January 1785

She is a sweet girl, delicacy and sensibility are read in every feature, and her manners are in unison with all that is amiable and lovely; she is very young.

Abigail Adams (Nabby): Journal in France, 9 May 1785

When we had finished our business we went to Mr. Jefferson's, where I saw Miss J., a most sensible girl.

Thomas Jefferson

John Adams: Diary, 25 October 1775

Duane says that Jefferson is the greatest Rubber off of Dust that he has met with, that he has learned French, Italian, Spanish and wants to learn German.

Thomas Jefferson to Giovanni Fabbroni, Williamsburg, Va., 8 June 1778

If there is a gratification which I envy any people in this world it is to your country its music. This is the favorite passion of my soul, & fortune has cast my lot in a country where it is in a state of deplorable barbarism.

Joseph Jones to James Monroe, 1 March 1780

The Governor need not fear the favour of the Community as to his future appointment while he continues to make the common good his Study. I have no intimate acquaintance with Mr. Jefferson but from the knowledge I have of him, he is in my Opinion as proper aman as can be put into the office having the requisites of ability, firmness, and diligence. You do well to cultivate his Friendship and cannot fail to enlist in a gratefull Sense of the favours he has conferred upon you, and while you continue to deserve his esteem he will not withdraw his countenance. If therefore upon conferring with him upon the Subject he wishes or shews desire that you go with him I would gratify him.

Jacob Rubsamen to Unknown, 1 December 1780

The Governor [i.e., Jefferson] possesses a Noble Spirit of Building, he is now finishing an elegant building projected according to his own fancy. In his parlor he is creating on the Ceiling a Compass of his own invention by which he can Know the strength as well as Direction of the Winds. I have promised to paint the Compass for it. . . . As all Virginians are fond of Music, he is particularly so. You will find in his House an Elegant Harpsichord Piano forte and some Violins. The latter he performs well upon himself, the former his Lady touches very skillfully and who, is in all Respects a very agreeable Sensible and Accomplished Lady.

James Madison to Edmund Pendleton, Philadelphia, 25 December 1781

It gives me great pleasure to hear of the honorable acquittal of Mr. Jefferson. I know his abilities, & think I know his fidelity & zeal for his Country as well, that I am persuaded it was a just one.

James Madison to Edmund Randolph, Philadelphia, 11 June 1782

Great as my partiality is to Mr. Jefferson, the mode in which he seems determined to revenge the wrong received from his Country, does not appear to me to be dictated either by philosophy or patriotism. It argues indeed a keen sensibility and a strong consciousness of rectitude.

Edmund Randolph to James Madison, Richmond, Va., 20 September 1782

Mrs. Jefferson has at last shaken off her tormenting pains by yielding to them,* and has left our friend inconsolable. I ever thought him to rank domestic happiness in the first class of the chief good; but I scarcely supposed, that his grief would be so violent, as to justify the circulating report, of his swooning away, whenever he sees his children.

*Martha Jefferson died on September 6, 1782.

James Madison to Edmund Randolph, 30 September 1782

I conceive very readily the affliction & anguish which our friend at Monticello must experience at his irreparable loss. But his philosophical temper renders the circulating rumor which you mention altogether incredible. Perhaps this domestic catastrophe may prove in its operation beneficial to his country by weaning him from those attachments which deprived it of his services. The vacancy occasioned by his refusal of a particular service,* you need not be informed, still subsists. As soon as his sensibility will bear a subject of such a nature, will you undertake to obtain his sentiments thereupon, and let me know whether or not his aversion is still insuperable?

*As a peace commissioner.

Thomas Jefferson to Elizabeth Wayles Eppes, 3 October 1782

This miserable kind of existence* is really too burthensome to be borne, and were it not for the infidelity of deserting the sacred charge left me [i.e., his three daughters], I could not wish its continuance a moment. For what could it be wished? All my plans of comfort and happiness reversed by a single event and nothing answering in prospect before me but a gloom unbrightened with one cheerful expectation. The care and instruction of our children indeed affords some temporary abstractions from wretchedness and nourishes a soothing reflection that if there be beyond the grave any concern for the things of this world there is one angel at least who views these attentions with pleasure and wishes continuance of them while she must pity the miseries to which they confine me.

*A distraught Jefferson speaks of his wife's recent death.

Marquis de Chastellux: Travels in North-America, in the Years 1780, 1781, and 1782

Let me describe to you a man, not yet forty, tall, and with a mild and pleasing countenance, but whose mind and understanding are ample substitutes for every exterior grace. An American, who

without ever having quitted his own country, is at once a musician, skilled in drawing; a geometer, an astronomer, a natural philosopher, legislator, and statesman. A senator of America, who sat for two years in that famous Congress which brought about the revolution; and which is never mentioned without respect, though unhappily not without *regret*: a governor of Virginia, who filled this difficult station during the invasions of Arnold, or Philips, and of Cornwallis; a philosopher, in voluntary retirement, from the world, and public business, because he loves the, inasmuch only as he can flatter himself with being useful to mankind; and the minds of his countrymen are not yet in a condition either to bear the light, or to suffer contradiction. A mild and amiable wife, charming children, of whose education he himself takes charge, a house to embellish, great provisions to improve, and the arts and sciences to cultivate; these are what remain to Mr. Jefferson, after having played a principal character on the theater of the new world, and which he preferred to the honorable commission of Minister Plenipotentiary in Europe. The visit which I made him was not unexpected, for he had long since invited me to come and pass a few days with him, in the center of the mountains; notwithstanding which I found his first appearance serious, nay even cold; but before I had been two hours with him we were as intimate as if we had passed our whole lives together; walking, books, but above all, a conversation always varied and interesting, always supported by that sweet satisfaction experienced by two persons, who in communicating their sentiments and opinions, are invariably in unison, and who understand each other at the first hint, made four days pass away like so many minutes.

Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, Annapolis, Md., 20 February 1784

Monroe is buying land almost adjoining me. Short will do the same. What would I not give you could fall into the circle. With such a society I could once more venture home & lay myself up for the residue of life, quitting all its contentions which grow daily more & more insupportable. Think of it. To render it practicable only requires you to think it so. Life is of no value but as it brings us gratifications. Among the most valuable of these is rational society. It informs the mind, sweetens the temper, cheers our spirits, and promotes health.

David Howell to Jonathan Arnold, Annapolis, Md., 21 February 1784

Gov. Jefferson, who is here a Delegate from Virginia, and one of the best members I have ever seen in Congress, has a good Library of French books, & has been so good as to lend me.

Thomas Jefferson to William Short, Annapolis, Md., 1 March 1784

Having to my habitual ill health, had lately added an attack of my periodical headache, I am obliged to avoid reading, writing and almost thinking.

Elbridge Gerry to Abigail Adams, Annapolis, Md., 16 April 1784

I think it not improbable, that the Report, which provides, that a Number of commercial Negotiations shall be set on Foot, under the joint Direction of Messrs. Adams, Franklin and Jay, will be accepted; upon our consenting that Mr. Jefferson of Virginia, who has an excellent character, and has been always on the most friendly Terms with Mr. Adams, shall be added to the Commissioners.

Thomas Jefferson to George Washington, Annapolis, Md., 16 April 1784

I consider the whole matter [concerning the Society of the Cincinnati] as between ourselves alone, having determined to take no active part in this or any thing else which may lead to altercation, or disturb that quiet and tranquillity of mind to which I consign the remaining portion of my life. I have been thrown back by events on a stage where I had never more thought to appear. It is but for a time however, and as a day laborer, free to withdraw or be withdrawn at will While I remain I shall pursue in silence the path of right.

Thomas Jefferson to G. K. van Hogendorp, Annapolis, Md., 4 May 1784

Your observation on the situation of my mind is not without foundation: yet I had hoped it was unperceived, as the agreeable conversations into which you led me, often induced a temporary inattention to those events which have produced that gloom you remarked. I have been happy and cheerful. I have had many causes of gratitude to heaven, but I have also experienced its rigors. I have known what it is to lose every species of connection which is dear to the human heart: friends, brethren, parents, children—retired, as I thought myself, to dedicate the residue of life to contemplation and domestic happiness, I have been again thrown by events on the world without an object on which I can place value. From those which are distant I am excluded by reason and reflection. The sun of life having with me already passed his meridian.

Chevalier de la Luzerne to Joseph-Matthais Gérard de Rayneval, Philadelphia, 17 May 1784

I have already had the honor of speaking to you of Mr. Jefferson. He was nominated in 1781 one of the five plenipotentiaries to treat with England. He then refused; but having lost his wife in 1782, he yielded to the entreaties of his friends. He was on the point of sailing for Europe when he learned that the provisional articles had been signed. He has been governor of Virginia; he quitted that place with the reputation of an enlightened, upright man, and of an excellent citizen; but incapable of holding the helm in stormy times. He loves the sciences and arts with passion, and he cultivates them with some success. He is full of sincerity; he loves much his own country; but he is far too much of a philosopher, and far too tranquil, to feel hatred or affection for any other nation, unless the interests of the United States are involved. His principle is that it is important for the happiness and the prosperity of the thirteen states to keep themselves as remote from England as the state of peace will permit; that as a consequence of this system it is for their advantage to keep up a particular attachment to France, and even Congress ought, as far as it can, direct toward us the affection of the people in order to balance the inclination and the numerous causes which carry them continually toward England. He has, notwithstanding these principles, shown himself to be the protector and the support of the refugees. He regards several of their demands as founded in justice; he has employed his pen and his influence, but without great success, to ensure the passage of plans relative to the acquitment of the debts; and in almost all discussions, it should be remarked that he has been on the honorable side of the question. If Mr. Franklin should cease to be minister near the king while Mr. Jefferson should be in France or in Europe, I do not doubt that the choice will fall on him. In that case, you will soon perceive that Mr. Jefferson does not join to his theoretical knowledge much experience or habit of public affairs.

Elbridge Gerry to John Adams, Philadelphia, 16 June 1784

Your Colleague Mr. Jefferson . . . You will find in him an able, faithful, & impartial Minister. On You & him We place our Reliance, & if You can preserve the Confidence & Friendship of each other, I am sure your Services will merit the highest approbation of your Country.

Arthur Lee to John Adams, New York, 12 August 1784

You are now to enter with a new partner whose real character you will study well before you confide in him. His genius is mediocre, his application great, his affectation greater, & his vanity greater than all. This last is the wheel by which the french and Dr. Franklin will endeavor to work him to their purposes. For a time I doubt not they will succeed. But it is not improbable that Dr. Franklin's jealousy of being eclipsed by him will soon produce a schism. You know how greedy Dr. F. is of praise & power—how intolerant, even to brutality & villainy, he is of any other person's praise. Mr. J. will snuff up the incense of french adulation, with not a bit less avidity; & as they are both in the same course for obtaining it, I should not wonder if they were soon to become rivals & enemies. But at first you must expect they will draw together, especially in one of the most material points, the carrying on the Negotiations at Paris.

François Barbé de Marbois to Joseph-Matthais Gérard de Rayneval, Philadelphia, 24 August 1784

Mr. Jefferson is an upright, just man, who belongs to no party, and his representations will have the greatest weight on the general Congress.

John Adams to James Warren, Auteuil near Paris, 27 August 1784

I received yours of the 29 of June, by Mr. Jefferson, whose appointment gives me great Pleasure. He is an old Friend with whom I have often had Occasion to labour at many a knotty Problems and in whose Abilities and Steadiness I always found great Cause to confide. The Appointment of this Gentleman, and that of Mr. Jay and Mr. Dana are excellent Symptoms.

Abigail Adams to Cotton Tufts, Auteuil near Paris, 8 September 1784

[Discussing having the correct black mourning clothes for the season.] . . . and though I had black it was not the silk for the Season and therefore could not be worn. Mr. Jefferson who is really a man who abhors this show and parade full as Much as Mr. Adams, yet he has not been long enough inured to it, to Submit with patience, or hear it without fretting. Back they had to go to Paris and lay by their mourning until the next death. His Hair too is an other affliction which he is tempted to cut off. He expects not to live above a Dozen years and he shall lose one of those in hair dressing. There is not a porter nor a washer woman but what has their hair powdered and dressed every day. Such is the Jeu.

John Adams to Elbridge Gerry, Auteuil near Paris, 9 September 1784

The Appointment of Mr. Jefferson is a very happy one. He is as active in Business as he is able, and has nothing So much at Heart as the real Service of his Country. I have known him of old. We have acted together formerly upon trying Occasions, and have always been Friends. Neither he nor

I, are altered, and I am under no Apprehensions but We Shall preserve the Confidence and Friendship of each other.

Abigail Adams (Nabby): Journal in France, 30 September 1784

Mr. J. is an agreeable man.

Marquis de Lafayette to Thomas Jefferson, Hartford, Conn., 11 October 1784

When I heard of your going to France, I heartily lamented I could not have the honor to receive you there. But in the same time anticipated the pleasure to wait upon you this winter in our French capital. Your voyage to Europe I ever considered as a favorite wish of mine, and on every public and private account am happy to think you at last have consented to go. Permit me, My dear Sir, farther to carry my views, and in case our respected Doctor Franklin is indulged in his wishes for retirement, let me hope my country may so far agrees with you, as to obtain your consent for a longer residence—an event which, both as a Frenchman, and an American, I most warmly desire.

Abigail Adams (Nabby): Journal in France, 13 October 1784

Came home and found Mr. Jefferson again. He is an agreeable man

John Adams to Francis Dana, Auteuil near Paris, 4 November 1784

You have given me an excellent Colleague and a good Friend in Mr. Jefferson.

William Knox to John Adams, London, 7 December 1784

I am charmed with the Character of Mr. Jefferson who you have at Paris, had I ever seen him I should beg my Comp[li]ment[s] to him. Such Characters give a Colour to the reputation of America, which the depraved state of Europe does not admit of

Thomas Jefferson to James Monroe, Paris, 10 December 1784

You shall find with me a room, bed, & plate with a hearty welcome.

John Adams to Elbride Gerry, Auteuil near Paris, 12 December 1784

Dr. Franklin is so bad with the Stone, that he has not been to Versailles nor Paris these twelve months; he has ventured to Auteuil, three or four times to dine with me, but the last Time he suffered such cruel Tortures in coming and going, that he seems determined to venture out no more unless in a Sedan. Mr. Jefferson has been a long time ill and confined, so that I have been much employ'd as a go between Passy and Paris. . . . Jefferson is an excellent hand. You could not have sent a better. He appears to me to be infected with no Party Passions or national prejudices, or any Partialities but for his own Country.

John Adams to William Knox, Auteuil near Paris, 15 December 1784

You can Scarcely have heard a Character too high of my Friend and Colleague Mr. Jefferson, either in Point of Talents or Virtues. My Fellow Labourer in Congress, eight or nine Years ago,

Founders on the Founders

upon many arduous Tryals, particularly in the Draught of our Declaration of Independence and in the formation of our Code of Articles of War, and Laws for the Army I have found him uniformly the Same wise and prudent Man and Steady Patriot. I only fear that his unquenchable Thirst of Knowledge may injure his Health.

Abigail Adams (Nabby): Journal in France, 27 January 1785

A small company to dine today. . . . Miss J. we expected; but the news of the death of one of Mr. J's children in America, brought by the Marquis de la Fayette, prevented. Mr. J. is a man of great sensibility, and parental affection. His wife died when this child was born, and he was almost in a confirmed state of melancholy; confined himself from the world, and even from his friends, for a long time; and this news has greatly affected him and his daughter. She is a sweet girl, delicacy and sensibility are read in every feature, and her manners are in unison with all that is amiable and lovely; she is very young.

John Quincy Adams: Diary, 29 January 1785

Mr. Jeffersons. He looks much afflicted. The last letters, brought him news of the death of one of his daughters: he has a great deal of Sensibility.

Thomas Jefferson to Arthur Lee, Autueil near Paris, 31 January 1785

My new Partner, is an old Friend and Co-adjutor, whose Character I Studied, nine or ten Years ago, and which I do not perceive to be altered. The Same industry, Integrity, and Talents remain without diminution. I am very happy in him but whether We Shall be able to accomplish any Thing here, I know not, any Thing I mean which may make it worth while to keep Us together. But if Congress order Us to Separate there will be the Same good Understanding and Correspondence between Us.

Abigail Adams to Cotton Tufts, 8 March 1785

Mr. Adams's Colleague Mr. Jefferson is an Excellent Man. Worthy of his station and will do honor to his Country.

John Quincy Adams: Diary, 11 March 1785

Spent the evening with Mr. Jefferson whom I love to be with, because he is a man of very extensive learning, and pleasing manners.

John Adams to Richard Cranch, Auteuil near Paris, 27 April 1785

I shall part with Mr. Jefferson, with great Regret, but as he will no doubt be placed at Versailles, I shall be happy in a Correspondence of Friendship, Confidence and Affection with the Minister at this Court, which is a very fortunate Circumstance, both for me, and the public.

John Adams to William Gordon, Auteuil near Paris, 27 April 1785

Mr. Jefferson is an excellent Citizen, Philosopher and Statesman, with whom I promise myself the most friendly and Cordial Correspondence, altho' I shall leave him with regret.

John Quincy Adams: Diary, 4 May 1785

He is a man of great Judgment.

Abigail Adams to Mary Smith Cranch, 8 May 1785

I shall really regret to leave Mr. Jefferson, he is one of the choice ones of the Earth.

Abigail Adams to Thomas Jefferson, London, 6 June 1785

Mr. Adams has already written you that we arrived in London upon the 27 of May. We journey'd slowly and sometimes silently. I think I have somewhere met with the observation that nobody ever leaves Paris but with a degree of tristness. I own I was loath to leave my garden because I did not expect to find its place supplied. I was still more loath on account of the increasing pleasure, and intimacy which a longer acquaintance with a respected Friend promised, to leave behind me the only person with whom my Companion could associate with perfect freedom, and unreserve: and whose place he had no reason to expect supplied in the Land to which he is destined.

Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, Paris, 20 September 1785

You see I am an enthusiast on the subject of the arts. But it is an enthusiasm of which I am not ashamed, as its object is to improve the taste of my countrymen, to increase their reputation, to reconcile to them the respect of the world & procure them its praise.

Thomas Jefferson to Abigail Adams, Paris, 25 September 1785

I do not love difficulties. I am fond of quiet, willing to do my duty, but irritable by slander and apt to be forced by it to abandon my post. These are weaknesses from which reason and your counsels will preserve Mr. Adams.

Abigail Adams to Mary Smith Cranch, London, 1 October 1785

In Mr. Jefferson he [i.e., Adams] has a firm and faithful Friend, with whom he can consult and advise, and as each of them have no object but the good of their Country in view, they have an unlimited confidence in each other, and they have only to lament that the Channel divides their more frequent intercourse.

Marquis de Lafayette to James McHenry, Paris, 3 December 1785

No better minister could be sent to France. He is everything that is good, upright, enlightened, and clever, and is respected and beloved by everyone that knows him.

John Adams to Henry Knox, 15 December 1785

You can Scarcely have heard a Character too high of my Friend and Colleague Mr. Jefferson, either in point of Power or Virtues. My Fellow Laborer in Congress, eight or nine years ago, upon many arduous Trials, particularly in the draft of our Declaration of Independence and in the formation of our Code of Articles of War, and Laws for the Army. I have found him uniformly the same wise and prudent Man and Steady Patriot. I only fear that his unquenchable Thirst for knowledge may injure his Health.

Marquis de Lafayette to George Washington, Paris, 6 February 1786

Words cannot sufficiently express to you how much I am pleased with Mr. Jefferson's public conduct—He unites every ability that can recommend him with the ministers, and at the time possesses accomplishments of the mind and the heart which cannot but give him many friends.

Lucy Ludwell Paradise to Thomas Jefferson, London, 5 May 1786

[Refers to Jefferson as] the First Character in Our State, and I shall add, the First in the Continent of North America.

Abigail Adams to Elizabeth Smith Shaw, London, 19 July 1786

Three of as Learned Men, as ever I had the honor of knowing, are three of the modestest Dr. Priestly, Dr. Price, and Mr. Jefferson, in neither of whom a self importance appears or a wish to force their sentiments and opinions upon Mankind.

Abigail Adams to Thomas Jefferson, London, 23 July 1786

Mr. Trumble will have the honor of delivering this to you, the knowledge you have of him, and his own merit will ensure him a favorable reception. He has requested a Letter from me, and I would not refuse him, as it gives me an opportunity of paying my respects to a Gentleman for whom I entertain the highest esteem, and whose Portrait dignifies a part of this room, tho it is but a poor substitute for those pleasures which we enjoy'd some months past.

Thomas Jefferson to Maria Cosway, Paris, 12 October 1786

And our own dear Monticello, where has Nature spread so rich a mantle under the eye? mountains, forests, rocks, rivers. With what majesty do we there ride above the storms! How sublime to look down into the workhouse of nature, to see her clouds, hail, snow, rain, thunder, all fabricated at our feet! And the glorious Sun, when rising as if out of a distant water, just gilding the tops of the mountains, and giving life to all nature!

Marquis de Lafayette to George Washington, Paris, 26 October 1786

Mr. Jefferson is a Most able and Respected Representative, and Such a Man as Makes me Happy to Be His Aid de Camp—Congress Have Made a choice Very favorable to their affairs.

Thomas Jefferson to Abigail Adams, Paris, November 1786

I am never happier than when I am performing good offices for good people.

Luigi Castiglioni: Sketches of American Statesmen, 1787

Mr. Jefferson is a man of about 50 years of age, lean, of a serious and modest appearance. His uncommon talents are not readily visible at a first encounter, but as one talks with him about the various subjects in which he believes himself to be informed, he very quickly gives evident proof of his judgment and application.

Louis Guillaume Otto to Comte de Vergennes, New York, 10 February 1787

Mr. Jefferson is for us in Virginia what Franklin has always been in Pennsylvania—that is, the most indefatigable panegyrist of France.

James Madison to William Short, Philadelphia, 6 June 1787

I had previously received from Mr. Jefferson information concerning the dislocation of his wrist, and the remedial journey which he had projected. His friends are particularly interested and none more than myself in his recovering the entire use of a member, without which they must lose the pleasure of many of his valuable communications and reflections. I should not go far in saying that it will be a loss to the world, if the use of his pen should be frustrated or even abridged, by the permanent effect of the accident.

Thomas Jefferson to Nicholas Lewis, Paris, 29 July 1787

The torment of mind I endure till the moment shall arrive when I shall not owe a shilling on earth is such really as to render life of little value.

Thomas Jefferson to George Gilmer, Paris, 12 August 1787

If you knew how agreeable to me are the details of the small news of my neighborhood, your charity would induce you to write frequently.

John Quincy Adams: Diary, 30 August 1787

In the evening I read about one half of Mr. Jefferson's notes upon Virginia, and was very much pleased with them. There is a great deal of learning shown without ostentation, and a spirit of philosophy equally instructive and entertaining.

Marquis de Lafayette to George Washington, Paris, 15 October 1787

I am Happy in the Good fortune America Had, that such a man as Mr. Jefferson was Sent to this Country.

Alexander Donald to Thomas Jefferson, Richmond, Va., 12 November 1787

Your old school Companion W[arner] Lewis, of Warner Hall was here staying with me when I had the pleasure of receiving your letter. It was so Friendly, and so very Flattering to my Pride, that I could not resist the vanity of showing it to him. He added to my Pride, by declaring (what I was pretty much convinced of before) that of all the Men he ever knew in his Life, he believed you to be the most sincere in your profession of Friendship. I am free to say, that when we used to pass some jovial days together at Hanover Town, I did not then imagine, that at this time you would be in Paris, Ambassador to the Court of Versailles. Some People in you High Character would be very apt to forget their old acquaintance, but you are not, and I must be allowed to do myself the justice to declare, I never entertained an Idea that you would.

Marquis de Lafayette to George Washington, Paris, 1 January 1788

I am More and More pleased with Mr. Jefferson. His abilities, His Virtues, His temper, Every thing of Him Commands Respect and Attracts Affection. He Enjoys Universal Regard, and does the Affairs of America to perfection. It is the Happiest choice that Could Be Made.

Thomas Lee Shippen to William Shippen, Jr., 14 February–26 March 1788

[While on the grand tour of Europe, young Thomas Shippen wrote his father:] Mr. Jefferson is in my opinion without exception the wisest and most amiable man I have seen in Europe. He has had the goodness to favor me upon many occasions with his advice. . . . He has supplied to me the want of you better than I thought it could have been supplied, and if any one but yourself were the father, the son should not lose by the substitution.

Marquis de Lafayette to George Washington, Paris, 25 May 1788

I am Happy in the Ambassador we Have in this Country, and Nothing Can Excel M. Jefferson's abilities, virtues, pleasing temper, and Every thing in Him that Constitutes the Great States man, zealous Citizen, and Amiable Friend.

Edmund Randolph: History of Virginia

As yet Thomas Jefferson had not attained a marked grade in politics. Until about the age of twenty-five years he had pursued general science, with which he mingled the law, as a profession, with an eager industry and unabated thirst. His manners could never be harsh, but they were reserved toward the world at large. To his intimate friends he showed a peculiar sweetness of temper and by them was admired and beloved. In mathematics and experimental philosophy, he was a proficient, assiduously taught by Dr. Small of William and Mary College, whose name was not concealed among the literati of Europe. He panted after the fine arts and discovered a taste in them not easily satisfied with such scanty means as existed in a colony whose chief ambition looked to the general system of education in England as the ultimate point of excellence. But it constituted a part of Mr. Jefferson's pride to run before the times in which he lived. Prudent himself, he did not waste his resources in gratifications to which they were incompetent, but being an admirer of elegance and convenience, and venerated by his contemporaries who were within the scope of his example, he diffused a style of living much more refined than that which had been handed down to them by his and their ancestors. He had been ambitious to collect a library, not merely amassing

number of books, but distinguishing authors of merit and assembling them in subordination to every art and science; and notwithstanding losses by fire, this library was at this time more happily calculated than any other private one to direct to objects of utility and taste, to present to genius the scaffolding upon which its future eminence might be built, and to reprove the restless appetite, which is too apt to seize the mere gatherer of books.

The theories of human rights he had drawn from Locke, Harrington, Sidney, English history, and Montesquieu he had maturely investigated in all their aspects, and was versed in the republican doctrines and effusions which conducted the first Charles to the scaffold. With this fund of knowledge, he was ripe for stronger measures than the public voice was conceived to demand. But he had not gained a sufficient ascendancy to quicken or retard the progress of the popular current.

Indefatigable and methodical in whatever he undertook, he spoke with ease, perspicuity, and elegance. His style in writing was more impassioned, and although often incorrect, was too glowing not to be acquitted as venial to departures from rigid rules. Without being an overwhelming orator, he was an impressive speaker, who fixed the attention. On two signal arguments before the General Court, in which Mr. Henry and himself were coadjutors, each characterized himself—Mr. Jefferson drew copiously from the depths of the law. Mr. Henry from the recesses of the human heart.

When Mr. Jefferson first attracted notice, Christianity was directly denied in Virginia only by a few. He was adept, however, in the ensnaring subtleties of deism and gave it, among the rising generation, a philosophical patronage, which repudiates as falsehoods things unsusceptible of strict demonstration. It is believed that while such tenets as are in contempt of the Gospel inevitably terminate in espousing the fullest latitude in religious freedom, Mr. Jefferson's love of liberty would itself have produced the same effects. But his opinions against restraints on conscience ingratiated him with the enemies of the establishment, who did not stop to inquire how far those opinions might border on skepticism or infidelity. Parties in religion and politics rarely scan with nicety the peculiar private opinions of their adherents.

When he entered upon the practice of the law, he chose a residence, and traveled to a distance, which enabled him to display his great literary endowments and to establish advantageous connections among those classes of men who were daily rising in weight.

You say that I have been dished up to you as an antifederalist, and ask me if it be just. My opinion was never worthy enough of notice to merit citing: but since you ask it I will tell you. I am not a Federalist, because I never submitted the whole system of my opinions to the creed of any party of men whatever in religion, in philosophy, in politics, or in any thing else where I was capable of thinking for myself. Such an addiction is the last degradation of a free and moral agent. If I could not go to heaven but with a party, I would not go there at all. Therefore I protest to you I am not of the party of federalists. But I am much farther from that of the Antifederalists. I approved from the first moment, of the great mass of what is in the new Constitution, the consolidation of the government, the organization into Executive, legislative and judiciary, the subdivision of the legislative, the happy compromise of interests between the great and little states by the different manner of voting in the different houses, the voting by persons instead of states, the qualified negative on laws given to the Executive which however I should have liked better if associated with the judiciary also as in New York, and the power of taxation. I thought at first that the latter might have been limited. A little reflection soon convinced me it ought not to be. What I disapproved from the first moment also was the want of a bill of rights to guard liberty against the legislative as well as executive branches of the government, that is to say to secure freedom in religion, freedom of the press, freedom from monopolies, freedom from unlawful imprisonment,

freedom from a permanent military, and a trial by jury in all cases determinable by the laws of the land. I disapproved also the perpetual reeligibility of the President. . . . These, my dear friend, are my sentiments, by which you will see I was right in saying I am neither federalist nor antifederalist; that I am of neither party, nor yet a trimmer between parties. These my opinions I wrote within a few hours after I had read the Constitution, to one or two friends in America. I had not then read one single word printed on the subject. I never had an opinion in politics or religion which I was afraid to own. A costive reserve on these subjects might have procured me more esteem from some people, but less from myself. My great wish is to go on in a strict but silent performance of my duty; to avoid attracting notice and to keep my name out of newspapers, because I find the pain of a little censure, even when it is unfounded, is more acute than the pleasure of much praise.

