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*PAPERS OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DELAWARE.*

XXXI.

LETTERS

OF

JAMES ASHETON BAYARD

1802—1814.

*Read before the Historical Society of Delaware, by Henry C. Conrad,  
Librarian, March 18, 1901.*

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DELAWARE,  
WILMINGTON.  
1901.

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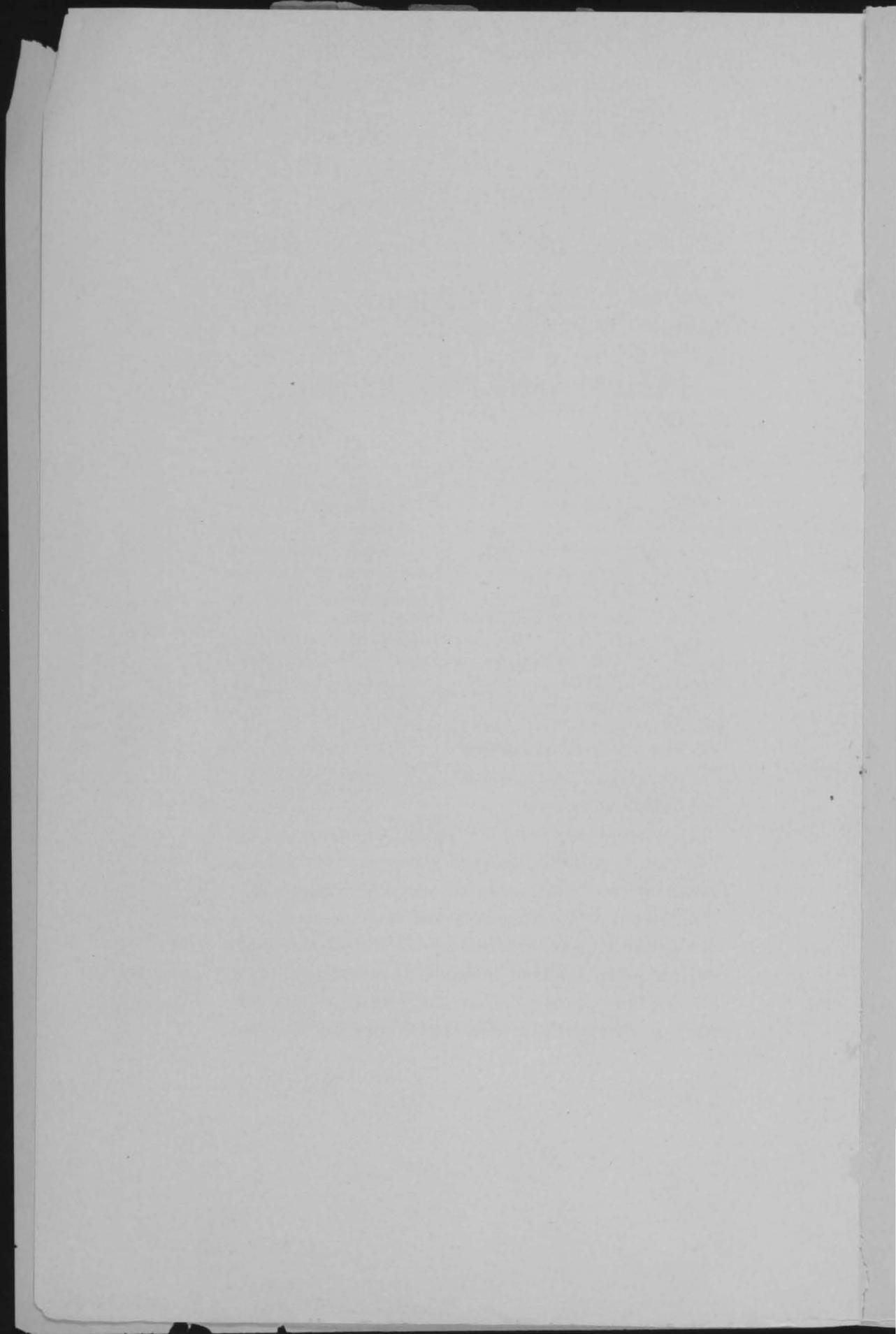
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JAMES ASHETON BAYARD.



LETTERS  
OF  
JAMES ASHETON BAYARD.

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NOTE.—The letters from James A. Bayard to his friend Cæsar Augustus Rodney, printed herewith, were written during Bayard's service in the House of Representatives, during his retirement in 1803-1805, his service in the Senate in 1805-13, and on his diplomatic mission abroad, first, to take advantage of the offer from Russia as mediator between the United States and Great Britain, and second, as a peace commissioner at Ghent. He died soon after his return to this country. Rodney was in the House of Representatives in 1803-05, and Attorney-General in 1805-11, practicing law after his resignation from the latter office. During the war with Great Britain he raised and commanded a rifle corps. These letters are printed from Bayard's letter-book, which was presented to the New York Public Library by Mr. Philip Schuyler.—*Librarian New York Public Library.*

WASHINGTON 31 Mar 1802

MY DEAR SIR

I was surprised to find by your last letter that you had given up the project of going to Sussex, tho' you certainly assign very substantial reasons for varying your intentions. It will not be in my power to attend the Supreme court in N-Castle, but I hope my absence will not interfere with the interests of my Brethren of the Bar or occasion any material delay in business. I never was more desirous of quitting any place than I am of leaving Washington & nothing

detains me here but a sense of the impropriety of leaving the State without representation on the floor of the House. I know not what business is yet designed to be done, but I know if we go thro' all upon our table we shall have no adjournment before the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March next. We proceed intolerably slow, and I believe there is a majority of the House who without doing anything find themselves in very lucrative employment. I envy you your liberty, and am consoled only by the hope of partaking of it before long.

Your's

J. A. B—

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WASHINGTON 13 Apr. 1802.

MY DEAR R.

I am glad to find you are so well occupied and so much amused with your late purchase upon the hill. I can hardly expect it will be a fund of profit, but I heartily hope it may be a source of health to you. Your adulterated water will prove extremely inviting on a warm summer's afternoon & your friends will have reason to wish that the adulterating material may be as unfailing as your spring.

I cannot express too strongly my desire to leave this place. Washington is tolerable for a few days, but detestable for a winter's residence. A joint committee of the two Houses have agreed this morning upon the business to be done this session and have fixed upon the 26<sup>th</sup> Inst. as the day of adjournment. I am in some hopes of being at the Kent Common-Pleas, but I shall not be re-

leased in times for Sussex. It would have been extremely agreeable to me to have gone the whole cruise with you, I hope it may turn out lucky & profitable. I thank you for the good news and good services on the subject of the wine. If we divide it in the first instance we shall certainly subdivide it between us afterwards.

Your's &c

J. A. B—

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WILMINGTON Nov 11<sup>th</sup> 1803.

