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TENNESSEE HISTORICAL MAGAZINE

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EDITOR
ST. GEORGE L. SIOUSSAT



VOLUME III.

Nashville

1917

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Incorporated 1875

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FORM OF LEGACY

*"I give and bequeath to The Tennessee Historical Society
the sum of -----dollars."*

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Neither the Society nor the Editor assumes responsibility for the statements or the opinions of contributors.

TENNESSEE

HISTORICAL MAGAZINE

Vol. 3

MARCH, 1917

No. 1

MEMPHIS AS A GATEWAY TO THE WEST.*

*A Study in the Beginnings of Railway Transportation
in the Old Southwest.*

I.

Cities in the United States, like those in the rest of the world, have had origins of many kinds but have attained real growth, if at all, through commerce or through the manufacture of goods which go into commerce. Unless an economic purpose is subserved neither the zeal of proprietary promoters nor the mandates of legislatures can force them into existence. As Thomas Jefferson once said of Virginia, "There are other places . . . at which the laws have said there shall be towns, but nature has said there shall not."¹ In the case of some cities, however, to natural advantages of situation outside forces add their assistance, and thus a town may for a longer or shorter period have an historical significance greater than the statistics of its population or wealth would seem to justify. That the city of Memphis was such a point, caught up from its mere local being into larger currents of Southern history it will be the purpose of this paper to demonstrate.

EARLY CONDITIONS.

When, in 1796, the State of Tennessee was admitted to the Union, much of the territory comprised therein was still in the possession of the Indians. Moreover, a dispute between the State of Tennessee, the State of North Carolina, and the United

*In a very abbreviated form, this paper was read before the Mississippi Valley Historical Association, at its Seventh Annual Meeting, in New Orleans, on April 22, 1915.

¹T. Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, p. 153, (Am. ed., 1794.) *Per contra*, for the origin of successful towns in the South, see U. B. Phillips, *History of Transportation in the Eastern Cotton Belt* (1908), ch. 1;—a work to which this study, as a whole, is much indebted.

States, with reference to the administration of the lands within the state, dragged on for several years.² Therefore, although as early as 1789 some of the land at the fourth Chickasaw Bluff upon the Mississippi River, near the present boundary line of the State of Mississippi, had been granted by North Carolina to one John Rice, it was not until 1819 that a town could be laid out thereon, and lots be sold, by the proprietors and promoters, John Overton, Andrew Jackson, and James and William Winchester. While the colonization of East and Middle Tennessee dates back to the period of the Revolution and the Confederation, West Tennessee, the region in which Memphis lies, was not thrown open to settlement until about the time that Florida was acquired from Spain, that Arkansas Territory was organized, and that Missouri was ready for statehood.

With the efforts of the early promoters and especially with the labors of the indefatigable Overton it will not be necessary here to deal, as the story has been told many times, most recently and with important corrections, by Mr. John H. DeWitt.³ Its location on the river was, of course, the factor which had given inspiration to the proprietors. From its very situation the town was assured of an existence and of some growth. From the upper Mississippi and its tributaries the flatboats had long floated down the river to New Orleans, touching here and there to exchange their freight for the local commodities sent to the southward for export. The era of the steamboat had just begun.⁴ It was soon certain that the new craft could stem the swift current of the river, and before long the danger of monopoly, early the source of friction, was removed by the decision in the case of *Gibbons vs. Ogden*. As early as 1823 Judge Overton had stressed the importance to the new

²"Some Phases of Tennessee Politics in the Jackson Period," by the present writer, in *American Historical Review*, vol. XIV., pp. 51 ff. (Oct., 1908).

³John H. DeWitt, *General James Winchester*, TENNESSEE HISTORICAL MAGAZINE, vol. I, pp. 192 ff. In greater detail also J. Phelan, *History of Tennessee*, ch. XXX; J. M. Keating, *History of the City of Memphis, Tennessee* (1886); J. P. Young, *Standard History of Memphis, Tennessee* (1912).

⁴The development of internal commerce, with reference to the Mississippi River and its tributaries is treated in two recent works: I. Lippincott, "The Internal Trade of the United States," 1700-1860, in *Washington University Studies*, vol. IV, pp. 63 ff. (Oct., 1916); and T. W. Van Metre, "Internal Commerce of the United States," in E. R. Johnson and others, *History of Domestic and Foreign Commerce of the United States* (Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1915). In the latter work is also a chapter, "Improvement of Rivers and Harbors and Regulation of Waterways," by D. S. Hanchett. An older treatment is that of W. F. Switzler, *Report on the Internal Commerce of the United States* (Bureau of Statistics, 1888).

town of providing a constant supply of wood for steamboats and all other possible accommodations for travelers upon the Mississippi, "which has the same effect as a great road."⁵ Such exertions were necessary, indeed, if Memphis was to be in any way distinguished from other Tennessee towns on the river bank, such as Fort Pickering just below, and Randolph and Fulton and Ashport up-stream; and still more if it was to compete with Vicksburg, begun about the same time, or with Natchez, which was much older. Notwithstanding the setback caused by the panic of 1819, all the river cities were entering upon a period of growth, especially New Orleans and St. Louis, and, on the Ohio, Cincinnati. It was the up-stream traffic that first passed exclusively to the steamboats, and for years the old-fashioned flatboats continued to descend the river and might be seen at every village, bringing foodstuffs, whisky, farm implements, furniture and many other commodities from the East and West. But gradually this peddling trade passed to the towns which, like Memphis, grew to be distributing points; while less favored places, like Palmyra, on the Cumberland, for a while a port of entry, passed away. Incorporated in 1826, in 1829 Memphis was made the terminus of a tri-weekly mail route from Nashville and in 1833 became a distributing point for the United States mails.⁶ Soon a hospital was established for the care of sick boatmen and travelers, to which the Assembly of Tennessee made an appropriation and for which it instructed the Governor to solicit the co-operation of other states.⁷ In 1826 the first newspaper made its appearance.⁸ For many years Memphis, a raw river town, was filled with the most disorderly elements of the frontier and seemed to be in danger of realizing Overton's fear that it might become "a mere harbor for a few drunken boatmen (besides those now there)."⁹ But gradually life became more settled. In 1833 the following interesting description of Memphis, which appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post*, of Philadelphia, found its way back to Tennessee:

"It has now an intelligent class of merchants who find the

⁵DeWitt, p. 199.

⁶Phelan, p. 325.

⁷*Laws of Tennessee*, 1827, Resolution No. 22. Later the state tax on merchants' licenses in the town itself, estimated to amount to \$1,000.00 annually, then (1835-6) a bonus paid by an insurance company and finally (1838) the tax on merchants' licenses in the whole county were successively appropriated. In 1843-44 and again in 1849-50 memorials were sent to Congress in behalf of the Memphis Hospital.

⁸Phelan, p. 331.

⁹DeWitt, p. 200.

position an important one for business, being the stopping point for travelers going to the vast regions on the Arkansas, Washita, and Red Rivers. It is one of the places on the Mississippi which passing steamboats generally honor with the discharge of their cannon as they ascend, and may stop to wood and water, and take in fresh provisions."

STATE AND FEDERAL AID.

Like all western promoters, those interested in this town saw in the development of a wider intercourse the way to the realization of their hopes. Assistance from the state in the building of roads and the development of commerce was naturally first to be thought of, and as we have seen, state support was given to the hospital at Memphis. Tennessee, however, was slow in developing organized schemes of internal improvement. The state, sharply divided into three geographical regions, illustrated as perfectly as any American commonwealth that state sectionalism which has so much affected our political history. The people of East Tennessee sought the improvement of transportation over the mountains, the development of the great valley routes to the East, and the improvement of the streams which connected with the rivers flowing into the Gulf. Middle Tennessee looked to the Cumberland in the north and to the Tennessee in northern Alabama and Mississippi.¹⁰ The Western District, in which Memphis lay, new and thinly settled, had to complain of a lack of interest in its welfare.

Another resort was, of course, the activity of the federal government. The improvement of the connection between the coast and the interior, the need of which had appeared so strongly in the Revolutionary period, had been an object dear to the heart of the first President, and later to that of Thomas Jefferson, though the latter gave expression to the constitutional scruples with regard to a general exercise of the power of appropriation for internal improvements, on the part of Congress, which later found expression in the vetoes of Madison, Monroe, Jackson and Polk. In the great schemes of Gallatin and Calhoun, Tennessee, an interior state, was of course deeply interested. When the Survey Bill of 1824 was before the Senate, both Andrew Jackson and his colleague Eaton, as yet uncommitted to strict construction, voted for it, and not a single Tennessee vote was cast against it in the House of Representatives.¹¹ They likewise voted, the same session,

¹⁰Phelan, ch. XXVII.

¹¹*Annals of Congress*, 18 Cong., 1 Sess., pp. 570-571; 1468-1469.

for the bill to improve the navigation of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers—the first general river and harbor bill.¹² The following year the committee on internal improvements in the House of Representatives of Tennessee submitted a report of the proposed great national road from Washington to New Orleans, recommending that a line be followed running along the center of the state to a point on the Mississippi River near Memphis. The “convenience to travelers westward” was stressed.¹³ Resolutions were passed requesting the governor to appoint a suitable person to act with the surveyor of the United States, authorizing the employment of “pilots” through the country, and urging the improvement of the Muscle Shoals on the Tennessee River.¹⁴ Had Tennessee, like Ohio, received grants of land for the making of roads within the state, a satisfactory system of transportation might have been worked out much sooner, but the triangular land fight to which we have referred above had stood in the way, and even the lands granted to education failed to materialize.

The constitutional scruples to which we have made reference were somewhat elastic, but the chief *bête noir* of the strict constructionists was the appropriation of federal funds to the building of roads within the limits of a state. Over the territories, however, Congress had full power, and roads through the territories might receive federal aid. If this were so, Memphis was more favorably situated than Nashville or Knoxville, for across the Mississippi lay the territory of Arkansas.

It will be recalled that in these years the international boundary of the United States was, in the South, but a few miles west of New Orleans. The treaty line of 1819, after a straight course from the upper part of the Sabine to the Red River, followed the latter stream on the south of the Arkansas Territory to the one hundredth meridian, and then ascended with that to the Arkansas River. The annexation of Florida removed the difficulties that had attached to the occupation of the Gulf coast by Spain. The southwestern frontier remained, however, beset by danger both from the Indians and from Mexico. The expedition of Long in 1820 resulted in more

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 765. 4 Stat. at L., p. 32. Toward the close of his Presidency Monroe accepted the principle that Congress could appropriate money for such purposes, but denied the right of Congress to construct. (“Views of the President of the United States on the Subject of Internal Improvements,” J. D. Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, vol. 2, pp. 144 ff.).

¹³*Journal of the House of Representatives*, Assembly of Tennessee, 1825, pp. 426-7.

¹⁴*Laws of Tennessee*, 1825, Joint Resolutions 15, 16, and 29.

definite information as to the Arkansas Country, but left an exaggerated impression of the extent of the Great American Desert. Later the removal of the Indian tribes from east of the Mississippi shut in Arkansas with yet more Indian difficulties. Scattered through the trans-Mississippi region were the military posts where were concentrated small detachments of the United States Army. Like St. Louis, further up the river, Memphis from its geographical position was a natural point of departure from both the military and commercial standpoints for the administration of this southwestern country, the settlement of which was recruited to no small extent from adventurous emigrants from Tennessee.

THE LITTLE ROCK ROAD.