Comte de Moustier to Comte de Montmorin, New York, 29 June 1789

It is not unlikely that this Minister Plenipotentiary would become, upon his return, Minister of Foreign Affairs, if Mr. Jay obtains the post of Chief Justice as expected. Although Mr. Jefferson has been delayed, there will be nothing lost for him because the slowness of the Congress in all its operations will give him time to arrive, perhaps even well before all the departments, and especially the judiciary department are formed and organized. However, Mr. Jefferson's views on the post of Secretary of Foreign Affairs are unknown. It is generally believed only that if he is disposed to accept it, it will be offered to him, just as it is believed that Mr. Jay would like a permanent position better than one that could be revoked without process. This change suits us in every regard. Mr. Jefferson being better informed about the customs and conventions between Sovereigns and Nations, having more elevated sensibilities, more conciliatory manners, and inclinations that are more suitable to the good of his country (which demand the approbation of the King) than the man he would replace.

Nathaniel Cutting: Diary, Cowes, England, 12 October 1789

I have found Mr. Jefferson a man of infinite information and sound Judgment, becoming gravity, and engaging affability mark his deportment. His general abilities are such as would do honor to any age or Country.

John Adams to Abigail Adams, Philadelphia, 26 December 1789

I am told Mr. Jefferson is to resign tomorrow. I have so long been in the habit of thinking well of his Abilities and general good dispositions, that I cannot but feel some regret at this Event: but his want of Candour, his obstinate Prejudices both of Aversion and Attachment his real Partiality in Spite of all his Pretensions and his low notions about many things have so nearly reconciled me to it, that I will not weep. Whether he will be chosen Governor of Virginia, or whether he is to go to France, in Place of Mr. Morris I know not. But this I know that he is neglected at Monticello he will soon see a Spectre like the disgraced Statesman in Gill Blass, and not long afterwards will die, for instead of being the ardent pursuer of Science that some think him, I know he is indolent, and his soul is prisoned with Ambition. Perhaps the Plan is to retire, till his Reputation magnifies enough to force him into the Chair in Case. So be it, if it is thus ordained.

Benjamin Rush: Commonplace Book, 17 March 1790

Visited Mr. Jefferson on his way to New York. It was the first time I saw him since his return from France. He was plain in his dress and unchanged in his manners. He still professed himself attached to republican forms of government, and deplored the change of opinion upon this subject in John Adams, of whom he spoke with respect and affection as a great and upright man.

John Trumbull to John Adams, Hartford, Conn., 30 March 1790

I doubt with You, whether any Man but Washington could at present support the Constitution [as President of the United States]—But were he dead, I am sure none who has been thought of as your Rival, could support it while You were living & neglected. Jefferson is little known at the Northward, & it would be impossible to persuade our Great Men in New England that he is greater or wiser than themselves.

Louis Guillaume Otto to Comte de Montmorin, New York, 31 March 1790

Mr. Jefferson who has finally arrived here and answers perfectly to the opinion that we have formed of him, has already given public proof of his modesty and his good disposition towards France. The citizens of Alexandria [Virginia] have presented him with an address of thanks for the support that he obtained from our government for the commerce of the United States, he told them “truth and candor oblige me to declare that you owe that support *solely* to the friendly disposition of a nation that on every occasion showed itself ready to adopt the means capable of strengthening the ties of a reciprocal interest and friendship.” In no case does Mr. Jefferson deny these sentiments; for resources, riches, learning, friendship, and good disposition towards Americans, he places France above all nations and he tires neither of praising it nor of exposing the true and presumptuous instances of the haughtiness and vainglory of England and its hatred for Americans. In accepting the office of secretary of state Mr. Jefferson has submitted to the desire of the president and the public, which follows the preference he has for France. He has started out here with the simplicity of a true republican, his modesty and affability have won for him the hearts of those who for the first time have seen and confirmed the attachment of their old friends. Finally, of all the Americans who have been to France, Mr. Jefferson is, after Dr. Franklin, the only one who sincerely feels gratitude for the welcome reception he met with. These arrangements are rather more satisfactory, Sir, since the most influential men put extreme confidence in Mr. Jefferson and think that if the United States has the ill fortune to lose the president, the secretary of state will have a better chance than any other to succeed him. . . . Mr. Jefferson is like all the men in the South, republican in spirit and in heart, with the gratitude to which he is very susceptible, that one does not ordinarily find in a free country. We have so much reason to rejoice at seeing at the head of foreign affairs a man as far and obliging as Mr. Jefferson and I believe that in every case we can count on his friendship.

George Beckwith: Notes on Conversation with Alexander Hamilton, April 1790

Mr. Jefferson considers the revolution in France as completed, and he declares it will be productive of great benefits to the states, he is greatly too democratic for us at present, he left us in that way, but we are infinitely changed, and he must alter his principles; I think this gentleman’s ideas are not friendly to the formation of a commercial treaty with you . . . Mr. Jefferson is a republican and a Frenchman.

Abigail Adams to Mary Cranch, New York, 3 April 1790

Mr. Jefferson is here, and adds much to the social circle.

Thomas Jefferson to Francis Willis, Jr., New York, 18 April 1790

The happiest moments of my life have been the few which I have past at home in the bosom of my family.

James Madison to Edmund Randolph, New York, 6 May 1790

Mr. Jefferson has been laid up near a week with his periodical head-Ache which has been very severe.

William Maclay: Journal, 24 May 1790

Jefferson is a slender Man. Has rather the Air of Stiffness in his Manner. His clothes seem too small for him. He sits in a lounging Manner on One hip, commonly, and with one of his shoulders elevated much above the other. His face has a scrawny aspect. His Whole figure has a loose shackling Air. He had a rambling Vacant look & nothing of that firm collected deportment which I expected would dignify the presence of a Secretary or Minister. I looked for gravity, but a laxity of Manner, seemed shed about him. He spoke almost without ceasing. But even his discourse partook of his personal demeanor. It was lax & rambling and Yet he scattered information wherever he went, and some even brilliant sentiments sparkled from him. The information which he gave Us respecting foreign Ministers &ca. was all high Spiced. He has been long enough abroad to catch the tone of European folly. He gave Us a sentiment which seemed to Savor rather of quaintness. "It is better to take the highest of the lowest, than the lowest of the highest." Translation. It is better to appoint a chargé des affaires with an handsome Salary, than a Minister Plenipotentiary with a small One. He took leave, and the Committee agreed to strike out, the Specific Sum to be given to any foreign appointment, leaving it to the President to account, and appropriated \$30,000 generally for the purpose.

Ezra Stiles to Thomas Jefferson, Yale College, New Haven, Conn., 27 August 1790

I am rejoiced that the United States are honored with you Counsels and Abilities in the high Department of the Secretary of State. This I say without Adulation, who am a Spectator only and a most cordial Friend to the Liberties and Glory of the American Republic, though without the least Efficiency or Influence in its Councils. There are four Characters which I cannot flatter; their Merit is above it. Such are those of a Franklin, an Adams, an Ellsworth, a Jefferson and a Washington. I glory in them all; I rejoice that my Country is happy in their useful Labors. And for yourself I can only wish, that when that best of Men, the present President, shall be translated to the World of Light, a Jefferson may succeed him in the Presidency of the United States. Forgive me this Effusion of the Sentiments of sincere Respect and Estimation.

Benjamin Rush: Commonplace Book, 13 May 1791

Breakfasted this morning with Mr. Jefferson, and read to him and Mr. [Henry] Drinker an account of the maple tree and sugar &c., and received some useful hints from each of them on the

subject. Was charmed with Mr. Jefferson's conversation. It was full of instruction upon all subjects. He read several extracts from his Journal of his travels in France to us which contained much useful information.

Thomas Jefferson to Alexander Donald, Philadelphia, 13 May 1791

I find as I advance in life I become less capable of acquiring new affections & therefore I love to hang by my old ones.

James Monroe to Thomas Jefferson, Richmond, Va., 17 June 1791

Upon political subjects we perfectly agree, & particularly in the reprobation of all measures that may be calculated to elevate the government above the people, or place it in any respect without its natural boundary. To keep it there nothing is necessary but virtue in a part only (for in the whole it cannot be expected) of the high public servants, & a true development of the principles of those acts which have a contrary tendency. The bulk of the people are for democracy, & if they are well informed the risk of such enterprises will infallibly follow.

Oliver Wolcott, Jr., to Oliver Wolcott, Sr., Philadelphia, 14 February 1792

Mr. J. appears to have shown rather too much of a disposition to cultivate vulgar prejudice; accordingly he will become popular in ale houses, and will do much mischief to his country by exciting apprehensions that the government will operate unfavorably.

Alexander Hamilton to Edward Carrington, Philadelphia, 26 May 1792

If I were disposed to promote Monarchy & overthrow State Governments, I would mount the hobby horse of popularity—I would cry out usurpation—danger to liberty &c. &c.—I would endeavor to prostrate the National Government—raise a ferment—and then “ride in the Whirlwind and direct the Storm.” That there are men acting with Jefferson & Madison who have this in view I verily believe. I could lay my finger on some of them. That Madison does *not* mean it I also verily believe, and I rather believe the same of Jefferson; but I read him upon the whole thus—“A man of profound ambition & violent passions.”

“Catullus” No. III (Alexander Hamilton), *Gazette of the United States*, 29 September 1792

Mr. Jefferson has hitherto been distinguished as the quiet modest, retiring philosopher—as the plain simple unambitious republican. He shall not now for the first time be regarded as the intriguing incendiary—the aspiring turbulent competitor.

How long it is since that gentleman's real character may have *divined*, or whether this is only the *first time* that the *secret* has been disclosed, I am not sufficiently acquainted with the history of his political life to determine; But there is always “a *first time*,” when characters studious of artful disguises are unveiled; When the visor of stoicism is plucked from the brow of the Epicurean; when the plain garb of Quaker simplicity is stripped from the concealed voluptuary; when Caesar *coily refusing* the proffered diadem, is seen to be Caesar *rejecting* the trappings, but tenaciously grasping the substance of imperial domination.

Alexander Hamilton to Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Philadelphia, 10 October 1792

[It would be unfortunate if Jefferson would defeat Adams as Vice President.] That Gentleman [Jefferson] whom I once very much esteemed, but who does not permit me to retain that sentiment for him, is certainly a man of sublimated and paradoxical imagination—entertaining & propagating notions inconsistent with dignified and orderly Government.

Alexander Hamilton to John Steele, Philadelphia, 15 October 1792

There was a time when I should have balanced between Mr. Jefferson & Mr. Adams; but I now view the former as a man of sublimated & paradoxical imagination—cherishing notions incompatible with regular and firm government.

John Trumbull to John Adams, Hartford, Conn., 25 February 1793

We hear the Secretary of State is about to resign. Can he no longer “Ride in the whirlwind and direct the Storm,” which himself has raised? Or does he hope to return in the more formidable character of a Senator or Representative hereafter? Or has the President been so irritated by the illiberal abuse, which the Faction have, with so little policy, poured out against him, as to hint the propriety of retiring from office?

Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, Philadelphia, 9 June 1793

There has been a time when . . . perhaps the esteem of the world was of higher value in my eye than every thing in it. But age, experience, & reflection, preserving to that only its due value, have set a higher on tranquility. The motion of my blood no longer keeps time with the tumult of the world. It leads me to seek for happiness in the lap and love of my family, in the society of my neighbors & my books, in the wholesome occupations of my farm & my affairs, in an interest or affection in every bud that opens, in every breath that blows around me, in an entire freedom of rest or motion, of thought or incogitancy, owing account to myself alone of my hours & actions.

Thomas Jefferson to Martha Jefferson Randolph, Philadelphia, 7 July 1793

I never before knew the full value of trees. My house is entirely embosomed in high plane trees, with good grass below, & under them I breakfast, dine, write, read, & receive my company. What would I not give that the trees planted nearest round the house at Monticello were full grown.

Benjamin Rush: Commonplace Book, pre-22 August 1793

The whole of Mr. Jefferson’s conversation on all subjects is instructing. He is wise without formality, and maintains a consequence without pomp or distance.

John Adams to John Quincy Adams, Philadelphia, 3 January 1794

The Motives to Mr. Jefferson’s Resignation are not assigned, and are left open to the Conjectures of a Speculating World. I also am a Speculator in the Principles and Motives of Men’s Actions and may guess as well as others. 1. Mr. Jefferson has an habit as well as a disposition to expensive Living, and as his Salary was not Adequate to his Luxury, he could not Subdue his Pride and Vanity as I have done, and proportion his Style of Life to his Revenue. 2. Mr. Jefferson is in

debt as I have heard to an amount of Seven thousand Pounds before the War, so that I Suppose he cannot afford to Spend his private income in the Public service. 3. Mr. Jefferson has been obliged to lower his Note in Politicks. Pains Principles when adopted by Genet, were not found so convenient for a Secretary of State. 4. He could not rule the Roast in the Ministry. He was often in a Minority. 5. Ambition is the Sublest Beast of the Intellectual and Moral Field. It is wonderfully adroit in concealing itself from its owner, I had almost said from itself. Jefferson thinks he shall by this step get a Reputation of an humble, modest, meek Man, wholly without ambition or Vanity. He may even have deceived himself into this Belief. But if a Prospect opens, The World will see and he will feel, that he is as ambitious as Oliver Cromwell though no soldier. 6. At other Moments he may meditate the gratification of his Ambition. Numa was called from the Forrests to be King of Rome. And if Jefferson, after Death or Resignation of the President should be summoned from the familiar Society of Egeria, to govern the Country forty Years in Peace and Piety, So be it. 7. The Tide of popular sentiment in Virginia runs not so rapidly in favour of Jacobinical feelings as it did—though the Party were a Majority and carried every Member at the last Election, there are Symptoms of increasing federalism in Virginia. A Wise Man like Jefferson foreseeeth the Evil and hideth himself*—But after all I am not very anxious what were his Motives.—Tho his Desertion may be a Loss to Us, of some Talents I am not sorry for it on the whole, because his soul is poisoned with Ambition and his Temper embittered against the Constitution and Administration as I think.

*Proverbs 27:12: “A prudent man foreseeeth the evil, and hideth himself, but the simple pass on and are punished.”

John Adams to Abigail Adams, Philadelphia, 6 January 1794

Jefferson went off Yesterday, and a good riddance of bad ware. I hope his Temper will be more cool and his Principles more reasonable in Retirement than they have been in office. I am almost tempted to wish he may be chosen Vice President at the next Election for there if he could do no good, he could do no harm. He has Talents I know, and Integrity I believe, but his mind is now poisoned with Passion Prejudice and Faction.

Abigail Adams to John Adams, Quincy, Mass., 12 January 1794

What ever may be Mr. Jefferson’s motives for retiring, I presume he will not be neglected. Most men grow either Avaricious or ambitious as they advance in Life.

Abigail Adams to John Adams, Quincy, Mass., 18 January 1794

Mr. Jefferson’s designed resignation tho long talked of was not fully credited until it took place. The reason given for it by the French Partizans is that the Nature of his office obliged him to lend his Name to Measures which Militated against his well known principals, and give a sanction to sentiments which his heart disapproved. If this is true he did wisely to withdraw.

They say that he will now appear as the Supporter of Genet and they consider him all their own. But I have always reluctantly believed ill of him and do not credit these reports. Yet I know Mr. Jefferson to be deficient in the only sure and certain security, which binds Man to Man and renders him responsible to his Maker.

Speech in Congress, 30 January 1794

In dismissing it however, he could not do justice to his own impressions, without declaring his entire confidence, that the report would be regarded by all discerning and unprejudiced judges, as one of the many monuments which its Author had left behind him, of the zeal, the talents, and the patriotism with which he had discharged the duties of his station; and that he had carried with him into retirement, a purity, both in his public and private name, which nothing that could be said within or without the walls of Congress, could tarnish.

Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, Monticello, 25 April 1794

I return to farming with an ardor which I scarcely knew in my youth, and which has got the better entirely of my love of study. Instead of writing 10 or 12 letters a day, which I have been in the habit of doing as a thing in course, I put off answering my letters now, farmer-like, till a rainy day, & then find them sometimes postponed by other necessary occupations.

Thomas Jefferson to John Barnes, Monticello, 9 October 1794

Having occasion for about 20lb. of good tea annually, I think it best to rely for the choice of it on the good faith of some dealer in that article, both as to quality & price, and on no one do I rely more willingly than on yourself. I usually send to Philadelphia for my groceries once a quarter, and will on those occasions ask of you a quarter's supply of tea. At present I will beg the favor of you to pack for me in a cannister 5 lb. of good tea. Young hyson we prefer both for flavor & strength, but if you have none good, let it be hyson of the ancient kind. If, immediately on the receipt of this you will deliver it to Mr. Mussi, corner of 7th & Market streets, he will pay your bill, & pack the tea with some other articles he will be sending me. Not doubting to receive from you what will be good in quality & reasonable in price.

Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, Monticello, 27 April 1795

The little spice of ambition which I had in my younger days has long since evaporated, and I set still less store by a posthumous than present name.

Thomas Jefferson to Angelica Schuyler Church, Monticello, 8 September 1795

I am now in a tranquil situation which is my delight, with all my family living with me, and forming a delicious society.

James Madison to James Monroe, Orange, Va., 29 September 1796

His enemies are as indefatigable as they are malignant.

Alexander Hamilton, New York, 8 November 1796

Our excellent President, as you have seen, has declined a reelection. 'Tis all-important to our country that his successor shall be a safe man. But it is far less important who of many men that may be named shall be the person, than that it shall not be Jefferson. We have every thing to fear if this man comes in, and from what I believe to be an accurate view of our political map I conclude that he has too good a chance of success, and that good calculation, prudence, and exertion were

never more necessary to the Federal cause than at this very juncture. All personal and partial considerations must be discarded, and every thing must give way to the great object of excluding Jefferson.

Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, 28 December 1796

I have no ambition to govern men. It is a painful and thankless office.

Abigail Adams to John Adams, Quincy, Mass., 31 December 1796

I am ready to think that [Hamilton's] Enmity to Jefferson was the prevailing Motive. Jefferson I hope will succeed. I believe the Government would be more conciliated, and the bitterness of Party allayed. The former Friendship which subsisted between you would tend to harmonize, and Moderation coolness and temperance would reconcile the present jarring interests to concord. This is my hope, and I do not Despair of seeing it effected. You know my Friendship for that Gentleman has lived through his faults and his errors, to which I have not been blind but most sincerely re-greeted them.

Abigail Adams to Elbridge Gerry, Quincy, Mass., 31 December 1796

I fully agree with you in sentiment as it respects the Election of Mr. Jefferson. I have long known him, and entertain for him a personal Friendship, and tho I cannot accord with him in Some of his politicks, I do not believe him culpable to the extent he has been represented. Placed at the Head of the Senate, I trust his conduct will be wise and prudent, and hope it will be a means of softening the animosity of Party, and of cementing & strengthening the bond of Union.

Lawrence Taliaferro to James Madison, Rose Hill, Orange, Va., 4 January 1797

I fear we have lost Colo. Jefferson [for the Presidency], I wish he had been a resident of Massachusetts. The air could not have infected him & we should have had a good republican to have presided in our Executive.

Elbridge Gerry to Abigail Adams, Cambridge, 7 January 1797

I have been long acquainted with Mr. Jefferson, & conceiving that he & Mr. Adams have ever had a mutual respect for each other; conceiving also that he is a gentleman of abilities, integrity, & altho not entirely free from a disposition to intrigue, yet in general a person of candor, & moderation, I think it is a fortunate circumstance, that he is Vice President & that great good is to be expected from the joint elections.

Thomas Jefferson to Count de Volney, Monticello, 8 January 1797

My farm, my family, my books & my building give me much more pleasure than any public office would, and especially one which would keep me constantly from them.

Abigail Adams to John Adams, Quincy, Mass., 15 January 1797

By the last Post I receivd Yours of December 27th & 30, Janry 1 & 3d. The extract from Mr. Madison's Letter I believe to be the genuine sentiments of Mr. Jefferson's Heart. Tho wrong in Politicks, tho formerly an advocate for Tom Paine's Rights of Man, and tho frequently mistaken in Men & Measures, I do not think him an insincere or a corruptible Man. My Friendship for him has ever been unshaken. I have not a Doubt but all the Discords may be tuned to harmony, by the Hnd of a skillfull Artist. I See by the paper of to Day that the extract is published in the Centinel, not through Eve, I assure you, for I have not disclosed it. It has gaind as Most storys Do, that Mr. J. declares he would not have taken the Vice Presidency under any other Man.

Tristram Dalton to John Adams, Washington, 16 January 1797

I was, this day, informed that some zealous Friends of Mr Jefferson say—They have good authority to assert, that He has declared his approbation of the Issue of the late Election—That he has, in the warmest terms, expressed a high sense of the Abilities, Integrity, and Firmness—of the President Elect, adding that he has the utmost confidence of your being a true Friend to our Constitution, and that under your Administration it will be inviolably maintained—

John Adams to Tristram Dalton, Philadelphia, 19 January 1797

Mr Jeffersons Letters and Declarations are no Surprise to me. We laboured together in high friendship in Congress 1776 and have lived and acted together very frequently since that time. His Talent and Information I know very well, and have and have ever believed in his honour, Integrity, his Love of his Country and his friends. I may say to you that his Patronage of Paine and Freneau, and his Entanglements with Characters and Politicks which have been pernicious, are and have long been a Source of Inquietude and Anxiety to me, as they must have been to you. But I hope and believe that his Advancement and his situation in the Senate an excellent school, will correct him. He will have too many French Friends about him to flatter him: but I hope, We can keep him Steady. This is entre nous.

Abigail Adams to Charles Adams, Quincy, Mass., 5 February 1797

I consider the vice Presidency as a conciliatory union of the States, and on that account a fortunate event. I have always entertaind a Friendship for Mr. Jefferson from a personal knowledge & long acquaintance with him. Tho I cannot altogether accord with him in Politicks I believe him to be a Man of strickt honour, and of real integrity of Heart, in his judgment not so Mature as some Men, but incapable of doing a real injury to his Country. Knowing it to be so, nor will he sacrifice its interests from any pecuniary Motive. When placed at the Head of the Senate, I will venture to say he will verify the opinion I have always formd of him, for I have never sufferd calumny and abuse to hide those good qualifies from my view. The most reprehensible part of his conduct, was countenancing that Freaneu when he was continually libelling the Government.

Abigail Adams to Elizabeth Smith Shaw Peabody, Quincy, Mass., 10 February 1797

The vice Presidency having been allotted to Mr. Jefferson: will serve as a bond of union between the States. I have long known Mr. Jefferson, and have ever entertained a Friendship for him; he is a Man of understanding, and of probity. Tho he has been biased towards one Nation, and

prejudiced against another, I do not believe he would knowingly Sacrifice the interests of his Country to any foreign Nation. Between him and Mr. Adams there has ever subsisted harmony, tho they have not accorded always in Sentiment, they have discented without warmth, or ill will, like Gentlemen, and Mr. Jefferson, I have not a Doubt will Support the President, nor do I fear any unpleasant Conduct from him at the Head of the Senate—

Alexander Hamilton to Rufus King, New York, 15 February 1797

Mr. Adams is President, Mr. Jefferson Vice President. Our Jacobins say they are well pleased and that the *Lion* & the *Lamb* are to lie down together. Mr. Adams's *personal* friends talk a little in the same way. Mr. *Jefferson* is not half so ill a man as we have been accustomed to think him. There is to be a united and a vigorous administration. Skeptics like me quietly look forward to the event—willing to hope but not prepared to believe. If Mr. Adams has *Vanity* to plan a plot has been laid to take hold of it. We trust his real good sense and integrity will be a sufficient shield.

Abigail Adams to Thomas Boylston Adams, Quincy, Mass., 21 February 1797

The result of the Election of President will be known to you before this reaches You. All the Machinations and intrigue of party, terminated in the Election of Mr. Jefferson to the vice Presidency. If the people had not been deceived, by the grossest and most palpable falsehoods I have every reason to suppose that their choice of Chief Majestrate would have been nearly unanimous. As the Union is now formed, I am far from thinking that it is an unfortunate circumstance. Mr. Jefferson is a Gentleman of abilities, and integrity. If he has his failings, we know them. Hypocrisy is not of the number. I have no apprehension of his acting an unfriendly part towards the President, or any way plotting against him.

Abigail Adams to John Adams, Quincy, Mass., 25 March 1797

There is one observation in your Letter which struck me as meaning more than is expressed. J. is as he was! Can he still be a devotee to a cause and to a people, run mad, without any wish for Peace, without any desire after a rational system of Government, and whose thirst for power and absolute dominion is become Gluttinous? Can it be?

Abigail Adams to Thomas Boylston Adams, Philadelphia, 16 July 1797

[At a celebration on the return of James Monroe from being U.S. Minister to France.] Congress were sitting, some of the violent were there, and *the vice President*, the Man of the people was toasted.

Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, Monticello, 3 August 1797

I disdain everything like duplicity.

Abigail Adams to John Quincy Adams, East Chester, N.Y., 3 November 1797

The Letter writer is now more generally known, and the hollowness of his Principles better understood. There is another tale of a more recent date, yet to be unfolded. You can Witness for me, how loth I have been to give him up. It is with much reluctance that I am obliged to look upon

him as a Man whose Mind is so warped by prejudice, and so Blinded by Ignorance as to be unfit for the office he holds, however wise and scientific as a Phylosopher [i.e., scientist] as a politician, he is a Child, and the dupe of party.

Thomas Jefferson to Martha Jefferson Randolph, Philadelphia, 27 December 1797

I envy those who stay at home, enjoying the society of their friendly neighbors, blessed with their firesides, and employed in doing something every day which looks usefully to futurity.

John Nicholas to George Washington, Charlottesville, Va., 22 February 1798

I do now know him to be one of the most artful, intriguing, industrious and double-faced politicians in all America.

Thomas Jefferson to Thomas Willing, Philadelphia, 23 February 1798

Th: Jefferson presents his respects to Mr. Willing, and other gentlemen managers of the ball of this evening [honoring Washington's birthday]. He hopes his non-attendance will not be misconstrued. He has not been at a ball these twenty years, nor for a long time permitted himself to go to any entertainments of the evening, from motives of attention to health. On these grounds he excused to Genl. Washington when living in the city his not going to his birthnights, to Mrs. Washington not attending her evenings, to Mrs. Adams the same, and to all his friends who have been so good as to invite him to tea- & card parties, the declining to go to them. It is an indulgence which his age and habits will he hopes obtain and continue to him. He has always testified his homage to the occasion by his subscription to it.

Tadeuz Kosciuszko to Thomas Jefferson, [15 July–5 August 1798]

You may rely upon my partiality towards America that I will do everything in my power to prevent a war so injurious to both republics, and in that respect you will be my Star that will guide my endeavors as you are a True American Patriot, and so disinterested a man who chose only the happiness of your own Country.

Robert Troup to Rufus King, New York, 2 October 1798

. . . on his return home from the last sitting of Congress, was indiscreet enough to accept of the honor of a public entertainment in Virginia on a *Sunday*. This fact has been trumpeted from one end of the continent to the other as an irrefragable proof of his contempt for the Christian religion and his devotion to the new religion of France. It has made an impression much to his prejudice in the Middle and Eastern States.

Benjamin Rush: Sketches, c. 1800

He possessed a genius of the first order. It was universal in its objects. He was not less distinguished for his political, than his mathematical and philosophical knowledge. The objects of his benevolence were as extensive as those of his knowledge. He was not only the friend of his country, but of all nations and religions. While Congress were deliberating upon the measure of sending commissioners to France I asked him what he thought of being one of them. He said "he would go

to hell to serve his country.” He was afterwards elected a commissioner, but declined at that time on account of the sickness of his wife. He seldom spoke in Congress, but was a member of all the important committees. He was the penman of the Declaration of Independence. He once showed me the original in his own hand writing. It contained a noble testimony against negro slavery which was struck out in its passage through Congress. He took notes of all the debates upon the Declaration of Independence, and the first Confederation. He was said, at the time alluded to, to be unfriendly to Christianity. It is possible this may be true. His notes contain some expressions which favour that opinion. In my conversation with him in Philadelphia while he was Vice President he denied the charge, and said he believed in the divine mission of the Saviour of the World, but he did not believe that he was the Son of God in the way in which many Christians believed it. He said he believed further in the divine institution of the Sabbath, which he conceived to be a great blessing to the world, more especially to poor people and slaves. He believed likewise in the resurrection, and a future state of rewards and punishments.

Thomas Jefferson to George Wythe, Philadelphia, 28 February 1800

I had, at an early period of life, read a good deal . . . & commonplacéd what I read. This common-place has been my pillar.

Charles Carroll of Carrollton to Alexander Hamilton, Annapolis, Md., 18 April 1800

We have strange reports circulated among us respecting the prevalence of Jacobinical principles in your State; it is asserted with confidence by the antifederal party here, that all your electors will vote for Mr. Jefferson as President; if such an event should really happen, it is probable he will be chosen; of such a choice the consequences to this country may be dreadful. Mr. Jefferson is too theoretical & fanciful a statesman to direct with steadiness & prudence the affairs of this extensive & growing confederacy; he might safely try his experiments, without much inconvenience, in the little Republic of St. Marino, but his fantastic tricks would dissolve this Union. Perhaps the miseries of France & more especially the Government of Buonaparte may have weaned him from his predilection for revolutions. I once saw a letter of his, in which among several others was contained this strange sentiment “that to preserve the liberties of a people, a revolution once in a century was necessary.” A man of this way of thinking, surely may be said to be fond of revolutions; yet possibly were he the chief Magistrate he might not wish for a revolution during his presidency.