DEAR SIR

We have just finished the circuit of the Supreme Court & to-day I set out upon that of the pleas. The Brandywine causes are all off, the first against Mr Dickinson was tried, and the close of the 2<sup>nd</sup> day ended it in a non.pros: at Bar. Without a shadow of title it was seriously protracted to the length mentioned, by Bedford, Vandyke, & Hall. When we moved for a nonsuit upon their closing, Bedford went out of Court, Vandyke only said we ought to demur, and perhaps there was not a man in the U. S. bearing the name of lawyer but Hall who would have been stupid and impudent enough to deny that an Estate in general tail descended from a Parent to a Child in preference to a 2<sup>nd</sup> cousin. It was true they had Mr. Marten's opinion, but it was by stating a false pedigree which precisely gave them our title. You have not been in the great city long enough to tell whether you can endure a 6 months residence. The honey-moon has hardly expired. I am told you are to

adjourn the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Mar: this will be fortunate as you will be pretty well prepared by that time for the pleasures of home.

Your's

J. A. B.

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WILMINGTON Dec 10<sup>th</sup> 1803.

MY DEAR SIR

Tis now one week since upon my return from Dover I received your last favor. I find the air of Washington extremely favorable to metaphors, there was scarcely a line of plain prose in your last letter. The climate here does not enable me to answer you in the same practical stile. But perhaps there is not so much in atmosphere as in occupation. I have been employed in the homely drudgery of making money, and you in the refined and elegant pursuit of attaining honour and reputation. I perceive plainly by the papers that you have not failed (as I knew you could not) in acquiring your object, and I have been as little disappointed as to mine. We are strange beings my friend, we contend for objects without knowing their value or insignificancy. The course of things forced us into a competition in which the successful Party was to be the loser. Tho' I do not like your politics, yet I should be much gratified that by some extraordinary event your interest was really promoted. I fear that the Virginia pride will never truly appreciate a Delaware Character. If they will do anything for you I will forgive your folly for going into public life. I know not that you would have expressed to

me the same wholesome admonition. But I fear you are disposed to do much more for certain men, than you will find them disposed to do for you. Believe me in the present times, (our Country is not in danger) it is better to be doing for ourselves, such is the object of all about you, tho' I am sure it does not present itself to you. In spite of your politicks I can't help liking you, and I am therefore but half gratified by the passing occurrences, as you are not here to partake, of them. You are not perfect, but you have so many pleasant qualities that I shall be quite glad when you return to our society.

Your's

J. A. B—

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WILMINGTON Feby 24 1804.

DEAR SIR,

I derived much satisfaction from your last letter. I gave full credit to the assurances you were so kind as to give me of the continued friendship you have always borne me And I shall have great pleasure in cherishing that confidence in your honour and sincerity which first attached me to you. Political opinion need not have an influence on personal sentiment. That we are of different political Parties, and so likely to remain is very certain, but I do not know in what the difference exists as to our opinions upon the material principles of politicks, I believe you are a little more *peopleick* than myself, but that will wear off after carrying your share of the government for awhile.

I think you are likely to have a complete surfeit of Washington this Session. Four months almost killed me, and how will you contrive to survive 6 or 7 I do not know. There is little prospect of your being liberated before the month of May, & I suspect you will have to clip the session if you are present at the pleas in Kent. It appears from the papers that the harmony of social intercourse has been a little disturbed in your mess. Let us know something of the details, the public prints are so much in the habit, of giving their own colours to transactions, that I seldom trust them as to facts of a Party or Personal nature. Has the thing ended or how is it likely to terminate. If you were here at present we should be able to feast you. A most plentiful cargo of terrapins arrived the other day the largest & finest I ever saw. I got two dozen to my share, but as their weight is a little above the frank priveledge it is not in my power to send you one by mail.

Your's

J. A. B.

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WILMINGTON 24 July 1807.

DEAR SIR

I had the pleasure to receive yesterday your favor of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Inst. It was a long time coming & I had begun to reproach you with forgetting or neglecting the promise you made me before we parted to inform me of things of consequence passing at the Seat of Government. I do view with you the present crisis of public affairs as very impor-

tant. Without substantial reparation for the crying offence committed against our honour rights and independence whatever the sacrifice, we must go to war. The nation will not be & I trust the administration will not be satisfied with empty apologies or with the mockery of a trial which ends in a promotion or ends with anything short of the signal punishment of the offender. I regretted being absent from Wilmington on the occasion of the public meeting, which deprived me of an opportunity of joining in the expression of that just sentiment of indignation which the atrocious act of the British Commander seems to have inspired in the breasts of all our Countrymen. To be an American and not to feel upon the occasion would be impossible.

Your's.

J. A. B—

WASHINGTON Jan. y 11<sup>th</sup>. 1811.

DEAR SIR

I should have made a pretty business of it if I had connected my movement to Congress with yours to the Cabinet. Looking at the weather and roads I have little expectation of seeing you here during the month of Jan<sup>y</sup>. We have news here to day that Baton Rouge and the fort of Mobile have been surrendered to our troops. The Bank bill is before the House of R. and it is supposed will not pass that body—intelligence from Europe is renewed & contradicted every day, one knows not when to believe.

Your's

J. A. B.

WASHINGTON 10 Dec. 1811.

MY DEAR R.

The conjectures you made as to a successor have been verified today by the nomination of Pinckney. There could have been no difficulty in the selection for no time has been lost in making it. We have still a chance for two representatives. A Committee of Conference of each house met on the subject of the apportionment and separated without coming to an agreement. As Chairman of the Comm<sup>ee</sup> of the Senate I reported accordingly with a recommendation of the Com<sup>ee</sup> to adhere to the ratio of 35,000. We shall take the question in the senate to-morrow on the report, which I have no doubt will be agreed to, and if the House do not recede the bill will be lost. I am still alone at Davis' and find solitude more agreeable than I expected.

Yours &amp;c

J. A. B —

WASHINGTON Dec 18<sup>th</sup> 1811.

DEAR SIR, —————

The House have this moment voted to recede from their disagreement to the amendments of the Senate to the apportionment Bill. The vote of course establishes the ratio of 35,000, and gives for the first time to our little state two members.

Your's

J. A. B.

WASHINGTON, Dec 22<sup>nd</sup> 1811

MY DEAR SIR.

I am going to narrate to you an occurrence of the day which will surprise you. It is nevertheless true, and shall be narrated with exact fidelity. Your friend Paul Hamilton called to make me a visit and after other indifferent conversation I remarked to him that I had had a letter from our friend Rodney since I had seen him last, and that upon the fullest consideration since he had returned home he was wholly satisfied with the step he had taken, and what was that he asked with surprise. I refer said I to his resignation of the office of Atty: General. What he exclaimed with great surprise has he resigned? I understood from him I replied that he had communicated to you his intention before he left Washington. What has he left Washington? I never heard a word about the affair or otherwise it has entirely escaped my recollection. It is nearly three weeks Sir since he left us, and have you not known of Mr Pinckney's being appointed to his place? Not a word of it. It has been in the newspapers for a considerable time; I have never seen it; I never knew a word about it. I am really very sorry—Rodney was a very amiable man and I had a great regard for him. How do you account for this that one member of the Cabinet, should not know so long after that another was absent or had resigned? To me it is passing strange. We are going on here in a strange temper,—all talking about war which no one seems to expect. The Senate has passed a Bill for an additional regular force of 25,000 men. We expect the

house will send it back to us with a reduction & I very much doubt whether they will agree in the end to anything which is efficient. We have here Governier Morris and Dewitt Clinton. Their ostensible object is a canal from the lakes to the Hudson, which is to cost seven millions of dollars. A fine time for such an expenditure when we have not money eno' in the Treasury to pay the bounties to the troops we propose to raise. The characters of the two men are pretty well known, and it is rather supposed that they mean to open a road to the presidency than a Canal from the lakes. Tho' a young republic we are already old in intrigue. And the goodnatured people are transferred from one man to another with all the zeal which belongs to a work of their own doing. Being only a Looker-on I amuse myself with the scene as it passes by. You see we have got two representatives. In this I have had some hand, and I did not hesitate upon such a subject to make engagements which had a view singly to the Interest of our own State. The result however I believe a just one as it regards the States generally. Let me know how you passed the Court, what business was done and what became of the causes in which I [was] concerned.