In the first session of the Eighteenth Congress an act was passed which authorized the survey and construction of a road from a point on the right bank of the Mississippi River, opposite Memphis, to Little Rock, the seat of government of the Arkansas Territory. In the discussion which preceded the passage of this act, it was stated that at the last session a memorial from the Arkansas Territory asking for the road had been received and referred to the committee of roads and canals of the House of Representatives which had reported favorably thereon. No action had followed. The proposed road would unite the two great bodies of settlers in Arkansas, those at the seat of government at one end and the settlements on the Mississippi at the other. The actual length would be but one hundred and fifty miles, but the circuitous route already existing was of three times that length. The military importance of the road was emphasized. It was at this very session that the great debate took place over the general survey bill, and the doubts of the strict constructionists appeared in the disposition to defer the appropriation for this road until the general question had been decided, and in the query that arose as to whether any part of the proposed road would lie within the State of Tennessee. In the House besides Conway, delegate from the Territory of Arkansas, Allen and Isacks of Tennessee spoke in behalf of the bill. In the Senate it was supported by Brown of Louisiana and Kelly of Alabama against the opposition of King of New York. Among those who voted for the construction of the road was one of the former proprietors of Memphis, Senator Andrew Jackson of Tennessee.¹⁵

It was many years before this road became a reality in the sense of actually constituting a highway for wagons.¹⁶ But

¹⁵*Annals of Congress*, 18 Cong., 1 sess., p. 92, p. 876, *et passim*.

¹⁶The original act (January 31, 1824, 4 *Stat. at L.*, p. 5), appropriated \$15,000.00. The act of March 3, 1827 (*ibid.*, p. 244) appro-

the discussion concerning it shows that at this early date Memphis was seen to be, like St. Louis, a convenient starting point into the hinterland across the Mississippi. Leaving for the present the future development of this distant region, let us

appropriated \$9,000.65 additional to complete this. This indicates that the road was merely a path through the swamp country with no effort at a real road bed. By the same act provision was made for a military road from Fort Smith to Fort Towson, thence south to the northern boundary of Louisiana by Washington in Hempstead County following the highlands between the Washita and Red rivers in the direction of Natchitoches. Governor John Pope in his message to the Territorial Assembly of Arkansas, in October, 1831, said that "as a leading mail route from Memphis to the West, it (this road) is not only important to the people here, but to the National Government." (*Journals of the General Assembly of the Territory of Arkansas*, 7th Session, Little Rock, 1832). In 1832, an act (4 *Stat. at L.*, p. 557) "for certain internal improvements" appropriated \$20,000.00 for the repair of the Little Rock and Memphis road. Evidently the results were unsatisfactory, for in 1833, Congress appropriated \$100,000.00 for a road from a point opposite Memphis to the house of William Strang on the west bank of the St. Francis River, for the purpose of establishing "a constant communication" from the point above named towards Little Rock, and a resurvey by a military engineer was ordered (*ibid.*, p. 650). Next year, in response to an inquiry by Congress, Secretary Cass reported that the survey had been delayed by the illness of the officer appointed to make it (23rd Congr., 1 Sess., Exec. Doc., vol. 5, Doc. No. 393; May 8, 1834). Another appropriation was made (4 *Stat. at L.*, p. 718). In 1835 an elaborate account of the survey conducted by William Howard, U. S. Civil Engineer was submitted, together with a map. (23 Cong., 2 Sess., Exec. Doc., vol. 3, Doc. 83, Jan. 13, 1835.)

The subjoined letter, for the use of which we are indebted to Mrs. Bettie M. Donelson, shows the continued interest of Memphis in this role, and gives a picture of the penetration of the West by this highway. It was written by John C. McLemore to his relative, Andrew J. Donelson:

MEMPHIS, Jany. 8, 1838.

You are aware that two appropriations have been made for constructing a road through the Mississippi swamp, from a point opposite Memphis to the St. Francis River, Arkansas. When finished, this road will be the only practicable crossing of the Mississippi valley below the mouth of the Ohio, and is the channel through which emigration must pass to the West. The swamp at this point is thirty-eight miles wide. Twenty-three miles of the road are completed. There remains an unexpended balance of the last appropriation sufficient to finish seven miles more. The greatest difficulty and delay in the construction of this road has arisen from want of labourers. An adequate force has at length been collected, owing to the scarcity of employment elsewhere.

A well organized body of five hundred men is now actively engaged in prosecuting the work. The unexpended balance of the appropriation of 1835 will hold out until April, when it will be necessary to disperse this force, unless an appropriation is made by that

turn to the connection of Memphis with the East. This brings into our view a United States Army officer of high rank, the extent of whose interest and activity in the development of transportation in the old Southwest, both east and west of the Mississippi, have not been duly appreciated.

EDMUND PENDLETON GAINES.

Edmund Pendleton Gaines was a native of Virginia but had lived in Tennessee. It was he who, in 1807, had arrested Aaron Burr in the Mississippi Territory.¹⁷ He had served with eminent distinction in the War of 1812. For many years he was on the trans-Mississippi frontier, and in 1822 he had made a careful inspection of the whole country from the Sabine Ridge, west of Natchitoches, by way of Fort Jesup, Fort Towson, Fort Gibson and Council Bluffs, to the Falls of St. Anthony.¹⁸ In December, 1826, he had proposed to the War Department a system of canals and turnpike roads from the central states to the frontier, but his suggestions were not heeded, because, he averred, of political reasons.¹⁹ In 1831 his headquarters were established at Memphis, and for the next fifteen years he devoted much time and energy to the

period, and that too at a season, when their service will be most available.

In common with the citizens of this part of Tennessee and of Arkansas, I feel a deep interest in the completion of this road. Its importance may be estimated from the amount of travelling which passes over it, even in its unfinished condition. During the month of September upwards of twelve hundred emigrants and between one and two hundred teams, with cattle, etc., passed along this road to the interior of Arkansas. Besides facilitating emigration, its completion will bring into notice and advance the value of a vast amount of public lands, which are now valueless from the difficulty of approaching them.

Eight or ten miles of the road will remain unfinished after the expenditure of the last appropriation. The portion of the swamp, like that over which the embankment is finished, is liable to an annual inundation from the Mississippi, of from one to eighteen feet. You will readily perceive, therefore, that the remaining miles must be embanked, or that which is finished will be comparatively useless. One mile covered with eighteen feet water would as effectively interrupt the travel, as if the whole were inundated. I am informed that the superintending engineer has estimated the sum required to complete the embankment, at one hundred and thirty-six thousand dollars. As an important link in the chain of communication between the east and west side of the Mississippi this work must present itself to you with strong claims for your support. I do not therefore hesitate to beg your influence and active exertions to procure the appropriation of the sum called for at the earliest possible period of the session.

¹⁷*American Historical Magazine*, vol. 1, pp. 140 ff., April, 1896.

¹⁸25 Cong., 2 Sess., Exec. Doc., vol. 9, Doc. 311.

¹⁹Printed circular dated Oct. 14, 1838, Tennessee Archives.

matter of railroad transportation. In 1835 he was in Nashville and at the request of the chairman of the committee of the House of Representatives on internal improvements he wrote a long communication to which reference will be made below. In this he said: "Tennessee and Kentucky are at this time, as a glance of the mind's eye to the map will show, the only two states of the Union that are in all respects central or interior states, extending nowhere to the seaboard or national or wilderness frontier."²⁰ Hence it was necessary for Tennessee to lay its plans with a due knowledge of what had been done and what was to be done by neighboring states.

This stated in a nutshell the larger aspects of the railroad problem in Tennessee. When the railroads were first talked of in the South they were considered rather as adjuncts to the existing transportation by water; but Tennessee started so late, comparatively, that the idea of through connection was present almost from the beginning. While three boards of internal improvement had been established in 1829,²¹ one for each of the three sections of the state, the matter of railroads appears to have been first seriously broached in 1831. The agitation came from East Tennessee—which was much interested in the convention recently held at Abingdon, in Virginia, and wished an extension of the proposed Lynchburg and New River road to Knoxville—and from Memphis. A committee of the House suggested state aid; but a similar committee of the Senate was against this proposal. From the House committee's report we learn that an example was presented in the activity of Alabama, where it was planned to build a railroad around the obstructions in the Tennessee River in North Alabama known as the Muscle Shoals. It was purposed ultimately to extend this road to Memphis. The stock was already subscribed. The road would be a new feeder to the great thoroughfare from the Mississippi and a part of the east of the Gulf of Mexico through East Tennessee and Virginia to the Chesapeake. As a result of the agitation, both the desired extensions in East Tennessee and the Memphis Railroad received charters.²²

If one bears in mind that this was the year of Jackson's

²⁰*Report of the Committee on Internal Improvement in the House of Representatives accompanying a bill providing for a general system of internal improvement in the state.* Nashville: S. Nye & Co., Printers to the House, 1835, p. 29 (Pamphlet, Tennessee State Library).

²¹Phelan, p. 281.

²²*Journals of the Assembly of Tennessee, 1831; Senate, pp. 128 ff. House, pp. 255 ff.* The charter for the Memphis Railroad which Phelan was unable to locate was ch. 221 of the Private Acts of 1831.

Maysville road veto, that the next two years saw the crisis of the nullification controversy, that an exciting presidential election took place in 1832, and that Tennessee was scourged with the cholera in 1833, one is not surprised that the success of these two years did not measure up to the hopes of the railroad enthusiasts. In 1833 there was, however, great activity in West Tennessee. It was reported that the Muscle Shoals project, under the name of the Tuscumbia, Courtland and Decatur Railroad, was making good headway.²³ In September of this year Gaines presided over a meeting held at Memphis with reference to promoting a railroad from the town into the "interior."²⁴ When the assembly met in October this proposed road was chartered under the name of the Western Railroad,²⁵ and by another law five hundred dollars were appropriated for the survey of a road from Jackson, Tennessee, to the Mississippi River. For the latter Gaines was named as one of the commissioners.²⁶ In December he presided over a meeting at Jackson held in the interest of this road.²⁷

While the Muscle Shoals project and the plan of a connection with the Lynchburg railroad were both helpful in denoting Memphis as a western terminal, the greatest outside force remains to be mentioned.

THE CONNECTION WITH CHARLESTON.

Among the cities of the Atlantic coast to which the railroad held out the means of crossing the mountains and bringing the rich commerce of the Mississippi Valley to the seaboard was the metropolis of South Carolina, Charleston; while nearby, Savannah, locally a rival, was in a position to cooperate in some of the larger needs of transportation. Out of the initiative of these cities developed systems in South Carolina and in Georgia which have been quite sufficiently described in Phillips's *History of Transportation in the Eastern Cotton Belt*. Between 1830 and 1840 two plans of reaching the West were supported in South Carolina. One of these, a railroad connection with Cincinnati through Columbia, Asheville and the valley of the French Broad to Cincinnati, was the darling scheme of Robert Y. Hayne. It is the view of Phillips that the Charlestonians, "led by the brilliant but

²³*National Banner and Nashville Whig*, Feb. 18, 1833, citing the *Memphis Times* and the *North Alabamian*.

²⁴*Ibid.*, citing Sept. 20, *Memphis Times* and *Advocate* of Sept. 7.

²⁵*National Banner and Nashville Whig*, Dec. 5, 1833. *Acts of Tennessee* 1833, ch. 26.

²⁶*Acts of Tennessee*, 1833, ch. 72.