Alexander Hamilton to John Jay, New York, 7 May 1800

In observing this, I shall not be supposed to mean that any thing ought to be done which integrity will forbid—but merely that the scruples of delicacy and propriety, as relative to a common course of things, ought to yield to the extraordinary nature of the crisis. They ought not to hinder the taking of a *legal* and *constitutional* step, to prevent an *Atheist in Religion* and a *Fanatic* in politics from getting possession of the helm of the State.

Timothy Pickering to George Cabot, Philadelphia, 16 June 1800

[In a conversation between President Adams and James McHenry, Adams said] “Mr. Jefferson is an infinitely better man, a wiser one I am sure; and, if President, will act wisely. I know it, and would sooner be Vice-President under him, or even minister resident at the Hague, than be indebted to such a being as Hamilton for the Presidency. . . .”

[In another conversation between President Adams and Timothy Pickering, Pickering] remarked that I supposed Mr. Jefferson to be a very learned man, “but certainly he is a very visionary man.” The President answered, “Why, yes, he has a certain kind of learning in philosophy, &c., but *very little of that which is necessary for a statesman.*”

Arthur Fenner’s Report of a Conversation with Alexander Hamilton, Newport, R.I., 25–26 June 1800

[Hamilton said] Mr. Jefferson was a man of no judgment; he could write a pretty book.

Oliver Wolcott, Jr., to Fisher Ames, Washington, 10 August 1800

It is probable that Mr. Jefferson’s conduct would be frequently whimsical and undignified; that he would affect the character of a philosopher; that he would countenance quacks, impostors, and projectors; that he would cultivate and increase our national prejudices, and so relax the principles of government as greatly to impair its utility as a bond of internal union and bulwark against foreign influence. He would certainly change all the principal officers of government, or rather there is no one of the gentlemen now in office who would serve under him. How their places would be supplied I cannot conjecture, but I know of no individuals of his party in whom are united the indispensable qualifications of character, talents, industry, experience, and integrity.

Chauncey Goodrich to Oliver Wolcott, Jr., Hartford, Conn., 26 August 1800

Among all the good people of the state, there is a horrid idea of Mr. Jefferson. The clergy abominate him on account of his atheistical creed.

Fisher Ames to Rufus King, Dedham, Mass., 24 September 1800

His irreligion, wild philosophy and gimmickery in politics are never mentioned [by John Adams]. On the contrary the great man has been known to speak of him with much regard, and an affected indignation at the charge of irreligion, asking what has that to do with the public and adding that he is a good patriot, citizen and father.

George Cabot to Alexander Hamilton, Brookline, Mass., 11 October 1800

Dr. [Timothy] Dwight is here stirring us up to oppose the Demon of Jacobinism.

John Adams to Abigail Adams, Washington, 15 November 1800

The opposite Party too are divided into many Sects, as the World will see, if they succeed in their Choice [i.e., Jefferson]. Their Man will not be found to be the man of all their People; No nor a Majority of them. He is not thorough going enough. He is not daring and desperate enough. In short one half the Nation has analyzed itself, within 18 months, past and the other will analyze itself in 18 months more.

Margaret Bayard Smith: Reminiscences of Washington, December 1800

“And is this,” said I, after my first interview with Mr. Jefferson, “the violent democrat, the vulgar demagogue, the bold atheist and profligate man I have so often heard denounced by the federalists? Can this man so meek and mild, yet dignified in his manners, with a voice so soft and low, with a countenance so benignant and intelligent, can he be that daring leader of a faction, that disturber of the peace, that enemy of all rank and order?” Mr. Smith, indeed, (himself a democrat) had given me a very different description of this celebrated individual; but his favorable opinion I attributed in a great measure to his political feelings, which led him zealously to support and exalt the party to which he belonged, especially its popular and almost idolized leader. Thus the virulence of party-spirit was somewhat neutralized, nay, I even entertained towards him the most kindly dispositions, knowing him to be not only politically friendly to my husband; yet I did believe that he was an ambitious and violent demagogue, coarse and vulgar in his manners, awkward and rude in his appearance, for such had the public journals and private conversations of the federal party represented him to be.

In December 1800, a few days after Congress had for the first time met in our new Metropolis, I was one morning sitting alone in the parlor, when the servant opened the door and showed in a gentleman who wished to see my husband. The usual frankness and care with which I met strangers, were somewhat checked by the dignified and reserved air of the present visitor; but the chilled feeling was only momentary, for after taking the chair I offered him in a free and easy manner, and carelessly throwing his arm on the table near which he sat, he turned towards me a countenance beaming with an expression of benevolence and with a manner and voice almost femininely soft and gentle, entered into conversation on the commonplace topics of the day, from which, before I was conscious of it, he had drawn me into observations of a more personal and interesting nature. I know not how it was, but there was something in his manner, his countenance and voice that at once unlocked my heart, and in answer to his casual enquiries concerning our situation in our *new home*, as he called it, I found myself frankly telling him what I liked or disliked in our present circumstances and abode. I knew not who he was, but the interest with which he listened to my artless details, induced the idea he was some intimate acquaintance or friend of Mr. Smith’s and put me perfectly at my ease; in truth so kind and conciliating were his looks and manners that I forgot he was not a friend of my own, until on the opening of the door, Mr. Smith entered and introduced the stranger to me as *Mr. Jefferson*.

I felt my cheeks burn and my heart throb, and not a word more could I speak while he remained. Nay, such was my embarrassment I could scarcely listen to the conversation carried on between him and my husband. For several years he had been to me an object of peculiar interest. In fact my destiny, for on his success in the pending presidential election, or rather the success of the democratic party, (their interests were identical) my condition in life, my union with the man I loved, depended. In addition to this personal interest, I had long participated in my husband’s political sentiments and anxieties, and looked upon Mr. Jefferson as the corner stone on which the edifice of republican liberty was to rest, the reformer of abuses, the head of the republican party, which must rise or fall with him, and on the triumph of the republican party I devoutly believed the security and welfare of my country depended.

Gouverneur Morris: Diary, 11 December 1800

It seems to be the general opinion that Colonel Burr will be chosen President by the House of Representatives. Many of them think it highly dangerous that Mr. Jefferson should, in the present

crisis, be placed in that office. They consider him as a theoretic man, who would bring the National Government back to something like the old Confederation. Mr. Nicholay comes today, and to him I state it as the opinion, not of light and fanciful but of serious and considerable men, that Burr must be preferred to Jefferson. He is, as I supposed, much wounded at this information.

John Marshall to Alexander Hamilton, Washington, 1 January 1801

I received this morning your letter of the 26th of December. It is I believe certain that Jefferson & Burr will come to the house of representatives with equal votes. The returns have been all received & this is the general opinion.

Being no longer in the house of representatives & consequently compelled by no duty to decide between them, my own mind had scarcely determined to which of these gentlemen the preference was due. To Mr. Jefferson whose political character is better known than that of Mr. Burr, I have felt almost insuperable objections. His foreign prejudices seem to me totally to unfit him for the chief magistracy of a nation which cannot indulge those prejudices without sustaining debt & permanent injury. In addition to this solid & immovable objection Mr. Jefferson appears to me to be a man who will embody himself with the house of representatives. By weakening the office of President he will increase his personal power. He will diminish his responsibility, sap the fundamental principles of the government & become the leader of that party which is about to constitute the majority of the legislature. The morals of the Author of the letter to Mazzei cannot be pure.

William Fitzhugh to Samuel Blachley Webb, Geneva, 12 January 1801

I will, nevertheless, venture to observe that as the issue of this late electioneering struggle has been the choice of Thomas Jefferson for our President, and as this choice is made by a majority of our countrymen, I am *content*, the more so, as I believe he will make a good President, and grievously disappoint the most violent of his partisans. Mr. Jefferson is a man of too much virtue and good sense to attempt any material change in a system which was adopted by our late beloved Washington, and has been since steadily pursued by Mr. Adams, and which has preserved our country in peace and prosperity for 12 years, during which period almost the whole civilized world has been deluged in blood, and this too in defiance of the repeated attempts of France & England by open threats and secret intrigues to draw us into the vortex of their ruinous convulsions.

Alexander Hamilton to James A. Bayard, New York, 16 January 1801

Perhaps myself the first, at some expense of popularity, to unfold the true character of Jefferson, it is too late for me to become his apologist. Nor can I have any disposition to do it. I admit that his politics are tinctured with fanaticism, that he is too much in earnest in his democracy, that he has been a mischievous enemy to the principle measures of our past administration, that he is crafty & persevering in his objects, that he is not scrupulous about the means of success, nor very mindful of truth, and that he is a contemptible hypocrite. But it is not true as is alleged that he is an enemy to the power of the Executive, or that he is for confounding all the powers in the House of Representatives. It is a fact which I have frequently mentioned that while we were in the administration together he was generally for a large construction of the Executive authority, & not backward to act upon it in cases which coincided with his views. Let it be added, that in his theoretic Ideas he has considered as improper the participation of the Senate in the Executive Authority. I have more than once made the reflection that viewing himself as the reversioner, he was solicitous to come

into possession of a Good Estate. Nor is it true that Jefferson is zealot enough to do anything in pursuance of his principles which will contravene his popularity, or his interest. He is as likely as any man I know to temporize—to calculate what will be likely to promote his own reputation and advantage; and the probable result of such a temper is the preservation of systems, though originally opposed, which being once established, could not be overturned without danger to the person who did it. To my mind a true estimate of Mr. J's. character warrants the expectation of a temporizing rather than a violent system. That Jefferson has manifested a culpable predilection for France is certainly true; but I think it a question whether it did not proceed quite as much from her *popularity* among us, as from sentiment, and in proportion as that popularity is diminished his zeal will cool. Add to this that there is no fair reason to suppose him capable of being corrupted, which is a security that he will not go beyond certain limits. It is not at all improbable that under the change of circumstances Jefferson's Gallicism has considerably abated.

Gouverneur Morris to Alexander Hamilton, Washington, 26 January 1801

They [the Federalist members of the House of Representatives] consider Mr. J. as infected with all the cold blooded Vices and as particularly dangerous from the false Principles of Government which he has imbibed.

Abigail Adams to Mary Cranch, Washington, 7 February 1801

Have we any claim to the favour or protection of Providence, when we have against warning admonition and advice Chosen as our chief Magistrate a man who makes no pretensions to the belief of an all wise and supreme Governor of the World, ordering or directing or overruling the events which take place in it? I do not mean that he is an Atheist, for I do not think he is—but he believes Religion only useful as it may be made a political Engine, and that the outward forms are only, as I once heard him express himself—mere Mummery. In short, he is not a believer in the Christian system—The other [i.e., Aaron Burr] if he is more of a believer, has more to answer for, because he has grossly offended against those doctrines by his practice.

Such are the Men whom we are like to have as our Rulers. Whether they are given us in wrath to punish us for our sins and transgressions, the Events will disclose—But if ever we saw a day of darkness, I fear this is one which will be visible until kindled into flames.

John Marshall to Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Washington, 4 March 1801

Today the new political year commences—The new order of things begins. . . . The democrats are divided into speculative theorists & absolute terrorists: With the latter I am not disposed to class Mr. Jefferson. If he arranges himself with them it is not difficult to foresee that much calumny is in store for our country—if he does not they will soon become his enemies & calumniators.

John Adams to William Cranch, Quincy, Mass., 23 May 1801

Mr. Jefferson is a party man, full of party spirit and very ambitious. He depends entirely on the party who have placed him at their head & will hesitate at nothing when the leaders of it advise & demand of him. The man who could patronize Freneau, Baches Duane, Callender & Lyon, cannot be expected to be very delicate in his measures. He has already displaced & removed more officers in two months than his predecessor ever attempted in four years. I never displaced any man for his principles nor for his personal opposition or even ill treatment of me although I had information

of instances enough. Yet the clamour against me was incessant for removals of men from office. But enough & too much of myself.

Theodore Sedgwick to Rufus King, Stockbridge, Mass., 24 May 1801

Jefferson was believed to be a sincere Democrat—hostile to the principles of our Constitution, and the measures of the administration—desirous of conforming in practice to the imbecile principles of the old confederation, a confederation whose measures would be directed by the arrogance of Virginia aided by those states which looked up to her with servile submission. It was believed that he had given evidence of an entire devotion to France under every form of her government, and that under the dominion of this political passion, aided by a rancorous hatred to Great Britain, he might involve the country in war with the latter, & what is worse form an intimate and subordinate connection with the former.

Robert Troup to Rufus King, New York, 27 May 1801

Jefferson's inaugural speech has had a wonderful lullaby effect. I do not apprehend the serious mischiefs from his administration that have been foretold; but my opinion is, that it will be the little contemptible thing that grows of a trimming system and a studied adherence to popular notions. Hamilton is persuaded that neither Jefferson nor his friends have sufficient skill or patriotism to conduct the political vessel in the tempestuous sea of liberty.

John Adams to Thomas Boylston Adams, Stoneyfield (i.e., Quincy, Mass.), 11 July 1801

Mr Jefferson's sayings are never well digested, often extravagant, and never consistently pursued. He has not a clear head—and never pursues any question through. His Ambition and his cunning are the only Steady qualities in him. His Imagination and Ambition are too strong for his Reason.

Fisher Ames to John Rutledge, Dedham, Mass., 30 July 1801

Mr. Jefferson's removals and appointments afford proof enough of the quo amino he administers the government. They present a most singular confutation of the puritanism with which his party sought office, and a noiseless efficient instrument of exposing the party to the world. A prevailing party should forbid their chief pen & ink, especially if he is a scribbler by trade and vain of his writing. Tom Payne has said that nobody could write a man down who was up but himself. The two Toms are strong illustrations that the fellow, so often in the wrong, was for once in the right.

Samuel A. Otis to John Adams, Washington, 16 December 1801

The Session hath commenced in quite a Republican style. No speech no reply, no company days, no formal dinners, & alas! no drawing rooms—How our new King is to get along liable all hours of the day to be interrupted in his business time will shew. But I think some of the practices of the old school would have been more for his convenience, and certainly more agreeable to his masters the sovereign people.

John Adams: Autobiography, 1776 (written in 1802)

Mr. Jefferson had been now about a Year a Member of Congress, but had attended his Duty in the house but a very small part of the time and when there had never spoken in public: and during the whole Time I sat with him in Congress, I never heard him utter three Sentences together. The most of a Speech he ever made in my hearing was a gross insult on Religion, in one or two Sentences, for which I gave him immediately the Reprehension, which he richly merited. It will naturally be inquired, how it happened that he was appointed on a Committee of such importance. There were more reasons than one. Mr. Jefferson had the Reputation of a masterly Pen. He had been chosen a Delegate in Virginia, in consequence of a very handsome public Paper which he had written for the house of Burgesses, which had given him the Character of a fine Writer. Another reason was that Mr. Richard Henry Lee was not beloved by the most of his Colleagues, from Virginia, and Mr. Jefferson was set up to rival and supplant him. This could be done only by the Pen, for Mr. Jefferson could stand no competition with him or any one else in Elocution and public debate. Here I will interrupt the narration for a moment to observe that from all I have read of the History of Greece and Rome, England and France, and all I have observed at home, and abroad, that Eloquence in public Assemblies is not the surest road, to Fame and Preferment, at least unless it be used with great caution, very rarely, and with great Reserve. The Examples of Washington, Franklin and Jefferson are enough to show that Silence and reserve in public are more Efficacious than Argument or Oratory. A public Speaker who inserts himself, or is urged by others into the Conduct of Affairs, by daily Exertions to justify his measures, and answer the Objections of Opponents, makes himself too familiar with the public, and unavoidably makes himself Enemies. Few Persons can bare to be outdone in Reasoning or declamation or Wit, or Sarcasm or Repartee, or Satire, and all these things are very apt to grow out of public debate. In this Way in a Course of Years, a Nation becomes full of a Man's Enemies, or at least of such as have been galled in some Controversy, and take a secret pleasure in assisting to humble and mortify him. The Committee had several meetings, in which were proposed the Articles of which the declaration was to consist, and minutes made of them. The Committee then appointed Mr. Jefferson and me, to draw them up in form, and cloath them in a proper Dress. The Sub Committee met, and considered the Minutes, making such Observations on them as then occurred; when Mr. Jefferson desired me to take them to my Lodgings and make the Draft. This I declined and gave several reasons for declining. 1. That he was a Virginian and I a Massachusettsian. 2. that he was a southern Man and I a northern one. 3. That I had been so obnoxious for my early and constant Zeal in promoting the Measure, that any draft of mine, would undergo a more severe Scrutiny and Criticism in Congress, than one of his composition. 4thly and lastly and that would be reason enough if there were no other, I had a great Opinion of the Elegance of his pen and none at all of my own. I therefore insisted that no hesitation should be made on his part. He accordingly took the Minutes and in a day or two produced to me his Draft. Whether I made or suggested any corrections I remember not. The Report was made to the Committee for five, by them examined, but whether altered or corrected in any thing I cannot recollect. But in substance at least it was reported to Congress where, after a severe Criticism, and striking out several of the most oratorical Paragraphs it was adopted on the fourth of July 1776, and published to the World.

Thomas Boylston Adams to John Adams, Philadelphia, 15 February 1802

The present Chief Magistrate of the United States, was so restless, during the period of his retirement from Office, and was possessed of such an itch for scribbling, that he has furnished

numberless weapons, which his political enemies have successfully turned against himself. I say, successfully, for notwithstanding the casual triumph of his party, which necessarily involved the consummation of his views, he has raised no monument, either to fame or glory, by his personal elevation.

Robert Troup to Rufus King, New York, 9 April 1802

Jefferson is the supreme director of measures—he has no levee days—observes no ceremony—often sees company in an undress, sometimes with his slippers on—always accessible to, and very familiar with, the sovereign people.

Thomas Jefferson to Benjamin Hawkins, Washington, 18 February 1803

I retain myself very perfect health, having not had twenty hours of fever in forty-two years past. I have sometimes had a troublesome headache, and some slight rheumatic pains; but now sixty years old nearly, I have had as little to complain of in point of health as most people.

Louisa Catherine Adams: Diary, March 1804

Of Mr. Jefferson I can only state the impression which he made on me when I saw him—My prejudices were all in his favour when I arrived in the Country as I had been accustomed to hear my Father praise him—The first abord did not please me: his countenance indicated strongly the hypocrisy of his nature and all about him his smile and his actions indicated a sort of tricky cunning, the sure attendant of a sophisticated mind devoid of a strong basis of substantial principle—His manners were neither elegant nor refined; his conversation was agreeable, but he ever appeared to be a great man by fortuitous circumstance; but too unsound by *reality* to claim so lofty a position—

It was the sneaking greatness of mere good fortune attained in a lucky hour; and by a concurrence of propitious events—Showy, prosperous and backed by a strong party in his political career; his character was exactly adapted to lead restless demagogues and turbulent politicians, who needed only *gifts* without aspiring to qualifications—Nervously timid and totally wanting in personal courage, he was a *jest* among brave men; and Mr. Tracy used to say of him “that he never would take the Leg of a Chicken, because he was afraid of the *drum stick*”—

In short he was the Iago of the political world—

His God rejecting; to his race untrue—

Louisa Catherine Adams to John Quincy Adams, Washington, 12 May 1804

You have seen by the papers I suppose the loss the President has sustain'd Mrs Epps died of an Abscess in her breast produced by a cold taken during her confinement she was removed in a litter to Monticello where for a day or two she appear'd to recover which raised her fathers hopes and render'd the shock more bitter Mrs. Maddisson says this stroke as been almost too severe for him she was his favorite Child—

William Plumer: Memorandum, 10 November 1804

I found the President dressed better than I ever saw him at any time when I called on a morning visit. Though his coat was old & threadbare, his scarlet vest, his corduroy small cloths, & his white cotton hose, were new & clean—but his linen was much soiled, & his slippers old—His hair was cropt & powdered.

William Plumer: Memorandum, 16 March 1806

The more critically & impartially I examine the character & conduct of Mr. Jefferson the more favorably I think of his integrity. I am really inclined to think I have done him injustice in not allowing him more credit for the integrity of heart that he possesses. A city appears very different when viewed from different positions—& so it is with man. Viewed in different situations—different times—place—circumstances—relations & with different dispositions, the man thus examined appears unlike himself. My object is truth—I write for myself—I wish not—I am determined not—to set down ought in malice, or to diminish anything from the fact.

The result of my investigation is that Mr. Jefferson has as much honesty & integrity as men in the higher grades of society usually have—& indeed I think more. He is a man of science. But he is very credulous—he knows little of the nature of man—very little indeed. He has travelled the tour of Europe—he has been Minister at Versailles. He has had great opportunities to know man. He has much knowledge of books—of insects—of shells & of all that charms a virtuoso—but he knows not the human heart. He is a closet politician—but not a practical statesman. He has much *fine sense* but little of that *plain common sense* so requisite to business—& which in fact governs the world.

These observations on his character are founded on facts that have fallen within my own View. An infidel in religion—but in every thing else credulous to a fault!

Alas man is himself a contradiction! I do not however mean to insinuate that Mr. Jefferson is a model of goodness. He has too much cunning. Still I repeat the errors of his administration proceed more often from the head than the heart. They partake more of credulity than of wickedness. Examine his whole life with a view to this fact & you will meet with proof in almost every official act.

Permit me to mention that no one circumstance tended so much to his elevation as the *great confidence* General Washington reposed in him. Washington did this with a full & perfect knowledge of him. They were both Virginians. His conduct during & after the Revolution was known to Washington. And although Jefferson was publicly opposed to the adoption of the Constitution of the United States yet Genl. Washington when called to administer the government gave to Mr. Jefferson the most important confidential office under him, that of *Secretary of State*. This office Mr. Jefferson held as long as he wished. Mr. Washington did not withdraw his confidence from him while in office. The approbation of Washington, under these circumstances, is honorable.

I do not myself so implicitly yield to the opinion of Mr. Washington as some men do. Still I think his approbation is worthy of great notice. It renders popular, the man on whom it has been conferred, to a certain extent. . . .

Mr. Jefferson is too timid—too irresolute—too fickle—he wants nerve—he wants firmness & resolution. A wavering doubtful hesitating mind joined with credulity is oftentimes as injurious to the nation as a wicked depraved heart.

William Plumer: Memorandum, 4 April 1806

[Stephen Roe Bradley said] That Mr. Jefferson was a visionary man—never qualified for the presidency—That we must now turn our attention to an eastern man—That Rufus King would make a good president—that Burr a better. That Mr. Jefferson had explicitly told him he would not be a candidate at the next election.

William Plumer: Memorandum, 8 April 1806

But said Mr. Adair, the President wants nerve—he has not even confidence in himself—For more than a year he has been in the habit of trusting almost implicitly in Mr. Madison. Madison has acquired a compleat ascendancy over him. I observed that I considered Mr. M as an honest man—but that he was too cautious—too fearful & timid to direct the affairs of this nation. He replied that is my opinion of the man.

William Plumer: Memorandum, 11 April 1806

Mr. Gilman told me that he believed the President was an honest man—but he wanted firmness—That Mr., Madison was much more timid—& yet he governed the President—That he consulted the other heads of department but little—That Genl. Dearborn, the Secry. of War, thought the measures of the President were too feeble—that he thought he was afraid to take the responsibility of proper measures upon him—That he trusted too much in governing Congress by an indirect and secret influence.

William Plumer: Memorandum, 11 December 1806

General [Stephen R.] Bradley, of the State, said to me this day, “That it was time to have some other man president—That Mr. Jefferson’s influence in Congress was irresistible—that it was alarming—That if he should recommend to us to repeal the Gospels of the Evangelist, a majority of Congress would do it.”

William Plumer: Memorandum, 27 December 1806

It appears to me that Mr. Jefferson is growing hard of hearing—that deafness is approaching upon him. I observed him several times to bend his head to listen—& he inquired what I had said. Age has some effect upon him.

He always renders his company easy & agreeable. His table was well furnished—good dinner—rich & various desert—but his wine, except Madeira & Hermitage, not good.

William Plumer: Memorandum, 4 February 1807

That had he preserved copies of the letters he had written, they would of themselves, form a narrative of the most interesting events during that period.

William Plumer: Memorandum, 9 February 1807

Mr. [John Quincy] Adams replied, The President cannot be a lover of history—here are prominent traits in his character, & important actions in his life, that he would not wish should be delineated, & transmitted to posterity.

Joseph Story to Samuel P. P. Fay, Washington, 30 May 1807

Jefferson is tall and thin, of a sallow complexion, with a fine, intelligent eye. Dr. M. yesterday introduced me, and we spent a half hour with him, in which time he conversed in a very easy, correct, and pleasant style. His language is peculiarly appropriate, and his manner very unaffected. The negligence of his dress a little surprised me. He received us in his slippers, and wore old-fashioned clothes, which were not in the nicest order, or of the most elegant kind; a blue coat, white worked cassimere waistcoat and corduroy breeches (I beg your pardon, I mean *small clothes*) constituted his dress. You know Virginians have some pride in appearing in simple habiliments, and are willing to rest their claim to attention upon their force of mind and suavity of manners. The President is a little awkward in his first address, but you are immediately at ease in his presence. His manners are inviting and not uncourtly; and his voice flexible and distinct. He bears the marks of intense thought and perseverance in his countenance . . . I visited him again this morning in company with Mr. Madison, at whose house I breakfasted, and conversed with him upon politics in a perfectly familiar manner. His smile is very engaging and impresses you with cheerful frankness. His familiarity, however, is tempered with great calmness of manner and with becoming propriety. Open to all, he seems willing to stand the test of inquiry, and to be weighed in the balance only by his merit and attainments. You may measure if you please, and cannot easily misjudge. On the whole, I confess he appears to me a clear and intelligent man, ready and discriminating, but more formed by philosophical reflection, than by rapid, enterprising, overbearing genius. If he chooses, he cannot fail to please. If he cannot awe, he will not sink into neglect. The current of his thoughts is gentle and uniform, unbroken by the torrent of eloquence, and unruffled by the fervor of vivid internal flame. Take this passing sketch and color it to your own fancy.

Thomas Jefferson to Isaac Weaver, Jr., Washington, 7 June 1807

Being very sensible of bodily decays from advancing years, I ought not to doubt their effect on the mental faculties. To do so would evince either great self-love or little observation of what passes under our eyes: and I shall be fortunate if I am the first to perceive and to obey this admonition of nature.

John Adams to Benjamin Rush, September 1807

Jefferson resigned his office as Secretary of State and retired, and his friends said he had struck a great stroke to obtain the presidency. . . . The whole anti-Federal party at that time considered this retirement as a sure and certain step towards the summit of the pyramid and, accordingly, represented him as unambitious, unavaricious, and perfectly disinterested in all parts of all the states in the union. When a man has one of the two greatest parties in a nation interested in representing him to be disinterested, even those who believe it to be a lie will repeat it so often to one another that at last they will seem to believe it to be true. Jefferson has succeeded; and multitudes are made to believe that he is pure benevolence; that he desires no profit; that he wants no patronage; that if you will only let him govern, he will rule only to make the people happy. But you and I know him to be an intriguer.

John Quincy Adams to John Adams, Washington, 30 November 1807

The President's Policy is *procrastination*—

Thomas Jefferson to Benjamin Rush, Washington, 3 January 1808

We had all rather associate with a good humored, light-principled man than with an ill tempered rigorist in morality.

John Adams to Benjamin Rush, 18 April 1808

Mr. Jefferson has reason to reflect upon himself. How he will get rid of his remorse in his retirement, I know not. He must know that he leaves the government infinitely worse than he found it, and that from his own error or ignorance. I wish his telescopes and mathematical instruments, however, may secure his felicity. But if I have not mismeasured his ambition, he will be uneasy and the sword will cut away the scabbard. As he has, however, a good taste for letters and an ardent curiosity for science, he may, and I hope will, find amusement and consolation from them; for I have no resentment against him, though he has honored and salaried almost every villain he could find who had been an enemy to me.

Margaret Bayard Smith to Susan B. Smith, Washington, March 1809

[At Madison's presidential inaugural ball.] Mr. Jefferson did not stay above two hours; he seemed in high spirits and his countenance beamed with a benevolent joy. I do believe father never loved son more than he loves Mr. Madison, and I believe too that every demonstration of respect to Mr. M. gave Mr. J. more pleasure than if paid to himself. Oh he is a good man! And the day will come when all party spirit shall expire, that every citizen of the United States will join in saying "He is a good man."

Thomas Jefferson to William Lambert, Monticello, 28 May 1809

Truth requires me to add also that after being so long chained to the writing table, I go to it with reluctance, and listen with partiality to every call from any other quarter.

John Adams to Benjamin Rush, 25 October 1809

There has never been the smallest interruption of the personal friendship between me and Mr. Jefferson that I know of. You should remember that Jefferson was but a boy to me. I was at least ten years older than him in age and more than twenty years older than him in politics. I am bold to say I was his preceptor in politics and taught him everything that has been good and solid in his whole political conduct. I served with him on many committees of Congress, in which we established some of the most important regulations of the army &c., &c., &c.

William Cunningham to John Adams, Fitchburg, Mass., 22 November 1809

Of such examples of great personal sway, (which might be cited *ad infinitum*,) we are, as yet, without an instance. Burr set out, and I believe pretty well provided, to be such a champion; but he burst in a nipping frost, and his "chesnuts" out. The only person among us possessing an overbearing influence if my observation and advisers have not erred, is Mr. Jefferson. He is the Apollo of a powerful party, and Monticello is our Delphos. This gentleman, in his Notes on Virginia, had authority in long-tried experience for saying: "that one precedent in favour of power is stronger than an hundred against it," which I take as equivalent to his confession, that when he abrogated

the Judiciary,* he set an apple on our youthful head, which could not be cleft by an hundred of our best archers. My mind has long been made up on the unconstitutionality of that repeal. It is unnecessary, especially as you are of the same opinion, to discuss the subject. In my judgment, an enlightened, impartial, honest and truly independent Judiciary, is of more consequence in maintaining the morals and liberties of a people, than every other branch—it was this alone which rendered tolerable the usurpation of Cromwell. But we have seen, and to our eternal injury it will be remembered, that *such* a Judiciary cannot be enjoyed, tho' guaranteed by the Constitution, without parity in the coordinate branches of the government.