Yours'

J. A. B.—

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SENATE CHAMBER 6 July 1812

DEAR SIR,

I had the pleasure to receive yesterday your favour of the 1<sup>st</sup> inst and can readily conceive that the comfort &

happiness you experience in private leave you nothing to regret in having renounced the parade and distinction of public life. I should like much to be with you and am sure I should gain a great deal by making the same exchange you have done. I was concerned to hear of the accident which befel you, but as it rendered you more studious, & its only permanent effect will be to increase your stock of knowledge, your friends will find a consolation for the pain you have suffered. The army of 25,000 is still before the House, but the number will remain tho' varied in composition from the nature of the force proposed by the Senate. The navy will be augmented, but whether any or what use will be made of these new forces is too difficult at this moment to foresee, to allow me to express any opinion on the subject. Bauduy I understand is not disposed to render my offer of the house in Town of any service to you. The French are always polite but seldom accommodating. Pray let me know when Witherspoon is to be tried? If it be not before the Supreme Court, I shall probably come in for a share of the prey.

Your's

J. A. B. —

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WASHINGTON Jan<sup>y</sup>. 26<sup>th</sup> 1812.

MY DEAR. R.

Affairs go on here with their usual snail pace as J. A. would say. A great many Gentlemen express themselves

anxious for war, but they don't know how to get at it. They find it almost as difficult to get men and money as to get the Orders in Council taken off. Gallitin's budget has made many wry faces. They expected he would raise all the money which was wanted without any new taxes. Bradley says he has no objection to go to war, but he does not mean that it shall cost anything. That he does not intend to vote any more money than just what is in the Treasury. He is against taxes, or loans, and he wished to God it was a part of the constitution that the Government should neither tax nor borrow, for the purpose of making war! It looks very much as if we should be brought up by the war-taxes. There was no sensation while the question was about raising men, but the taxes are the rub with your popularity-men. I postpone all opinion now as to what is likely to happen, till I see how the ways and means are treated.—I have seen nothing done yet which has not pointed to popularity, when I see the needle vary, I may indulge myself in new speculations. I have some anxiety to know if you have wasted your money, and what progress you have made in the way of retrenchment. These enquiries could not be made if I cared nothing about you; But I know you are too much disposed to let tomorrow provide for itself and the motive must therefore excuse the enquiries. It is impossible for you to be too prudent the ensuing year. It will be one of experiment you will afterwards be able to calculate.

Your's

J. A. B

WASHINGTON 16<sup>th</sup> Feby. 1812.

MY DEAR R.

Your letter of the 6<sup>th</sup> I had the pleasure to receive two days ago. Maugre my solitude I have upon the whole spent the winter more pleasantly than any former one in Washington, when entirely separated from my family. And for my location I am certainly indebted to you. Very little has been done in Congress for several days past. It is not intended to take any decisive step before the arrival of the Hornet. But it is difficult to divine what is expected by the Hornet. Barlow may have a treaty with France, but no change can be looked for in our relations with England. We are informed that the Com<sup>ee</sup> of Ways & Means will report to-morrow, and in substance will adopt Mr Gallitin's report with some modifications and *additions*. I understand however that the taxes are not to be imposed till war is finally determined on. Your successor Mr Pinckney has greatly disappointed public expectations as to his oratorical powers. The first cause he was concerned in he refused to argue because the Court would not adjourn at 2 o'clock and allow him till next morning to prepare himself. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> cause he left the Court about the same hour when it came to his turn to speak, apologizing that he had been summoned as a Cabinet Minister, The following morning we heard him. His manner is extremely violent and ranting & better suited to any purpose of public speaking than a law argument. Disappointment was universal. Our friend Horsey is certainly about to suffer a great metamorphosis. What kind of a being

the change will make of him the Lord only knows. He has his own manner of courting. Tho' he might more conveniently lodge in Georgetown he prefers making love three miles off and takes great care that too frequent visits shall not render the Lady too familiar with. One thing is fixed tho' the time is not known when the old Bachelor is to be merged. It can't well happen in Lent as the Lady is a Catholic, and not allowed to *taste flesh* during the quadragesimal fast. They still keep up a buz about adjourning, but I don't know what they mean by it. At all events I expect to be with you in April.

God bless you.