²⁷*National Banner and Nashville Whig*, Dec. 31, 1833.

visionary Hayne . . . went headlong into an immense project for direct transmontane connection with disregard both to natural obstructions and of their own financial limitations . . . the Louisville, Cincinnati and Charleston bubble was expensive in its blowing and disastrous in its bursting."²⁸ On the other hand, the biographer of Hayne, Theo. D. Jervey, of Charleston, considers that Hayne's scheme was not only practicable but also fraught with possibilities which, if realized, might have done much to weld together the Northwest and the South and thus to have prevented a resort to civil war; and that John C. Calhoun, in supporting a more southern route to the West and thus emphasizing the sectionalism which was identified with slavery was in this respect the evil genius of his state.²⁹ As one alternative to the route urged by Hayne, Calhoun advocated the utilization of a pass over the mountains in northeast Georgia to the Tuckasiege, a branch of the Little Tennessee, in a direction towards Louisville and Nashville.³⁰ But this was merely a variation of the same idea. The real alternative to the plans of Hayne was for South Carolina to lend its support to the work already accomplished by Georgia, to be expanded by the construction of a railroad from Atlanta to the Tennessee River, while from that point railroad connection should be established by companies backed by the Western states and assisted by South Carolina and Georgia capital, to the Mississippi River.³¹ Soon—as early as 1831³²—Memphis was looked upon as the western terminus for this scheme. Thus this vision was added to the local significance of the Memphis Railroad chartered by Tennessee in 1831. The aspirations were revealed in the change of name which took place in 1833 of this little railroad, yet unborn, when it was called the Atlantic and Mississippi Railroad.³³ The same is to be said of the Memphis and Lagrange Railroad, chartered in 1835, the first railroad in Tennessee to receive state aid.³⁴

²⁸Phillips, pp. 218-219.

²⁹T. D. Jervey, *Robert Y. Hayne and His Times*, 1909 (pp. 383 ff.), and also *The Railroad the Conqueror* (Pamphlet).

³⁰Phillips, pp. 186-187.

³¹*Ibid.*, pp. 304-305. See also J. F. Jameson, (ed.), *Correspondence of John C. Calhoun*, pp. 346-347, and Calhoun's earlier letter in Jervey's *Hayne*, pp. 389-390.

³²23 Cong., 1 Sess., Exec. Doc., vol. 3, Doc. 33.

³³*Acts of Tennessee*, 1833, ch. 49.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 1835, ch. 22.

THE WORK OF STEPHEN H. LONG.

In June, 1834, in obedience to instructions issued by the Topographical Bureau, Col. S. H. Long went to Athens, Georgia, where he conferred with the president of the Georgia Railroad Company. A preliminary examination and survey of the route between Athens and Augusta had already been made. Although this company considered this road as part of the great road from Charleston to Memphis, the prospect of the completion of the whole line was too remote for the company, in its condition at that time, to authorize them to incur any expense for the survey from Augusta to Memphis. Without hope of funds from this source, Long proceeded across the country from Athens to Courtland, on the Tennessee River, collecting as best he could information about the topography of this region. At Courtland he found in session the board of directors of the Tuscumbia, Courtland and Decatur Railroad Company, who ordered an outfit at their own expense, for the further prosecution of his mission from Tuscumbia to Memphis, and directed their chief engineer, David Deshler, Esq., to accompany him through a large portion of the distance. On his arrival at Memphis he reported to Gaines, according to instructions. Soon after his arrival, delegates from the Columbia and Tennessee Railroad Company and from the Jackson and Mississippi Railroad Company held a conference with the Atlantic and Mississippi Railroad Company, and it was decided, at the instance of the first two companies, that Long should examine the country with a view to a railroad passing from Memphis to Jackson, Tennessee, and thence eastwardly through the interior, and "longitudinally of the state," to a point near the confluence of the Holston and Clinch Rivers, in East Tennessee. In this service he was governed by the instructions of Gaines, and his expenses were defrayed by the companies who had promoted the investigation. He made a brief report to Gaines, which is dated at Memphis, September 4, 1834. At Memphis he found W. B. Guion, Esq., United States assistant civil engineer, who had been prevented by illness from joining him earlier. Meanwhile Gaines, on behalf of the Atlantic and Mississippi Railroad Company, had arranged with Governor Lumpkin³⁵ of Georgia for the examination of a southern route for the contemplated Atlantic and Mississippi Railroad Company, leading through the interiors of Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia, to Savannah, and with a view to its ultimate extension northeastwardly from the Oconee River, through Georgia, South Carolina and North

³⁵Cp. Phillips, pp. 304-305.

Carolina, to Norfolk, Virginia. The expenses of this examination were met by the Memphis Railroad Company.

Colonel Long's report included a discussion of railroad grades and curves, and of the modes and cost of construction, interesting as revealing the technical knowledge of that time. He then passed to a detailed description of the three routes: First, that from Augusta by way of the contemplated road to Athens and the road from Decatur to Tusculumbia and thence to Memphis. This he called the northern route of the Atlantic and Mississippi Railroad. The second route, which he called the southern route, extended from Memphis through Mississippi to Montgomery, Alabama, and thence across the Georgia rivers to Savannah. Branches might run to Natchez and Vicksburg, to New Orleans, and to Mobile. The third route was described as that of the Chesapeake and Mississippi Railroad, and extended through Tennessee from Memphis, by the middle of the state, to the easterly base of the Cumberland Mountain, near the confluence of the Clinch and the Holston, there connecting with the Valley. As to this route he revised the statements already made in his earlier report to Gaines. Since the rendering of that report he had traveled in the Great Valley of Virginia, and was convinced from personal observation of the practicability of a railroad. In addition he cited the authority of Captain Crozet, who had surveyed the route from the James River westward. For each of the three routes Long gave an estimate of the expense.

In conclusion Long submitted his views on "the importance of the point at which the several routes have their common termination at the Mississippi River." He enumerated all the bluffs on the east bank of the Mississippi from the Iron Banks, sixteen miles below the mouth of the Ohio, where a town, Columbia, had been located, to the lowermost bluff, the site of Baton Rouge. On the west bank, he declared that places "eligible for mercantile operations on a large scale" did not exist below the mouth of the Ohio. "Across this valley region there are as yet no passes by land secure from frequent and protracted interruptions, occasioned by overflows from the rivers by which it is traversed; nor is there any encouraging prospect that roads can hereafter be constructed to any tolerable advantage, except in a very few instances." As to the east bank, with regard to wharfage and other facilities, Memphis was as favorably situated as any of the towns of the South; while opposite to it the General Government had already begun the Arkansas road, for thirty-nine miles elevated three feet or more above the surface of the valley. From Vicksburg or Natchez there was practicable no common road

to the westward, for the bayous and lagoons of the Mississippi, Tensas, Wachita and Red Rivers, and the overflows of the freshets of those streams, constituted difficulties that could not readily be surmounted.³⁶

To Long's report Gaines gave his entire approval and in the letter to the committee of the Tennessee House of Representative, to which allusion was made above, he added his belief in the possibilities of Memphis in the following words:

"I know of no place in the valley of the Mississippi combining so many advantages for the speedy and cheap concentration of all the elements of *force* and *supply*—of men and means—whether for *military, naval or commercial* purposes. The agricultural products of the thousands of fertile vales and plains of the great valley, with the countless millions of mineral wealth with which the apparently sterile mountains and hills and many of the fertile plains are filled, will be wafted down a thousand of the remote and immediate tributary streams of the Mississippi, of whose tributaries, all but five or six, mingle their waters with this mighty river above Memphis—a position where formations of ice never occur to interrupt the navigation, which at no time of the year presents any obstruction other than some few snags that have escaped the vigilant eye of our excellent commander, Shreve,³⁷ whose indefatigable labours in clearing out the river are worthy of all praise; a position which is destined soon to become the *seaport* and the *principal commercial emporium* of the state, affording a constant and safe navigation to the sea at all seasons of the year, to the largest vessels that can possibly enter the Mississippi River at the Balize—a position combining more advantages for the contemplated armory of the states in the valley than any other spot."³⁸

³⁶23 Cong., 2 Sess., Exec. Doc., vol. 4, Doc. 177.

³⁷See below, p. 20; and cp. J. Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, vol. 2, p. 118, note.

³⁸*Report of the Committee on Internal Improvement*, pp. 22-23. The act of 1835-36 is described by Phelan, p. 282. An interesting sidelight on the state of public information and opinion in Tennessee in regard to railroads appeared the next year, 1836. Like many other states, Tennessee considered the plan of a "central" railroad, in this case running from the Mississippi to the mountains. One notes with interest that the chief engineer of the state was instructed to consider at the same time a similar route for a turnpike and to enlighten the Assembly as to whether the railroad or the turnpike would be preferable; and that in the report of the engineer Memphis was at once declared to be "out of the discussion," because it was not "as near the center of the state as practicable." (*Journal of the House of Representatives*, Appendix, 1837, p. 709.) As the proposed central railway also omitted Nashville, it is easy to understand that no concrete results followed.

GAINES AND THE TRANS-MISSISSIPPI FRONTIER.

Our next endeavor must be to make clear the expansion of Gaines's ideas as to railroads into the territory across the Mississippi River. The reader will recall the road from Memphis into Arkansas, to which reference was made in the first pages of this paper. This was still inadequate for its purpose, and additional efforts were being made to improve it. Gaines's scheme of military roads east of the Mississippi, submitted in 1826, has been mentioned. Now, in 1835, Gaines, writing from the headquarters of the Western Department at Memphis, proposed to utilize the railroad as a part of the scheme of defense. He prepared an extensive plan of five groups of roads, four of which were to lay in the country

The reference made by General Gaines to a "contemplated armory" demands a word of explanation. The West was eager for the establishment in its midst of a National armory, similar to those at Springfield and at Harper's Ferry. In 1823 the President was authorized to employ an officer to select a site for such an armory. (3 *Stat. at L.*, p. 788: *American State Papers*, Military Affairs, vol. 2, pp. 729 ff). From time to time the matter was again agitated. In 1836 an appropriation was made for an *arsenal* at Memphis (5 *Stat. at L.*, p. 78). In 1841 a board of commissioners was appointed to select a suitable site on the western waters for a national armory. The board was instructed that any place proposed as a site for the armory must, first, be on the western waters, secondly must have available mechanical power, either of steam or of water; third, must be relatively healthy, and lastly must be within reach of material for the manufacture of arms and for the distribution of the manufactured product, and articles of subsistence must be obtainable. The board examined no less than forty-eight sites, of which Memphis was listed as the twenty-fourth. The board somewhat amusingly said that "were it not for the town lots in which the bluff is divided, the site of that portion of the city presented the most favorable locality for an army in the whole neighborhood." Commenting on the situation of Memphis the board reported that first, the Mississippi was navigable to Memphis, secondly, there was abundant material for building purposes, such as brick clay and all sorts of hardwoods; thirdly, there was in the vicinity no coal worthy of mention; fourthly, Memphis was situated on the western national road from Memphis to Little Rock, 150 miles of which were unfinished; the shortest route to the Tennessee River was 102 miles, reaching the Tennessee at the town of Savannah; fifthly, water for mechanical power would be brought from Wolf River at Germantown, 62 miles away. The cost of constructing the necessary canal would be \$200,000.00. The committee occupied an unhealthy position, but that doubtless the climate would be henceforth more salubrious with the neutralizing influence of the furnace fires and smoke of the city's manufactures. Nine places in Tennessee were examined. The committee recommended as the best site Fort Massac, on the Tennessee River, 30 miles above its confluence with the Ohio (27 Cong., 3 Sess., Exec. Doc., vol. 4, Doc. 133). So far as Memphis was concerned, nothing came of the scheme of a western armory.

east of the Mississippi. The two southern railroads, each with its terminus in Memphis, followed routes which have already been described. But a fifth line was suggested, which was to run from Memphis to the headwaters of the Sabine River, with one branch to go up the valley of the Red River to Fort Towson, and with another to go from Little Rock up the valley of the Arkansas River to Fort Towson or Fort Gibson.³⁹

In the first half of the year 1836 Gaines was kept in excited activity. In January he went to Florida to make arrangements for the continuation of the Florida War. Returning to New Orleans, he left that city March 28 for the Louisiana-Texas frontier, where, besides the possible hostilities with Mexico, there was grave danger of trouble with the Indians. The success of the Texas revolution changed the face of affairs very greatly, but the Indian tribes were still to be reckoned with.⁴⁰

In 1836 and the years immediately following there was therefore renewed interest in the defense of the frontier. In this year Congress authorized the President to have surveyed and opened a military road from some point on the right bank of the Mississippi River between the mouth of the St. Peters and the mouth of the Des Moines River, by the most favorable route to the Red River. If the consent of the Indian tribes could be obtained the road should pass west of the State of Missouri and the Territory of Arkansas; but if not, then east of the western boundaries of that state and territory. Such forts should be constructed for the protection of the frontier as the President might see fit.⁴¹ Over the carrying out of this plan there ensued a long correspondence between Secretary Poinsett, General Macomb, commander-in-chief; General Atkinson at Jefferson Barracks, Colonel Kearney, and other officers, in which, besides abundant evidence of jealousy between the officers of the line and the engineers and a good deal of punctilio concerning matters of rank, there is to be found much interesting information as to the administration of military affairs on the frontier.⁴² In December, 1837, the Secretary of War transmitted to the House of Representatives, in answer to a resolution which the House had passed respecting the protection of the western frontier, reports from C.