*A reference to the repeal of the Judiciary Act of 1801.

William Cunningham to John Adams, Fitchburg, Mass., 29 December 1809

You very seriously declared of Mr. Jefferson, that he was under the government of the two most unfriendly passions to the liberties of a people, that can possibly reign in the bosom of a magistrate—"A MEAN THIRST OF POPULARITY, AND AN INORDINATE AMBITION." What, Sir but avariciousness of popularity, and insatiable ambition, have been the causes of all the Tyranny with which the world has been cursed? . . .

I was hostile to Mr. Jefferson's Administration, and for that reason principally, I never thought of being in place under it. I never could see any thing to satisfy me, that he was a profound statesman, but much to convince me that he was superficial—that he was actuated by a mean thirst for popularity—and that the Constitution itself was not a bulwark against his revengeful spirit. In all this it is possible I may be mistaken, and, although supported in my opinion by the highest authority, I sincerely wish I may be, for notwithstanding the distressing experience I have had of the villainy of which man is capable, I am yet impel'd more by my disposition than is due to principle, to judge charitably.

Thomas Jefferson to Tadeusz Kosciusko, Monticello, 26 February 1810

A part of my occupation, & by no means the least pleasing, is the direction of the studies of such young men as ask it. They place themselves in the neighboring village, and have the use of my library & counsel, & make a part of my society. In advising the course of their reading, I endeavor to keep their attention fixed on the main objects of all science, the freedom & happiness of man.

Thomas Jefferson to William Lambert, Monticello, 16 July 1810

My occupations here are almost exclusively given to my farm & affairs. They furnish me exercise, health & amusement, and with the recreations of family & neighborly society, fill up most of my time, and give a tranquility necessary to my time of life.

Thomas Jefferson to David Howell, Monticello, 15 December 1810

I give more time to exercise of the body than of the mind, believing it wholesome to both.

John Adams to Benjamin Rush, 21 June 1811

[In speaking of the “masters of the theatrical exhibitions of politics.”] We whigs attempted somewhat of the kind. The Declaration of Independence I always considered as a Theatrical Show. Jefferson ran away with all the stage effect of that: i.e. all the Glory of it.

Thomas Jefferson to Benjamin Rush, Poplar Forest, Va., 17 August 1811

The loss of the power of taking exercise would be a sore affliction to me.

Having to conduct my grandson through his course of Mathematics, I have resumed that study with great avidity. It was ever my favorite one. We have no theories there, no uncertainties remain on the mind; all is demonstration & satisfaction. I have forgotten much, and recover it with more difficulty than when in the vigor of my mind, I originally acquired it.

John Adams to Benjamin Rush, 25 December 1811

[In speaking of Jefferson and Benjamin Rush.] I believe you both to mean well to mankind and your country. I might suspect you both to sacrifice a little to the infernal gods, and perhaps unconsciously to suffer your judgments to be a little swayed by a love of popularity and possibly by a little spice of ambition.

Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, Monticello, 21 January 1812

You and I have been wonderfully spared, and myself with remarkable health, and a considerable activity of body and mind. I am on horseback 3 or 4 hours of every day; visit 3 or 4 times a year a possession I have 90 miles distant [Poplar Forest], performing the winter journey on horseback. I walk little however; a single mile being too much for me; and I live in the midst of my grandchildren, one of whom has lately promoted me to be a great grandfather.

Benjamin Rush to John Adams, Philadelphia, 17 February 1812

I rejoice in the correspondence which has taken place between you and your old friend Mr. Jefferson. I consider you and him as the North and South Poles of the American Revolution. Some talked, some wrote, and some fought to promote and establish it, but you and Mr. Jefferson *thought* for us all.

Mathew Carey to James John Adams to John Adams Smith, Quincy, Mass., 20 May 1812

Jefferson was my friend 37 years ago, is now, & ever since has been, and I have been his. and notwithstanding some & many appearances I have never seen so much duplicity in him, as in every other public man, whom I have ever numbered among my political Friends excepting two or three among whom neither Livingston Clinton or Washington is one.

John Adams to John Adams Smith, Quincy, Mass., 15 June 1812

Mr Jefferson is accused and may be justly suspected of sacrificing sentiment in some instances and bending Principle to his personal views of interest and ambition. If I knew anyone Man living or dead, who had not, I would worship him; not with *λατρία* however. Washington, in my opinion

was at least as selfish as Jefferson, Both had my esteem; neither my devotion, I loved both; but not with blindness of eyes.

Madison, Philadelphia, 11 August 1812

Had Mr. Jefferson been a Nero, & you a Caligula, you could not be more completely abhorred & detested than you are in such parts of New England as are under the influence of the Boston Gazette & the Repertory.

Richard Rush to President James Madison, Washington, 4 September 1812

[If James Monroe would resign as secretary of state and take the field as general of an army in the Northwest,] the urgent remedy would go but half way. Who will fill the chasm he would leave? To deprive the nation of the hopes to which it clings in this quarter as to part of the wisdom required in its councils; to deprive you, too, Sir, of such services at such a time would not do! Where, then, is the substitute? Shall I presume to suggest one? not impracticable I trust, effectual—more than heart could wish—I am sure: Where, Sir, is the illustrious Jefferson? I, indeed, can be no stranger, more than all others, to his great age, to his long, useful, arduous, services; to his love of retirement, to his claims to be now exempt from toil. But, Sir, might he not still be prevailed upon to lend the mighty weight of his name—of his venerable years—yet a little longer, to the service of his country when a new crisis addresses itself, as it now would; to his feelings of constant devotion to her cause? May not his venerable and now almost canonized form be seen to step forth to this post; to leave the shades of his secluded and beloved mansion at such a time, at such a call? The sacrifice would, indeed, be great; but, to him, what sacrifice would be too great when his country was in question, her benefit, her highest interests, the stake? Then, Sir, I speak, I am sure, the language of millions when I say, depression would give place to joy, confidence rise to enthusiasm! Then would the great republican family of the union be one—feel with but one heart, rise up in its whole strength! Such an event, Sir, and the best hopes of the patriot are made sure! Such an event, and the glory of the setting days of the then greatest of patriots is more than ever crowned!

John Mason to President James Madison, George Town, 4 September 1812

To what Mr. Rush has said Sir, I will only add, my certain and positive conviction, that at this moment; the appointment of some Man, who has, in an extraordinary degree, by the weight of his Talents, and personal character, the means of relieving the public despondency, produced by Hull's infamous Conduct, is necessary; and that no Man in our Community is so well fitted for this, as Mr. Munroe, but the objection to his leaving your Cabinet, at this time, can be overcome in no way but by Mr. Jefferson in person to supply his Place—and may not the Friends throughout the Continent, of that great and good Man hope, he will, on such an occasion, make the Sacrifice?

His Country would hail him with enthusiastic Joy as Secretary of State! and I even will venture to hope that his lofty mind will consider it no Condescension to aid your councils with his Wisdom and his virtue, at such a time.

Gabriel Duvall to James Madison, Washington, 5 September 1812

Altho' Mr. Jefferson has already attained the pinnacle of political fame, his condescension to fill the office of Secretary of State would evince such genuine & disinterested patriotism that it

could not fail to increase the veneration with which the people of the present age regard his character, & to perpetuate it with posterity.

Thomas Jefferson to William Duane, Monticello, 1 October 1812

The hand of age is upon me. The decay of bodily faculties apprises me that those of the mind cannot be unimpaired, had I not still better proofs. Every year counts by increased debility, and departing faculties keep the score. The last year it was the sight, this it is the hearing, the next something else will be going, until all is gone. . . . As a compensation for faculties departed, nature gives me good health, & a perfect resignation to the laws of decay which she has prescribed to all the forms & combinations of matter.

John Adams to Benjamin Rush, 27 December 1812

On the 16th January 1804, I wrote to a correspondent, "I wish Jefferson no ill; I envy him not. I shudder at the calamities which I fear his conduct is preparing for his country, from a mean thirst of popularity, an inordinate ambition, and a want of sincerity."

John Adams to Richard Rush, Quincy, Mass., 15 July 1813

The Talents, the Scollarship, the Genius, the Learning of Jefferson and Madison are not disputed; but their total Incapacity for practical Government or War, is unblushingly asserted, and I must Say not much disputed by any Party or Individual here.

Thomas Jefferson to Samuel Harrison Smith, Monticello, 21 September 1814

I learn from the newspapers that the vandalism of our enemy has triumphed at Washington over science as well as the Arts, by the destruction of the public library with the noble edifice in which it was deposited. . . . I presume it will be among the early objects of Congress to recommence their collection. This will be difficult while the war continues and intercourse with Europe is attended with so much risk. You know my collection, its condition and extent. I have been 50 years making it & have spared no pains, opportunity or expense to make it what it is. While residing in Paris, I devoted every afternoon I was disengaged, for a summer or two, in examining all the principal book stores, turning over every book with my own hands and putting by everything which related to America, and indeed whatever was rare & valuable in every science. Besides this, I had standing orders, during the whole time I was in Europe, in its principal book-marts, particularly Amsterdam, Frankfort, Madrid, and London, for such works relating to America as could not be found in Paris. So that, in that department particularly, such a collection was made as probably can never again be effected; because it is hardly probable that the same opportunities, the same time, industry, perseverance, and expense, with some knowledge of the bibliography of the subject would again happen to be in concurrence. During the same period, and after my return to America, I was led to procure also whatever related to the duties of those in the high concerns of the nation. So that the collection, which I suppose is between 9 and 10,000 volumes, while it includes what is chiefly valuable in science and literature generally, extends more particularly to whatever belongs to the American statesman. In the diplomatic and Parliamentary branches, it is particularly full. It is long since I have been sensible it ought not to continue private property, and had provided that at my

death, Congress should have the refusal of it, at their own price. But the loss they have now incurred makes the present the proper moment for their accommodation, without regard to the small remnant of time and the barren use of my enjoying it.

John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, Quincy, Mass., 20 December 1814

As you are all Heluones Librorum* I think you ought to have a Sympathy for each other.

*Glutton for books.

Francis C. Gray's Account of a Visit to Monticello, 4–7 February 1815

On Saturday it rained & at 12 O'clock we [Gray and George Ticknor] went from our tavern in a hack to Monticello three miles east of Charlottesville on the same road we had passed the day before. Our road passed between Monticello & the S.W. mountain which is much higher & along whose side runs the narrow path which led us between these hills to the gate on the S.E. side of Monticello. The Sides of both these hills & the valley between them are covered with a noble forest of oaks in all stages of growth & of decay. Their trunks straight & tall put forth no branches till they reach a height almost equal to the Summits of our loftiest trees in New England. Those which were rooted in the valley, in the richest soil overtopped many which sprung from spots far above them on the side of the mountain. The forest had evidently been abandoned to nature, some of the trees were decaying from age, some were blasted, some uprooted by the wind & some appeared even to have been twisted from their trunks by the violence of a hurricane. They rendered the approach to the house even at this season of the year extremely grand & imposing. On reaching the house we found no bell nor knocker & entering through the hall [into] the parlour saw a Gentleman (Col. Randolph) who took our letters to Mr. Jefferson.

Mr. Jefferson soon made his appearance. He is quite tall, 6 feet one or two inches, face streaked & speckled with red, light grey eyes, white hair, dressed in shoes of very thin soft leather with pointed toes & heels ascending in a peak behind, with very short quarters grey worsted stockings, corduroy small clothes blue waistcoat & coat, of stiff thick cloth made of the wool of his own merinos & badly manufactured, the buttons of his coat & small clothes of horn, & an under waistcoat flannel bound with red velvet—His figure bony, long with broad shoulders, a true Virginian. He begged he might put up our carriage, send for our baggage & keep us with him some time. We assented & he left the room to give the necessary directions, sending as we requested the carriage back to Charlottesville. On looking round the room in which we sat the first thing which attracted our attention was the state of the chairs. They had leather bottoms stuffed with hair, but the bottoms were completely worn through & the hair sticking out in all directions. On the mantle piece which was large & of marble were many books of all kinds Livy, Orosius, Edinburg review, 1 vol. of Edgeworth's moral tales &c. &c. There were many miserable prints & some fine pictures hung round the room, among them two plans for the completion of the Capitol at Washington one of them very elegant. A Harpsichord stood in one corner of the room. There were four double windows from the wall to the floor of fine large glass & a recess in one side of the apartment. This was the Breakfasting room. After half an hour's conversation with Mr. Jeff. & Col. Randolph we were invited into the parlour where a fire was just kindled & a servant occupied in substituting a wooden panel for a square of glass, which had been broken in one of the folding doors opening on the lawn. Mr. J. had procured the glass for his house in Bohemia, where the price is so much the square foot whatever be the size of the glass purchased, & these panes were so large that unable to replace the square in this part of the country, he had been obliged to send to Boston to have some

glass made of sufficient size to replace that broken, & this had not yet been received. We passed the whole forenoon, which was rainy, in conversation with Mr. Jeff. & Mr. Randolph & at 4 o'clock toddy was brought us, which neither of us took & which was never again handed again, & we were ushered back into the breakfast room to dinner, where we were introduced to Mrs. Randolph, Miss Randolph, & Mr. T. J. Randolph. The rest of the family at table were Mrs. Marks, a sister of Mr. Jefferson & 2 other daughters of Co. Randolph. The drinking cups were of silver marked G.W. to T.J.—the table liquors were beer & cider & after dinner wine. In the same room we took tea & at ten in the evening retired—Fires were lighted in our bed rooms & again in the morning before we rose—the beds were all in recesses—At 15 minutes after 8 we heard the first breakfast bell & at 9 the second, whose sound assembled us in the breakfast room—We sat an hour after breakfast chatting with the Ladies & then adjourned to the parlour. Mr. Jefferson gave us the catalogue of his books to examine & soon after conducted us to his library, & passed an hour there in pointing out to us its principal treasures. His collection of ancient classics was complete as to the authors but very careless in the editions. They were generally interleaved with the best English Translations. . . . Mr. Jeff took us from his library into his bed chamber where on a table before the fire stood a polygraph with which he said he always wrote. Mr. Jefferson took his accustomed ride before dinner & on his return told us that the ice was crowded & thick on the banks of the Rivanna & had carried away 30 feet of his mill dam; this was all he said on the subject, & from his manner I supposed his loss was probably about one or two hundred dollars, but on our ride back to Richmond we heard it every where spoken of as a serious loss & the countrymen some of them even estimated it at \$30,000. This to be sure must [have been] a most wonderful miscalculation, but no doubt the loss was serious.

George Ticknor's Account of a Visit to Monticello, 4–7 February 1815

We left Charlottesville on Saturday morning, the 4th of February, for Mr. Jefferson's. He lives, you know, on a mountain, which he has named Monticello, and which, perhaps you do not know, is a synonyme for Carter's mountain. The ascent of this steep, savage hill, was as pensive and slow as Satan's ascent to Paradise. We were obliged to wind two thirds round its sides before we reached the artificial lawn on which the house stands; and, when we had arrived there, we were about six hundred feet, I understand, above the stream which flows at its foot. It is an abrupt mountain. The fine growth of ancient forest-trees conceals its sides and shades part of its summit. The prospect is admirable. . . . The lawn on the top, as I hinted, was artificially formed by cutting down the peak of the height. In its centre, and facing the southeast, Mr. Jefferson has placed his house, which is of brick, two stories high in the wings, with a piazza in front of a receding centre. It is built, I suppose, in the French style. You enter, by a glass folding-door, into a hall which reminds you of Fielding's "Man of the Mountain," by the strange furniture of its walls. On one side hangs the head and horns of an elk, a deer, and a buffalo; another is covered with curiosities which Lewis and Clarke found in their wild and perilous expedition. On the third, among many other striking matters, was the head of a mammoth, or, as [Georges] Cuvier calls it, a mastodon, containing the only *os frontis*, Mr. Jefferson tells me, that has yet been found. On the fourth side, in odd union with a fine painting of the Repentance of Saint Peter, is an Indian map on leather, of the southern waters of the Missouri, and an Indian representation of a bloody battle, handed down in their traditions.

Through this hall—or rather museum—we passed to the dining room, and sent our letters to Mr. Jefferson, who was of course in his study. Here again we found ourselves surrounded with paintings that seemed good.

We had hardly time to glance at the pictures before Mr. Jefferson entered; and if I was astonished to find Mr. Madison short and somewhat awkward, I was doubly astonished to find Mr. Jefferson, whom I had always supposed to be a small man, more than six feet high, with dignity in his appearance, and ease and graciousness in his manners. . . . He rang, and sent to Charlottesville for our baggage, and, as dinner approached, took us to the drawing-room,—a large and rather elegant room, twenty or thirty feet high,—which, with the hall I have described, composed the whole centre of the house, from top to bottom. The floor of this room is tessellated. It is formed of alternate diamonds of cherry and beech, and kept polished as highly as if it were of fine mahogany.

Here are the best pictures of the collection. Over the fireplace is the Laughing and Weeping Philosophers, dividing the world between them; on the right, the earliest navigators to America,—Columbus, Americus Vespuccius, Magellan, etc.,—copied, Mr. Jefferson said, from originals in the Florence Gallery. Farther round, Mr. Madison in the plain, Quaker-like dress of his youth, Lafayette in his Revolutionary uniform, and Franklin in the dress in which we always see him. There were other pictures, and a copy of Raphael's Transfiguration.

We conversed on various subjects until dinner-time, and at dinner were introduced to the grown members of his family. These are his only remaining child, Mrs. Randolph, her husband, Colonel Randolph, and the two oldest of their unmarried children, Thomas Jefferson and Ellen; and I assure you I have seldom met a pleasanter party.

The evening passed away pleasantly in general conversation, of which Mr. Jefferson was necessarily the leader. I shall probably surprise you by saying that, in conversation, he reminded me of Dr. [James] Freeman. He has the same discursive manner and love of paradox, equally fond of American antiquities, and especially the antiquities of his native State, and talks of them with freedom and, I suppose, accuracy. He has, too, the appearance of that fairness and simplicity which Dr. Freeman has; and, if the parallel holds no further here, they will again meet on the ground of their love of old books and young society.

On Sunday morning, after breakfast, Mr. Jefferson asked me into his library, and there I spent the forenoon of that day as I had that of yesterday. This collection of books, now so much talked about, consists of about seven thousand volumes, contained in a suite of fine rooms, and is arranged in the catalogue, and on the shelves, according to the divisions and subdivisions of human learning by Lord Bacon. In so short a time I could not, of course, estimate its value, even if I had been competent to do so.

Perhaps the most curious single specimen—or, at least, the most characteristic of the man and expressive of his hatred of royalty—was a collection which he had bound up in six volumes, and lettered “The Book of Kings,” consisting of the “Memorires de la Princesse de Bareith,” two volumes; “Les Memories de la Comtesse de la Motte,” two volumes; the “Trial of the Duke of York,” one volume; and “*The Book*,” one volume. These documents of regal scandal seemed to be favorites with the philosopher, who pointed them out to me with a satisfaction somewhat inconsistent with the measured gravity he claims in relation to such subjects generally.

On Monday morning I spent a couple of hours with him in his study. He gave me there an account of the manner in which he passed the portion of his time in Europe which he could rescue from public business; told me that while he was in France he had formed a plan of going to Italy, Sicily, and Greece, and that he should have executed it, if he had not left Europe in the full conviction that he should immediately return there, and find a better opportunity. He spoke of my intention to go, and without my even hinting any purpose to ask him for letters, told me that he was now seventy-two years old, and that most of his friends and correspondents in Europe had died in the course of the twenty-seven years since he left France, but that he would gladly furnish

me with the means of becoming acquainted with some of the remainder, if I would give him a month's notice, and regretted that their number was so reduced.

The afternoon and evening passed as on the two days previous; for everything is done with such regularity, that when you know how one day is filled, I suppose you know how it is with the others. At eight o'clock the first bell is rung in the great hall, and at nine the second summons you to the breakfast-room, where you find everything ready. After breakfast every one goes, as inclination leads him, to his chamber, the drawing-room, or the library. The children retire to their school-room with their mother, Mr. Jefferson rides to his mills on the Rivanna, and returns at about twelve. At half past three the great bell rings, and those who are disposed resort to the drawing-room, and the rest go to the dining-room at the second call of the bell, which is at four o'clock. The dinner was always choice, and served in the French style; but no wine was set on the table till the cloth was removed. The ladies sat until about six, then retired, but returned with the tea-tray a little before seven, and spent the evening with the gentlemen; which was always pleasant, for they are obviously accustomed to join in the conversation, however high the topic may be. At about half past ten, which seemed to be their usual hour of retiring, I went to my chamber, found there a fire, candle, and a servant in waiting to receive my orders for the morning, and in the morning was waked by his return to build the fire.

To-day, Tuesday, we told Mr. Jefferson that we should leave Monticello in the afternoon. He seemed much surprised, and said as much as politeness would permit on the badness of the roads and the prospect of bad weather, to induce us to remain longer. It was evident, I thought, that they had calculated on our staying a week. At dinner, Mr. Jefferson again urged us to stay, not in an oppressive way, but with kind politeness; and when the horses were at the door, asked if he should not send them away; but, as he found us resolved on going, he bade us farewell in the heartiest style of Southern hospitality, after thrice reminding me that I must write to him for letters to his friends in Europe. I came away regretting that the coach returned so soon, and thinking, with General Hamilton, that he was a perfect gentleman in his own house.

Charles Clay to Thomas Jefferson, Bedford, N.Y., 8 February 1815

I sincerely wish your name may Remain in the Annals of America as the Cedar of Libanus, or the live Oak of America.

Caesar A. Rodney to Thomas Jefferson, Wilmington, Del., 10 February 1815

It has been so long since I had the pleasure of hearing from you, that I feel anxious to know whether in the tranquil scenes of retirement you continue to enjoy your usual good health, for I know must enjoy, unclouded, except by sickness, that serenity of mind, which is the constant companion of a pure conscience. The diadem of a man, who can repeat with truth, the sentiment of the Latin Lyric bard

“Integer vitae, scelerisque purus.”*

And who can say with justice, to an enemy,

“Hic murus ahacaeud esto Nil conscire sibi nulla palescere culpa.”**

Tho' you cannot have been, since you left Washington, without solicitude for the welfare of the Republic, you have been relieved from that burthen of cares, necessarily incident, to the high office you, filled with so much dignity, & executed with such exalted integrity, directed by the most

enlightened understanding, that you gained the affections of the people at large, & the warm attachment of every individual, capable of attachment, who had the honor of being more intimately connected with you, by the ties of friendship, or the relations of office. Fidelity & frankness to your friends was the unerring & undeviating maxim of your public life. And I shall never forget, your last advice, your parental legacy & injunction, to those you left behind, on going out of office. "To love one another as you had loved them." . . .

Since we last parted what wonderful revolution & changes have taken place at home & abroad. "Tempora mutantur,"*** & some men have changed with the times. But I will not descant on this subject, when it shall be in my power to visit you I may. This pleasure & satisfaction, I anticipate before a very long time. I have a great desire to spend a few days with the best of men, in his retreat of whom some future historian will say with more propriety, than it was said of Scipio in ancient or Scarborough in modern times

"Nil non laudandum, aut fecit, aut dixit, aut sensit."****

*The man of unblemished life who is unstained by crime.

**Be this our wall of bronze, to have no guilt at heart, no wrongdoing to turn us pale.

***Times change.

****Guilty of no act, word or thought that was not praiseworthy.

Thomas Jefferson to Horatio G. Spafford, Monticello, 21 February 1815

Your favor of Jan. 28 was three weeks on its passage to this place. I thank you for the copies of the pamphlet you have been so good as to send me. I have read it with pleasure and observe the ingenuity of the idea. Having however been myself very much of a projector in mechanics, and often disappointed in my theoretical combinations, I have learnt neither to form, nor to trust any opinion on these conceptions, until confirmed by experiment.

Thomas Jefferson to Benjamin Smith Barton, Monticello, 26 February 1815

I have come to a resolution my self as I hope every good citizen will, never again to purchase any article of foreign manufacture which can be had of American make, be the difference of price what it may. The greatest obstacle I apprehend to our manufactures is our slavish obsequiousness to British fashions. The British stuffs *in fashion* will be sent to us, and while our workmen are preparing to imitate them the fashion will have vanished, and our belles and beaux be drawn off to something newer. This is a great evil, but I fear an irremediable one. It is the peculiar domain in which the fools have usurped dominion over the wise, and as they are a majority they hold to the fundamental law of the majority.

Thomas Jefferson to P. H. Wendover, Monticello, 13 March 1815

Tranquility, at my age, is the balm of life.

Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, Monticello, 10 June 1815

I cannot live without books.

Thomas Jefferson to James Maury, Monticello, 16 June 1815

Your practice of the cold bath thrice a week during the winter, and at the age of 70, is a bold one, which I should not, *à priori*,* have pronounced salutary. But all theory must yield to experience, and every constitution has its own laws. I have for 50 years bathed my feet in cold water every morning (as you mention) and having been remarkably exempted from colds (not having had one in every 7 years of my life on an average) I have supposed it might be ascribed to that practice. When we see two facts accompanying one another for a long time, we are apt to suppose them related as cause and effect.

*Deductively.

John Minor to Thomas Jefferson, Fredericksburg, Va., 24 October 1815

[An immigrant from Ireland wanted to visit Jefferson.] He has fixed on our Country as the last asylum of Liberty; but before he adopts the place of his final settlement wishes to traverse the Country, and become acquainted with the People—his motive for visiting Montecello, is to become acquainted with a Man whose well earned fame has procured him the Thanks of his Country, and intitled him to the approbation of the Wise of all nations.

Nathaniel Macon to Thomas Jefferson, Washington, 7 January 1816

That the evening of your life may be as happy as the Meridian has been usefull, is the sincere prayer of . . . Nathaniel Macon.

Thomas Jefferson to Charles Thomson, Monticello, 9 January 1816

I too have made a wee little book, from the same materials, which I call the Philosophy of Jesus. It is a paradigm of his doctrine, made by cutting the texts out of the book, and arranging them on the pages of a blank book, in a certain order of time or subject. A more beautiful or precious morsel of ethics I have never seen. It is a document in proof that I am a real Christian, that is to say, a disciple of the doctrines of Jesus, very different from the Platonists, who call me infidel, and themselves Christians and preachers of the gospel, while they draw all their characteristic dogmas from what its Author never said nor saw. They have compounded from the heathen mysteries a system beyond the comprehension of man, of which the great reformer of the vicious ethics and deism of the Jews, were he to return on earth, would not recognize one feature.

I retain good health, am rather feeble to walk much, but ride with ease, passing two or three hours a day on horseback, and every three or four months taking, in a carriage, a journey of 90 miles to a distant possession, where I pass a good deal of my time. My eyes need the aid of glasses by night, and with small print in the day also; my hearing not quite so sensible as it used to be; no tooth shaking yet, but shivering and shrinking in the body from the cold we now experience, my thermometer having been as low as 120 this morning. My greatest oppression is a correspondence afflictingly laborious, the extent of which I have been long endeavoring to curtail. This keeps me at the drudgery of the writing table all the prime hours of the day, leaving for the gratification of my appetite for reading only what I can steel from the hours of sleep. Could I reduce this epistolary corvee within the limits of my friends and affairs, and give the time redeemed from it to reading and reflection, to history, ethics, mathematics, my life would be as happy as the infirmities of age would admit, and I should look to its consummation with the composure of one “*qui summon nec metuit diem nec optat.*”*

*Who neither fears the last day nor prays for it.

Thomas Jefferson to Philip Thornton, Monticello, 7 February 1816

The story of my death which you mention has I suppose given a momentary pleasure to the inventor, and some political partisans who think it ought to have happened 20 years ago. However it has not affected my health which has been uninterruptedly good, nor was I in Bedford where the death happened for a month before its period.

Thomas Jefferson to John Barnes, Monticello, 7 February 1816

I hope you enjoy good health, as I do, altho I have been killed lately by a report of very general circulation. I suppose they have a mind to be in time for what must happen ere long.

Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, Monticello, 8 April 1816

I steer my bark with Hope in the head, leaving Fear astern. My hopes indeed sometimes fail; but not oftener than the forebodings of the gloomy.

Thomas Jefferson to William Short, Monticello, 5 May 1816

Tranquility is the softest pillow for the head of old age.

From sunrise till noon I am chained to the writing table. At that hour I ride of necessity for health as well as recreation. And after dinner I must often return to the writing table.

Thomas Jefferson to George Logan, Monticello, 19 May 1816

I prefer candid and open expression.

Elizabeth Trist to Thomas Jefferson, Birdwood, Albemarle County, Va., 11 July 1816

I need not assure you how much it revived me to have proof of your being in existence and in good health and on Peachey's [Peachy R. Gilmer] Return from Albemarle he confirmed the glad tidings to us, that he never saw you in better health or in as good spirits. God grant that the blessing may be long continued to you.

Thomas Jefferson to Joseph Lakanal, Monticello, 30 July 1816

The wise man is at home every where, and the mind of the Philosopher never wants occupation.

Thomas Jefferson to Charles Pinckney, Monticello, 3 September 1816

You say nothing in your letter of your health which, after so long an interval, cannot be interesting to a friend. I hope it continues firm. As for myself, I weaken very sensibly, yet with such a continuance of good health as makes me fear I shall wear out very tediously, which is not what one would wish. I see no comfort in outliving one's friends, and remaining a mere monument of the times which are past. I withdraw myself as much from politics, and gladly shelter myself under the wings of the generation for which in our day, we have labored faithfully to provide shelter.