J. A. B—

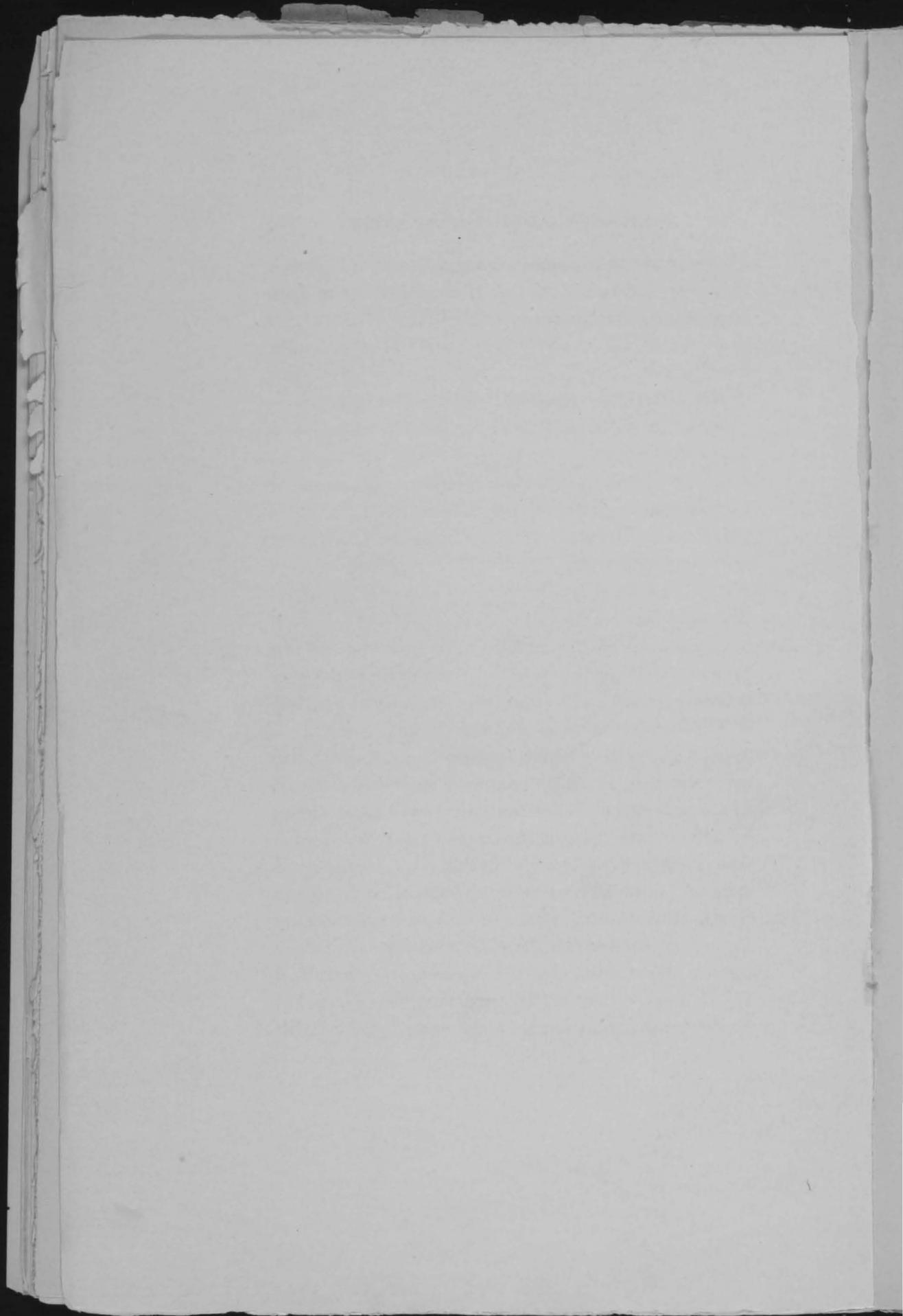
WASHINGTON 27 Feby. 1812

MY DEAR R.

We have at length got the Constitution but she brings us nothing of any consequence. She left Cherbourg the 4<sup>th</sup> of Jany. at which time the Hornet had landed a Messenger in France, & sailed for England she is to return to France, and to take in a full cargo of dispatches for the U. States. The House of R. yesterday had the report of the Com<sup>ee</sup> of Ways & Means before them and in a Com<sup>ee</sup> of the whole adopted the whole string of taxes recommended by the Secretary. The Majority upon the excise was the smallest and on the land tax the greatest. I think there will be some flinching and skulking when they come to the yeas & nays. It does not appear to me that



CÆSAR A. RODNEY.



Congress have more respect for the people's money now than they had in the time of John Adams. You know what may be the consequence.

Your's

J. A. B. —

N. B. Secretary Hamilton told me the other day to remind you of the terrapins. If you don't send them I am sure I shall not see the inside of the Secretary's house, and if you do, I don't know that I shall—unless you put an invitation in the mouth of one of them.

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SENATE CHAMBER. 6 Mar 1812

MY DEAR R.

I have just received your letter of the 29<sup>th</sup> Feby but post-marked the 4<sup>th</sup> March, your dates and those of the Postmaster have generally disagreed. Your time I presume passes very pleasantly as you seem to take no note of it, not so here. I have counted the days too regularly not to know the exact day of the month. The Terrapins may be on the road or possibly arrived, but I have heard nothing of them. If they were mailed on the 1<sup>st</sup> inst they certainly ought to be in Washington by this time. I fear our Secretaries are so much engaged in war affairs, as to have no time to think of eating even *terrapins*. We have been employed several days upon the nominations for the new army. They have all been sent in except from New-York & Delaware. There is a rumour afloat that war will be declared within two weeks. It is not discredited nor be-

lieved. I cannot discover the source of it. It would not surprise me if the effort were made, but it is not likely that it will be attempted before the arrival of the Hornet. That may be however within two weeks

Your's

J. A. B. —

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WASHINGTON 9 Mar. 1812

MY DEAR .R.

The Pearl river bill has passed both houses & your father's estate is two thousand dollars the better of it. I have great pleasure in congratulating you on the prosperous events and therefore I give you joy of the windfall. The Terrapins have arrived, and the good Secretary has been so civil as to send me 4 of them. They are really stout fellows and may rank with the grenadiers of their species. Mr Secraty [*sic*] also hints that when his appetite gets the better of a small fever which has laid hold of him, he will be glad to receive from me a lesson in the sublime art of cooking these strange animals who can fatten in air or water and live without either. I was out shooting on Saturday with Mr Attorney your successor. We found but 3 or 4 snipe and I killed only one, and as he did not kill as many, you may think what was his luck. The taxes caused at one time some wry faces, but they have all gone down pretty smoothly. The resolutions have been sent to a select comēe to prepare Bills. No war, no taxes, not a bad combination. How results the specific gravity? will the war float the taxes, or the taxes sink the war? We are

waiting here with great impatience for a little insect called a Hornet. It is supposed it will arrive winged with peace or war. Of whatever magnitude impending events may be, people here seem to think very little about them. Winder of Baltimore has agreed to accept the rank of Colonel in the new army. He has a large family and is in good business, he pays very dear I think for a pair of epaulettes.

Your's

J. A. B.

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WASHINGTON Mar 16, 1812.

MY DEAR R.

I never was more surprised & shocked than at the account given in your last letter of the abominable & dastardly attack made upon you by Bradun. I had at the same time however a sentiment of pity for the man, because I am persuaded he had lost his senses at the moment he committed the violence. I always found him very decent and well behaved in his conduct, and must suppose that the transport of feeling at what he considered a cruel decision blindly hurried him to an act of which he must soon have repented. You have received I presume & hope no permanent injury & the affair must be considered as one of those unpleasant occurrences to which life is exposed, & which are disposed of the best when the least thought of. We will leave so ungrateful a subject to think of one that will revive recollections of a more gay and pleasant nature. While fortune treated you so hardly at New-Castle, think with how much beneficence she is treat-

ing our Friend Horsey at Washington. He has drunk the poison of her eyes—Behold him tasting the nectar of her lips, enjoying the thrilling sensations of an embrace,—transported with the extacies of hope & desire and then say if there be not moments of pleasure in the world, which console us for the evils to which we are subject. Horsey is now completely—The Lady has engaged her hand, having given her heart, the father has approved and he only waits for the fine days of *May* to consummate his happiness. He has removed to Georgetown, and the war may commence and the battle rage loud & long before he will know anything about them. This same war is much talked of here but nobody seems to know when it is to take place. Clay & Cheves spent part of last evening with me & they both assured me that war was inevitable & would be declared in a short time. Clay is certainly in confidence, & I believe both are & they spoke in entire sincerity. You will know how to appreciate the information. The Supreme Court adjourned on Saturday having done much business, & left much undone. Johnston called last evening to take leave, and spoke of you with friendship. Our friend Hamilton I told you sent me four of the terrapins you sent to him & promised me a supper on those he retained. But I have had no farther notice on the subject and I presume the terrapins have expiated all the crimes they ever committed on the chaffing-dish before this time. You have seen the President's Message with Henry's documents. Were they worth think you 50,000 dollars? That sum was certainly paid for

them & Henry is off with the money. The Comee refused to send for him & the Executive has officially assured us they have no names. If there were traitors they ought to have been known. The public should have been informed that its indignation might have marked the guilty. I will not complain of the times, for I know not that we are likely to have better; but with regard to men, I do not believe the Court at Washington is much behind any Court in Europe in intrigue & duplicity. In speaking thus of *your friends*, you perceive what a proof of confidence I give you. Adieu, and let me assure you you will want little when you possess all the good things I wish you.