³⁹25 Cong., 2 Sess., Exec. Doc., vol. 9, Doc. 311.

⁴⁰T. M. Marshall, *A History of the Western Boundary of the Louisiana Purchase* (1914), chs. 8 and 9, *passim*; E. C. Barker, "The United States and Mexico," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, vol. 1, pp. 17, 19, 21, (June, 1914).

⁴¹5 *Stat. at L.*, p. 67.

⁴²25 Cong., 2 Sess., Exec. Doc., vol. 8, Doc. 278.

Gratiot, chief engineer, and others, and promised to send one which was expected from General Gaines as soon as it was received. Gratiot's report was accompanied by a map, while another map illustrated the line of defense recommended by Poinsett.⁴³ August 14, 1837, Gaines wrote from St. Louis to make suggestions as to the distribution of the forces and proposed that each post should be used as the basis for a military school.⁴⁴

A much more extensive scheme, however, was unfolded by Gaines in a communication which, in obedience to instructions received in November, 1837, he submitted on February 28 of the following year. This long document, which was laid before the House of Representatives on April 6, 1838, by the Committee on Military Affairs, was in large part a repetition of the views stated in earlier reports.⁴⁵

Gaines proposed the selection of sites and the construction of forts at eleven points between the Sabine and Lake Superior, inclusive. He also discussed at length the utility of railroads, both with regard to their importance as a part of a system of defense and with respect also to their commercial value. This time seven principal roads were proposed. The first was to be from Memphis via Little Rock to the intersection of the Sabine River with Latitude 31°. The second was to branch off from this, which he called the Tennessee and Texas Railroad, at a point thirty miles northeast from Little Rock, and was to go up the valley of the Arkansas River to Fort Gibson, and thence to the intersection of the Texas boundary and the Arkansas River. The third was to go up the valley of the Red River to Fort Towson and beyond. The fourth was to branch off near the Sabine Ridge and to go to the mouth of the Sabine. The fifth was to go from St. Louis to Fort Gibson with a branch up one of the forks of the Merimac to the Osage River. The sixth was to run from the St. Charles to a site on the upper Des Moines with a branch from the point where this road should intersect the northern boundary of the State of Missouri, to reach the upper Missouri River near the site recommended for a fort at the mouth of the Big Platte. The seventh should begin at the mouth of the Chippewa and run to some site on Lake Superior. If this scheme is compared with that of 1835 it will be seen that the earlier plan was concerned with roads east of the Mississippi, except the one that was to start at Memphis and go to the headwaters of the Sabine. The plan of 1838, however, was

⁴³25 Cong., 2 Sess., Exec. Doc., vol. 2, Doc. 59.

⁴⁴25 Cong., 2 Sess., Exec. Doc., vol. 8, Doc. 276.

⁴⁵25 Cong., 2 Sess., Exec. Doc., vol. 9, Doc. 311.

entirely for the trans-Mississippi. While St. Louis was used as one base, Memphis continued to be the center for the Southwest.

The military road through Arkansas was already surveyed and the importance of Memphis as a prospective junction with the railroad to Charleston was kept alive by Gaines's reiteration. In October of the same year he circulated from his headquarters in St. Louis a printed letter with his suggestions as to defense, and a diagram of his railroad system.⁴⁶ Apparently he lost no opportunity to disseminate his ideas. In January, 1839, he wrote a letter to the Chamber of Commerce of New Orleans, and this letter likewise he had printed. This was a reply to a report of the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce with reference to the improvement of the Mississippi and elaborated his pet scheme for coast defense—the erection of a number of floating batteries. His arguments for railroads were repeated.⁴⁷ Two years later he was again writing, this time to James C. Jones, the Whig Governor of Tennessee. He said that he no longer apprehended serious opposition to his system of railroads and harbor defenses nor that the frontier would be permitted to remain much longer the victim to a difference of opinion between the votaries of European systems. At this time the feeling with regard to Great Britain was one of tension over the northeastern boundary, and like an old war horse, Gaines scented danger. "If we are to have a war with England in the ensuing winter I shall require," he wrote, "the whole of the forces and vessels here suggested to be on their way to New Orleans by the 20th of next month."⁴⁸

In 1845, when the tension between the United States and Great Britain on the one hand, and Mexico on the other, was at its height, Gaines again brought forward his ideas as to military preparedness. On June 28, 1845, he had written from the headquarters of the Western Division, now at New Orleans, to Secretary Marcy, stating that he believed the western forts to be defenseless in their present condition.⁴⁹ This letter was followed, on August 23, by one to the Adjutant General.⁵⁰ In the first he gave an estimate of the sums necessary for his scheme of defense, which included an array of war steamers, floating batteries, snag-boats and martello towers. He urged the completion of the Atlantic and Mis-

⁴⁶Printed circular, dated Oct. 14, 1838, Tenn. Archives. See cut.

⁴⁷Printed circular, dated Jan. 22, 1839, Tenn. Archives.

⁴⁸Ms. letter, dated Oct. 7, 1841, Tenn. Archives.

⁴⁹Gaines Papers, Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*

Mississippi Railroad, with branches to Mobile, Pensacola and St. Marks, at a total cost of \$18,000,000; also the railroad from Memphis to Texas at \$8,100,000. Generously allowing 10 per cent additional for contingencies, he estimated the total cost of these and his other suggestions to be \$45,870,000, with which there would be need of a working force of 200,000 men for five years. The second letter indicated his belief that war had been declared by Mexico.

We shall meet with Gaines again at the Memphis Convention, where honorable recognition was given of his services to the West. He had become very popular in Memphis and in the river country generally, and when, in 1842, an order was issued from Washington which abolished the grand divisions of the army then existing, a meeting of indignation was held in Memphis to protest against the action and violently to attack the supposed author of it, General Winfield Scott, with whom Gaines had a standing quarrel. A bill was introduced in Congress to revoke the order and in November, 1843, the matter was discussed in the Tennessee Legislature.⁵¹ In 1836 General Gaines, in the opinion of General Jackson, had exaggerated the danger from the Indians, and called out more troops than were needed.⁵² Unfortunately he repeated this mistake even more seriously in 1846 at the outbreak of the Mexican war, to the embarrassment of President Polk. A court of inquiry was ordered, but on account of his age and the excellence of his motives no punitive action was taken.⁵³ It was unfortunate that this should be the close of a long career devoted to the welfare of the country and particularly of the West.

That aspirations rather than accomplishment marked the period 1830-1840 goes without saying. In the West only feeble beginnings of actual construction were attained, like the Muscle Shoals Railroad and the Memphis and Lagrange. The great through connections that were planned had to wait for the recovery from the panic of 1837 and for the progress westward of the roads of the Atlantic coast. But that the great through lines east of the Mississippi were planned, and that the penetration of the trans-Mississippi had been considered were factors full of importance for the future. In this connection, as we have shown, the idea of defense from a military standpoint played no small part; and the engineers of the army performed a service that deserves the most ample recognition.

⁵¹*Memphis Enquirer*, Dec. 9, 1843, April 20, 1844.

⁵²See note 40 above.

⁵³M. M. Quaife (ed.), *The Diary of James K. Polk* (1910), vol 1, pp. 450-51, 480; vol. 2, 82-83, 97, 98.

There were, however, other forces at work, to the consideration of which we must now turn. The army was primarily interested in the construction by land of roads and railroads. No less important were the rivers of the Mississippi valley.

RIVER AND HARBOR IMPROVEMENT.

Of all types of congressional legislation, none has come in for more severe criticism than that usually known as the "river and harbor bill." When one contemplates the amount of money that has been wasted in the appropriations to purely local objects, often with entire failure to achieve the intended results, and when one considers the political methods that have attached to such legislation, criticism of the recurring "pork barrel" seems justified. But when one studies intensively the story of the growth of the West, when one sees how essential, after the use of the steamboat began, the river traffic was to the interior, and when one reads the accounts of the difficulties and dangers that beset this navigation, a feeling of greater toleration arises as to the mistakes that were made, and even as to the local particularistic competition that marked the struggle for such appropriations.

Of Monroe's complaisance in the matter of appropriations to internal improvements we have made note above; and the logic which permitted the expenditure of federal funds in grants to roads could hardly stop at similar expenditures for the improvement of rivers. The terrible steamboat accidents that took such a toll of lives in the West were due in large part to ill-constructed boilers. In 1838, and again in 1843, Congress passed laws looking to the prevention of such accidents by the proper inspection of boilers,⁵⁴ while encouragement was given to improvement of the boiler itself.⁵⁵ But more frequent causes of disaster were the hidden sandbars of the changing current, and the huge "snags"—obstructions brought down the streams and deposited where they would rip the flimsily-built steamboats. To the first bill—passed in 1824—for the improvement of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers reference was made above, and in our account of General Gaines's activities we have found him more than once alluding to the snag-boats and the clearing of the rivers. With this work the name of one man, Henry M. Shreve, is pre-eminently associated. Shreve invented a boat for the special purpose of removing snags, which, a report made by committee of the House of Representatives later declared "cannot

⁵⁴*Stat at L.*, pp. 304, 626.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 252-261.

be dispensed with on the western rivers." Under the authority of the Secretary of War he built, in 1829, one of these snag-boats with the very impressive name *Heliopolis*; and subsequently two others were built. By the use of these, said the committee, the navigation of the Mississippi, Ohio, Arkansas and Red Rivers had been improved immeasurably, and millions of property and many lives had been saved.⁵⁶ In 1838 he received a patent, which later he tried to sell to the government. This had not been accomplished at the time of his death and many years later his heirs were pressing the claim upon Congress.⁵⁷

During the administration of John Quincy Adams the river and harbor bills were many and liberal, nor did Jackson frown upon appropriations of this kind. Indeed one of the last acts which General Jackson approved was the river and harbor bill of March 3, 1837.⁵⁸ Only one general bill was passed in Van Buren's term of office, and a falling off in such legislation became noticeable. Some appropriations for improvements on the Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, and Arkansas Rivers were tacked on to an army bill of 1842,⁵⁹ and there were also appropriations for particular improvements. To Tyler's action of 1844, when he vetoed the eastern river and harbor bill, but allowed that for the West to go through, reference will be made hereafter.

MATTHEW FONTAINE MAURY.

It was to be expected, perhaps, that just as Gaines and the army had called attention to the need of roads and railroads for defensive purposes, so, in view of possible war, the need of water communication should be stressed as a means of defense. To educate the mind of the country to the upbuilding of its naval power, and in this connection to invite attention to the western rivers, as part of the problem of defense, proved to be the practical task to which one of the greatest of American scientists gave many years of his life. Matthew Fontaine Maury, it will be recalled, spent much of his boyhood in Tennessee, where he was for a while under the instruction of Dr. Otey, later Bishop of Tennessee.⁶⁰ After a severe accident which rendered him unfit for active service he devoted much

⁵⁶27 Cong., 2 Sess., Rep. of Com., vol. 3, H. Rep., 556.