Baron de Montlezun's Account of a Visit to Monticello, 20 September 1816

Monticello is situated on a considerable elevation . . . from whence one towers over the horizon for distance of forty-five miles. I arrived at two o'clock, just as former president Jefferson was sitting down to eat. Soon afterwards he was to travel to another piece of land he owns near New-London, Virginia. . . . Mr. Jefferson is seventy-three years old, but he does not appear more than sixty-three. His grandson, who is six feet four inches tall, told me that, among the inhabitants of the neighboring mountains, he was of ordinary size.

Thomas Jefferson to Dabney Carr, Monticello, 8 October 1816

[Commenting on the unauthorized publication of one of his letters dealing with the call a state constitutional convention.] I have sometimes thought of coming to a resolution never to answer a letter from a person whom I do not know. Yet, to consider every man as unworthy of confidence, because some are found to be so, is a Machiavelism so contrary to my opinion of the human character generally, that I cannot act upon it. I believe it is better to suffer sometimes by breaches of confidence, than to suspect all and, by a Jesuitical reserve, to become suspected of all.

Richard Rush to Charles Jared Ingersoll, Washington, 9 October 1816

Monticello is a curiosity! Artificial to a high degree; in many respects superb. If it had not been called Monticello, I would call it Olympus, and Jove its occupant. In genius, in elevation, in the habits and enjoyments of his life, he is wonderfully lifted up above most mortals. The fog I was told never rises to the level of his mountain; and it is just so with what the newspapers say of him. Further: the dew does not fall on it; nor are there any insects there; nor, by consequence, any birds! Now, figure to yourself a house exalted upon such an eminence as all this bespeaks, and that house, thus as it were in the sky, decked off with art and wealth, and you have Monticello. I saw nothing so cheap as a print on his walls; nothing but paintings or statuary, with curious assemblages of artificial or natural objects forming quite a museum.

He lamented to me the loss of his library, and expects an importation of books this fall from Europe. His chief reading is the antient classicks, in the originals. He admitted that they were of no use; but he exclaimed, "they are such a luxury." He reads, he says, no longer for knowledge, but gratification. I need not tell you with what open doors he lives, as you well know that his mountain is made a sort of Mecca.

Thomas Jefferson to Gouverneur Morris, Monticello, 20 October 1816

[Morris was planning on visiting Jefferson.] You will find me enjoying general good health, but much enfeebled by age, as at that of 73 ought to be expected.

Thomas Jefferson to Mathew Carey, Poplar Forest, Va., 11 November 1816

You ask if I mean to publish any thing on the subject of a letter of mine to my friend Charles Thompson? Certainly not. I write nothing for publication, and last of all things should it be on the subject of religion, on the dogmas of religion as distinguished from moral principles, all mankind, from the beginning of the world to this day, have been quarrelling, fighting, burning and torturing one another. For abstractions unintelligible to themselves and to all others, and absolutely beyond

the comprehension of the human mind. Were I to enter on that arena, I should only add to the number of Bedlamites

Thomas Jefferson to Maximilian Godefroy, Poplar Forest, Va., 11 November 1816

I receive here your favor of Oct. 12 written from the Natural bridge, and am not at all surprised at the sensations expressed by you as produced by that great object, and the attachment excited. As a place of retirement and contemplation I know none in the world which would be so delightful, were not its solitude so incessantly interrupted by the curiosity of the world, and constant succession of visitors. But these would render it impossible for any one to live there but in some line of business which would turn their visits to account. There was a moment when I would have parted with it. When about to retire from the Presidency I found myself considerably in debt on winding up my affairs, and an individual from the neighborhood of the bridge happened to call on me at that moment, & proposed to buy. I told him I would consider of it and write to him. I did so & wrote him an offer which he never answered. Had he accepted, it would have been gone, and I should now have been repenting it. The momentary motive having been relieved from other resources, it has never again arisen. I consider myself as guardian only for the public of this first of all natural curiosities, and in the permission I gave to the establishment* there, I strictly guarded against defacing or masking the object.

*On 2 December 1814 Jefferson agreed to a five-year lease of a parcel of land "either on or near to the Natural bridge" in Rockbridge County where Philip Thornton could build a lead shot manufactory, dwelling house and gardens for an annual rent of \$150.

Joseph Delaplaine to Thomas Jefferson, Philadelphia, 23 November 1816

I have been several times recently, to see the Venerable Charles Thomson. He spoke of you freely. It appears that one of your letters gave him great delight. It is that, in which you speak of the scriptures &c. after this, I will not conceal from you the fact, and it is now no secret, that your letter to Mr. Thomson as well as one to another gentleman in another quarter, near Philada., has been quoted. Gen. Wilkinson said to me a few days ago "Sir, I am happy to learn that Mr. Jefferson has written to a gentleman that he has become a disciple of or follower of Jesus Christ." To be brief; it is in general circulation, & a current opinion & belief, that you have avowed yourself a *perfect believer in the Christian Religion* & that you believe in the *Divinity of Our savior*.—This has gained such ground that Genl. Wilkinson, has given it a place, he told me a few days ago, in his work which will be published in 2 or 3 weeks.—

I mention these things, dear sir, in a frank, open manner, to enable you to know, if you have not already heard, what the people say in this quarter on this subject. And I can say that the Religious world in this quarter, are daily congratulating each other, on what they call, your happy change of Religious belief.

George Flower's Account of a Visit to Monticello, 12 December 1816

During his own presidency it was expected that the old levees wd be kept up—he thot the most easy way to get rid of them wd be to ride out on levee morning & stay out till a late hour. Upon his return to dinner a cluster of persons near the house were waiting in full dress. He dismounted and civilly shaking them by the hand he invited them to walk in to dinner. So ended the last of the

levees. He broke up in like manner all formal announcements to dinner according to Rank by sitting promiscuously amongst the company & often at the lower end of the Table—

Josephus B. Stuart's Account of a Visit to Monticello, 24 December 1816

Mr. J. Reads without glasses. . . .

We ought to manufacture all our own clothes.—& not be too proud to wear them.—He had one a blue quaker coat, blue cloth vest, olive cotton cordyroy breeches with horn buttons on the whole—all homemade. Has his cloth manufactured at Wilmington N.C. . . .

He is now 73.—not much grey—his teeth apparently good—a great eater.—drinks French wines only.—

Thomas Jefferson to Joseph Delaplaine, Monticello, 25 December 1816

On my return from Bedford, after an absence of 7 weeks, I found here your favors of Oct. 28, Nov. 13, 20 & 23 with a copy of the 1st No. of your Repository. But I found also an immense accumulation of letters received during my absence, some of which claimed my first attentions. You know my aversion to the drudgery of the writing table. The great affliction of my present life is a too oppressive correspondence. It is wearing me down in body and mind; and leaves me scarcely a moment to attend to my affairs or to indulge in the luxury of reading and reflection, which would soothe as a balm the decaying powers of life.

Francis Hall's Account of a Visit to Monticello, 7–8 January 1817

I found Mr. Jefferson tall in person, but stooping and lean with old age, thus exhibiting that fortunate mode of bodily decay, which strips the frame of its most cumbersome parts, leaving it still strength of muscle and activity of limb. His deportment was exactly such as the Marquis de Chastellus describes it, above thirty years ago: “At first serious, nay even cold,” but in a very short time relaxing into a most agreeable amenity; with an unabated flow of conversation on the most interesting topics, discussed in the most gentlemanly, and philosophical manner.

Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, Monticello, 11 January 1817

Forty three volumes read in one year, and 12 of them quartos! Dear Sir, how I envy you! Half a dozen 8vos. [octavos] in that space of time are as much as I am allowed. I can read by candlelight only, and stealing long hours from my rest; nor would that time be indulged to me, could I, by that light, see to write. From sunrise to one or two o'clock, and often from dinner to dark, I am drudging at the writing table. And all this to answer letters into which neither interest nor inclination on my part enters; and often for persons whose names I have never before heard. Yet, writing civilly, it is hard to refuse them civil answers. This is the burthen of my life, a very grievous one indeed, and one which I must get rid of.

Thomas Jefferson to William Duane, Monticello, 24 January 1817

A great decay of bodily powers has not been without effect on the mind also, which is become sensibly sluggish, averse to the labors of the writing table, and almost incurious and insouciant as to the affairs of the world. I have scarcely the curiosity to read the newspapers, and resign myself willingly to the care of those on whom that trust has devolved in the due course of nature.

William Thornton to Thomas Jefferson, Washington, 19 February 1817

Colonel Trumbull has been here some time, & has expressed satisfaction on viewing the Copy I made of your Portrait. I have placed it in the Congressional Library, in a very superb gilt Frame, that when the members view the works by which the inside of your head was so well stored, they might also have a good Idea of the outside of the Head.—I mean to send the original (put up with care, along with Mr. West's Sketch) by your worthy & highly esteemed Successor Mr. Madison—

Thomas Jefferson to Madame de Corny, Monticello, 2 March 1817

My country has been prosperous and happy: but, in endeavoring to make it so, my life has been worn down with cares and anxieties. Twenty years of labor and solitude, after parting with you, during which the whole of my time and attention was absorbed by incessant occupations, which cut me off from intercourse and correspondence with my friends, brought me to that period of life which it ceases to be enjoyment. Altho' I have had good health, yet the hand of time presses heavily on me. I am become feeble in body, inert in mind, and much retired from the society of the world to that of my own fire-side. My eldest daughter, who was just old enough to be a little known to you, has rendered that a circle of no small compass among ten grandchildren, and four great grandchildren, we are in no solitude.

Thomas Jefferson to Charles Willson Peale, Monticello, 16 March 1817

I admire you in the variety of vocations to which you can give your attention. I cannot do this. I wish to be always reading, and am vexed with every thing which takes me from it. With respect to my letters to you mentioning some agricultural practices etc make what use you please of them, only not giving my name. This would draw letters upon me, which are the affliction of my life by the drudgery they subject me to in writing answers.

Thomas Jefferson to Joseph Delaplaine, Monticello, 12 April 1817

Your statements of the corrections of the Declaration of Independance by Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams, are neither of them at all exact. I should think it better to say, generally that the rough draught was communicated to those two gentlemen, who, each of them made 2 or 3 short and verbal alterations only. But even this is laying more stress on mere composition than it merits; for that alone was mine; the sentiments were of all America.

Thomas Jefferson to Josephus B. Stuart, Monticello, 10 May 1817

You say I must go to writing history. While in public life, I had not time: and now that I am retired, I am past the time. To write history requires a whole life of observation, of enquiry, of labor and correction. Its materials are not to be found among the ruins of a decayed memory. At this day I should begin where I ought to have left off. The "solve senescentem equum"* is a precept we learn in youth but for the practice of age; and were I to disregard it it would be but a proof the more of its soundness. If any thing has ever merited to me the respect of my fellow-citizens, themselves, I hope, would wish me not to lose it by exposing the decay of faculties of which it was the reward.

*Be wise in time, and turn loose the ageing horse (Horace, *Epistles*).

Thomas Jefferson to Louis Pio, Monticello, 13 June 1817

I am now feeling the effects of age; enfeebled in body & less active in mind, my daughter, whom you knew, has provided for my old age a numerous family of grand children, and these again begin to add to our society another generation of descendants. I shall die therefore in the midst of those I love.

Donald Fraser to Thomas Jefferson, New York, 30 June 1817

I frequently ruminates of the three Corinthian Pillars, of the American Revolution—*George Washington, Thomas Jefferson & Benjn. Franklin*: whose names, will doubtless, be held in high veneration, by the American Nation, for many Centuries to come; & revered, & admired, by all the lovers of rational Liberty, throughout the civilized world.

Thomas Jefferson to Benjamin Waterhouse, Monticello, 3 March 1818

I am much debilitated in body, and my memory sensibly on the wane. Still, however, I enjoy good health and spirits, and am as industrious a reader as when a student at college. Not of newspapers. These I have discarded. I relinquish, as I ought to do, all intermeddling with public affairs, committing myself cheerfully to the watch and care of those for whom, in my turn, I have watched and cared.

Salma Hale: Account of a Visit to Monticello, May 1818

I rode to Charlottesville, and, on the following forenoon, I ascended to his residence on Monticello, by a steep road, which nearly encircled it. His dwelling house stood on the north border of a plateau containing several acres of level land, the middle of the house being an oblong, and each end a half circle. On enquiring at the door, I was told that Mr. Jefferson was taking his usual walk in his grounds, and was invited to enter and await his return. In a short time, I saw him thro the window among the trees, a tall, spare man, walking towards the house, throwing his legs about unmindful of his steps, like a man in a reverie. On entering he gave me a civil welcome, and, after reading the letter of introduction, took his seat, and began to converse on common topics, saying, however, nothing of politics. He spoke with interest of Lewis and Clark's tour over the Rocky Mountains, a history of which lay on the table, and with animation and pathos of the feelings and sufferings of the revolutionary period. He observed, in substance, that he had read no history that gave such a glowing account of them as they deserved. . . .

After staying an hour or two, I desired him to order a servant to lead my horse to the door. "Oh, no," said he, "you must not leave me so soon; you must dine with me and sleep with me. But this is just the time when I invariably take a ride; and it is moreover my duty to visit, to day, the workmen on the University grounds and see what they are doing. Here are books, at your service, and you will find walks about the grounds that may amuse you, till my return."

I passed the time as he suggested very agreeably, and also in examining curiosities in the spacious hall, such as the skeleton, not wholly perfect, of a mammoth, and skeletons or bones, and stuffed skins, of other animals, which once inhabited Virginia, and of which some had been extinct. I saw there also a shirt, woven of steel wire, which he said was found in the southern part of the State.

On his return after an absence of a few hours, we were summoned to dinner. He offered me several kinds of wine, but said that he drank none but *lachrymal Christi*, which was made from

grapes that grew on the sides of Mount Vesuvius. I tasted of a dish, which was new to me, concocted of corn meal and grated cheese. He remarked that he was very fond of corn meal, in all the modes in which it could be presented as food for man; that when minister to France, he saw none, and longed for it; that when he visited Rome, observing “American Corn Meal,” on a shop door, he ordered a small quantity to be sent to his lodgings, and gave directions how to prepare it. “On tasting it, I found that the bread or cake had been made of your hard, dry northern corn—I’d as life eat sawdust.” He offered me tomatoes, with the remark that he introduced that plant, into this country, from Europe.

Alma Hale to David Hale, Charlottesville, Va., 7 May 1818

I have just returned from visiting Mr. Jefferson, with whom I have spent a very agreeable day. He appears to be very rich, has a large brick house on the top of a mountain, and lives happy and contented.

Salma Hale to Arthur Livermore, Richmond, Va., 16 May 1818

Mr. Jefferson I found on the top of his mountain surrounded with curiosities, and himself not the least. The base of Monticello is five or six miles in circumference, and entirely covered with a thick forest. On the summit is a plain of four or five acres, in the center of which stands the house, which is of brick, and exposed to every wind that blows. On three sides is a prospect extending fifty, seventy, and one hundred miles mostly over a level and cultivated country. Mr. J. does not appear to have suffered much from age. He is cheerful, social, and unreserved—talked of politics some but of literature and religion more. . . . His house is filled with paintings and Indian relics, and a view of his rooms affords as much gratification as of a museum.

Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, Monticello, 17 May 1818

My repugnance to the writing table becomes daily & hourly more deadly & insurmountable. In place of this has come on a canine appetite for reading. And I indulge it because I see in it a relief against the taedium senectutis,* a lamp to lighten my path thro’ the dreary wilderness of time before me, whose bourne I see not. Losing daily all interest in the things around us, something else is necessary to fill the void. With me it is reading, which occupies the mind without the labor of producing ideas from my own stock.

*Weariness of old age.

Thomas Jefferson to Benjamin Henry Latrobe, Monticello, 19 May 1818

You have no conception of the drudgery of letter writing to which I am subjected, and which really renders life a burthen. Writing too is become a slow & painful operation from a stiffening wrist, the consequence of an antient dislocation.

Thomas Jefferson to William Short, Monticello, 29 May 1818

After this meeting [near Charlottesville] I shall pass the months of Aug. and Sep. in Bedford. I am still able to take that journey in an easy carriage; and indeed shall now go there within about 3 weeks. I ride also on horse back 5 or 6 miles every day, but I cannot walk further than my garden,

and weaken very fast: and notwithstanding this increasing debility I enjoy perfect health. My wrist, the dislocation of which you remember in Paris, by its stiffening renders writing slow and painful.

Thomas Jefferson to Thomas A. Digges, Monticello, 15 June 1818

Altho' withdrawn from all meddling with public affairs, I have not withdrawn from all anxieties for the future.

I thank you for thinking of me as to the spring wheat, my family will try it with pleasure, meddling little myself with the affairs of the farm, for altho' I enjoy uninterrupted health, yet I daily become more feeble in body. I perform my journies to Bedford in an easy carriage, and ride 6 or 8 miles on horseback every day without fatigue; but I do not walk further than my garden.

Thomas Jefferson to Horatio G. Spafford, Monticello, 28 June 1818

Age and a stiffening wrist render writing slow and painful, and oblige me to adopt almost a lapidary stile: this is the effect of an ancient dislocation of the wrist. I have given up my farms to be managed by my family, and take no concern in them myself.

Saint Andrew's Parish, S.C.: Celebration Toast, 4 July 1818*

Thomas Jefferson and James Madison.—The two brilliant constellations who have guided the American people to glory and happiness—May the light they have shed, never be obscured.

*Printed in the Charleston *City Gazette*, 7 July 1818.

'76 Association, S.C.: Celebration Toast, 4 July 1818*

Thomas Jefferson, the polar star of Republicanism—Let us steer by this brilliant light, and we will pursue the strait course.

*Printed Charleston *City Gazette*, 9 July 1818.

Thomas Jefferson to Patrick Gibson, Monticello, 30 July 1818

With the notification from the bank of the U.S. came to hand. That notification is really like a clap of thunder to me, for god knows I have no means in this world of raising money on so sudden a call; my whole & sole dependence being only on the annual income of my farms.

Charles G. Haines to Thomas Jefferson, New York, 18 August 1818

I cannot but congratulate a Statesman, so distinguished as yourself among the Fathers of our Republic, that you have lived to see the day, when your toils and your sacrifices are repaid by the unparalleled happiness and prosperity of the Nation, to whose existence and welfare you have so greatly contributed.

Thomas Jefferson to Martha Jefferson Randolph, Warm Springs, Va., 21 August 1818

I do not know what may be the effect of this course of bathing, on my constitution; but I am under great threats that it will work its effect thro' a system of boils. A large swelling on my seat,

increasing for several days past in size and hardness disables me from sitting but on the corner of a chair. Another swelling begins to manifest itself to-day on the other seat.

Thomas Jefferson to Patrick Gibson, Monticello, 10 September 1818

I returned a few days ago from the springs, my health entirely prostrated by the use of the waters. They produced an imposthume, which with the torment of the journey back reduced me very low, so that I am not yet able to set up to write. But I am sensibly mending.

Thomas Jefferson to Francis Eppes, Monticello, 11 September 1818

I am lately returned from the warm springs with my health entirely prostrated by the use of the waters. They produced an imposthume and eruptions which with the torment of the journey back reduced me to the last stage of weakness and exhaustion. I am getting better, but still obliged to lie night and day in the same reclined posture which renders writing painful.

George Wyche to Thomas Jefferson, Hicksford Greenville County, Va., 28 October 1818

[refers to Jefferson as] the first man of the age.

Thomas Jefferson to George Wyche, Monticello, 10 November 1818

Age and its consequent infirmities of body & relaxation of mind, oblige me to excuse myself from all correspondence. I am no longer equal to it.

Thomas Jefferson to Destutt de Tracy, Monticello, 24 November 1818

My own health is failing. My strength has been declining rapidly the few last years, the mere effect of age, and I am just now recovering from an illness of three months, which will leave me, I apprehend, in but a shattered condition.

Charles Willson Peale to Thomas Jefferson, Washington, 25 November 1818

Your emminant Labours for the good of mankind will endear your memory to future ages.

Thomas Jefferson to John Barnes, Monticello, 7 December 1818

My health is in a great degree restored. I now ride daily and am gathering flesh & strength.

Thomas Jefferson to Joseph Gales, Monticello, 7 December 1818

I have long ceased to read newspapers, except a single one of my own state, & that chiefly for the advertisements. Perfectly resigned as a passenger to the steerage of those who are navigating the vessel of State, & with entire confidence in them, I scarcely enquire or wish to know what is passing. Age has relieved me from these cares, and now calls for tranquility and rest. Under these circumstances it is useless to be receiving newspapers which I never open, and difficult and troublesome to be making small & fractional remittances into other states.

Thomas Jefferson to John G. Jackson, Monticello, 27 December 1818

I feel with great sensibility, the kind interest you are so good as to express on the subject of my health. My trial of the Warm springs was certainly ill-advised. For I went in perfect health, and ought to have reflected that remedies of their potency must have effect some way or other. If they find disease they remove it; if none, they make it. Altho' I was reduced very low, I may be said to have been rather on the road to danger, than in actual danger. I have now entirely recovered my strength, & consider my health as restored. But as to the value of my life, dear Sir, of which you speak so partially, it is now nothing. I may do for our University what others would do better were I away, my vicinity to the place alone giving me prominence in its concerns. As to every thing else, I am done. Enfeebled in body, probably in mind also, in memory very much, and all those faculties on the wane which are the avenues to life's happiness, I am equal to no pursuit useful to others, or interesting to myself, beyond such employment of my remaining time, as may protect me from the taedium vitae, not the least afflicting of the distresses of old age. I read with avidity, but have the sensations of the gallows when obliged to take up my pen.

Simeon DeWitt to Thomas Jefferson, Albany, N.Y., 15 January 1819

You, Sir, are now considered as the chief of the surviving fathers of our beloved country, who as occasions offer do not cease to manifest Your paternal anxieties for its welfare, and no where can there exist a greater deference for Your opinion on matters relating to the public good than in the State of New York.

Thomas Jefferson to Vine Utley, Monticello, 21 March 1819

So free from catarrhs that I have not had one, (in the breast, I mean) on an average of 8 or 10 years thro' life. I ascribe this exemption partly to the habit of bathing my feet in cold water every morning, for 60 years past. . . .

I was a hard student until I entered on the business of life, the duties of which leave no idle time to those disposed to fulfill them; & now, retired and at the age of 76, I am again a hard student. Indeed, my fondness for reading and study revolts me from the drudgery of letter writing. . . . I never go to bed without an hour, or half hour's previous reading of something moral, whereon to ruminate in the intervals of sleep. . . .

I have lived temperately, eating little animal food, & that, not as an aliment so much as a condiment for the vegetables, which constitute my principal diet. I double however the doctor's glass and a half of wine, and even treble it with a friend; but halve its effect by drinking the weak wine only. The ardent wines I cannot drink, nor do I use ardent spirits in any form. Malt liquors & cider are my table drinks, and my breakfast, like that also of my friend, is of tea & coffee. I have been blessed with organs of digestion which accept and concoct without ever murmuring whatever the palate chooses to consign to them, and I have not yet lost a tooth by age.

Thomas Jefferson to Ezra Stiles, Monticello, 25 June 1819

The drudgery of letter-writing often denies the leisure of reading a single page in a week.

John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, Quincy, Mass., 21 July 1819

“the undoubted, acknowledged draughtsman of the Declaration of Independence”

Thomas Jefferson to Henry Dearborn, Monticello, 5 February 1820

I rejoice to learn that you continue to enjoy good health. I pray you may do so through as long a life as you wish. mine is gone with little prospect of a return. but I have enjoyed so much of it thro' life that I have no right to complain, and am truly ready to meet whatever destiny is before me.

John A. Dix: Diary Account of his Visit to Monticello, 19 February 1820*

We set out, accompanied by Mr Todd, & at sunset arrived at Monticello.—Mr. Jefferson received us with his characteristic courtesy & plainness of manner, & introduced us to his family, which consisted of Mrs. Randolph, lady of the present Governor of Virginia, & several of her daughters. Mrs. R. is a woman of great elegance, simplicity of manner, & refinement—her daughters comely, intelligent & interesting. The ensuing day we accompanied Mr. Jefferson to Charlottesville about 4 miles distant, to view the new College, which is rising in its neighbourhood.—

The mansion-house of Mr Jefferson occupies the summit of an eminence, constituting a part of the South west mountain of Virginia, elevated about 600 feet above an arm of the James River, which meanders at its base. This eminence, the ascent of which following the flexures of the road, is about a mile & an half, is of a Pyramidical form, & originally terminated so nearly in a point that Mr. Jefferson was under the necessity of levelling the apex to obtain sufficient space for the location of his dwelling & its subordinate constructions & for the formation of a lawn of tolerable dimensions.

The prospect for compass & for the variety & beauty of the objects, which it embraces, is almost unrivalled. On the south & east the horison shuts at a distance of 40 miles, leaving an intervening space of champaign country of luxuriant forest, spotted with farm-houses & hamlets, & intersected at intervals by silvery lines of the James River, which through an occasional vista, gleam on the sight. On the west & towards the north the Blue Ridge of Virginia, commencing at a distance of about 20, and terminating at about 130 miles, bounds the view. A cursory survey Presents it as an uninterrupted, parapet of deep azure dominating over a beautiful expanse of country, which spreads itself out, in the nature of a glacis, from the Blue ridge to the South west mountain. A critical examination exhibits it broken into numberless nodes & Promontories, singularly varied but not so much so as to violate the conceptions of beauty or to offend the taste.

The mansion of Mr Jefferson, like its illustrious occupant, is rapidly hastening to decay. The effects of time are left unrepaired to grow into evidences of neglect & dilapidation. But in this state it harmonises with the relations of its Sage. It holds a character of unique & solitary grandeur, elevated above the surface of ordinary things, but wasting into ruin under the attrition of years. It is difficult to contemplate without emotion these localities, in themselves imposing, associated with the history of him, who is the great object of our veneration. The recollection of his services, & of the Power which he wielded in the institution of our Government blends with the imagination of his speedy & inevitable alienation from us in the composition of Profoundly interesting & solemn emotions. They point to the achievements of our fathers, our own happy destinies, the increasing growth of our country & the imagination of her future Power. Based on such considerations of experience, which has passed, & of hopes, which are to come, there is a monument in feeling to those, who, as motives or instruments, have been influential to them the duration of which will be commensurate with the Principles of our Political existence—the virtue of patriotism & the property of freedom.—

*This diary entry, originally in Dix's handwriting, was printed in the *Literary and Scientific Repository, and Critical Review* 1 (Oct. 1820), 529–30.

John A. Dix's Description of Jefferson, post-19 February 1820*

Mr. Jefferson, whose house (Monticello), in Albemarle County, we reached the night of the day on which we left Montpelier, contrasted strongly in person and manners with Mr. Madison. He was tall, dignified, and stately, less conversational, except when warmed by a congenial topic, but commenting with singular frankness and freedom on men as well as things. I cannot better illustrate this last trait than by repeating a remark in regard to Mr. Monroe, who was President of the United States from 1817 to 1825, and to whom, I believe, he was attached by a life-long friendship. "Monroe," he said, "was a man of remarkable judgment and common-sense. If an object was placed before him he would be sure to reach it, but he could never tell you how he got there." He spoke of the family of Louis XVI. with great contempt, with an obvious sympathy with the French Revolution, apart from its atrocities. The leaning of Mr. Madison in the same direction may be referred, perhaps, without a forced construction to the fact that he gave a French name to his residence. Mr. Jefferson must unquestionably be considered, when his varied accomplishments are taken into account, the most remarkable man of his time. He was a natural philosopher, profoundly versed in political science, an accomplished musician, and a tasteful architect. His house, designed by himself, was a faultless specimen of Italian architecture. I was much addicted in my young days to drawing, and as I was finishing a *sketch* of it he came along, and, looking over my shoulder, said, much to my gratification, "Very exact." I believe this sketch furnished the illustration in Randall's *Life of Jefferson*.** The preceding year, while at an evening party in New York, at which there was a good deal of music, Captain [Thomas] *Bibby*, the host, said to me, "I see you are very fond of music; do you play on any instrument?" I answered that I played a little on the violin. "That," said he, "was my instrument when I was a young man." He then told me that he was an aide-de-camp of the British General Frazer, who was killed at Saratoga a few days before the surrender of Burgoyne; that he was sent as a prisoner of war to Charlottesville, three miles from Monticello, and that he had played duets with Mr. Jefferson on the violin. He added, "Mr. Jefferson was one of the best amateur violinists I ever knew."

I mentioned this conversation to Mr. Jefferson, who remembered Captain Bibby perfectly; and he then told me he had practised four hours a day on the violin for ten years when he was a young man; that he had taken lessons of one of the first violinists in France while he was Minister at Paris, and that he gave up his violin when he became Secretary of State to General Washington. He added, "I wish I had learned to play on the harpsichord, as my fingers are too stiff for the violin, for in that case I might have amused myself in my old age."

*Printed in Morgan Dix, comp., *Memoirs of John Adams Dix* (2 vols., New York, 1883), I, 58–60.

**Henry S. Randall, *The Life of Thomas Jefferson* (3 vols., New York, 1858), I, xiii, 132–33.

William Short to Thomas Jefferson, Philadelphia, 27 March 1820

I have remained betwixt the desire of writing to you & the fear of giving you trouble; knowing how much of this, the correspondence of your friends imposes on you. I remember well how independent you formerly kept yourself of an amanuensis. At present an aid of this kind would be of great relief to you—And I, for one, have it much at heart that you should have this relief. I would then have no scruple in begging you to send me the syllabus of the Philosophy of Jesus, which you found too long to copy; & which indeed I would not have at the price of that trouble to

you. From the little I saw, & from the great deal I have heard of *one the members of your own family*, I think you would find a most ready & willing & able amanuensis in her & I wish indeed both for your sake & hers that you would accept this service at her hands.