Your's

J. A. B.

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WASHINGTON March 22. 1812

MY DEAR SIR.

I thank you for your letter of the 15<sup>th</sup> inst. The plot does not take as was expected, even Wright says that it was a wicked thing to attempt to divide the people at the moment when every means of conciliation ought to have been employed. The payment of the 50,000 dollars is a fact of indubitable verity and is not denied by any friend of the Administration. It was paid on the 11<sup>th</sup> of Feby & the President knowing that fact, sends a letter of Henry dated the 20<sup>th</sup> of Feby. at Philada<sup>a</sup> importing to be a voluntary offer of the communication. It was known that the date was false & the offer not gratuitous. Is not this a

fearful prostitution of the first office in our country. A party never ought nor can be benefitted by such a transaction. I hope to be with you at the Supreme Court, but I dread the Hornet. I cannot be absent when the matter of war is to be decided on. But that in any event is not expected in a month.

Yours'

J. A. B.

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WASHINGTON 6 May 1812

MY DEAR SIR.

I cannot tell you when or where the war is to begin, but I continue to think that it will have a beginning and that before long. It is not unlikely that it will be made before it is declared. We have four frigates out, and I understand with such orders, that if they meet with any British ships of war on the coast an engagement is highly probable. When the President has made the war I presume Congress will not be too modest to declare it, It is with great difficulty we can get or preserve a quorum in the Senate. On Monday no business was done for want of one, & we have not had since more than 2 or three beyond the majority.

Yours.

J. A. B.

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SENATE CHAMBER 11 June 1812

MR DEAR R.

I received your letter of the 9<sup>th</sup> yesterday. You are very kind in saving the woodcock till my return. You

generally have mercy upon them, but it is a great concession not even to disturb them till we can enjoy the amusement in common of beating up their quarters. Especially let no — — — — of any species violate the sanctity of their retreat in the neighbourhood of the Spring; that is a spot of our exclusive sport and upon the occasion of one of our old delightful Parties at Cool Spring will be the ground we will appropriate to ourselves, while we send the boys back into the woods to search for more distant & uncertain game. I have never met with anything at Washington half so agreeable as one of our Parties at Cool Spring. You want me (not that you have asked it) to tell you something about our proceeding in Congress. This I should be very happy to do, but the vile padlock which they have hung to my lips prevents me from opening them. But you have more than common means of guessing & cannot therefore be much in the dark as to the work we are employed in. The fable of the mountain I fear will not apply. If the birth should be equally harmless, I should be satisfied that it should be equally ridiculous. If you have kept as good a lookout with your spy-glass as you promised to do, I think you must have discovered something ahead. At this moment she is behind a point, but if the wind holds & she is able to weather it, you will probably throw down your glass & call all hands to quarters. You have thought the thing all along a jest, & I have no doubt in the commencement it was so, but jests sometimes become serious and end in earnest. The denouement must be unfolded in a few days,

but the features of the result will I fear be better discovered in the fable of Cadmus, than that of the mountain. You have had a flourishing time of it at Wilmington while we have been drooping here, you have actually lived in clover during the spring while we have been starving.

Your's

J. A. B. — — — —

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WASHINGTON June 20<sup>th</sup> 1812

MY DEAR R.

You are now in possession of all our secrets & you find I have been the better prophet of the two. I wish your inspiration had prevailed, and I assure you that I would rather have forfeited all pretensions to prophecy than to have had my predictions fulfilled. However as we are now at war we must defend ourselves; & I think you ought to bestir yourself in organizing a military force. I am in hopes we shall adjourn in 10 or 12 days, at all events I think I shall return by that time, & see how the war comes on in Delaware. I am very sensibly obliged by your appropriation of the woodcock at Cool Spring to our common sport & equally sensible of the obliging manner in which you set aside the Taunton till my return. We will toss it off to the success of Decatur Bainbridge & our other brave naval commanders who I fear will have very unequal battles to fight. I do not believe all our secrets are over. I have heard that the President means to ask for authority

to take military possession of East Florida. If such should be the case no doubt our doors will be again shut.

Yours'

J A B.

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WASHINGTON 17 Jan. 7 1813.

MY DEAR R.

I had the pleasure to receive your letter a day or two ago to receive yours of the 9<sup>th</sup> inst. It was written as you rightly calculated the day we arrived at Washington. We are now quartered comfortably at the six buildings. The Bill raising an additional army of 20,000 men for 1 year has passed the house & been twice read in the Senate & committed. The ways & means are to be derived from loans. The Secretary proposes borrowing 20,000,000 not at 6 per cent you may be assured but at any per cent necessary to produce the money. No taxes are to be laid this winter—the Virginia & N. Carolina elections are still to come. A majority for the 2 ensuing years is no small matter. They pretend to have adopted this principle the war is to be carried on by loans & provision made only for the interest on them. While therefore the ordinary revenue is sufficient to meet the ordinary expences of the government & the interest on the debt which may exist no taxes are to be laid. The double duties on the importations will be equal to the object the present year. I saw a few evenings ago Col. Winder & Capt. Gibson, their account of the operations on the frontier beggars all description. Gib-

son states that the number of men which crossed at Queens-town was sufficient to have beaten any force the British could have brought against them. But to [*sic*] thirds of them skulked & altho' 900 were taken not more than 300 hundred could be brought into the field. The regular troops behaved no better than the militia, for in fact they had no more experience or discipline. And yet we are going to raise an army of 20,000 men for one year in order to add to our defeats and disgrace, & to the triumphs of the enemy. Jones passed the Senate as Secretary of the Navy without a division, but Armstrong rubbed thro' as Secretary at War with 18 to 15, & if S. Smith & Leib had voted as they took pains to make others vote he would have been rejected. It is the common opinion that he will soon set the Cabinet by the ears.

Yours'

J. A. B.

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WASHINGTON 31 Jan<sup>y</sup>. 1813.

MY DEAR R.

I received yesterday your favor of the 24<sup>th</sup>. You will not expect in me a very punctual correspondent this winter, as the attentions belonging to a wife, in accompanying her to Parties consume no inconsiderable part of one's time. I saw a few evenings ago your quondam friend the late Secretary of the Navy. He forgot that I was an acquaintance of yours as he did not enquire after you. He has lost all character for the tameness with which he has crouched to

Madison since he has been turned out of office. The statements he made to several of his friends as to the harsh conduct of the President towards him, he has endeavoured to explain away in a publication in the *Intelligencer*. And so kindly has Mrs. H. met the humiliation of her husband that she has sent a present of a glass ship which belonged to the navy office to Mrs. M. since the gentleman has been dismissed from his office. But it is understood that if Mr. H. is not fit to be secretary of the navy a birth may be found which will suit him. It is therefore important that he should keep himself in some favor. It is said that he is to be Commissary of Prisoners at N. York. So that all men are not so quite proud & high-spirited as yourself. A State paper made its appearance yesterday, which has excited considerable sensation. It is a manifesto of the Com<sup>ee</sup>. of Foreign relations which bring the war to the single point of controversy respecting impressment & proposes a law which is to remove the ground even of that. So that your prophecies as to the result of a winters intrigue may yet be verified.