⁵⁷e. g., 46 Cong., 2 Sess., Rep. of Com., vol. 3, H. Rep., 577.

⁵⁸*Laws Relating to Improvement of Rivers and Harbors*, (58 Cong., 3 Sess., House Doc. No. 425), vol. 1, pp. 79 ff., 5 Stat. at L., p. 79.

⁵⁹*R. and H. Laws*, vol. 1, p. 96; 5 Stat. at L., p. 508.

⁶⁰D. F. M. Corbin, *Life of Matthew Fontaine Maury*.

of his time to literary work. The cities of the seaboard in the South were much interested in the establishment of direct trade with Europe. In this connection Maury, in 1839, in the *Southern Literary Messenger*,⁶¹ began a series of writings intended to stir up the Southern people. Besides direct trade routes to Europe Maury urged the cultivation of closer commercial relations with South America. But of especial importance for our present purpose was his insistence upon the need of adequate preparation for naval defense of the Gulf of Mexico against the possibility of an attack by Great Britain. In July, 1841, Upshur, the Secretary of the Navy, was requested by the Senate to give his views upon the defense of the Gulf. He replied early in 1842, including with his letter a report of the Commissioners of the Navy dated January 22 of that year.⁶² In March he advised that the Pensacola Navy Yard should be immediately completed.⁶³ In his report, in December, 1842, accompanying the message of President Tyler, the secretary again devoted much space to the Mississippi and the defense of the West.⁶⁴ Maury's agitation was unquestionably having some effect, and the atmosphere of a Whig administration was favorable to an increase of federal activity.

Another manifestation of interest in the improvement of the navigation of the Western rivers was that given at Cincinnati, where two meetings were held on November 4 and December 21, 1842, for the purpose of drawing up a memorial to be submitted to Congress.⁶⁵ The report on the memorial, prepared by a committee of which L. Whiteman was chairman, is full of very valuable information concerning the river trade, the detail of which is in striking contrast with the poverty of the Census or other government statistics. This memorial reached Congress in the session of 1842-43 and was referred in the House of Representatives to the committee of the whole on the state of the union. The Cincinnati Convention also appointed a committee to correspond with similar committees in other cities. In this same session Senator Barrow of Louisiana introduced a bill to appropriate a million dollars for the improvement of the Mississippi and its tributaries. A report intended to accompany this bill contained much statistical information based in part on the Cincinnati memorial. The report was particularly severe with regard to the

⁶¹Vol. 5, pp. 2-12, 233-306.

⁶²Vol. 4, pp. 309-346.

⁶³*Ibid.*, vol. 3, Doc. 216.

⁶⁴27 Cong., 3 Sess., Sen. Doc., vol. 1, Doc. 1, pp. 539 ff.

⁶⁵27 Cong., 3 Sess., Exec. Doc., vol. 4, Doc. 126.

lack of information to be derived from the Federal Government, in which respect, said the report, "we are quite as much in the dark as to the trade of the Mississippi as that of the Niger."⁶⁶ In an article contributed to the *Southern Quarterly Review*, on "The Maritime Interest of the South and West," Maury urged the strategic importance of the Gulf, and advised especially the fortification of Key West and the Dry Tortugas. He pointed out the danger of a blockade of the Mississippi by some foreign power, and pleaded for the establishment of a dockyard at Memphis, for which, he pointed out, three naval officers of the United States had already made an examination and a favorable report.⁶⁷ Thus, like Gaines, and no doubt largely because of Gaines's advertisement of Memphis, Maury, too, brought to the little town on the Mississippi another outside force that would tend to keep Memphis in the public mind. The story of the dockyard must now be briefly told.

THE MEMPHIS NAVY YARD.

The particular connection which Memphis was to have with the defense of the West from the standpoint of the Navy Department has serious and comic features, illustrating as it does the unsystematic methods which have so long unfortunately characterized the financial history of the United States. In 1828, according to local accounts, the Mississippi River deposited at the mouth of the Wolf River at Memphis the beginnings of what was known on the rivers as a "mud-bar" and later this bar attained considerable dimensions and became of sufficient importance for a controversy to arise as to its ownership. The suggestion that the mud-bar, or the batture, as it was more politely called, should be utilized as a navy yard was made, according to Phelan, in the *National Intelligencer* of Washington over the signature, "Union Jack," and was received with levity in Memphis.⁶⁸ The laughter was soon suppressed, however, and Memphis went to work to secure the navy yard with all the energy that characterizes modern towns in the pursuit of the local expenditure of federal funds. The Tennessee Legislature presented a memorial on behalf of Memphis. August 16, 1842, Mr. Clark, chairman of the Naval Committee of the House of Representatives, reported in favor of examining the site with regard to its availability.⁶⁹ A fortnight later a bill to this end passed the House but in

⁶⁶27 Cong., 3 Sess., Sen. Doc., vol. 3, Doc. 137.

⁶⁷Vol. 4, pp. 309-346.

⁶⁸Phelan, p. 337.

⁶⁹27 Cong., 2 Sess., Rep. of Com., vol. 5, Rep. 991.

the Senate was referred to the wrong committee and the session closed without definite action. In the third session of the twenty-seventh Congress Clark again made a report from the Committee on Naval Affairs.⁷⁰ From this a number of items of information are to be gathered. The Mayor of Memphis, E. Hickman, recited the proceedings of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, to which body Col. D. Morrison had submitted a report, in September, 1842, on the project of a canal from Wolf River to the Mississippi. This canal, he stated, would provide an ample water power for the purpose of a naval depot and dockyard and in addition for manufactures. He alleged that there was no other point near the Mississippi River within hundreds of miles of the center of this great valley where water power could be obtained at all, and stressed the incomparable position of Memphis at the head of uninterrupted navigation at all seasons of the year.

Mayor Hickman's document included also the report of the Committee on Naval Affairs to which we referred above. In this the advantages of Memphis were enumerated; its location, good water, water power, uninterrupted navigation, freedom from ice, and healthfulness. Central with reference to the interior, Memphis was far enough from the coast to avoid surprise from a hostile fleet. At no point could materials for building steamers and other vessels and subsistence in supplies be concentrated so rapidly. The boatmen on the Western waters furnished some of the best materials for the Navy. Memphis was to be the terminus of the Atlantic and Mississippi Railroad.

Support was had from Charleston in the shape of a memorial of the Chamber of Commerce of that city addressed to Congress. Having learned that it was proposed to change the route of the great mail between Boston and New Orleans from the established line through Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia and Alabama to the Mississippi, to a western line by Washington and Pittsburg or Wheeling to the Northwest, the Chamber of Commerce urged the retention of the Southern route in addition to the new one, pointing out the availability of the railroad connection to be established between Charleston and Memphis, and approving the establishment of a naval station and arsenal at Memphis. There was submitted also a report of a special committee of the mayor and alderman of Memphis, a report of the board of health⁷¹ of that city, and

⁷⁰27 Cong., 3 Sess., Rep. of Com., vol. 1, Rep. 114.

⁷¹The population of the town, exclusive of the suburbs South Memphis and Fort Pickering, was estimated at "near" 4,000. A total death list of thirty-four out of a population of 4,000 during the sickly season was held to demonstrate the healthfulness of the town.

a statement of the offer of land and water power for the naval depot and dockyard if the location of Memphis should be selected.

The bill was duly passed,⁷² and in May, 1843, the Secretary of War appointed a commission consisting of Captain L. Rousseau, Commander H. A. Adams, and Lieutenant S. Johnston of the Navy, who proceeded to examine the site and who soon made a report not altogether favorable.⁷³ Later, under the instructions of the Secretary of the Navy, Rousseau, Adams and Johnston revisited Memphis, and made a second report more favorable than the first. But meanwhile the city had been very active and when the Twenty-eighth Congress met in December, 1843, an extensive document was submitted and referred to the Committee on Naval Affairs. This included the report of the previous session, the second report of the officers, and a long letter or treatise written by Lieutenant Maury, restating his views on defense. He brought forward the sectional argument that the North had received far larger appropriations than the South, the defense of which had been neglected. Too long to analyze at length, this communication was an appeal to the South and West to press their claims and secure the establishment of the dockyard at Memphis.⁷⁴

Mr. Ashe, who represented the Memphis district in the House of Representatives, introduced in that house a bill to establish a navy yard at Memphis,⁷⁵ and a similar bill was laid before the Senate by Ephraim H. Foster.⁷⁶ The chief debate took place in the Senate, where the bill was reported favorably by the Committee on Naval Affairs, with an amendment.⁷⁷

In the earlier stages of the agitation the memorial of the Tennessee Assembly had been supported by Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi; but by this time the spirit of competition and rivalry had developed and Mississippi had changed to the opinion that Natchez would offer a better site.⁷⁸ Up the river also Cairo hungered for the naval depot, and Missouri was uncertain. Therefore Senator R. J. Walker of Mississippi, Senator Breese of Illinois, and Senator Atchison of Missouri opposed the bill, which was supported, however, by Bayard of Delaware, chairman of the Committee on Naval

⁷²5 *Stat. at L.*, p. 626.

⁷³28 Cong., 1 Sess., Rep. of Com., vol. 1, Rep. 120.

⁷⁴28 Cong., 1 Sess., Exec. Doc., vol. 3, Doc. 33.

⁷⁵*Cong. Globe*, 28 Cong., 1 Sess., p. 41.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, p. 320.

⁷⁸27 Cong., 3 Sess., Exec. Doc., vol. 4, Doc. 123.

Affairs.⁷⁹ The efforts of the Tennesseans were successful and the sum of \$100,000 was appropriated for the establishment of the navy yard at Memphis.⁸⁰ It developed that the Tennessee Legislature had not formerly given its consent, so at the next session of Congress this was waived until the Tennessee Assembly should meet.⁸¹ In 1844 a report of progress was made to the Secretary of the Navy by Rousseau, Adams and Johnston, together with a plat of the navy yard.⁸² Unfortunately, before the naval depot was fairly started the plans regarding it were changed, the original intention was never fully carried out and finally the plant was ceded to the city of Memphis.⁸³

THE RIVER AND HARBOR BILL OF 1844.

The Western newspapers contained many evidences of a widespread interest in the scheme of defense. Maury continued to write letters under the signature, "Harry Bluff," which appeared in the Chicago *Democrat* and were widely copied. The *Journal*, of Louisville, Kentucky, reminded the Government of its duty to the South and West. The ignorance of the East as to the West was remarkable. The people of the East should see the floating palaces on the Mississippi and its tributaries, which afforded 15,000 miles of steamboat navigation and necessitated the employment of over 400 steamboats. This navigation must be made safe; the rivers must

⁷⁹*Cong. Globe*, 28 Cong., 1 Sess., pp. 478 ff., 499, 505, 511, 692.

⁸⁰5 *Stat. at L.*, p. 665.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, p. 796, approved February 13, 1845.

⁸²28 Cong., 2 Sess., Exec. Doc., vol. 1, Doc. 2, pp. 634-636.