Thomas Jefferson to William Short, Monticello, 13 April 1820

But while this Syllabus is meant to place the character of Jesus in it's true and high light, as no imposter himself, but a great Reformer of the Hebrew code of religion, it is not to be understood that I am with him in all his doctrines. I am a Materialist; he takes the side of spiritualism: he preaches the efficacy of repentance towards forgiveness of sin, I require a counterpoise of good works to redeem it Etc. Etc. it is the innocence of his character, the purity & sublimity of his moral precepts, the eloquence of his inculcations, the beauty of the apologues in which he conveys them, that I so much admire; sometimes indeed needing indulgence to Eastern hyperbolism. my eulogies too may be founded on a postulate which all may not be ready to grant. among the sayings & discourses imputed to him by his biographers, I find many passages of fine imagination, correct morality, and of the most lovely benevolence: and others again of so much ignorance, so much absurdity, so much untruth, charlatanism, and imposture, as to pronounce it impossible that such contradictions should have proceeded from the same being. I separate therefore the gold from the dross; restore to him the former, & leave the latter to the stupidity of some, and roguery of others of his disciples. of this band of dupes and impostors, Paul was the great Coryphaeus, and first corrupter of the doctrines of Jesus. these palpable interpolations and falsifications of his doctrines led me to try to sift them apart. I found the work obvious and easy, and that his part composed the most beautiful morsel of morality which has been given to us by man. the Syllabus is therefore of *his* doctrines, not *all of mine*. I read them as I do those of other antient and modern moralists, with a mixture of approbation and dissent. . . . You kindly enquire after my health. there is nothing in it immediately threatening, but swelled legs, which are kept down mechanically by bandages from the toe to the knee. these I have worn for 6. months. but the tendency to turgidity may proceed from debility alone. I can walk the round of my garden; not more. but I ride 6. or 8. miles a day without fatigue. I shall set out to Poplar Forest within 3. or 4. days; a journey from which my physician augurs much good.

Thomas Jefferson to William Barraclough, Monticello, 13 May 1820

I have recieved, Sir, the little book of poems you have been so kind as to send me, and thank you for it as a mark of respect: but at the age of 77. our passion for poetry is gone, and the imagination become too torpid to taste it's beauties, or to criticise it's merits. I have no doubt that younger readers will do justice to yours; and, with my wishes that your poems may find abundance of them, I tender the assurance of my respect.

Samuel L. Mitchill to Thomas Jefferson, New York, 16 May 1820

I have the pleasure to inform you that natural science is advancing with rapid strides; and that I, with others, view yourself, as one of its great patrons and promoters.

Benjamin J. Barbour: Account of Visit to Monticello, Barbours town, Va., 8 June 1820

I then paid my first visit to the *sage of the mountain* but he was from home, and I enjoyed but a poor view of the curiosities of his house, so much so that I shall go again. The old fellow has

Founders on the Founders

something of design in fixing his seat on that mountain, for illustrious as he is now, and dying covered with fame as having been the chief architect in this beautiful temple of liberty, his tomb will in after ages be as eagerly sought after by the classic and patriotic as was ever the holy sepulcher of Jerusalem by the deluded pilgrim, riding up the other day, and suffering my imagination to fly beyond the swiftness of time, glancing my eye over a neglected tomb stone, persuaded myself that I was viewing the grave of Jefferson, some centuries hence, I felt myself inspired with a holy reverence.

Adam Hodgson: Account of Visit to Monticello, 17 June 1820

Mr. Jefferson's appearance is rather prepossessing. He is tall and very thin, a little bent with age, with an intelligent and sprightly countenance. His manners are dignified, but courteous and gentlemanly; and he enters into conversation with great ease and animation.

Thomas Jefferson to John Holmes, Monticello, 8 July 1820

You ask leave to publish my letter of apr. 22 but the wise man tells us there is a time for every thing; of course, for retiring from business as well as for entering into it; and my time for retiring is long since arrived. I feel it most sensibly in all the faculties of mind and body; and in nothing more than in the wish to pass the remainder of life in tranquility, and in the peace and goodwill of all mankind.

Henry Orne to Thomas Jefferson, Boston, 12 July 1820

On an occasion which reminds us of the great authors of our independence, and more especially on an occasion when the principles are enquired into which lead to that independence and by which it may be perpetuated, no American can forget the highly venerated author of the instrument by which that independence was declared. Impressed with a deep conviction that to no one is our country more indebted for the secure establishment, and increasing popularity of the fundamental principles of our national institutions, permit me to offer to you, sir, the accompanying feeble effort to render those principles more generally understood, and more profoundly cherished, by the great body of the American people.

George Watterson: Account of Visit to Monticello, 15 August 1820

Mr. Jefferson is now near eighty years of age; his person is tall and stately; his countenance mild and agreeable; his step, though at so advanced an age, is firm and springy; and his whole appearance is that of a philosopher and a well-bred gentleman. I could perceive no marks of the imbecility of age in any thing he said or did; he indeed complained of the decay of his memory, but his memory seemed to be stored within the treasures of learning, and with all that was useful and agreeable. In his manner he is dignified without being haughty, and easy without being familiar. What he says has the weight of authority and the impressiveness of wisdom, and he never tires of detailing events that have passed, a propensity so common with those whose energies have been weakened by the decay of age. Mr. Jefferson's constitution has always been, as it still is, vigorous and healthy, and it is not likely, from the regularity and temperance he observes, and the exercise he takes, that he will be immediately sensible of that gradual waste of body and intellect which accompanies our progress to the grave from old age. He is now surrounded by his family, and seems to experience all that happiness that flows from a long life of usefulness and virtue; but,

though abstracted from the cares and miseries of state, and buried in the shades of retirement, the same eagerness to be useful, & the same to promote the welfare of his country and his native state which always distinguished him, still accompanies him; and the attention he bestows, and the time he devotes to the Charlottesville University evince his former vigor of mind, and display the native and prominent virtues of his heart. His house is an elegant octagonal building, with a large doric portico in front; the entrance, or hall, contains a considerable collection of curiosities in nature and art, such as statues, busts, paintings by Raphael, Reubens, Pouisson, &c., and many other curiosities of nature, more complete, interesting, and valuable, than can be found in any other private collection, perhaps, in the world. The conversation of Mr. Jefferson is replete with amusement and edification, and is never withheld by any feeling of reserve from those who desire it. It is a pity some of his relations or friends do not endeavor to form, from their close intimacy with him, an *ana*, for the gratification and instruction of those who survive him, and who must and will feel the deepest interest in all that concerns a man who has been so distinguished and useful in every walk of life. . . .

“It is seldom (says Gibbon) that minds long exercised in business, have formed any habits of conversing with themselves; and, in the loss of power, thy principally regret the want of occupation.” But, like Dioclesian, both Mr. Madison and Mr. Jefferson have preserved their taste for the most innocent, as well as natural pleasures, and their hours, like those of that Roman emperor in retirement, are sufficiently employed in reading, planting and cultivating their farms, to exclude the miseries of Indolence, and the horrors of *ennui*. The residence of both Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison, is the residence of taste and elegance, and to both may be applied, with peculiar aptitude, the lines of the poet of nature;

“An elegant sufficiency—content,
Retirement, rural quiet, friendship, books,
Ease and alternate labor—useful life,
Progressive virtue, and approving Heaven.”*

*James Thomson, *The Seasons* (London, 1744), The Spring, lines 1157–60.

Jared Sparks: Account of Visit to Monticello, 19–20 August 1820

At all events, I went to see him at the exhibition-house at Monticello, up a long hill, which is almost daily trod by many a weary pilgrim’s foot. I was very kindly received and politely treated; and I think there are very few persons who would not feel inclined to say at once, that this is no common man. He bears the marks of age, but his mind is vigorous, excursive, and quick.

Thomas Jefferson to Francis Eppes, Monticello, 6 October 1820

I will certainly write to you occasionally, but you will not expect it very frequently, as you know how slowly & painfully my stiffened wrist now permits me to write, & how much I am oppressed by a general and revolting correspondence, wearing me down with incessant labor, instead of leaving me to the tranquil happiness with which reading and lighter occupations would fill pleasantly what remains to me of life.

Nathaniel Helme: Account of Visit to Monticello, 7 November 1820

Mr. Jefferson’s stature is tall and very erect; his step remarkably quick and active; his manners easy, graceful and polite; his mental powers, instead of being impaired by age, retain their native

strength and energy; in fine, in his whole deportment are discoverable the characteristic traits of the sage, the patriot, and the gentleman. Mr. Jefferson in his dress, which was a grey coat, grey pantaloons and red vest, adheres very much to the old-fashioned style.

Isaac Briggs to His Wife and Children, Richmond, Va., 21 November 1820

[Describing a visit to Monticello] His 77th year finds him strong, active and in full possession of a sound mind. He rides a trotting horse and sits on him as straight as a young man. Compared with him, Madison, although ten years younger, looks like—a little old man.

Thomas Jefferson to Joel Yancey, Monticello, 4 January 1821

I have for sometime been becoming sensible that age was rendering me incompetent to the management of my plantations. Failure of memory, decay of attention and a loss of energy in body & mind convince me of this; as well as the vast change for the better since my plantations here have been put under the direction of my grandson T. J. Randolph. His skill, his industry and discretion satisfy me that it will be best for me to place all my plantations, in Bedford as well as here, under his general care instead of my own.

Thomas Jefferson: Autobiography, 10 February 1821

Sitting near me on some occasion of a trifling but wordy debate, he [John Francis Mercer] asked how I could sit in silence hearing so much false reasoning which a word should refute? I observed to him that to refute indeed was easy, but to silence impossible. That in measures brought forward by myself, I took the laboring oar, as was incumbent on me; but that in general I was willing to listen. If every sound argument or objection was used by some one or other of the numerous debaters, it was enough: if not, I thought it sufficient to suggest the omission, without going into a repetition of what had been already said by others. That this was a waste and abuse of the time and patience of the house which could not be justified. And I believe that if the members of deliberative bodies were to observe this course generally, they would do in a day what takes them a week. And it is really more questionable, than may at first be thought, whether Bonaparte's dumb legislature which said nothing and did much, may not be preferable to one which talks much and does nothing. I served with General Washington in the legislature of Virginia before the revolution, and during it, with Dr. Franklin in Congress. I never heard either of them speak ten minutes at a time, nor to any but the main point which was to decide the question. They laid their shoulders to the great points, knowing that the little ones would follow of themselves.

Thomas Jefferson to Timothy Pickering, Monticello, 27 February 1821

I have little doubt that the whole of our country will soon be rallied to the Unity of the Creator, and, I hope, to the pure doctrines of Jesus also.

Thomas Jefferson to Bernard Peyton, Monticello, 4 March 1821

Age and ill health, and still more the loss of plantation skill and management by an absence of 50 years from such attentions, had for some time rendered me unequal to the proper management of my possessions.

Thomas Jefferson to Spencer Roane, Monticello, 9 March 1821

Great decline in the energies of the body impart naturally a corresponding wane of the mind, and a longing after tranquility as the last and sweetest asylum of age.

Thomas Jefferson to John Taylor, Monticello, 14 March 1821

With respect to Memoirs, it is too late for me to think of such an ~~enterprise~~ undertaking, in any useful form. While in public life, my occupations never allowed me the time, & when I retired I was too old, & no longer within reach of the public offices where alone authentic documents of history can be obtained.

Thomas Jefferson to Marquis de Lafayette, Monticello, 22 March 1821

My health is better, but not good. So weak as not to walk further than my garden. But I ride with little fatigue.

Thomas Jefferson to Bernard Peyton, Monticello, 30 March 1821

Will you be so good as to send me a good Yankee cheese. I prefer them to English.

Spencer Roane to Thomas Jefferson, Richmond, Va., 20 June 1821

[Roane sends Jefferson several essays he wrote under the pseudonym “Algernon Sydney.”] I was particularly desirous, too, of placing them before the Eyes of that illustrious citizen, whom power could not seduce, nor dangers appal, in the great object of his life,—which has been to secure the liberty, and advance the happiness of his native Country.

John Marshall to Joseph Story, Richmond, Va., 13 July 1821

For Mr. Jefferson’s opinion as respects this department it is not difficult to assign the cause. He is among the most ambitious, & I suspect among the most unforgiving of men. His great power is over the mass of the people & this power is chiefly acquired by professions of democracy. Every check on the wild impulse of the moment is a check on his own power, & he is unfriendly to the source from which it flows. He looks, of course, with ill will at an independent judiciary.

That in a free country with a written constitution, any intelligent man should wish a dependent judiciary, or should think that the constitution is not a law for the court as well as the legislature, would astonish me if I had not learnt from observation that, with many men, the judgment is completely controlled by the passions.

William H. Crawford to Thomas Jefferson, Washington, 18 July 1821

Like the great body of American Citizens he is desirous of Paying his respects, to the man, who more than any one now living, has contributed to raise the Character of the American Republic.

Thomas Jefferson to Francis C. Whiston, Monticello, 24 July 1821

[Responding to Whiston’s request to send him some of Jefferson’s correspondence with American leaders.] My written correspondence with Genl. Washington, Dr. Franklin, Mr. Adams while

associated in public service, was very inconsiderable; because, acting mostly together, our communications were verbal and rarely written. Independent of this, I am sure you will excuse me for candidly expressing a scruple which I should feel in a compliance with your request. I consider a letter as a trust from one friend to another, and that it is a breach of that trust to communicate it without the consent of the writer. In writing letters commonly, in the confidence and carelessness of friendship we are not on our guard, as if writing for the public, or for any other than our friend. We hazard therefore expressions and observations, with which we trust him in confidence they will go no further. I have been often made to feel painfully by the breaches of confidence as to my own letters; and what I have thought wrong towards myself, I ought not to do in the case of another. These considerations will I hope justify me for excusing myself on this occasion, the less important to you, as what I possess of that kind is less considerable.

John Marshall to Joseph Story, Richmond, Va., 18 September 1821

[Jefferson is referred to as] the great Lama of the mountains.

Thomas Jefferson to William Short, Monticello, 24 November 1821

I was just returned from Poplar Forest which I have visited four times this year. I have an excellent house there, inferior only to Monticello, am comfortably fixed and attended, have a few good neighbors, and pass my time there in a tranquility and retirement much adapted to my age and indolence. . . .

I do not admire your Canada speculation. I think, with Mr. Rittenhouse, that it is altogether unaccountable how any man can stay in a cold country who can find room in a warm one, and should certainly prefer to Polar regions of ice and snow, lands as fertile and cheap which may be covered with groves of olives and oranges. I envy M. Chaumont nothing but his French cook & cuisine. These are luxuries which can neither be forgotten, nor possessed in our country.

Thomas Jefferson to Katherine Duane Morgan, Monticello, 26 January 1822

Time, which wears all things, does not spare the energies either of body or mind of a Presque Octogenaire. While I could, I did what I could, and now acquiesce cheerfully in the law of nature which, by unfitting us for action, warns us to retire and leave to the generation of the day the direction of its own affairs. The prayers of an old man are the only contributions left in his power.

Thomas Jefferson to John Barnes, Monticello, 7 April 1822

I learn with pleasure the continuance of your health, that bodily activity should decline with age is a law of nature. I am very little able to walk, but I ride daily and without fatigue, and otherwise enjoy a goodly health. In one week more I enter my 80th year.

David B. Lee to Thomas Jefferson, Philadelphia, 15 April 1822

Being penetrated with the most profound conviction, of your truly philosophic mode of deciding on any new theory; And knowing that you are too great a philosopher to suffer your mind to be bound in the vulgar fetters of prejudice which limits our researches for knowledge within the pailing erected by our forefathers. . . .

Thomas Jefferson to Willie Blount, Monticello, 27 April 1822

From all political pursuits I am necessarily withdrawn by the turpitude of age and it's irresistible devotion to tranquility and rest. The direction of the future belongs to the generation now on the stage, mine is past; and I resign to them with cheerfulness and confidence the care of themselves and posterity, a duty which I doubt not they will ably and faithfully fulfill.

Thomas Jefferson to Samuel Maverick, Monticello, 12 May 1822

Age, debility and decay of memory have for some time withdrawn me from attention to matters without doors.

Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, Monticello, 1 June 1822

I have ever dreaded a dotting old age; and my health has been generally so good, and is now so good, that I dread it still. The rapid decline of my strength during the last winter has made me hope sometimes that I see land. During summer I enjoy its temperature, but I shudder at the approach of winter, and wish I could sleep through it with the Dormouse, and only wake with him in spring, if ever. They say that [General John] Starke could walk about his room. I am told you walk well and firmly. I can only reach my garden, and that with sensible fatigue. I ride however daily. But reading is my delight. I should wish never to put pen to paper; and the more because of the treacherous practice some people have of publishing one's letters without leave.

Thomas Jefferson to Thomas Ritchie, Monticello, 10 June 1822

It has been a rule of my life, steadily observed to take no notice of anonymous defamations.

Thomas Jefferson to Ritchie & Gooch, Monticello, 10 June 1822

[Describing his press copy machine] I took also, with a Copying machine a press-copy of every page, which I kept for my own use. It is known that copies by this well-known machine, are taken by impression, on damped paper, laid on the face of the written page while fresh, and past between rollers—as copper plates are. They must therefore be true facsimiles.

John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, Quincy, Mass., 12 July 1822

I hope one day your letters will be all published in volumes; they will not always appear Orthodox, or liberal in politics; but they will exhibit a Mass of Taste, Sense, Literature and Science, presented in a sweet simplicity and a neat elegance of Style, which will be read with delight in future ages.

Samuel A. Bumstead: Description of Thomas Jefferson, Fluvanna Co., Va., 23 August 1822

[After leaving Monticello without seeing Jefferson, Bumstead described the events to his "Aunt Lilly"] After I got about 3 miles from his house and was about entering the Richmond road, I saw a man on horse-back at a distance off; it was difficult to conceive what the matter was or whether he wanted anything of me by his making toward me with so much speed—as he advanced within plain sight I was well aware by the cut of his jib who it was. His costume was very singular—his coat was checked gingham, manufactured in Virginia I suppose. The buttons on it were of white

metal and nearly the size of a dollar. His pantaloons were of the same fabric. He was mounted on an elegant bay horse going with speed—and he had no hat on but a lady’s parasol, stuck in his coat behind, spread its canopy over his head, which was very white—his hair is quite thick—his complexion sandy—and his eye, the eye of an eagle—his features regular and resembling very much the portrait you have in your parlor—He cast his penetrating eye at me and gave a polite nod of his head as he passed. This was Thomas Jefferson. . . . such a great man in such a plain and singular garb. . . . I am told it is his usual gait. He does not appear as old as he really is—He is in his 84th year*—He was remarkably erect and had every appearance of antiquity about him. I am told he always rides in this manner during the summer without any hat—often times many miles—it was very warm when I met him today and I thought he looked pretty well heated.

*At this time, Jefferson was 79 not 84.

Thomas Jefferson to William Short, Monticello, 19 October 1822

My health, after which you kindly enquire, is entirely re-established. I am very weak indeed and daily getting more so, insomuch that I do not walk into my garden without feeling it sensibly, yet I ride without fatigue 6, 8, or 10 miles every day, and a few days ago 20 miles without suffering.

Thomas Jefferson to Charles Willson Peale, Monticello, 23 October 1822

It is right for old friends, now and then, to, ask each other how they do? The question is short, and will give little trouble either to ask, or answer. I ask it therefore, observing in exchange that my own health is tolerably good; but that I am too weak to walk further than my garden without suffering, altho’ I ride without fatigue 6 or 8 miles every day, and sometimes 20. I salute you with constant and affectionate friendship & respect.

Thomas Jefferson to Albert Gallatin, Monticello, 29 October 1822

After a long silence I salute you with affection. The weight of 80 years pressing heavily on me, with a wrist & fingers almost without joints, I write as little as possible, because I do it with pain and labor.

Thomas Jefferson to Elbridge Gerry (younger), Monticello, 23 November 1822

My memory is too much decayed to be appealed to or trusted.

Ellen W. Randolph to John Adams, Monticello, 15 December 1822

My Grandfather informs me that you have expressed a wish to hear from him through my means, since he is deprived of the power of writing to you himself by the accident which has disabled one of his wrists. This accident was much less serious than might have been apprehended from the circumstances under which it took place. The fall was to the ground from a terrace about three feet high; my grandfather extended his arm in an effort to save himself & fell upon it, the consequence of which was a fracture of the inner bone not far from the wrist. It was immediately set by a skillful surgeon and we hoped that a few weeks would have sufficed for the complete cure, but owing probably to his advanced age, the bone has not shewn as great a disposition to unite

again as we could wish. This will subject him for a longer time to the inconvenience of not being able to use his left arm at all, whilst his right hand has been stiff for many years in consequence of a former dislocation of the wrist. His general health is good, and he pursues his usual occupations with the exception of writing, which has become so extremely painful to him, that he avoids it as much as possible. Having a horse perfectly gentle & manageable by one stiff hand, he continues to take the only kind of exercise which he has used for many years past, and spends part of every day in riding over his farm.

Thomas Jefferson to William Short, Monticello, 29 December 1822

I have duly received your favor of the 17th with its kind enquiries as to the state in which my late accident has placed me. The fracture was of the most favorable character, of the smaller bone of the left fore-arm, without, as is still hoped, deranging those of the wrist. It was promptly and well set by a skillful surgeon, has been constantly doing well, without incurring any accident, and has given me not much pain. It hinders me from nothing which can be done with one hand, and I have been able to ride out since the 2d week. The only disadvantageous circumstance is the slowness with which old bones knit. A younger person would have been clear of his sling in 6 weeks. I am now in the 7th and have neither use nor motion of that hand; and I would willingly compromise with my sling for 3 weeks more. It adds much to the difficulty and awkwardness of writing, which a crippled right hand and wrist had before brought on me. While this will lessen the frequency of expressing my attachment to my friends, it will not lessen the warmth of my feelings towards them.

Thomas Jefferson to Edward Everett, Monticello, 24 February 1823

Nor am I a friend to a scrupulous purism of style. I readily sacrifice the niceties of syntax to euphony and strength. It is by boldly neglecting the rigorisms of grammar that Tacitus has made himself the strongest writer in the world. The Hypercritics call him barbarous; but I should be sorry to exchange his barbarisms for their wire-drawn purisms.

Thomas Jefferson to William Johnson, Monticello, 4 March 1823

Altho' I had not time to prepare anything express, my letters (all preserved) will furnish the daily occurrences and views from my return from Europe in 1790, till I retired finally from office. These will command more conviction than anything I could have written after my retirement; no day having ever passed during that period without a letter to somebody, written too in the moment, and in the warmth and freshness of fact and feeling they will carry internal evidence that what they breathe is genuine. Selections from these after my death, may come out successively as the maturity of circumstances may render their appearance seasonable.

William Short to Thomas Jefferson, Philadelphia, 17 March 1823

Contrary to all precedent I have by me a letter from you which has remained for two months unanswered. I have been silent only because I feared to give you trouble. I know how laborious it is for you now to write—& I have always known how unwilling you were to employ an amanuensis. Yet I am not the less anxious to hear that you are perfectly restored to the use of your arm, & have retained your general health.

Thomas Jefferson to William Short, Monticello, 28 March 1823

The bone of my arm is well knitted and strong; but the carpal bones, having been disturbed, maintain an oedematous swelling of the hand and fingers, keeping them entirely helpless, and holding up no definite term of their usefulness. I am now in the 5th month of this disability.

Thomas Jefferson to Abiel Holmes, Monticello, 5 April 1823

Your favor of the 17th ult. is just now received. It brings to my recollection our correspondence of 1806, 7, 8. I was then about 63 or 4 years of age; had still a good memory, a tolerable degree of energy and industry of body and mind, and great desire of being useful. Now, at the age of 80, I have still indeed the will, but not the ability of usefulness. Decay of memory, prostration of strength, inertness of mind, torpidity of age, easy only in the passive occupation of reading, a mutilation of both hands rendering writing very painful, in this condition, dear Sir, I am no longer able to aid at all your useful and laudable labors.

Thomas Jefferson to Thomas Leiper, Monticello, 31 May 1823

On my late return from Bedford I found here your three favors of May 9, 13, and _____. The millet you have been so kind as to send me is not yet arrived. Accept my thanks for it, as well as for the details as to its culture and produce. I shall turn it over to my grandson Th: J. Randolph, to whom I have committed the management of the whole of my agricultural concerns, in which I was never skillful and am now entirely unequal to them from age and debility. . . . Withdrawn entirely from agriculture, I am equally so from the business of the world, and especially from political concerns, which I trust entirely to the generation of the day, without enquiry, or reading but a single newspaper.

Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, Monticello, 12 October 1823

I do not write with the ease which your letter of Sept. 18 supposes. Crippled wrists and fingers make writing slow & laborious. But while writing to you, I lose the sense of these things in the recollection of ancient times, when youth & health made happiness out of every thing. I forget for a while the hoary winter of old age, when we can think of nothing but how to keep ourselves warm, and how to get rid of our heavy hours until the friendly hand of death shall rid us of all at once.

Daniel Webster: Notes of Conversation with Thomas Jefferson, 1824

Mr. Jefferson is now between eighty-one & eighty-two, above six feet high, of an ample long frame, rather thin & spare. His head, which is not peculiar in its shape, is set rather forward on his shoulders, & his neck being long, there is, when he is walking or conversing, an habitual protrusion of it. It is still well covered with hair, which having been once red, & now turning grey, is of an indistinct sandy color. His eyes are small, very light, & now neither brilliant, nor striking. His chin is rather long, but not pointed, his nose small, regular in its outline, & the nostrils a little elevated. His mouth is well formed, & still filled with teeth; it is generally strongly compressed, bearing an expression of contentment & benevolence. His complexion formerly light, & freckled, now bears the marks of age & cutaneous affection. His limbs are uncommonly long, his hands & feet very large, & his wrists of a most extraordinary size. His walk is not precise & military, but easy & swinging; he stoops a little, not so much from age, as from natural formation. When sitting he

appears short, partly from a rather lounging habit of sitting, & partly from the disproportionate length of his limbs. His dress when in the house, is a grey surtout coat, kerseymere buff waistcoat, with an under one faced with some material of a dingy red. His pantaloons are very long, loose, & of the same color as his coat. His stockings are woolen, either white or grey, & his shoes of the kind that bear his name. His whole dress is neglected but not slovenly. He wears a common round hat. He wears when on horseback a grey strait bodiced coat, & a spencer of the same material, both fastened with large pearl buttons. When we first saw him he was riding, & in addition to the above, wore round his throat a knit white woolen tippet, in the place of a cravat, & black velvet gaiters under his pantaloons.

His general appearance indicates an extraordinary degree of health, vivacity, & spirit. His sight is still good, for he needs glasses only in the evening, his hearing is generally good, but a number of voices in animated conversation, confuses it.

Mr. J. rises in the morning, as soon as he can *see* the hands of his clock (which is directly opposite his bed) & examines his thermometer immediately, as he keeps a regular meteorological diary. He employs himself chiefly in writing till breakfast, which is at nine. From that time till dinner, he is in his library, excepting that in fair weather he rides on horseback from seven to fourteen miles. Dines at four, returns to the drawing room at six, when coffee is brought in, & passes the evening, *till nine* in conversation. His habit of retiring at that hour is so strong, that it has become *essential* to his health & comfort. His diet is simple, but he seems restrained only by his tastes. His breakfast is tea & coffee, bread, of which he does not seem afraid, although it is always fresh from the oven, with sometimes a slight accompaniment of cold meat.

He enjoys his dinner well, taking with meat a large proportion of vegetables. He has a strong preference for the wines of the Continent, of which he has many sorts of excellent quality, having been more than commonly successful in his mode of importing, & preserving them. Among others we found the following, which are very rare in this country, & apparently not at all injured by transportation. L'Ednau, Muscat, Samian, & Blanchette de Limoux. Dinner is served in half Virginian, half French style, in good taste & abundance. No wine is put on the table till the cloth is removed.

In conversation, Mr. J. is easy & natural, & apparently not ambitious; it is not loud as challenging general attention, but usually addressed to the person next him. The topics when not selected to suit the character & feelings of his auditor, are those subjects with which his mind seems particularly occupied, & these at present, may be said to be Science & Letters, & especially the University of Virginia, which is coming into existence almost entirely from his exertions, & will rise it is to be hoped, to usefulness & credit under his continued care. When we were with him, his favorite subjects were Greek & Anglo-Saxon, & historical recollections of the times & events of the Revolution & of his residence in France, from 1783/4 to 89.

John Finch's Account of a Visit to Monticello, before 5 April 1824

I was shewn by the servant into the drawing-room, and waited with some anxiety for the moment when I should see Mr. Jefferson. In a few minutes he came, welcomed me to Monticello, and began to converse with as much ease as if we had been acquainted for years. Mr. Jefferson was at this time nearly eighty years of age, tall, slender, and stooped very slightly; he retained all the vivacity of a much younger period of life. The pictures of Mr. Jefferson as President do not give a correct idea of his countenance. The profile by Stuart, and the likeness by Trumbull, in the picture of the Signing of the Declaration of Independence, are the most correct. It would be impossible to paint the genius and fire which appeared in the expression of his eyes. . . .

On returning to the drawing-room, we had a conversation which continued three hours, and the following were some of the sentiments Mr. Jefferson expressed: . . .

“I played with Dr. Franklin at chess, and was equal to him at the game.”