Yours'

J. A. B.

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SENATE CHAMBER 13 Feb.y. 1813

MY DEAR R.

I have heard nothing lately said about the repeal of the non-importation act & I think it will not take place during the present session. A summer session is in contemplation to commence about the 1<sup>st</sup> of June. This I had from the

President who said it would be recommended by the Comtee of ways & means in the other house. This extraordinary session proposed it is said is designed to be employed only in digesting & imposing a system of internal taxation. The Virginia election will then be over, and the N. Carolina & Tennessee elections pretty well secured. I saw a letter from General Harrison yesterday which softens in some degree the aspect of the picture first given of Winchester's defeat. His conjectures limit the loss to about 340 men. Few however escaped—600 must have been taken. This battle like that of Queenstown furnishes evidence of American courage exposing itself to extreme danger, & disaster, thro' the want of a proper head to control and direct it. I feel great pleasure in looking forward to the speedy termination of the session. In spite of all the routs & parties with which Washington abounds, I cannot like the place, and always rejoice when I find myself on the road to Wilmington. I hope to be shooting snipe with you before long.

Adieu

Yours' J. A. B.

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WASHINGTON, 21 Feby. 1813.

MY DEAR, R.

I received yesterday your letter of the 18<sup>th</sup> covering the handbill containing the account of the splendid victory of the Constitution over the Java. I rejoice most heartily in the event, and the more on account of the brave Commander, of the Constitution who heretofore has been the

sport of so much perverse accident. You remember our forebodings when we heard of Bainbridge's sailing, which I am very happy to find have not been realized. Horsey left us to-day & is on the road to Wilmington, Ridgely has been gone these ten days past & the State now rests upon my shoulders. I shall try & support it till the end of the session. Treasury notes are likely to become very plenty, a law will be passed to-morrow authorizing the secretary of the Treasury to issue ten millions Dollars in addition to the five already issued. They will soon be as abundant as old paper money-bills. The expences of the Western Campaign are enormous. Flour at the Rapids has cost the Government 60 dollars a barrel. The Sec:y will find great difficulty in getting money this summer, but as he must have it I suppose he will pay a handsome price. If you can trust you may have reserved your money for a good market. Horsey's wife was in bad sailing trim and if she had remained here much longer, would have required heaving-down before she could have commenced her voyage.

Your's

J. A. B.

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COPENHAGEN 27 June 1813.

MY DEAR R

We have stopt at this place which is directly in our route in order to obtain information as to what has lately passed & what exists on the continent & may concern us. Military details you will have received before this reaches

you, and the most important fact which relates to ourselves is that the Emperor of Russia is with his army & that G. B. has no minister at present at St. Petersberg We intend to proceed to that city to-morrow where we expect to arrive in 10 or 12 days. The first part of our voyage was boisterous rough & cold and consequently very uncomfortable. Mr Tod & myself were the only part of our Company who were not seasick. Mr Gallitin suffered a good deal & was not entirely well before we entered the narrow seas. Tho the British represent the ocean as covered with their vessels of war, upon the whole passage we spoke nothing but a Yankey Letter of Marque, till we entered the North-sea. We had a strong wind in crossing the N Sea & passed it in little more than 24 hours. We found it very rough. We stopt one day at Gottenburg which is situated among frightful rocks but enjoys a fine harbour, and subsists by commerce. It is much affected by the interruption of trade with America. We were obliged to come to at Elsineur on account of the sound duties, & availed ourselves of the occasion, not only to look at the town, but also to visit the castle & the celebrated garden of Hamlet It is impossible to describe to you at this time these places or the impression they made upon me. But you may well conclude that I was highly gratified. I abstain from any remarks of a political nature as it is scarcely possible that this letter can reach you without being opened & in such case you would be little benefitted by the attempt to communicate political information. It is impossible to offer any kind of conjecture as to the time of our return. If the Russian mediation

should not be accepted, it will be speedily, otherwise we may be detained God knows how long. Whatever I find of novelty abroad to gratify me for a moment it cannot quench my desire to be at home. I do assure you I shall hail the moment with great joy when the good ship the Neptune turns her head towards the shores of America.

Yours,

J. A. B.

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ST. PETERSBERG 30 August 1813-

MY DEAR R.

The present is the first opportunity which has presented itself of writing to the U States since our arrival here. The American trade is at an end, and even foreign vessels are deterred from attempting the American by the blockade established by the British fleet. We arrived here on the 21<sup>st</sup> July & a few days afterwards were presented to the Count Romanzoff Chancellor of the Empire, but we found to our great grief, that the Emperor was in Silesia 1200 miles from his capital. We cannot be received at Court till his Majesty's orders are received on the subject. A copy of our letters of credence was sent to the Imperial Head-quarters, immediately after it was delivered. But no answer has yet been received in return. This is a matter of no political importance because, as G. Britain has appointed no one to meet & treat with us, our having been presented at Court would have varied our situation very little. The mediation of the Emperor has not been accepted, nor yet formally refused by the B. Cabinet. How

long the course of events may induce us to remain, can only be at present an affair of conjecture, but I am certain that neither Mr G. or myself are disposed to protract a fruitless residence abroad. I have been to visit most of the palaces & churches so celebrated in the tales of Travellers. The Winter Palace & the Hermitage which communicate with each other are the most splendid & magnificent. We were conducted thro' a suite of rooms which appeared endless. The walls are covered with paintings of the most celebrated masters. Nothing can exceed the splendor & expence of their churches. I have been thro' the palace of St Michael in which Paul lost his life. We passed thro' the room in which he was strangled. And I fancied that I saw the spot on which his struggles ended with the agony of death. A new floor has been laid in the room, in order that that should not remain which had been stained with the blood of an Emperor. The Palace is stript at present of all its ornaments & furniture & inhabited only by a few domestics. I was highly gratified in viewing the Taurida palace & especially the grand Hall in which Potemkin gave the magic entertainment to his Mistress. It contains a vast number of very fine statues. Sir John Carr gives you a good description of it. The Empress Regent at present resides at Zarsho-Zelo but comes into town occasionally to hold her Court. We had an intimation given us when the Empress would be absent & that we could use the occasion to view the palace. It is 22 versts from the city, which is a ride of about two hours. We went out & were shew [*sic*] the apartments & conducted thro' the grounds. All

I can say at present is that the whole is an Imperial establishment. But after all my dear R. I would rather be in Wilmington than in St Petersburg, and no one can be more anxious than I am to return to my family & country. This I hope will be at no distant period, and in the meantime believe me

Yours'

J. A. B.

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ST PETERSBURG 15 Oct 1813.

MY DEAR R.