⁸³In October, 1845, bids for the construction of a navy yard were being opened in Washington by the Secretary of the Navy (*Diary of James K. Polk*, vol. 1, p. 54). At the end of March, 1846, Stanton of Tennessee complained that the work on the navy yard had been delayed and was likely to be delayed much longer. President Polk promptly sent for George Bancroft and urged haste, and Morrison of Memphis was sent home with the necessary orders (*ibid.*, 303-304). Bancroft in his annual report had severely criticized the proposed navy yard as framed on a scale of extravagant expenditure, and recommended a more restrictive scope for its activities. (29 Cong., 1 Sess., Exec. Doc., vol. 1, Doc. 2, p. 648.) This brought about a protest from the Legislature of Tennessee which urged that the full program of 1844 should be carried out. (29 Cong., 1 Sess., Exec. Doc., vol. 5, Doc. 125.) The navy appropriation act of 1846 definitely required, however, that the development of the Memphis navy yard should be confined to the construction of a rope walk. (9 *Stat. at L.*, p. 100.) In 1847, 1848, 1849 and 1850, appropriations amounting each year to more than \$100,000 were made. (*Ibid.*, pp. 170-171, 296, 376, 516.) In 1851 the appropriation was \$50,000 for the preservation of public property at Memphis and the rope walk at said place. (*Ibid.*, p. 624.) Later minor appropriations were made. (10 *Stat. at L.*, pp. 101, 103, 222.) But in 1854 the navy yard was ceded to the mayor and aldermen of Memphis. (*Ibid.*, pp. 586-7.)

be cleared. This was all that was needed in time of peace, but in war Great Britain might seize every ship that left New Orleans. The *Journal* referred to the essay by Maury in the *Southern Review* and summed up his proposal with regard to the Florida Straits and the Tortugas. A naval depot was needed in the West and if Memphis should be selected, Kentucky would be satisfied. Later the editor was more emphatic in support of the Memphis navy yard and shipbuilding plant, preferring it to the Tortugas scheme.⁸⁴ The citizens of Memphis, on the other hand, reciprocated by supporting other projects. Thus in January, 1844, the activity of Indiana and Illinois in the improvement of the Wabash River by making it a slack water navigation was brought to the attention of the people of Memphis and a public meeting was held in support of the plan.⁸⁵

The improvement of the western rivers was further encouraged by the passage of a river and harbor act in June, 1844, which was most liberal to the states of the Mississippi Valley.⁸⁶ To Tyler's approval of this bill and his veto of that for the rivers and harbors of the East reference was made above. In the latter he found it necessary to forestall a charge of inconsistency and did so by saying "The Mississippi occupies a footing altogether different from the rivers and water courses of the different states. No one state or a number of states can exercise any other jurisdiction over it than for the punishment of crimes and the service of civil process. It belongs to no particular state or states, but of common right, by express reservation, to all the states. It is reserved as a great common highway for the commerce of the whole country. . . . The United States therefore is charged with its improvement for the benefit of all and the appropriation of governmental means to its improvement becomes indispensably necessary for the good of all." As for the lakes, it was as important for the government to establish good harbors as to build breakwaters on the Atlantic coast. The lakes were called "Great Inland Seas." If John C. Calhoun, at this time Secretary of State, did not write these parts of Tyler's message, the sentiments here expressed were at least those which he was soon to elaborate in more refined and expanded form at the Memphis convention of 1845.⁸⁷ (To be continued.)

ST. GEORGE L. SIOUSSAT.

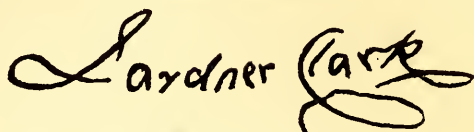
⁸⁴Louisville *Journal*, Dec. 5, 8, 1843.

⁸⁵Memphis *Enquirer*, Jan. 20, 27, 1844.

⁸⁶*R. and H. Laws*, vol. 1, p. 100. 5 *Stat. at L.*, pp. 661-662.

⁸⁷Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers*, vol. 4, pp. 330 ff. In this connection I have used with profit a ms. paper by Mr. D. L. McMurry.

LARDNER CLARK, NASHVILLE'S FIRST MERCHANT AND FOREMOST CITIZEN.¹

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lardner Clark". The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent flourish at the end of the word "Clark".

[Signature of Lardner Clark.]

From the very beginning of the earliest French settlements in the Illinois country and lower Mississippi, French Lick, or the site of our present Nashville, was visited by traders, trappers and hunters, having with them canoeloads of trinkets, etc., for barter with the Indians. This measure of trade is hardly dignified enough to come under the head of "merchant," so is cast aside and what shall be considered is the personage who first came to the Cumberland settlement for a permanent residence, and who opened a regular place of business for the sale of goods, supplying continuously the wants of the pioneers with reference to dry goods, clothing, notions and groceries.

SOURCES FOR DATA.

The statement made by Putnam in his *History of Middle Tennessee*, published in 1859, is copied almost verbatim in all later accounts of the business history of Nashville.²

Putnam's authority seems to have been a then extant "Day-book of L. Clark, Merchant and Ordinary Keeper," which was afterwards lost, or at least is not recorded as preserved among the manuscripts given by Mr. Putnam to the Tennessee Historical Society. The notices appear on pages 173 and 174 and footnote on page 292, as follows:

"For the establishment of the first dry goods store in the new country, the stock was packed from Philadelphia to the Falls upon horses. This was the store of Daniel Broadhead. The second store was at Lexington, and was opened by Colonel (afterwards General) James Wilkinson.

"Small supplies for the settlers were purchased at Wilkinson's store. It was several years later than this when a small dry goods store was opened at the little town in the cedars

¹An address delivered before the Tennessee Historical Society at its February meeting, 1917.

²See Judge Guild's *Old Times*, 1878, p. 468. Clayton's *History of Davidson County*, 1880, p. 197. *History of Nashville*, 1890, p. 89. Gilmore's *Advance Guard of the Revolution*, p. 75., etc.

at the Bluff. And then salt was of more value than silks and broadcloths.

"The name of 'Lardner Clark, Merchant and Ordinary Keeper,' may be placed at the head of the list of dealers in dry goods, thimbles and pins for ladies, dinners and liquors for men, and provender for horses. The merchant-princes of our city, and the landlords of our hotels, need not be ashamed to be called 'successors of Hon'ble Clark,' for he was Justice of the Peace also. Ten horses, packed with goods from Philadelphia, traveling by slow stages through the length of Virginia, and arriving at the Bluff in the fall of the year 1786, was a sight worth looking at, and proves that Nashville was not then 'a one-horse town!' We doubt if the Honorable Lardner Clark, in the half dozen years in which he was in business imported or sold a single silk dress or satin. Cheap, plain chintzes and calicoes and unbleached linens and coarse woolens constituted the choice of his stock. For his imported goods the merchant was glad to receive peltries: skins of all sorts and sizes, from the buffalo bull's, the monster bear's, down to the spotted fawn's and soft fine velvet of the beaver and hare."

This statement of Putnam is practically all that has ever been known concerning Lardner Clark, and was the sole material in hand when this research was begun. The added data have for their authority the various record books of the county of Davidson, including Minute Books, Will Books and Deed Books. Further references are made to the series of State Records of North Carolina, to volumes of the Illinois Historical Society, to the archives of New Jersey, the manuscripts of the Tennessee Historical Society, and to investigations made for the writer by friends in the Spanish archives of the St. Louis Historical Society, and others in Philadelphia, New Jersey, and Missouri.³

SETTLEMENT.

No close student of the history of this settlement fails to see that our hitherto old historians, Fiske, Haywood, Ramsey, Putnam, etc., have set all their historic data in the over-emphasized importance of the representatives of North Carolina and Virginia settlers. The perspective furnished by our present-day material concerning the early settlements of the Mississippi Valley is wholly wanting. Once only is it mentioned incidentally, that James Robertson "went on to Kaskias and the Illinois," and even this fact has commonly

³The writer records his special indebtedness to Mrs. Ida M. Schaaf, St. Mary's, Mo., and to Mr. Frank H. Stewart, Philadelphia.

received a subordinate interpretation.⁴ Still another neglected factor is the failure to give recognition to the important contribution made to the history of the earliest days of settlement by emigrants from the eastern colonies of the United States, some of them, historically; true New Englanders—Yankees. Years ago the attention of the writer was attracted by finding certain family names on our records that unmistakably tell the story of eastern, and even New England origin.

Note the echo of Puritan ecclesiasticism in the following: *Eusebius* Bushnell, *Ebenezer* Titus, *Lardner* Clark, *Aquila* Carmick, *Adam* Hope, *Cornelius* Ruddle, *Heydon* Wells, *Abigail* Sugg, *Prudence* ———, *Patience* ———, *Adam* Hampton, etc. Possibly not all of these came directly from the East; some drifted southward, first to Virginia and the Carolinas, and later westward. Others were immediately from the Eastern colonies, and came first to the Illinois country, then up the Cumberland River to the French Lick settlement.

A JERSEY FAMILY.

About the time of the American Revolution there lived in Gloucester County, New Jersey, a family bearing the English name *Clark*, probably from New England to Jersey.

An early member of this family was Thomas Clark, a settler at Clark's Landing, on Little-Egg-Harbour, then Gloucester County, where the family was the most conspicuous of the plantation owners of South Jersey. His son was Elijah Clark, a highly esteemed and prosperous business man in the county of Gloucester. Married, April 29th, 1756, to Jane Lardner, a daughter of the Lardner family of Philadelphia. He shared largely in the civic and political history of his colony, being a member of the Provincial Congress of New Jersey, held in May, June and August, 1775, from the county of Gloucester; was also a member of the convention sitting in Burlington, Trenton and New Brunswick, June to August, 1776. Previous to November 6th, 1777, he was a Lieutenant-Colonel of the Gloucester militia, resigning his military position to become a member of the Assembly, January, 1778.⁵

At the close of this year he seems to have sold his plantation in South Jersey and located anew at Haddonfield, nearer to Philadelphia. He died December 9th, 1795. An idea of

⁴This subject is elaborated more at length in an address delivered by the writer before the Illinois Historical Society, April, 1916, on *Timothy DeMonbreun*.

⁵From "Newspaper Clippings," Archives of New Jersey, Second Series, vol. III, pp. 1 and 2, and vol. II, p. 592.

colonial plantation life at this time in New Jersey may be gathered from two advertisements here added:

“TO BE SOLD.

“At the forks of Little-Egg-Harbour, Gloucester County, State of New Jersey. The premises whereon the subscriber now lives, with all their buildings and improvements thereon, to-wit, a saw-mill and grist-mill, both remarkable for their going fast, and supplied with a never failing stream of water. The mills are within a mile and a quarter of a landing to which vessels of 70 and 80 tons burthen may come; Scows that carry seven or eight thousand feet of boards can go loaded from the mill-tail. There is a sufficient quantity of pine and cedar timber to supply the saw-mill for a number of years, and also a great quantity of cedar fit for rails, near the water side which may be very easily exported to those parts of the country where they will sell to a great advantage. There is also on the premises a dwelling-house that will accommodate a large family, also a barn, stables and out-houses, a number of houses for workmen and tradesmen, also wet and dry goods stores, and indeed every building necessary to render a place convenient for carrying on business and trade extensively.

“Any person intending to purchase may be further informed by applying to the subscriber at the place aforesaid.

“Dec. 14, 1778.

ELIJAH CLARK.”

“ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS REWARD.

“Was stolen on the night of the 21st instant from the subscriber’s plantation, near Haddonfield, Gloucester County, State of New Jersey, a bright bay HORSE, about fourteen and a half hands high, rather slim built, short hair, a little cat-ham’d, his hind ancle joints bend forward when hard used, his main lies on the off side, no hair cut about his head, paces none, trots very fast, shod before.

“Whoever secures said horse, so that the owner may get him again, shall (if taken within ten miles of this place) have five hundred dollars, and if further off, seven hundred and fifty dollars, and for the horse and thief a Thousand Dollars and all reasonable charges paid, by James Vanuxen and Clark in Philadelphia, or by me.

ELIJAH CLARK.”

“June 23.