Thomas Jefferson to William Short, Monticello, 10 April 1824

I hope you have not entirely unlearned the practice of riding on horseback. I can assure you from experience that to old age, the daily ride is among the most cheering of comforts, it renews the pleasurable sensation that we are still in society with the beings and the things around us, and so delightful and so necessary is this daily revival to me, that I would wish to lose that and life together.

Thomas Jefferson to Horatio G. Spafford, Monticello, 1 May 1824

My reading now is for amusement rather than instruction, the wane of body cannot be unattended with that of the mind. Extreme debility has obliged me to retire from all other business, and the only serious occup[atio]n to which I now attend is the getting into oper[atio]n the University established in our state.

Thomas Jefferson to Arthur S. Brockenbrough, Monticello, 4 May 1824

My last ride to the University and return without getting off of my horse, with the heat of the day so overcome me with fatigue that I could scarcely reach home, and still leaves me so sore and languid that I have not been on my horse since, nor shall I be able yet for some days.

Martin Van Buren’s Account of a Visit to Monticello, c. 23 May 1824

We employed our mornings in drives about the neighbourhood, during which it may well be imagined with how much satisfaction I listened to Mr. Jeffersons conversation. His imposing appearance as he sat uncovered—never wearing his hat except when he left the carriage & often not then—and the earnest & impressive manner in which he spoke of men and things are yet as fresh in my recollection, as if they were experiences of yesterday. I have often reproached myself for having omitted to make memoranda of his original and always forcible observations & never more than at the present moment. Uppermost in my mind is the recollection of his exemption from the slightest remains of party or personal prejudice against those from whom he had differed during the stormy period of his public life. Those who like myself had an opportunity to witness his remarkable freedom from the common reproach of political differences would find it difficult to doubt the sincerity of the liberal views he expressed in his Inaugural Address in regard to parties and partizan contests.

Samuel Whitcomb’s Account of a Visit to Monticello, 31 May 1824

He is tall & very straight—excepting his neck which appears limber or enclined to crook. His face is long & thin. His eyes light & weak, but somewhat severe. He is more homely, plain & uninteresting, common & undignified, than I was prepared to expect. I should not take him for a generous man. He is more positive, decided, & passionate, than I had expected. I Should think him less of a philosopher than a partisan. His *manners* are much the most agreeable part of him—they

are artificial—he shrugs his Shoulders when talking—has much of the Frenchman—is rapid, varying, volatile, eloquent amusing. I should not think him (did not know his age) much over 60 or 65 years. He alluded to his being troubled with extensive correspondence. But sd he could read with as much ease & pleasure as ever. Can see in the day time without glasses. Thos. B. Wait Jr. looks much like him, & has much of his expression of countenance. Mr. J's Skin however is fair & rather red.

Samuel Whitcomb's Account of a Visit to Monticello, 1 June 1824

[Madison] appears less studied, brilliant & frank—but more natural, candid & profound than Mr. Jefferson. Mr. Jefferson has more imagination & passion, quicker & richer conceptions; Mr. Madison has a sound judgement, tranquil temper, & logical mind. Mr. Jefferson excites interest immediately on entering his presence; Mr. Madison has nothing in his looks, gestures, expressions or manners to indicate any thing extraordinary in his intellect or character. But the more one converses with him, the more his excellences are developed & the better he is liked.

Thomas Jefferson to Charles Willson Peale, Monticello, 18 July 1824

My eyes are good, also. I use spectacles only at night; and I am particularly happy in not needing your teeth of porcelain. I have lost one only by age, the rest continuing sound. I ride every day from 3 or 4 to 8 or 10 miles without fatigue, but I am little able to walk, and never further than my garden.

Thomas Jefferson to William H. Tarpley, Monticello, 26 July 1824

My hearing is become so dull that I enter little into convers[atio]n, and pass nearly the whole of my time in the abstraction of my apartment, age too has greatly impaired my memory, & strength.

Horace Holley's Second Account of a Visit to Monticello, 5–6 September 1824

You will of course expect me, when I speak of the family at this place, to say, what all, who have visited it, know to be true, that it is one of the most intelligent and agreeable in the United States. Mr. Jefferson's talents are before the world, and allowed by all. He does not, even now at the age of 82, sink upon a near inspection, and by familiar intercourse. His memory, as is the fact with all persons at his advanced period of life, is not as active for names, and for recent events, as formerly; but all the other functions of the mind appear to be performed with as much vigor as ever. His muscles easily become tired with walking even half a mile, but he can ride for hours on horseback without similar fatigue. Generally he does not sleep after dinner, and continued talking with me yesterday from morning to night. He never dictates to an amanuensis, and never did, but makes a rough draft of his letters and other written communication, and has them copied by his nieces, or some one else. After he left the government, he used to receive 1200 letters a year, and was exceedingly oppressed with the task of answering them, which he performed, unless the communications were actually impertinent. He has now about half the number, but complains that the notice, which he is obliged to take of them, interferes very much with his studies and his devotion to the University.

Horace Holley's Third Account of a Visit to Monticello, 5–6 September 1824

I spent yesterday and the past part of the present day at Monticello with Mr. Jefferson and his family. Mr. William Short of Philadelphia is there, and has been for a fortnight. Mr. Jefferson is what I expected, and what the world already knows. He received me hospitably, and conversed with me freely and fully while I stayed. He talks easily still, though 82, and preserves the faculties of his mind in vigorous operation. His memory fails of course in regard to names and more recent events, but his judgment is unimpaired. His mind is full of the university, and he is almost constantly engaged in completing the details of its laws and government. . . .

Mr. Jefferson is a plain looking old gentleman, dressed in a blue coat with yellow buttons, a buff jacket, a pair of snuff colored corduroy pantaloons, blue and white cotton stockings, and black slippers up at the heels. He is grey, tall, square shouldered, takes long steps, and has not now a clear voice. His muscles are not vigorous, but his hand trembles little, and is not observed to tremble at all as he uses at table. He rides on horseback daily in fair weather, but walks out seldom. He makes a rough draft of all his letters and written communications, but has them copied by his nieces, or some one else. He says that his correspondence is annoying to him, and used to take up nearly all his time. At one period he was in the habit of receiving 1200 letters a year; but they have now fallen to 600. Still they break in upon his studies and plans for the University. He answers most of them, but not such as are absolutely without claim to attention.

Thomas Jefferson to Thomas G. Watkins, Monticello, 16 October 1824

That you should have met with enemies and backbiters is the lot of all men, and of talents especially, had you been good for nothing you would have stood in nobody's way and been spoken of as a good creature. I however hear nothing of these gossiping tales. My neighbors who visit me know they are not to my taste, or if mentioned in my presence I hear them not, the defect of my hearing having increased so as to insulate me in ordinary convers[atio]n. . . . I am laboring under severe indispose[iti]o[n], the effect of a cold. A tonsil so swelled that I cannot open my mouth to take in any thing but liquids, sore throat, head ach and a general malaise, but I shall be well before you receive this.

Thomas Jefferson to Charles J. Ingersoll, Monticello, 27 October 1824

Mr. Short and Mr. Harris have truly informed you that I suffer to excess by an oppressive correspondence. The decays of age have so reduced the powers of life with me, that a greater affliction can scarcely be imposed on me than that of writing a letter. I feel indeed that I must withdraw from the labors of this duty, even if it loses me all my friends. My affections for them undergo no diminution, but the laws of the animal economy take from me this means of manifesting it.

Daniel Webster to Jeremiah Mason, Washington, 29 December 1824

At Mr. Jefferson's, we remained five days. This was something longer than our intention, but there came rains, which prevented our departure. Mr. Jefferson is a man of whom one may form a very just account, as to person & manners, from description, & pictures. We met him in the road, & I knew him at once, although he was on horseback, & something straighter, & freer from the debility of age, than I had expected. We found him uniformly pleasant, social & interesting. He talked less of present things than might be expected, although in the intercourse with gentlemen under his own roof, he did *not keep back* his opinions, on men or things. But if I were to say what

appeared to be the leading topics, with him, & those to which his mind habitually turned itself, I should mention *three*—early anecdotes of Revolutionary times—French society—politics—& literature, such as they were when he was in France—and Genl. Literature, & the Va. University.

On these three general topics he has much to say & he says it all well.

Daniel Webster to Joseph Hopkinson, Washington, 31 December 1824

My visit to Virginia was not unpleasant. Mr. Jefferson is full of conversation, & as it relates, pretty much, to by-gone times, it is replete with information & useful anecdote. All the great men of our Revolutionary epoch necessarily had a circle of which they were, severally, the center. Each, therefore, has something to tell not common to all. Mr. Adams & Mr. Jefferson, for example, though acting together, on a common theater, at Philadelphia, were nevertheless far apart, when in Massachusetts & Virginia, & each was at home, in the midst of men & of events, more or less different from those which surrounded the other. I heard Mr. Jefferson talk over the events of his early life, as your friend [David] Hunter represents the young Indians to listen to the tales of the age-stricken warriors; not without occasionally feeling, like them, an impulse to raise the war song, & grasp the tomahawk. Mr. Jefferson's conversation is little on present things; partly perhaps from the prudence of forbearing to engage in questions which now divide the community, but mostly from a greater love for other topics. Early Revolutionary events, political occurrences, in both Hemispheres, about the time he was in France, & general literature & the *University of Virginia* would seem to be his favorite subjects.

Thomas Jefferson to Francis A. Van Der Kemp, Monticello, 11 January 1825

The solitude in which we are left by the death of our friends is one of the great evils of protracted life. When I look back to the days of my youth, it is like looking over a field of battle. All, all dead! and ourselves left alone amidst a new generation whom we know not, and who know not us.

Thomas Jefferson to Roger C. Weightman, Monticello, 24 June 1826

[In writing from his deathbed] Acquiescence is a duty, under circumstances not placed among those we are permitted to control.

James Madison to Nicholas P. Trist, 6 July 1826

He lives and will live in the memory and gratitude of the wise and good, as a luminary of science, as a votary of liberty, as a model of patriotism, and as a benefactor of human kind. In these characters, I have known him, and not less in the virtues and charms of social life, for a period of fifty years, during which there was not an interruption or diminution of mutual confidence and cordial friendship, for a single moment in a single instance. What I feel therefore now, need not, I should say, cannot, be expressed.

Timothy Pickering to John Marshall, Salem, Mass., 26 December 1828

Altho' I, in common with many others, have for a long period considered Mr. Jefferson as a visionary statesman; and therefore can read his absurd notions about the judiciary without astonishment; yet I am inclined to ascribe them, as exhibited in his letter to Barry, as much to passion as to wrongheadedness. To me they appear strongly marked with resentment after the lapse of so

many years, still ranking in his bosom, from the escape of Judge Chase from the vengeful impeachment instigated, I believe, by him, & virulently prosecuted by his partisans. Recollect the haste with which he pardoned the scoundrel Callender—his able agent in calumnies against his political opponents—and his preemptory order to the marshal to restore the sum paid for the fine imposed by the sentence of Judge Chase: a restoration as unwarrantable as if he had put his hand directly into the public treasury & thence drawn the money.

James Kent: Journal to His Son, 30 April 1833

He [Egbert Benson in 1833] spoke of *Jefferson* as one of the most unprincipled, malignant, false & visionary Men that ever lived, & that it was he who on his return to the U. States converted *Madison* to democracy & subdued, perverted & corrupted his mind & Principles.

James Madison to George Tucker, Montpelier, Va., 27 June 1836

Apart from the value put on such a mark of respect from you in a dedication of your “Life of Mr. Jefferson” to me, I could only be governed in accepting it by my confidence in your capacity to do justice to a character so interesting to his country and to the world; and, I may be permitted to add, with whose principles of liberty and political career mine have been so extensively congenial.

John Marshall to Henry Lee, Richmond, Va., 25 October 1839

In truth, I have been a skeptic on this subject from the time I became acquainted with Mr. Jefferson as Secretary of State. I have never believed firmly in his infallibility. I have never thought him a particularly wise sound and practical statesman; nor have I ever thought those opinions which were peculiar to himself “most in accordance with the freedom and happiness of society that have ever been given to the world.” I have not changed this mode of thinking.

Joseph Story: Autobiography

Mr. Jefferson has imputed mainly to me the repeal of the embargo, in a letter to which I have already alluded, and has stigmatized me on this account with the epithet of “pseudo-republican.” “Pseudo-republican” of course, I must be; as every one was in Mr. Jefferson’s opinion, who dared to venture upon a doubt of his infallibility.

Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer

Charles Carroll of Annapolis to Charles Carroll of Carrollton, 8 April 1773

I wrote to the Major [i.e., Jenifer]. . . . I know Him to be a Courtier but I believe Him to be One of the best of them, that is He would follow His own Opinion if His Office did not determine Him to follow the Opinion of Others.

William Pierce: Sketches of Delegates to the Constitutional Convention, c. September 1787

Mr. Jenifer is a Gentleman of fortune in Maryland;—he is always in good humour, and never fails to make his company pleased with him.—He sits silent in the Senate, and seems to be conscious that he is no politician.—From his long continuance in single life, no doubt but he has made the vow of celibacy.—He speaks warmly of the Ladies notwithstanding.—Mr. Jenifer is about 55 Years of Age, and once served as an Aid de Camp to Major Genl. [Charles] Lee.

Edmund Jenings

John Adams to Elbridge Gerry, Braintree, Mass., 11 September 1779

It is still necessary to go farther, to appoint a secretary to the Commission, and to give the Management of all maritime and commercial Affairs to a Consul, to reside at Nantes. There is a Gentleman in Paris, whose Name I will venture to mention to you. Edmund Jenning Esqr., Councillor at Law of Maryland. This Gentleman appears to me, to have Such Abilities, such extensive Knowledge, and so much Candor and Moderation, that I cannot but think he would be very usefull as secretary to the Commission. And I would fain hope he would accept it. He is not upon bad Terms with F[ranklin] nor too much an Idolator of him, which is exactly the Character that a Secretary to the Commission ought to have, in Relation to the Minister.

Thomas Johnson

John Adams: Diary, Philadelphia, 10 October 1774

Johnson of Maryland has a clear and a cool Head, an extensive Knowledge of Trade, as well as Law. He is a deliberating Man, but not a shining orator—His Passions and Imagination don't appear enough for an orator. His Reason and Penetration appear, but not his Rhetoric.

Galloway, Duane, and Johnson, are sensible and learned but cold Speakers.

Charles Carroll of Carrollton to Charles Carroll, Sr., Philadelphia, 29 July 1776

I hope Mr. Johnson is secure of a seat [in Congress]. [Samuel] Chase I know is—& I know these two men have the will & power to be useful.

Daniel Carroll to James Madison, 28 May 1788

The truth is Mr. Johnson's accommodating disposition, and a respect to his character led the Majority into a Situation, out of which they found some difficulty to extricate themselves.

William Samuel Johnson

Edmund Pendleton to James Madison, Virginia, 9 December 1782

I think I have heard that Dr. Johnson is very clever.

Samuel Blachley Webb to Jeremiah Wadsworth, New York, 9 March 1785

I flatter myself a little pains might induce Dr. Johnson to return again to Congress—it certainly would have a happy effect, this is the time that great and important offices are filling—and Doct. Johnson has I believe much more influence than either you or myself knows, the Southern Delegates are vastly fond of him, & I believe he would do more good than any other man from the State.

William Pierce: Sketches of Delegates to the Constitutional Convention, c. September 1787

Dr. Johnson is a character much celebrated for his legal knowledge; he is said to be one of the first classics in America, and certainly possesses a very strong and enlightened understanding.

As an Orator in my opinion, there is nothing in him that warrants the high reputation which he has for public speaking. There is something in the tone of his voice not pleasing to the Ear,—but he is eloquent and clear,—always abounding with information and instruction. He was once employed as an Agent for the State of Connecticut to state her claims to certain landed territory before the British House of Commons; this Office he discharged with so much dignity, and made such an ingenious display of his powers, that he laid the foundation of a reputation which will probably last much longer than his own life. Dr. Johnson is about sixty years of age, possesses the manners of a Gentleman, and engages the Hearts of Men by the sweetness of his temper, and that affectionate style of address with which he accosts his acquaintance.

Enoch Perkins to Simeon Baldwin, Hartford, Conn., 15 January 1788

[In the Connecticut ratification Convention] Dr. Johnson reasoned well on the subject; his eloquence was music to the ear.

William Maclay: Journal, 15 May 1789

I cannot help here noting a Trait of insolence in Lee, Elsworth and Johnson.

William Maclay: Journal, 19 August 1789

Dr. Johnson in particular, was very uncandid.

Samuel Johnston

Samuel Johnston to James Iredell, New York, 24 February 1790

I should be quite well if it was not for that complaint in my head which I have so long complained of and that is no worse than usual.

Pierce Butler to Archibald Maclaine, New York, 3 March 1790

I sincerely wish that your own private Interest could be benefited as much by Your coming to Congress as Your Country's wou'd, for indeed the Southern Interest calls loudly for some such Men as you here. Your senators are at length on the floor. Govr Johnston is a very amiable and desirable associate and indeed so is Coll Hawkins.

Timothy Bloodworth to John Adams, Washington, 13 February 1801

The Act pass'd this sessions, for the revisal of the Judicial sitem, will require the appointment of a Judge for the State of No Carolina, permit me, with resepectfull submission, to recommend Mr Samuel Johnston, as a Gentleman suitably quallified to fill that Station. his Charrecter is so wel established as a Lawyer, that any observations on that subject, would be superfluouse. I beg leave only to add, that this recommendation does not arise from personal Attachment, but from a knowledge of his personal Merrit, & full persuation that should he meet with the Approbation of the President, he will do Honor to the appointment, by the rectitude of his Conduct.

John Coffin Jones

Henry Knox to Thomas Jefferson, New York, 10 December 1788

[John Coffin Jones] is a merchant of eminence in Boston. He abilities, his honor, and his liberal Fortune unite to render him a valuable member of our republic.

John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, Braintree, Mass., 2 January 1789

Give me leave to introduce to you John Coffin Jones Esqr., an eminent Merchant of Boston and a late Member of the Legislature from that Town. His Character both in public and private Life is much respected, and his Intelligence will enable him to give you a much better account of the general and particular Politicks of this Country than I can.

John Paul Jones

John Paul Jones to the Marquis de Lafayette, L'Orient, France, 1 May 1779

I cannot Insure success but we will endeavor to deserve it.

Founders on the Founders

John Adams: Diary, 13 May 1779

After Dinner walked out, with C[aptain]s Jones and Landais to see Jones's Marines—dressed in the English Uniform, red and white. A Number of very active and clever Sergeants and Corporals are employed to teach them the Exercise, and Maneuvers and Marches &c.

After which Jones came on Board our ship.

This is the most ambitious and intriguing Officer in the American Navy. Jones has Art, and Secrecy, and aspires very high. You see the Character of the Man in his uniform, and that of his officers and Marines, variant from the Uniforms established by Congress. Golden Button holes, for himself—two Epaulets—Marines in red and white instead of Green.

Eccentricities and Irregularities are to be expected from him—they are in his Character, they are visible in his Eyes. His Voice is soft and still and small, his Eye has keenness, and Wildness and Softness in it.

Benjamin Franklin to John Paul Jones, Passy, France, 15 October 1779

For some days after the arrival of your express scarce anything was talked of at Paris and Versailles but your cool conduct and persevering bravery during that terrible conflict [i.e., the engagement with the *Serapis*].

Benjamin Franklin to the Commissioners of the Navy, Passy, France, 17 October 1779

Jones' bravery and conduct in the action have gained him great honor.

Benjamin Franklin to Cooper, Passy, France, 27 October 1779

Few actions at sea have demonstrated such steady, cool, determined bravery as that of Jones in taking the *Serapis*.

Benjamin Rush: Sketches

He united in his military character the *boldness* which is produced by madness, the *bravery* which is the effect of animal spirits, and the *courage* which is the result of reflection. He once put into my hands a history of his naval exploits. He exulted in it in having first hoisted the American flag on board the first armed vessel that was commissioned by the United States. I heard him give a minute account of his engagement with the *Searpis* in a small circle of gentlemen at a dinner. It was delivered with great apparent modesty and commanded the most respectful attention. Towards the close of the battle, while his deck was swimming in blood, the captain of the *Serapis* called him to strike. "No, Sir," said he, "I will not, we have had but a small fight as yet." He had been well educated in Scotland (his native country) and discovered style and taste both in writing and conversation. His countenance was strongly marked with thought. I know nothing of his private character.

John Adams to Abigail Adams, Paris, 15 May 1780

Somebody has inserted in the Amsterdam Gazette, that this Gentleman lodges with me. This is done with a political design, but whether it was intended to do honour to me, or him or both, I don't know.—It is not true.—However there is a good Understanding between him and me, and

therefore I did not trouble myself to enquire whether it was done to serve or hurt him or me, or both.

Abigail Adams to Elizabeth Cranch, Auteuil near Paris, 3 December 1784

Chevalier Jones you have heard much of. He is a most uncommon Character. I dare Say you would be as much disappointed in him as I was. From the intrepid Character he justly Supported in the American Navy, I expected to have seen a Rough, Stout, warlike Roman. Instead of that, I should sooner think of wrapping him up in cotton wool and putting him into my pocket, than sending him to contend with Cannon Ball.

He is small of stature, well proportioned, soft in his Speech, easy in his address, polite in his manners, vastly civil, understands all the Etiquette of a Lady's Toilette as perfectly as he does the Masts, Sails and rigging of a Ship. Under all this appearance of softness, he is Bold, enterprising, ambitious and active.

He has been here often, and dined with us several times. He is said to be a Man of Gallantry and a favorite amongst the French Ladies whom he is frequently commending for the neatness of their persons, their easy manners and their taste in dress. He knows how often the Ladies use the Baths, what colour best suits a Lady's complexion, what Cosmeticks are most favourable to the skin. We do not often See the Warrior and the *Abigail** thus united.

*Name of a maid in Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Scornful Lady* (1616), thus the term "Abigail" means a lady's maid.

John Paul Jones to Thomas Jefferson, L'Orient, France, 31 July 1785

My best wishes will always attend that Land of Freedom, and my Pride will be always gratified when such measures are adopted as will make us respected as a great People who deserve to be Free.

Luigi Castiglioni: Sketches of American Soldiers, 1787

Paul Jones is about 40 years of age, short, and has none of the ferocious appearance with which some have painted him in affected portraits. He loves the pleasures of life, and readily finds compensation amid the luxuries of Paris for the harsh labors of his excursions on the sea.

Edward Carrington to Thomas Jefferson, New York, 10 November 1787

I find that this brave, and in my mind honest, Man has his enemies.

Thomas Jefferson to Edward Carrington, Paris, 27 May 1788

Paul Jones is invited into the Empress's service with the rank of rear admiral, and to have a separate command. I wish it corresponded with the views of Congress to give him that rank from the taking of the Serapis. [I look to] this officer as our great future dependence on the sea, where alone we should think of ever having a force. He is young enough to see the day when we shall be more populous than the whole British dominions and able to fight them ship to ship. We should procure him then every possible opportunity of acquiring experience.

Nathaniel Fanning: Narrative of the Adventures of an American Naval Officer, 1806

I never knew him to drink any kind of ardent spirits. On the contrary, his constant drink was lemonade (lime juice and water, with a little sugar to make it the more palatable). It is true, that every day while at sea, and the weather good, he made it a custom to drink three glasses of wine immediately after the table cloth was removed.

Captain Jones was a man of about five feet six inches high, well shaped below his head and shoulders, rather round shouldered with a visage fierce and warlike, and wore the appearance of great application to study, which he was fond of. He was an excellent seaman, and knew (according to my judgment) naval tactics as well as almost any man of his age; but it must be allowed that his character was somewhat tinctured with bad qualities . . . His smoothness of tongue, and flattery to seamen when he wanted them was persuasive, and in which he excelled every other man I ever was acquainted with . . . His pride and vanity, while at Paris and Amsterdam, was not generally approved of after the famous sea battle. This certainly gave great umbrage to many persons who had been his best friends. His conduct however, towards Captain Preston [of the *Serapis*], his antagonist, was highly approved of by many, and was becoming that of a conqueror.

Joseph Jones

Martha Dangerfield Bland (Mrs. Theodorick Bland, Jr.) to Frances Bland Tucker (Mrs. St. George Tucker), 30 March 1781

Mr. Jones who looks like a presbyterian Priest his complexion as sable as his habit he always wears black.

Thomas Jefferson to James Monroe, Monticello, 24 April 1794

Mr. Jones dined with me 4 or 5 days ago. I never saw him so low. The Staunton water had handled him very severely. He found himself something better however, & I hope he has continued to mend, for indeed his appearance was disquieting.

Samuel Jones

Alexander Hamilton to Hugh Seton, New York, 18 June 1784

[On obtaining a lawyer to represent a friend of Seton's.] I thought it my duty to transfer the trust to some person on the spot to whose judgment and integrity your interests might be safely committed. I have fixed upon Mr. Samuel Jones for this purpose; a Gentleman as distinguished for his probity as for his professional knowledge.

New York Convention, 1 July 1788

When Mr. Jay sat down [in the New York ratifying convention], Mr. Jones took an opportunity of rising, and with his usual ingenuity stated some objections to the idea of a concurrent jurisdiction.

Alexander Hamilton to Timothy Pickering, New York, 17 March 1798

If Robert Troupe resigns his office of District Judge The President cannot make a better choice than of Samuel Jones Esqr the present comptroller of the State. I understand he will accept.

Willie Jones

Archibald Maclaine to James Iredell, Wilmington, N.C., 17 November 1788

[Referring to Thomas Person and Willie Jones] I have as small an opinion of one of these gentlemen as I have of the other; and therefore would not trust either of them. W. Jones would in my opinion sacrifice any thing rather than give up the party which he has so scandalously patronized. The inflexibility of his pride will soar above every other consideration.

Johann, Baron de Kalb

Robert Morris to John Hancock, Philadelphia, 17 February 1777

The enclosed letter & its translation were put into my hands to lay them before Congress. The Writer General de Kalb was a Brigdr. Genl. all the last War in Germany, has many years commanded a French Regiment & is said to be a man of Interest at the Court of Versailles. He speaks & writes English well, is a polite Gentn and an excellent Soldier. This Character of him is given to me by Doctr. Phile and Capt Hasenclever who are personally acquainted with him. He was in this Country in the disturbed times of the Stamp Act & was then supposed to be sent by the French Court to watch the dispute and its progress. If you choose to encourage him Doctor Phile will transmit your pleasure.

Silas Deane to President of Congress John Hancock, Paris, c. 16 March 1777

The Baron du Kalb is an old experienced officer, having served during the last war as Adjutant General under Marshal De Broglio, who recommends him. His being a German, and speaking the English language, will undoubtedly be of great service, as well as his other qualifications, the whole of which he submits to the determination of the honorable Congress, to direct, as they shall judge proper.

Marquis de Lafayette to Henry Laurens, Valley Forge, Pa., 26 January 1778

I came with the Baron de Kalb in this country, he is wise, he is a good officer, he is not overpowered by the clamors of an inbounded ambition.

William Churchill Houston to William Livingston, Philadelphia, 14 September 1780

No later Dispatches from the Southward than are published except a Letter of to-day, describing more particularly the Circumstances of the Fall of Baron de Kalb. This General, deserted by the Militia, fought at the Head of the Maryland and Delaware Troops, assisted by one Regiment of South Carolina Men under Continental Officers, with the most exemplary Bravery and Ability, kept them together with exact Order and Discipline, received and returned the Enemy's Charge with Bayonets till surrounded and borne down with Numbers, his Horse killed under him, himself pierced with two Musquet Balls and eight Bayonet Wounds, he became a Prisoner. He died in a little Time after, and was buried by the Enemy with all the Honours of War. The British Officers attended his Funeral and paid the highest Respect to his Merit and Memory. One of his Aids, who was wounded and taken with him, was treated with Civility by Lord Cornwallis, and suffered to come on Parole to the northward for the Care of his wounds.

James Kent

Daniel Webster to Francis Brown, Boston, 20 September 1818

I never doubted, for a moment, on which side of such a question C[hancellor] K's mind must ultimately rest. I have studied him (in his works) many years, & think I understand him. He has great talents, great legal learning, & great *firmness* & independence of mind. His opinion will have *weight*, wherever it is known.

Daniel Kilham

John Quincy Adams: Diary, 16 September 1787

After meeting I went with Dr. Kilham to his shop; and he lent me a number of Pieces of good music. He has a very pretty taste in this art, though he does not perform upon any instrument.*

*Adams referred to Kilham as "my very worthy fellow boarder," as they resided in the same boarding house in Newburyport.

John Quincy Adams to Abigail Adams, Newburyport, Mass., 23 December 1787

I board at a Mrs. Leathers's . . . There is one boarder beside myself—a Dr. Kilham (I hope the name will not scare you), one of the representatives from this town, a very worthy man, and a man of sense and learning. Was it not for him I should be at my lodgings as solitary as an hermit.

William Kilty

William Cranch to John Adams, Washington, 9 May 1801

On Govr. Johnson's declining, the office of Chief Judge several persons were talk'd of.—The place was offer'd to Judge Duval, one of the judges of the General Court of Maryland, but he declined. It was then offer'd to and accepted by Mr. Kilty of Annapolis. He did not get his commission untill the morning of the day on which the Court sat in Washington.* This Gentleman was educated to the practise of physic, and was surgeon's mate in Genl. Forrest's regiment during the War. He has practised law some years, has been member of the Council of Maryland, and was lately employ'd by the Legislature to revise and republish the Laws of Maryland. I had practised with him and having often lodged in the same house while attending the Courts, we had become in some degree intimate. His political sentiments and mine did not coincide, but we had never any warmth in our discussions. He has considerable talent in Poetry & Music, and upon those subjects we always harmonized.