This place affords no news. Even the operations of the Russian armies are made known to us thro' the medium of the English papers. I have of course nothing to say to you which may not be communicated in very few words. After our arrival here this government renewed the offer of mediation to G. B. The answer of the B. Government has not yet been received. The R. Government does not consider the mediation as refused & that we look upon as a point for them to decide. We were yesterday presented to the reigning Empress. It is impossible to say how long we shall remain here, but we intend to send our ship immediately to Gottenburg. From that place we can sail at any season, but from Cronstadt there is no moving from the 1<sup>st</sup> of Nov: to the middle of May. We shall of course have to travel thro' Sweden & shall pass round the head of the Gulf of Bothnia, or cross from Abo to Stockholm. If we pursue the first route we shall approach near to the Polar circle, & that probably in the coldest month in the year.

The passage by Abo is the shortest but it is frequently impracticable. There is but little prospect of success attending our Mission. I have not thought since I have been here that the B. Government would admit the mediation of Russia. The Count Romanzoff seems to think differently, & it is from him we are to receive our final answer on the subject. I do assure you I wish myself home with all my heart. The novelty of this place is exhausted and nothing remains to compensate for the separation from my family & friends. I wish you all kind of happiness

Adieu,

Yours

J. A. B.

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LONDON 1<sup>st</sup> May. 1814.

MY DEAR. R.

I little expected when I left the United States to have had it in my power to address a letter to you from this great Metropolis. It is of no importance to you to detail the motives which brought me here, tho' I am well satisfied in their having justified me in coming. I arrived at the moment the wonderful & unexpected events occurred of the Abdication of Buonaparte of the Crown of France & Italy & the restoration of the Bourbons. This revolution may be considered as established, Louis 18<sup>th</sup> makes his solemn entry this day into Paris & Buonaparte is in custody on his route to Elba. All the authorities of France civil & military have sent in their adhesion to the new government. You will readily believe that these events have no

[sic] softened the temper of John Bull towards America. If the people are allowed to have their way there will be no chance of peace. The cry is for Lord Wellington's army to be sent over to inflict exemplary chastisement. There is no doubt that a great part of that army will be sent over if the negociation fail at Gottenburg. As yet no commissioners are appointed to conduct the negociation on the part of this government. Probably as soon as Lord Castlereagh returns from the Continent an appointment will be made. Till that event happens I shall probably remain here. I can offer you no conjecture as to the probable result of the negociation. I can only say I do not despair of peace. I have had an opportunity of seeing the Lords and Commons in Session. The Lords were sitting as a court of Appeal, and there were two Lords present beside the Lord Chancellor. Counsel were arguing at the bar. In the Commons there were a few more than a quorum, but the subject before them occasioned an animated debate, in which Messrs Stevens, Whitbread, McIntosh, Romilly, Marryatt, &<sup>ct</sup> took part. I will tell you what I think of them when I have the pleasure of seeing you. I have seen also the Courts of Chancery Kings-Bench & Common-Pleas in session. The halls in which they sit are miserable boxes. The whole of them put together would not contain half the number of the court-room at New-Castle. Their appearance was not wonderfully impressive and I think their long wigs excite rather a ludicrous than a solemn feeling. I do not expect to remain here very long, & I am quite satisfied to be off

whenever it is proper that I should go. I have seen everything which I was desirous of seeing; and it is really not pleasant to inhabit a country where there is no sympathy, & where you are to rejoice when they are sad, and to mourn when they are joyful. I have written to you several letters but have not received a line from you. Clay & Russell are at Gottenburg, but we have received nothing which they brought for us.

Yours'

J. A. B.

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GHENT. 5<sup>th</sup> August, 1814.

MY DEAR. R.

The conveyance of letters to the distance of 4000 miles is subject to much delay & many accidents. Your favor of the 28<sup>th</sup> of July 1813- addressed to me at St Petersburg, I received in this place July 11<sup>th</sup> 1814. & at the same time I received your letters of 14<sup>th</sup> August 15 Sept<sup>r</sup> '13. & Feby. 14. If they had lost anything of their novelty, they were not the less historical & furnished much matter of interest & information. I wrote to you from Amsterdam, at the close of my journey from St Petersburg. You have a faint idea of the difficulty of reaching the Atlantic from the Russian Capital in the winter season. The gulf of Finland & the Baltic are not navigable, and the ordinary course is to cross the Gulf of Bothnia at Abo, or to go round the head of it by Torneo. The Gulf of B. during part of the season is not passable on account of broken & floating ice & then you must go

by Torneo. This was the route I expected to have taken & which I was relieved from taking by the revolution in Holland which opened a new road. When the winter approached we sent our ship from Cronstadt to Gottenburg, from which place we were informed, we could sail at any season of the year. It was from there we expected to embark. But when we learned that Holland was open, we sent orders to our captain to sail for some port in that country, and we commenced our journey by land to Amsterdam. We set out in Jan<sup>y</sup>. & were upon the road all the month of Feby. the coldest in the year. We generally travelled during the whole night, which in the high latitudes you know in the month of Feby. is the greater part of the 24 hours. We passed thro' Riga, Revel, Konigsberg, & Berlin. In B. we stopt nearly a week to rest & refresh ourselves which I assure you I found very necessary. We arrived at Amsterdam the 4<sup>th</sup> of March. It was here I received advices from our government of the negociation proposed to be held at Gottenburg. This intelligence was mixed with pain & pleasure. It disappointed the fond hope I had entertained of speedily returning to my country, but opened at the same time a prospect of carrying home with me when I did return the Olive Branch for which I had been sent abroad. The messenger who delivered to me dispatches at Amsterdam was to proceed to St Petersburg with similar instructions to M<sup>r</sup> Adams to repair to Gottenburg knowing that more than two months must intervene before [we] could assemble at Gottenburg. I determined to avail myself of the interval in paying a visit to

London. I did not venture upon this step without knowing that I should tread upon safe ground, tho' in an enemy's country. And indeed I had reason to think that the visit might be attended with a good political effect. I proceeded thro' the Hague & Rotterdam to Helvoetsluys from whence I embarked for Harwich. We carried over with us several English officers who had been wounded, & the widows of others who had been killed in the attempt to storm Bergen op Zoom. This part of the company were not very cheerful. We made the passage in about 45 hours; the distance is said to be 100 miles from land to land. The shores on either side are dangerous in foul weather from the sands. Our captain would not go out in the night, and they never approach the coasts but when they can see the buoys. We had a dull passage, but a very quiet one considering the number we had on board a small vessel. Orders had been sent to Harwich for our civil treatment. The distance from Harwich to London is a little more than 70 miles, & having a very fine day in the beginning of April & seeing after a long & dreary winter the first appearance of vegetation, I had a delightful ride to the far-famed city. We arrived in the evening just in time to be able to see the parts of the Town thro' which we drove to our lodgings. We had about four miles to drive after we got into the Town, & it was nearly dark when we were set down at the Blenheim hotel. The limits of a letter will not allow me to detail the employment of my time while I remained in this Metropolis. The Houses of Parliament & the Courts of justice were of course objects of curiosity. St