Elijah Clark and Jane Lardner reared quite a large family, among them children bearing the names of Lardner, Elisha,

“Newspaper Clippings,” Archives of New Jersey, vol. IV, p. 454, Second Series. Advertisement in the “Penn. Packet,” June 24, 1780.

John, and a daughter Rebecca, later married to James Van-Uxen, a merchant of Philadelphia. The latter were the parents of Prof. Lardner Van-Uxen, a distinguished geologist and scientist of New York State. That this household, with its New England ideals, gave to the children of the home every educational and cultural advantage that the peculiar disturbed conditions of the times afforded is to be assumed. And yet it must be remembered that this region of our country suffered, and was desolated by the Revolution in a fearful manner; privation, limitations, etc., were the uniform experiences of all households. Lardner Clark, one of these sons, displayed in after life that he had received unusual advantages for mental and moral improvement in his youthful days. He had both an English and classical education, though it is probable that he was never able to carry it to the point of a college graduate. Possibly the call to arms came to him just at this period, for while the facts do not justify us in saying that he served in the army, yet he was in after life given responsibilities that would rather infer he had experienced army service.⁷

That he had attained his majority before the close of the Revolution is shown in that he became a land owner as early as 1779, the records of the county of Gloucester so indicating. A transfer of land by deed July 26, 1780, in the same records speaks of him as "Lardner Clark, Merchant of Philadelphia,"* thus indicating that about this date he had already entered his life vocation in the neighboring city. A printed funeral sermon found among his papers in later years discloses an interest shared at this time in the person of Richard Stockton, a fellow Jerseyman, and noted as one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. The sermon was delivered by Rev. Dr. Stanhope Smith at the burial of Mr. Stockton at Princeton in 1781.

WYCOFF AND CLARK, MERCHANTS, KASKASKIAS OF THE ILLINOIS.

Immediately after the surrender to England of the vast French domain of the Mississippi Valley, measures were concerted for its effectual occupation. Among these was that English merchants and traders would be encouraged to proceed with, or immediately follow on, the occupation of the country by the military forces stationed at the old French towns and forts. This was done to compel these new regions to give their trade to the English and thus break up as far

⁷See page 49.

*He was associated in business with his brother-in-law, James Van-Uxen.

as possible their attachments to the former regime. This original encouragement given was continued for a number of years and the "Illinois Country" became to young America the field of imaginative dreams of mercantile success, besides furnishing much to satisfy the "call of the wild" with its good and bad furnishings.

About 1780-1781 Lardner Clark associated with himself a fellow Jerseyman of Monmouth County—William Wycoff, Jr. Possibly these young men were sent forth backed by larger firms in Philadelphia, as it is hardly reasonable that alone they would be able to inaugurate a business in the then far West unless they had financial support. The old French town of Kaskaskias, situated a little north of the mouth of the Ohio on the Mississippi River, was the chosen location of the new venture. It was reached from Philadelphia by a journey to the headwaters of the Potomac, then over the mountains to Fort Pitt, where boats were taken down the Ohio, eventually reaching, by stemming the tide of the muddy Mississippi, this metropolis of the West, sometimes poetically called "Little Paris." A record of those who claimed citizenship in Kaskaskias on or before 1783, has the names of William Wycoff and Lardner Clark.⁸

There were many things in the Illinois country at this time that seriously militated against the success of business enterprises. The country was still without much form of government, little respect for authority, no means of formal collection of accounts, etc. There existed great jealousies between the larger mercantile firms represented in the settlement, and much more between them and the old French traders and hunters. The population was a sad mixture of French, Spanish and renegade English from Canada and the colonies. The Indians were still surly and dissatisfied and competing settlements had grown up on the Spanish side at St. Genevieve and Paincourt, the local name for the village represented by our present St. Louis.

THE FRENCH LICK OR CUMBERLAND COUNTRY.

For seventy-five years the local French of Kaskaskias had been familiar with the hunting grounds of the Shawnees, designated after their visitation by the French traders, as the "French Lick" and later known as the Cumberland Settlement. The common date hitherto accepted as the commencement of settlement here by the North Carolina and Virginia pioneers, is January, 1780, so at the coming of Lardner Clark to Kaskaskias this settlement was still in swaddling clothes.

⁸Mason, *Early Chicago*, p. 200.

Some of the Kaskaskians—English and French—were among the first settlers at Nashborough,⁹ and many others plied their trade with these lonely pioneers. By water route Kaskaskias was the nearest settlement to them. Thus intercourse was kept up and social and business acquaintanceship fostered. The firm of Wycoff & Clark was not long established ere they sought to reach with their goods the new Cumberland River settlement, and this gave to our subject opportunity for his first visit to what was to become our present city of Nashville.

THE COMING OF THE COMMISSIONERS.

February 1, 1783, is to be reckoned as an important date in the developing of the infant colony on the Cumberland. Up to this time the settlement had made little progress, both because of Indian persecution and the fact that the sacrificing colonists had as yet no titles to their lands. As early as 1780—hastened, no doubt, by the occupation of these lands by emigrants—the State of North Carolina made good to its soldiers of the continental line its former promise of remuneration for war duties by passing an act that reserved this whole region west of the Cumberland Mountains for these soldiers.

Since the country was fast filling up, and the possibility was that all of the lands would not be needed to pay off this obligation, the Assembly in 1782, raised a commission to go to the West and lay off a definite portion as a reservation for the soldiers and to effect titles for those who had at an earlier date made settlement there.¹⁰

This commission was given authority to employ a guard of military for protection against the Indians, and a retinue of surveyors and assistants for a proper location of the plat, also numerous other helpers in the way of hunters, etc., of the commissary department.

In addition, the proceeding of such a well-protected caravan to the wilderness settlement furnished an opportunity for many families to emigrate, as well as brought in many undesirables in the way of fugitives from justice, camp-followers, etc.

This noted company arrived at the French Lick about the close of January, 1783, and on or about February 1 made their start toward the southern boundary of the State.¹¹ It is needless to say that there was no trouble in finding adventurers for this expedition, for every retainer from the humblest

⁹First name given the settlement.

¹⁰N. C. State Rec., vol. XXIV, p. 419.

¹¹Haywood, p. 187; Putnam, *History of Middle Tenn.*, p. 172.

to the greatest was richly rewarded in land-claims for his service. This ranged from a minimum of 320 acres up to the thousands.

CLARK "ONE OF THE GUARDS."

This recital at length of the coming of the commissioners is recorded to give opportunity of saying—in the oft-repeated formula of the deed-records of Davidson County as to "guard rights"—that Lardner Clark was "*one of the guards.*" It is quite possible that when the commission party arrived at Nashborough they found a goodly company gathered from Kentucky, the Illinois and other settlements to the west, ready to jeopardize their lives for the 320 acres or more. Wide advertisement had been given to the enterprise, hence the worthy patriots had gathered from many sources. The expedition apparently promised more immediate "glory" to the volunteers and less danger than Lexington or King's Mountain! Guard duty having been discharged and "rights" secured, Nashborough became a place of permanent interest to many of these visitors. Then, too, their opportunity to locate and know all the fine lands over the district had been well improved during the service; very certain they had kept their eyes on something in addition to the "gun"! Also it was known that countless soldiers of the Revolution who thus had claims granted them for these lands would never in person occupy them, but immediately on provision being made to perfect title they sold their claims, and for comparatively small valuation. Thus many of the "guards," as well as others, had an opportunity to buy up vast plats of choicest lands, which made them and their descendants great wealth.

The wealth and position of a large part of the Old South, so far as it relates to Tennessee, with its aristocracy and plantation life, roots itself back in this historic opportunity.

OPENS A MERCHANDIZE STORE AT NASHBOROUGH.

Many of these visitors to Cumberland Settlement mounted their horses to ride back over the mountains or pushed out in their canoes from the mouth of French Lick Branch to descend the Cumberland, with new life plans in their minds. So Lardner Clark determined as he paddled down the Cumberland to the Illinois that here at Nashborough was the coming situation that the firm of Wycoff and Clark must use for the extension of their merchandize business. It is not certainly known that Mr. Wycoff became interested in this second venture. The firm remained the same as to Kaskaskias, but there are no data to show but that the Nashborough enterprise was the property of Lardner Clark alone. Not later than the *summer*

of 1783 finds the FIRST MERCHANT IN NASHVILLE behind his rude counters ministering to the wants of the pioneer settlers, English and French, and the wandering Cherokee and Chickasaw.

It will be noted that Putnam gives the credit to Daniel Broadhead for opening the first store in Kentucky, at the Falls, in 1783, and followed by that of Wilkinson at Lexington, dating that of Lardner Clark at Nashville in 1786.¹² The above are secure data for moving back Putnam's date some three years, whereby Clark, instead of being the third in succession, becomes a contemporary, and Nashville and Louisville stand side by side in date of business history.

The scant records afford information to the effect that during these few months of summer and fall, 1783, the store at Nashborough did at least enough *credit* business to command a deal of attention in the way of litigation in the first county court. This court had been authorized by an act of the Assembly of May, 1783, creating Davidson County.¹³ The first court met in October, 1783, and at this term Clark introduced certain collection cases, which were followed up in action at the next term in January, 1784. A minute of the January term of court, 1783,—“Lardner Clark enters suit against William Oglesby, etc., for goods sold,”—with a change of name only, is an oft-repeated entry on the pages of this body, and beneath it is the story of “*credit*” whose pathetic sequel will be later indicated. The same court records a deed of transfer of land bought by Clark from the State of North Carolina as assignee of James Todd, who possessed a land claim: “320 acres on the waters of Mill Creek, on the *buffaloe road* that leads to the French Lick”—this ancient path followed a course very much the same as the present Nolensville pike. There is no name that appears oftener in the first deed book of Davidson County—“Book A”—than that of L. Clark, from the fourth and fifth deeds onward. The same first court discharged its important duty to the newly organized county by making certain fixed prices on the seeming indispensables—whisky, taffia (a French wine) and West India rum.

NASHBOROUGH BECOMES NASHVILLE.

Hardly can it be said that “Nashborough” had really “become,” ere it suffered a change of name, losing the old English termination “borough” to receive the French touch “ville.” Just who was responsible for this is not indicated, but possibly may be either charged up to some local influence, or to

¹²See 'p. 28.

¹³N. C. State Rec., vol. XXIV, p. 540.

some more foreign, as seems to have been felt in the case of the sister city of *Louis-ville*. The Assembly of May, 1784, provided for the laying out of a town "at the place called the Bluff, near the French Lick."* Commissioners were appointed and provision made for the laying out of a plat containing 200 acres. The trustees were to solicit from the settlers subscriptions to these lots by an agreement to take one or more at a certain stated price, and when the subscription list had amounted to as many as fifty the numbers of the lots were to be placed in a box and drawn for, and the trustees issue deeds to the parties as per the number of the drawing. Certain conditions were imposed upon all as to improvements, etc.

L. Clark was fortunate enough to share in a very favorable drawing, as his number called for *Lot No. 11*. This is represented in the present plan of Nashville in the block embraced within the boundaries of Church, Second Avenue, Clark and First Avenue. The details of the transaction are best shown in the form of deed made:

"Trustees of Nashville to Lardner Clark.

"Know all men by these presents that we, Samuel Barton, Thos. Molloy and James Shaw, Directors and Trustees of ye town of Nashville, in ye State of North Carolina, in consideration of *four pounds*, lawful currency of ye aforesaid state; do hereby grant and convey to Lardner Clark, his heirs and assignees ye Lot No. 11 in ye aforesaid town of Nashville, and every part and parcel thereof, to have and to hold ye said Lot No. 11 and every part and parcel thereof, with every of its rights, privileges, easements, advantages, emoluments and appurtenances, to ye said Clark, his heirs and assigns, from ye day of ye date of these presents, forever; under ye rule, restrictions and provisos hereafter mentioned, viz: That ye said Lardner Clark shall within three years after ye date of this conveyance, effect, build and finish on ye said lot, *one well framed square log, brick or stone house*, sixteen feet square at least and eight feet pitch in ye clear, with brick or stone chimney, or proportional to said dimensions, if ye said Clark shall have one or more lots contiguous, according to an Act of Assembly in such case made and provided.