*Kilty was chief judge of the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Columbia (1801–1806).

Rufus King

Elbridge Gerry to John Adams, New York, 5 March 1785

My Friend Mr. Rufus King studied under Mr. [Theophilus] Parsons of Newburyport, is at the Age of about thirty, eminent in the Law, has in a Year or two as a Member of the General Court of our State [i.e., the legislature], so established his Reputation as to be appointed a Member of Congress, & in this Character, by a well informed firm & sensible Mind, an agreeable person, & an elegant Address has already made progress in establishing a considerable Influence—he is a true Republican in principles & is in a System of politics that I have no Doubt Will in all essential points correspond with your own. I think You will be much pleased in opening a Correspondence with him & that he will be very happy in continuing it.

Rufus King to Daniel Kilham, New York, 24 August 1785

I am in a situation which perplexes me; was I a man of moderate fortune, I would follow my present pursuit; for I think I could do it, with honor, and with a prospect of some service to my country—but if this opinion should prevail I must abandon my profession, by this I could live with convenience, in peace, and without hazard—leaving this quiet prospect, I find much at hazard and little certainty, except constant vigilance & numerous enimies, for Parties will Exist. I am undetermined—at present.

Charles Storer to John Adams, New York, 23 November 1785

Mr. King has lately written you, and I desired him to continue the Correspondance; because you have often complained of being in the dark, as to what was going forward here, & as he is a man the most capable of giving you substantial information of any one I know. He has a great

respect and esteem for you, & in his turn is in the highest estimation of any young man in America—His talents are universally acknowledged to be very great: he is deeply versed in the laws & politics of his Country, & withal is *highly ambitious*—He is nevertheless a staunch Republican.

John Bayard to Samuel Bayard, New York, 1 December 1785

I find Congress opens a new scene of Action to me & candidly confess it requires greater abilities than I am possessed of to make a distinguished Appearance on the Floor. There are several Gentlemen who shine as speakers particularly a Mr. Rufus King from Massachusetts. He has a graceful Attitude—a fine flow of Words & in general a thorough acquaintance of the Subject on which He speaks. This gives him an unrival'd Influence. The Debates are conducted in general with great Decency & propriety & the Members treat each other with the utmost politeness—the greatest inconvenience is, that We have so many good speakers, each willing to display their Abilities on the Subject in debate that they are frequently lengthened out, & exhausted & become rather tiresome.

John Adams to Rufus King, Grosvenor Square, London, 23 December 1785

Although I may not be personally known to you, your Character uniformly given of your Talents, Application and public spirit, leave me no room to doubt, that I shall derive much necessary Information from your letters.

James Monroe to Thomas Jefferson, New York, 16 July 1786

Two of these men [delegates from Massachusetts] whose names are Dane and King are elected for the next year. . . . The former is I believe honest but the principles of the latter I doubt.

Rufus King: Memorandum About Events on 13 September 1786

[James] Monroe and I were sent to the Legislature at Philadelphia [to remonstrate against Pennsylvania's policy of paying its federal taxes directly to Pennsylvania citizens who were creditors of the United States.] . . . Being first named in the mission, it was in course that I should deliver the remonstrance. I had taken a good deal of pains to examine and arrange the matter of my discourse, and having acquired some reputation, felt unusual Solicitude that my performance should not disappoint any expectations that might have existed. The doors of the Legislature were open and the House very full—I had scarcely risen from my chair and addressed the Speaker, before all my thoughts were scattered and my power to recall them wholly gone. Confused and mortified, I had nothing left but to turn to my Colleague, who was sitting by me, and to ask him to take my place which he did and I sat down. Monroe went on and presented the views which he entertained on the subject. During his Speaking I rallied and recalled my scattered thoughts, became composed, and when Monroe finished, I again presented myself and went thro' my discourse without trepidation and to my own satisfaction.

William Pierce: Sketches of Delegates to the Constitutional Convention, c. September 1787

Mr. King is a Man much distinguished for his eloquence and great parliamentary talents. He was educated in Massachusetts, and is said to have good classical as well as legal knowledge. He has served for three years in the Congress of the United States with great and deserved applause,

and is at this time high in the confidence and approbation of his Country-men. This Gentleman is about thirty three years of age, about five feet ten Inches high, well formed, an handsome face, with a strong expressive Eye, and a sweet high toned voice. In his public speaking there is something peculiarly strong and rich in his expression, clear, and convincing in his arguments, rapid and irresistible at times in his eloquence but he is not always equal. His action is natural, swimming, and graceful, but there is a rudeness of manner sometimes accompanying it. But take him *tout ensemble*, he may with propriety be ranked among the Luminaries of the present Age.

Brissot de Warville: New Travels in the United States of America, August 1788

Mr. King, whom I also saw at this dinner [hosted by Alexander Hamilton], is reputed to be the most eloquent man in the United States. What impressed me most about him was his modesty; he seemed completely unaware of his worth.

George Thatcher to Sarah Thatcher, New York, 14 May 1789

Mr. King has been persuaded upon, by the Inhabitants of this City, to become a citizen; and to show how much they esteem him they have elected him one of their Representatives in the State Government; and the Supreme Court have actually dispensed with a standing Law of the State and admitted him a Councillor at Law, in a manner that does him great honor—Hence we may expect him no more in the Massachusetts except as a visitor—This State think they have made a considerable acquisition in him, & I think the Massachusetts has suffered a great Loss.

Robert Troup to Alexander Hamilton, Albany, N.Y., 12 July 1789

Our King is as much followed & attended to by all pasties as ever a new light preacher was by his congregation. He has acquired & will maintain an entire ascendancy in the house. He is happy in his manner—his language his reasoning & his choice of subjects to speak upon. Nothing but delicacy to [James] Duane as an old inhabitant has prevented King from being unanimously supported by all the members of the Southern district except L’Hommedieu & Morris.

New York Daily Gazette, 20 July 1789

In any age when rectitude is greeted with derision, and virtue reprobated with indignity, it is difficult for an honest politician to steer his course clear of the rocks and shoals that are ever cast in his way, by the hackneyed antiquated knaves of government.

Mr. K. however, exhibits an example of firmness, prudence and respectability, seldom to be met with in young senators. Possessed of talents which, when called forth in the service of his country, shone with a lustre that obscured the mean abilities of many whose influence, not their merit, had placed them in exalted stations, he has exerted his abilities with dignity and effect. His judgment is mature, his conceptions strong, his reasons seldom to be controverted.

In discharging the duties of every office hitherto delegated to him, he has come off with *ecclat*; and we have no cause to suspect that he will depart from the paths of true patriotism.

We shall only add our wishes, that he may never suffer his character to be branded with the causes which his countrymen have in store for the betrayers of their liberties. May his conduct remain exemplary as a representative, and virtuous as a man—blessed in domestic felicity, and admired by the true friends of America.

George Lux to George Read, Baltimore, Md., 28 July 1789

Senators are chosen [for New York], & very good ones, I know they are, although from the character I have heard of Mr. King, I could rather have wished to see him in the House of Delegates, his eloquence being better adapted to a popular than a select branch—

Thomas B. Wait to George Thatcher, 9 August 1789

Rufus King is a man of genius. He is a favourite of fortune—Is he also a Studious man? But above all, is he a man of genuine *integrity*? Answer these two questions in the affirmative, and I shall not hesitate to give it as my opinion, that he will do credit to the state that gave him birth, and that he will prove a blessing to all the States in the Union. His popular talents are prodigious.

Abigail Adams to Cotton Tufts, 1 September 1789

Mr. King makes a very respectable figure as a Senator.

William Maclay: Journal, 12 June 1790

King plausible & florid . . . both Lawyers [William Paterson], and both equally retained by the Secretary [of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton].

Alexander Hamilton to John Jay, Philadelphia, 3 September 1792

Perhaps it will not be amiss for you to converse with Mr. King. His judgment is sound; he has caution and energy.

Richard Harison to Alexander Hamilton, Albany, N.Y., 21 June 1793

If he [Robert Troup] should be at a Loss, I trust that he will consult with Mr. King upon whose Judgment we both have the fullest Reliance.

John Adams to Charles Adams, Philadelphia, 31 January 1795

The Election of Mr. King* is great Joy, to all the rational Part of the Public here, for he has great Information, Steady Conduct, and powerful Elocution.

*As U.S. minister to Great Britain.

Rufus King to Alexander Hamilton, Philadelphia, 2 May 1796

You must know that I am not a little tired with the separation from my Family, and drudging in the Senate. The work now before us being finished, I think I am entitled to a dismission. It would be agreeable to me to spend a few years abroad, and if I do not misconceive the interests of the Country, I think I could render some service to the Public at the present Period in England—will you converse with Mr. Jay on this subject?

Alexander Hamilton to Timothy Pickering, New York, 10 May 1796

While I have my pen in my hand, give me leave to mention a particular subject to you. Mr. Pinckney, it is said, desires to return to the U. States. In this case a successor will be wanted. If we had power to make a man for the purpose, we could not imagine a fitter than Mr. *King*. He is tired of the Senate & I fear will resign at all events. I presume he would accept the mission to England. Can there be a doubt that it will be wise to offer it to him?

Alexander Hamilton to George Washington, New York, 10 May 1796

It is rumored, that Mr. Pinckney entertains a wish to return to this Country. Give me leave to make known to you, that in such an event, I have ground to believe it would not be disagreeable to Mr. *King* to be the successor. I verily believe, that a more fit man for the purpose cannot be found and I imagine Mr. King will in every event leave the Senate. Should you think well of his appointment, I presume he would be disposed by a *previous resignation* to make the way easy to his nomination by you. Considering the strong commercial relations of the two countries it is truly very important that each should have with the other a man able and willing to give fair play to reciprocal interests.

George Washington to Alexander Hamilton, Philadelphia, 15 May 1796

With respect to the Gentleman you have mentioned as Successor to Mr. P—— there can be no doubt of his abilities, nor in *my mind* is there any of his fitness. But you know as well as I, what has been said of his political sentiments, with respect to another form of Government; and from thence, can be at no loss to guess at the Interpretation which would be given to the nomination of him. However, the subject shall have due consideration; but a previous resignation would, in my opinion, carry with it too much the appearance of Concert; and would have a bad, rather than a good effect.

Alexander Hamilton to George Washington, New York, 20 May 1796

I observe what you say on the subject of a certain diplomatic mission. Permit me to offer with frankness the reflections which have struck my mind.

The importance to our security and commerce of good understanding with G. Britain renders it very important that a man *able* and *not disagreeable* to that Government should be there. The Gentleman in question equally with any who could go & better than any willing to go answers this description. The idea hinted in your letter will apply to every man fit for the mission by his conspicuousness, talents and dispositions. 'Tis the stalking horse of a certain party & is made use of against every man who is not in their view & of sufficient consequence to attract their obloquy. If listened to, it will deprive the Government of the services of the most able and faithful agents. Is this expedient? What will be gained by it? Is it not evident that this party will pursue its hostility at all events as far as public opinion will permit? Does policy require any thing more than that they shall have no real cause to complain? Will it do, in deference to their calumniating insinuations to forbear employing the most competent men or to entrust the great business of the Country to unskillful unfaithful or doubtful hands? I really feel a conviction that it will be very dangerous to let party insinuations of this kind prove a serious obstacle to the employment of the best qualified characters. Mr. King is a remarkably well informed man—a very judicious one—a man of address—a man of fortune and economy whose situation affords just ground of confidence—a man

of unimpeached probity where he is best known—a firm friend to the Government—a supporter of the measures of the President—a man who cannot but feel that he has strong pretensions to confidence and trust.

Alexander Hamilton to Angelica Church, New York, 25 June 1796

I wrote you last by Mr. King who sailed a few days since for London as our Minister Plenipotentiary. You must not think the less well of him for not being a Jacobin—for he is a very clever fellow and will do credit to your Country.

Bartholomew Dandridge to George Washington, London, 12 March 1799

He is an exceedingly worthy man—fine talents & great firmness—a staunch republican & in no hands could the Honor & Interests of our Country be more safely reposed.

John Adams to John Marshall, Quincy, Mass., 30 August 1800

Mr. King is somewhat of a croaker at times. He is apt to be depressed, by what he thinks, a train of unfortunate events.

Baltimore *Maryland Gazette*, 16 July 1812

The Hon. Rufus King.—who have had an opportunity of witnessing any important discussion in the Senate, in which Mr. King has taken a part, have almost universally assigned him the palm. His talents are spoken of in more exalted terms, even by his political opponents, than any other member of that body, and we do not think it would be too much to say, that he is superior at this time to any other man of which the United States can boast. Bred up in the service of his country, and guided by the strictest integrity, he has justly acquired a reputation which entitles him to the confidence of his fellow-citizens. With such a man at the head of our government, we might soon expect to witness a change in the gloomy aspect of our affairs, and that scene of prosperity again restored which formerly spread its blessings around us. For many years he has lived in the retirement of private life, and his talents when greatly required, have been lost to his country. But since all parties now unite in speaking his praise, it is sincerely to be wished that his councils may produce that effect, which they so eminently deserve. If ever there is a time when honest men come again into fashion, it would be the pride of our nation to have a statesman like him to direct its affairs.

John Adams to John Quincy Adams, Quincy, Mass., 18 February 1825

Mr King's letter has touched my heart—in all our vicissitudes he has appeared an honourable friend to me and I have always found him an honourable man. I wish him and his, health peace and posterity. His letter is herewith returned.

Henry Knox

John Thomas to John Adams, Roxbury Camp, 24 October 1775

The two Gentlemen you Named to me [Henry Knox and Josiah Waters], I have had Some Acquaintance with, the first I take to be judicious, and has by Reading, Obtained a Theoretical Knowledge, in fortifications. I have been Pleased with Some of his Projections, but he has had no Opportunity of Practicing any great, as he doth not belong to the Army; but I have thought, had he Practised he would make as good a Figure as any that I am Acquainted with; here. As to Gunnery I believe has not made that so much his Study.

Benjamin Rush to Richard Henry Lee, Bordentown, 6 January 1777

I congratulate you upon the addition of Colonel Knox to the list of general officers. He is a brave, sensible, enterprising man. I saw his behavior in the battle of Trenton; he was cool, cheerful, and was present everywhere.

Nathanael Greene to Jacob Greene, Middlebrook, N.J., 4 June 1777

There is a French gentleman sent over by Mr. Dean to have the command of all artillery in America. If his appointment is confirmed, it will rob us of one of the best, or at least, as good an officer as we have in the service—General Knox.

James Lovell to Benjamin Franklin, Philadelphia, 4 July 1777

The Merit of Br. Genl. Knox is great, and he is beloved by his Corps.

Committee for Foreign Affairs to the Commissioners at Paris, York, Pa., 1 December 1777

. . . Genl. Knox, the father of the American Artillery . . .

Benjamin Rush: Sketches

A brave and intelligent officer, and an open hearted, honest hearted man.

Rev. John Murray to Nathanael Greene, Gloucester, Mass., 21 January 1780

Please to make my Compliments acceptable to General Knox. I hope he has not, or ever will meet, with any thing to prevent his laughing as hearty as ever. I really think he is qualified for a Disciple of who was the Founder of the Sect of laughing Philosophers? Or was there ever so happy a Sect in the world?

John Hancock to Benjamin Franklin, Boston, 27 October 1781

. . . General Knox whose Abilities & Conduct in the Military Line during this Contest has En-deared him to this Country in such a manner as to gain the Universal Esteem of all Whigs & well wishers to their Country.

Marquis de Chastellux: Travels in North-America, in the Years 1780, 1781, and 1782

Henry Knox . . . is between thirty and forty, very fat, but very active, and of a gay and amiable character. Previous to the war he was a bookseller at Boston, and used to amuse himself in reading some military books in his shop. Such was the origin and the first knowledge he acquired of the art of war, and of the taste he has had ever since for the profession of arms. From the very first campaign, he was entrusted with the command of the artillery, and it has turned out that it could not have been placed in better hands.

Alexander Hamilton to George Washington, Philadelphia, 13 February 1783

General Knox has the confidence of the army & is a man of sense. I think he may be safely made use of. Situated as I am Your Excellency will feel the confidential nature of these observations.

Francisco de Miranda: *Travels in the United States*, 1783–1784

General Knox. This man, who from a simple bookseller passed to the militia and from there to the first ranks of the American army, is one of the best informed on the theory and practice of the art of war of the many *caudillos* I have known on this continent, including “The Idol.” His manner is very pleasant and his conversation interesting.

Marquis de Lafayette to Henry Knox, Paris, 11 May 1785

The patriot and the soldier are nobly united in your person. God grant your advices may be adopted—your pains may fructify.

Luigi Castiglioni: *Sketches of American Soldiers*, 1787

Entering the army, he very quickly distinguished himself from the multitude by his range of knowledge and courage. In the course of the war, in which he lost the fingers of his left hand, he commanded the artillery, and was so skillful at directing the artillerymen that by the end of the war the French themselves were amazed at their readiness and activity. His wife always accompanied him in the field and insisted upon sharing the fortunes of war with him. After it was over, it is reported that, upon taking his leave of the other officers, he said laughingly to one of them (who had also been a bookdealer), “Now we can return home and reopen our shops”—so little influence had the well-deserved distinctions had toward rendering him haughty. He is now Secretary of War, lives in New York with his wife, and those who happen to know him are received in their home with complete cordiality.

He is a man of about 50 years of age, of fine stature, but corpulent, with pleasant manners and a face more noble than his humble origins.

George Washington to Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, 3 February 1787

I have the fullest conviction of your friendship for, and attachment to me; know your abilities to judge; and your means of information.

Otto's Biographies, Fall 1788

Secretary of War. Trustworthy, modest, frank, active, obliging, attached to France. He is of all the servants of Congress the most expeditious and the most serviceable. Born in obscurity* the Revolution put him in his place and atoned the mistake of Fortune. He would be without fault if his imagination was not a little too ardent.

The large holdings of his wife in the province of Maine make him a little uneasy on the dismemberment of this province. He always fears that England will get hold of it, but these apprehensions are hardly founded.

He is from very agreeable Society and he deserves to be among the small number of intimate friends of the foreign minister.

*He was a bookbinder journeyman in Boston. The daughter of the lieutenant governor passing by chance through the shop to buy some books was taken with his looks and good sense with which he spoke to her. She invited him to come to her house; the young Knox profited by these advances to propose an elopement; they were soon in agreement and were married against the wishes of Mrs. Knox's family. This family was Royalist. It happened through singular circumstances that without this marriage which displeased them so much, all of their property would have been confiscated. The Revolution was at the point of breaking out; Mr. Knox was one of the first to bear arms; he was moreover a captain, and showed his talents to be so extraordinary that in less than two years he was made major general of artillery. He was considered not only by the American but by all the French officers, as the most qualified person to fill this position.

Alexander Hamilton to James Madison, New York, 23 November 1788

As to Knox [for U.S. Vice President] I cannot persuade myself that he will incline to the appointment. He must *sacrifice* emolument by it which must *of necessity* be a primary object with him.

James Madison to Edmund Randolph, New York, 17 June 1789

High as the existing President stands, I question whether it would be very safe for him even not to reinstate J—y or K—x.

William Maclay: Journal, 28 June 1790

[In comparing Secretary of War Knox to Secretary of the Treasury Hamilton and Secretary of State Jefferson, all of whom attended a dinner hosted by the Pennsylvania delegation to Congress.] Knox is the easiest Man, and the most dignity of Presence. They [the three secretaries] retired at a decent time. One after another. Knox staid longest. As indeed suited his Aspect best, being more of a Bachanalian Figure.

Alexander Hamilton to Edward Carrington, Philadelphia, 26 May 1792

Poor *Knox* has come in for a share of their [Madison and Jefferson's] persecution as a man who generally thinks with me & who has a portion of the President's good Will & confidence.

Thomas Jefferson: The Anas, 1793

Knox joined Hamilton in everything.

Thomas Jefferson: Notes on a Cabinet Meeting, Philadelphia, 6 May 1793

[On recognizing Citizen Genet and on the viability of the French treaty with the U.S.] Knox subscribed at once to H[amilton]'s opinion that we ought to declare the treaty void, acknowledging at the same time, like a fool as he is, that he knew nothing about it. . . . there having been an intimation by E[dmund] R[andolph] that in so great a question he should choose to give a written opinion, & this being approved by the President I gave in mine April 28. H. gave in his. I believe Knox's was never thought worth offering or asking for.

James Madison to Thomas Jefferson, Philadelphia, 21 December 1794

Hamilton is to resign, according to his own notification the last of February. His object is not yet unfolded. Knox, as the shadow, follows the substance.

John Adams to Abigail Adams, Philadelphia, 30 December 1794

Now come great Things. Knox is to go out tomorrow. He insists on beginning the Year 1795 a freeman. He told me Yesterday, he had been 20 Years (next April) in service. that if he should die tomorrow his Wife & Children would not have enough to live on two Years—That he had not above ten Years to live—that he had the means at the Eastward of making Something and that it was his Duty to do it.

This Man is capable of flattering himself with hopes that to others appear Chimerical—He is capable of thinking himself popular enough in Massachusetts to be chosen Governor at the first Vacancy—But I suspect he cherishes another hope, that is of being Governor of Maine—These however are hints between you and me & to go no farther.

Oliver Wolcott, Jr., to Oliver Wolcott, Sr., Philadelphia, 6 January 1795

General Knox has been unfortunate in some respects, and has not acquired as much reputation as he deserves to have done.

John Adams to Abigail Adams, Philadelphia, 20 January 1795

What is to be the Fortune of General Knox, I know not. I am anxious about him and his Family. he has been raised to an Elevation, for which neither Nature, nor Education ever intended him. Fortune alone has been his Patron. His Family has been worse calculated for his situation than himself. He has been a laborious and I doubt not a faithful servant of the Public, and it would be melancholy to see him unfortunate in his old Age. I wish his Lands may prove a source of Abundance to him and his Family.

Abigail Adams to John Adams, New York, 22 June 1795

Boston Chronical goes on in its accustomed stile of abuse. G[eneral] Knox has got his share, Lord of Maine &c &c.

Timothy Pickering to Alexander Hamilton, Trenton, N.J., 21 August 1798

I know also that not only all your friends, but your political enemies have the highest respect for your abilities: while the latter, the political enemies also of General Knox, estimate his talents

Founders on the Founders

by a very moderate scale: and some persons have in my hearing called him a *weak* man. I think him neither *weak* nor *great*: but with pretty good abilities, possessing an imposing manner that impresses an idea of mental faculties beyond what really exist. I am certain that if he had been second to General Washington and of course likely to command in chief, great dissatisfaction would have been excited. I much doubt even whether the nomination would have been confirmed by the Senate.

I write this letter in the confidence of friendship, for the public good, which I conceive to be involved in your holding your present superior station. I have always supposed you & General Knox to be cordial friends. I wish you to continue such. I persuade myself he is too good a patriot to suffer the present disappointment to actuate him to any improper conduct; and that he will at least passively acquiesce. I think he will *gain* no honor, by declining to serve under you: I rather believe his refusal will detract from the reputation he now possesses.

Timothy Pickering to George Cabot, Trenton, N.J., 20 September 1798

I knew indeed that Knox was proud and vain and ambitious; but I thought that as for years he had been the daily witness of Hamilton's vast superiority of talents, and had known how highly they stood in the public estimation, and supposing also that he felt an ardent friendship for Hamilton, I was astonished to find him not hesitating, but apparently desirous not to serve under Hamilton. The President's tour to Massachusetts furnished Knox with the lucky opportunity of making and enforcing his claim by the plausibility of his arguments and his adulatory professions of respect, honor, and devotion to the great man. You probably know that Knox is capable of using the deepest flattery; and flattery has often too much effect on the finest minds, and in the present instance would make the stronger impression as operating against a competitor for whom the President had no liking, if he did not feel for him aversion.

George Washington to President John Adams, Mount Vernon, 25 September 1798

With respect to General Knox, I can say with truth, there is no man in the United States with whom I have been in habits of greater intimacy; no one whom I have loved more sincerely; nor any for whom I have had a greater friendship.

Oliver Wolcott, Jr., to Alexander Hamilton, Trenton, N.J., 10 October 1798

I sincerely hope that General Knox will decline service. His pecuniary affairs are I believe so embarrassed, that there is no prospect of his preserving his independence & I much fear, that the fortune of modern speculators, some loss of character, awaits him.

Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, Philadelphia, 3 January 1799

Genl. Knox has become bankrupt for \$400,000 & has resigned his military commission. He took in Genl. [Benjamin] Lincoln for \$150,000 which breaks him. Colo. [Henry] Jackson also sunk with him.

Mercy Otis Warren, History of the American Revolution, 1805

Mr. Knox had not the advantages of a literary education; but his natural inquisitive disposition and attention to books, rendered him a well-informed, agreeable man, with ingratiating accomplishments. His love of military parade, and the affability of his manners, brought him forward to the command of a cadet company in Boston, before the commencement of the American war. Naturally of a complacent disposition, his jovial humor and easy deportment rendered him acceptable in all companies, and made him a favorite with the commander in chief, even before his talents as a soldier were called into exercise. With an assemblage of pleasing qualities, it is not strange that he rose rapidly in the military line. He commanded the artillery department for several years before the conclusion of the war; and performed his duty in this line with courage and vigilance, which did honor to his military character.

John Adams to the Printers of the *Boston Patriot*, June 1812

[Alexander Hamilton allegedly said that] Knox had no Talents.

John Adams to Richard Rush, Quincy, Mass., 12 December 1813

You are reading the History of the Revolution, and you do well. But your Father would tell you, there is no History of it extant, and never will be. You have found two or three Genius's. Warren, Montgomery, Green or Arnold, perhaps. Knox, however, contributed, as much as any, to effectual service.

Thomas Jefferson to Martin Van Buren, Monticello, 29 June 1824

General Knox, a man of parade. . . .

Lucy Knox

Abigail Adams Smith to Abigail Adams, New York, 15 June 1788

Mrs. Knox is much altered from the character she used to have. She is neat in her dress, attentive to her family, and very fond of her children. But her size is enormous; I am frightened when I look at her; I verily believe that her waist is as large as three of yours, at least.

Tadeusz Kosciuszko

George Washington to Henry Laurens, White Marsh, Pa., 10 November 1777

While I am on this Subject [i.e., engineers], I would take the liberty to mention, that I have been well informed, that the Engineer in the Northern Army (Cosieski) I think his name is) is a Gentleman of science & merit. From the character I have had of him, he is deserving of notice.

Benjamin Rush to Horatio Gates, Philadelphia, 25 August 1797

Our old Revolutionary friend General Kusiasco is now in our city. I relieve myself from the toils of the day by passing an hour with him every evening. His conversation is a repast of noble republican sentiments. There has been such a defection from the principles of the year 1776 in our country that I fear he will not be as happy among us as he expected. He speaks of some of the customs introduced by the late administration of our government with surprise and horror.

Benjamin Rush to Horatio Gates, Philadelphia, 3 September 1797

Our illustrious friend Kusiasco left this city a few days ago and is now pleasantly and hospitably accommodated at General White's at Brunswick. His wounds are all healed. One of them on his hip has left his thigh and leg in a paralytic state. Time has done a little towards restoring it. I do not despair of his being yet able to walk. He will always limp, but what then? To use an ancient play upon words, "Every step he takes will remind him of his patriotism and bravery."

Thomas Jefferson to Horatio Gates, Philadelphia, 21 February 1798

He is as pure a son of liberty as I have ever known, and of that liberty which is to go to all, and not to the few or the rich alone.

Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz: *Travels through America*, 20 August 1798

[John] Armstrong, friend of Kosciuszko during the war, described him thus: Shortly after entering the service he became a lieutenant colonel, then a colonel; at his discharge he was a *Brigade General*. He served actively the whole time in the corps of engineers, courageously and patiently undergoing all sweat and toil. He did not like Fayette—the cause, jealousy. Greene, the greatest flatterer of his officers, he adored. Attached to the commanding officers Gates and Greene, he never had his own command, except towards the end of the war when he was given a battalion of light infantry.

William Thornton to Thomas Jefferson, Washington, 20 July 1816

The Portraits of yourself of Mr. & Mrs. Madison [by Bass Otis], I beheld them with amazement.—I did not admire them, but I admired at them. Never was such injustice done to you, except by Sign Painters, and Genl. Kosciusko; than which last nothing can be so bad, and when I saw it, I did not wonder that he lost Poland—not that it is necessary a Genl. Should be a Painter, but he should be a man of such Sense as to discover that he is not a Painter.

Thomas Jefferson to M. Julien, Monticello, 23 July 1818

General Kosciusko, the brave auxiliary of my country in its struggle for liberty, and from the year 1797, when our particular acquaintance began, my most intimate and much beloved friend. On his last departure from the United States in 1798, he left in my hands an instrument appropriating after his death all the property he had in our public funds, the price of his military service here, to the education and emancipation of as many of the children of bandage in this country as it should be adequate to.

Henry Kuhl

Alexander Hamilton to Thomas Willing, Albany, N.Y., 5 April 1795

Mr. Henry Kuhl, Principal Clerk in the Comptroller's office has informed me that he is a candidate for the place of Assistant Cashier to the Bank of the United States and has requested a testimonial of my opinion of his qualifications.

I without scruple give it and in the strongest manner; I cannot imagine a man better qualified for such a place than he is. A thorough knowledge of accounts—a very clear *business head*—remarkable steadiness, attention, diligence and *accuracy* mark him out as a man peculiarly fitted for such an employment. And my opinion of his integrity and trust-worthiness is equal to that of his capacity. Indeed I do not scruple to say that I am persuaded he will be found a valuable acquisition to the institution. It is not often that such a man will present himself.