Stephen's chapel is quite shabby, the Chamber of the house of Lords is better, but quite common. I attended the Lords when an appeal was argued from Scotland, & altho the House was in Session there were present only one Lord beside the Lord Chancellor. I heard part of the debate on what was called the Norway question & listened I assure you for 3 hours with great pleasure to a speech of Earl Grey. He is a very eloquent sensible & manly speaker. In the house of Commons I heard no good speaking but I was not present upon any very important occasion. The Hall of the King's Bench is scarcely large eno' to contain the Barristers. I attended sittings of the Court but observed nothing very remarkable but the wigs & robes of the Judges & Lawyers. I heard some motions argued in the common pleas where Sir Vicary Gibbs had lately taken his seat at the head of the Court, & I thought there were few of our legal Gentlemen who had been 14 years at the Bar who would not make very passable Seargeants. I was successively in all the Courts & found they had no great occasion for large chambers, for not a soul scarcely but the Counsel attended them. You will remember however they had nothing before them but matters of law. My stay in London was about 6 weeks and notwithstanding the politeness of a few people I most sensibly felt that I was in an enemy's country. The mass of the people are extremely hostile to us, & I verily believe hate us worse than they ever did the French. America has not a friend in any Englishman, & there is not an Englishman who would be satisfied to see the war terminated, till he thought we

were severely punished for our audacity in commencing it. It had been proposed by the British Government to Mr G. & myself to transfer the seat of negociation from Gottenburgh to Ghent, to which we readily assented, (the low countries being neutral at the time), considering this as a place more convenient to both Parties. Having time eno' before me I determined to visit Paris upon my route to Ghent. It was going to be sure something out of the way, but it was as well to be upon the road as waiting here for my Colleagues who I knew could not arrive for some weeks.

I crossed the channel at Dover in a vessel smaller than our common packets & crowded with upwards of a hundred passengers. We had a strong wind & heavy sea & such a scene of distress I never saw on board of a vessel. It was difficult to keep out of the way of the cascades & such an atmosphere I never breathed before. Fortunately we had a short passage & were landed in about 3 hours, & my stomach maintained the reputation it had acquired in crossing the Atlantic. We travelled at a delightful season of the year & thro' a rich & beautiful country from Calais to Paris. One ought to be in Paris at least six months to know anything about it & to acquire a proper taste for it, I had time only to indulge the eye, & that was quite satisfied before I left the city. The gardens of the Thuilleries & the Luxembourg are enchanting. The gallery of paintings in the Louvre is magnificent & the finest Statues that exist are found in the Halls of the same building. It was no small gratification to have a

sight of the celebrated Statues of Apollo & Venus which had been brought from Rome. The King of Prussia took back the sword of Frederic & some bronze horses which the French had carried off from Berlin, but all the fine paintings and Statues of which all Europe had been robbed were suffered to remain. Certainly in this conduct there was much moderation & forbearance on the part of the Allies. Before I left Paris I took a walk of two miles under it. You descend about 20 feet to the level of the excavation; the passage at first was very narrow, but soon opened into very wide spaces. You pass immense walls of human bones, which are brought here from the common cemeteries. The number was stated at 2,400,000 skeletons. We were under the direction of a guide from whom we were cautioned not to separate. The passages are so numerous & intricate that strangers easily lose themselves, several persons were said to have done so, & perished in the caverns. We had a company of about 14 persons & each one carried a wax light in his hand. If any accident were to extinguish the lights, the Guide himself could never find his way out. We ascended two miles from where we had entered, & I found it much more pleasant to be upon than under the earth. After leaving Paris I went a little out of my way to see Brussels & Antwerp, towns you know of no small celebrity in history. When I reached Ghent I found Mr Adams & Mr Russell had arrived two days before me. Mr Clay came a day after me, & Mr Gallitin made his appearance at the end of about ten days. We have *all* been here nearly 5 weeks

& have not yet heard of the B. Commissioners having left London. The Post which comes by Calais & moves slowly brings us the newspapers from London in five days. The British Government knew of our being here within three days after we were assembled. It is impossible now that anything can be done to affect the present Campaign. I can say little as to the probability of peace. I have seen no signs of it except in the Speech of the Prince Regent upon closing the Session of Parliament. But a speech from the throne is too hollow a thing to be much relied upon. Let the event be what it will, I hope to see the U. States before the winter. I have enough of Europe & sigh most dolefully to revisit my native shore

Your's

J. A. B.

August 7<sup>th</sup>

P. S. The B. Commissioners Lord Gambier, Mr Goldbourne & Dr Adams arrived last evening, & this morning I had a visit from Mr Baker the Secretary to notify the fact— 20<sup>th</sup> August. There can be no peace the British pretensions render the continuance of war inevitable.

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GHEENT 28<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1814.

MY DEAR R.

Here am I still at Ghent. When I wrote you by the John Adams which left us the latter end of August, I expected by this time to be near the Coast of America. The British Government have ordered it otherwise. The are not yet

prepared to tell us whether the war shall continue or peace be made. They are looking to events on both continents. They will be influenced greatly by the State of affairs in America at the end of the Campaign, & also by the state of affairs which may result from the proceedings of the Congress at Vienna. If the campaign terminates badly with you, & if things should settle down peaceably on this continent we shall have no peace. Nothing exists here, which would [lead] one to form a decided opinion. The negotiation is evidently protracted to take the chance of what may happen. Knowing this to be the fact we have done & mean to do all that is in our power to defeat their project. But discretion confines us within certain bounds, & they will be enabled to take their own course. I think you ought to count upon & be prepared for another campaign & a campaign in which the Government will exert its whole power against us. If we can weather the storm another year, they will give up the contest & we shall be safe & quiet for a generation to come. This continent is generally in our favour, but it is exhausted by long wars, & will reluctantly embark in new conflicts. We must depend upon ourselves, & if the contest be maintained as I am sure it can be if we are united, America will establish a proud character throughout Europe & the World. You may rely upon it *we* shall not cede any point of National honor. We may have much to suffer, but to an honorable mind no suffering is so great as that of disgrace. It is better far to die than to exist in a state of ignominy. Such I hope is the sentiment of every American, & if such be the sentiment of our

citizens the U States cannot be subdued or disgraced. I will not flatter you with vain prospects. Peace is not in our power, it depends upon our enemy. You are not to expect it unless events should render it the interest of the enemy to make it. You will not see me before the spring. Whether peace or war be designed, the negociation will be protracted for some months to come. I have long sighed to return to my family & friends. Europe may have its attractions for others, but everything which is dear & interesting to me is in America.

Adieu sincerely yours,

J. A. B.

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GHENT, Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>. 1814.

MY DEAR. R.

I am afraid we have put an end to your Military Career & deprived history of some brilliant pages which you were preparing to furnish. A treaty of Peace & Amity was signed yesterday by your Plenepotentiaries & those of the B. Government. The general basis is the Status ante Bel-lum. The British retain only the possession of some disputed Islands in the bay of Passamaquoddy, till a decision on the right takes place according to a provision in the treaty. Hostilities continue till the treaty be ratified by our Government. We shall not attempt to voyage in the winter, but you may expect us in the spring.

Sincerely, Yours '.

J. A. BAYARD.



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