"In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands and seals, this the *6th day of July*, in the year of Our Lord 1784, and ninth of our Independence. Which deed of conveyance was acknowledged to said Lardner Clark by Samuel Barton and Thomas Molloy in court for the County of Davidson, on the 8th of April, in the year of Our Lord 1785."¹⁴

*N. C. State Rec., vol. XXIV, p. 616.

¹⁴Deed Book "A," p. 13.

“HEAP BIG INDIAN” AT CLARK’S STORE.

Our narrative cannot dwell at length on the events of this year. Sufficient to say among them was the experience of our merchant having to take some of his own legal medicine, as it is found that one Philip Alston, a refugee citizen from the Spanish Natchez country, enters suit against L. Clark. This was a sequel to another interesting occasion, viz: the visit of a delegation of Chickasaw Indians.

During the summer Nashville was visited by a band of some thirty Chickasaw Indians, with certain of their chiefs, among them one William Glover. They came to confer with Col. James Robertson in reference to the invasion of their lands by the whites in the “bend” of Tennessee River. While here they found much to interest them in Clark’s “emporium,” and that he did business with them is indicated in the one transaction given in the court records, with Chief Glover:

“That on the 11th of July, 1784, at Nashville in ye county aforesaid, the said Lardner Clark by his written subscription did assume to pay *William Glover, a Chief Indian of ye Chickasaw Nation*, ye sum of twenty dollars at any time when required. And whereon the said Glover not being able to talk to ye said white people did afterwards, to-wit, on the 14th day of July in ye year aforesaid, desire ye said Philip Alston to receive the subscription and pay him in goods for ye same, which ye said Philip Alston did and took his receipt for same, and afterwards, to wit on the 31st day of July in ye year aforesaid, did by his public acknowledgement deliver the said money, etc.”¹⁵

THINGS MORE “TENDER.”

The cut we are enabled to insert here turns our thoughts toward more tender things. Though possibly the interesting event was decorated with much rough trimming, and unless the good Parson Craighead had arrived by this time, the event was lacking in the grace of proper canonicals. For fear the small print of the cut is difficult of being deciphered it is made bolder in print:

“To Any Lawful Magistrate
Of the County of Davidson,

These are to permit and License you to join

LARDNER CLARK AND ELIZABETH BOWEN,

Both of this County, together in the holy State Matrimony, he having given bond and Security Agreeable to the Statutes

¹⁵N. C. State Rec., XVII, 85, 92. Davidson Co. Min. Bk. I, p. 48.

Box C-1-1124-C.

To any Lawfull Magistrate
Of the County of Carver

And me to permit and licence you to join
London Charles and Elizabeth Brown
Both of this County together in the holy State of
Matrimony ^{the} being bound and Security Agreeable
to the Statutes in that behalf made and provided.
And for your so doing this shall be your
Warrant. Witness my hand and Seal of the
said County at Office this 22nd day of July 1784



Andrew Diving

in such case made and provided. And for your so doing, this shall be your Warrant. Witness, Andrew Ewing, Clerk of the said County, at Office, this the 22nd day of July, 1784.

Andrew Ewing.¹⁶

The story of this domestic felicity is of this wise. A certain worthy family by the name of Bowen¹⁷ had at an early date settled in Augusta County, Virginia. There the father, John Bowen, had died, and his widow, Rachel Matthews Bowen, with a number of her children came to the Cumberland country, settling in the Mansker's Station neighborhood near the present site of Goodlettsville. Later she was followed by her husband's younger brother, William Bowen, who also settled in this vicinity. The widow Bowen had attractive daughters, and as above indicated, one of them won the heart of our New Jersey Yankee; another captured Daniel Frazier, perhaps also from the East, and to show the fair widow to be still possessed of Virginia charms, it is to be recorded that another of our down East settlers, Ebenezer Titus, took her to wife. Thus was set an example that later many others of our Eastern friends have followed.

THE "BATTLE OF THE KEGS."

This is the caption that Mr. Putnam gives to a transaction in which Nashville and Kaskaskias are involved, and Lardner Clark one of the combatants. However, the story is so overlaid with personal observations of the historian, etc., as that the historical part is obscured. This is best brought out in quotations from the records, even though it be at the risk of too great detail. At the October term of the County Court of Davidson, 1784, Lardner Clark made a presentment against one Samuel Martin, a citizen of the county, upon which he was seized and placed in the common prison, from which he was only released after some months of confinement. The "declaration" in the case was as follows:

"Lardner Clark complains of Samuel C. Martin in custody, etc., to wit: Whereas Wm. Wycoff, his partner in the Illinois Country, in ye month of July or August last past, purchased of John East, Agt. for Mr. Truckey at Au Post, two-thirds of a certain cask of red-wine, which was lost out of Mr. Truckey's batteau, which was then in the river Mississippi.

"Which said cask of wine was found by Jno. S. Sigvauld. And agreeable to proclamation of Mr. Truckey's, intituled him to one third of the wine, and it was accordingly cased to him,

¹⁶TENNESSEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY Mss., Box E-1-24.

¹⁷See Appendix in succeeding instalment.

and by the said Sigvault sold to the before mentioned Mr. Wycuff, which made him owner of the whole cask of wine. And that the plaintiff's partner endeavored to contract with the said Martin to bring the cask of wine to the plaintiff at Nashville, and informed the defendant where the s'd cask of wine was, proposing that ye said defendant take it to this place for a valuable consideration. But that they, ye before mentioned Wycuff and Martin, could not agree on ye portage of ye wine, and the said Wycuff concluded to leave it there until another opportunity might offer. But that ye said Martin, taking the advantage of the before mentioned information, took the cask of wine from the place where it was concealed in the river there, and brought it to Nashville, and that notwithstanding the plaintiff claimed the cask of wine immediately on its arrival here, he the aforesaid Martin, refused to deliver it, but sold it for his own account, and never has, but still refuses to make any satisfaction for the same,—

“Wherefore ye plaintiff saith he is injured, and hath damages to the amount of four hundred pounds specie, and thereupon he brings suit and good proof, etc.”¹⁸

The case was long drawn out owing to depositions, etc., having to be taken in the Illinois Country and parties summoned to appear in Nashville from these distant settlements. The prisoner, however, was finally released on bail at the July term, 1785, at which same court the deposition of Captain Tardiveau, a respected citizen of Kaskaskias, was taken. At the next court in October, the depositions of one Jno. Sigvault and Sarah Dunnareau, French citizens of Illinois, were read, the former was as follows:

“John Sigvault, a witness in the cause of Lardner Clark, plaintiff, against Samuel C. Martin:

“After being sworn on the voire-dire, sayeth: That he is neither gainer or loser in the event of the suit, and further sayeth on his oath, that last Spring he went from Nashville to the Illinois by water, and when he came to the mouth of the Ohio, he embarked on board of a batteau, the property of Mr. Truckey, and when he was in two leagues of the mouth of Cucusca¹⁹ Creek, the boat was lost by a tree falling across it, and part of the goods on board the boat was lost. On which, Mr. Truckey, the owner of the goods, issued a proclamation declaring that the finder of any of the goods should be entitled to a 1-3 part of the goods so found. And that the deponent found one 50 or 60 gallon cask of red wine, which he hid near

¹⁸Old Minute Book of Davidson County Court, vol. 1, p. 70.

¹⁹Kaskaskias.

the mouth of the Ohio, and then went to the Illinois in company of the defendant, and informed John East,²⁰ Agent for Mr. Truckey, of the wine, and Mr. East directed him to Mr. Demumbre, the acting magistrate of the Illinois, and there proved it to be the property of Mr. Truckey. Which he accordingly did, and here produces his affidavit which he then saw made. And Mr. East refused to give him a 1-3 part of the wine so found, because he did not bring it up to the Illinois, and says that Mr. John East sold the same to said Wicuff in his presence, and desired the deponent to apply to Mr. Wicuff for 1-5 part of the said wine, which the said Wicuff agreed to pay on the delivery of the wine, and says that Mr. Wicuff applied to the defendant to carry the wine to Nashville. But knows not whether they made an actual agreement, but that the defendant told Mr. Wicuff that he did not offer sufficient freight, but that he would carry it if he had room in his boat. And being cross-examined by the defendant, he says, that after he found the wine, his company would not go up to the Illinois with him, and that he then intended to bring the wine to Nashville.

“And further sayeth not.”²¹

On the final hearing, October 5th, the various depositions were placed before the jury, on which they returned a verdict for the plaintiff Clark allowing him *one shilling!* From which the defendant *appealed* to the *Superior Court*,—into which it is not our purpose to proceed in further chase of the “shilling.”²²

“TABLES TURNED”!—JURY SERVICE, ETC.

It seems that our Merchant did not wholly escape the penalties of the law he was so prone to invoke in his collection of accounts, for the records of this same January, 1785, term of court show that Lardner Clark was indicted for *retailing spirituous liquors* without license for same, to which he pleaded guilty. That there were some extenuating elements may be inferred, since it is further recorded,—“On which, *from circumstances, think fit to remit same!*” That his character had not been severely damaged is further to be inferred, since the closing action of the same court nominated a Grand Jury for the succeeding term, in which panel appears the name of L. Clark.²³

²⁰He afterward lived at New Madrid.

²¹Dav. Co. Min. Book [old vol.] I, pp. 118-119. New Min. Bk. I, p. 67.

²²Min. Bk. I, p. 99.

²³Min. Bk. I, p. 55.

THE "HOUSE WITH A PIAZZA"!

Just now our progressive townsman goes about an undertaking that made him further noted in local annals, showed his apparent leadership, gave permanence to his purpose of becoming a fixed resident, and incidentally became an example and inspiration toward civic improvement.

This is the building of what, in his day was no doubt called, an elaborate dwelling, having appointments and comforts far above anything else so far seen in the village. It has been seen that in his original drawing of town lots he became the owner of Lot No. 11. To this he now adds by purchase, Lot No. 10,—just north of it, making him possessor of all that now central part of our wholesale district bounded by the present Union, First Avenue, Church and Second Avenue.²⁴ Almost in the center of this two acre plat he proceeded to erect a large two story log mansion. It was sufficiently roomy to furnish space for a dwelling, public service as a tavern, and also his store room, or place of business. This was no doubt accomplished in the method of the day, by having a wide frontage to the house, with a large porch extending the full length of it, from which ingress was given separately to both the business house and the residence portion, with appropriate ell extension, and other porch accommodations in the rear. Large white limestone chimneys adorned the west and east ends of the mansion, with additional ones in the rear.

In passing, it is to be noted that the mention of L. Clark in the short excerpt from Putnam's History of Middle Tennessee, and the present little Clark Street of our city map, are the only two *written* and *objective* monuments that exist to the memory of our subject in the annals of the city of his adoption. The little street was a means, originally, of entrance to his residence property when he had sold off for business purposes the frontage of his lot, and this space of fifty-one feet was made a perpetual reservation in the first deeds made by Clark to purchasers of his property. This residence of Lardner Clark must be looked upon as a very important factor in the history of our community. Be it remembered that the North Carolina and Virginia settlers were practically all of the plantation and stock-raising character, they from the start, planted and perpetuated the ideals of the Southern agricultural colonies, opening large country homesteads, employing tutors for teachers of their households, erecting country churches for their select neighborhood aristocracy, etc.

While there prevailed a somewhat different life and ideal among the busy tradesmen and shop-keepers of the town, here

²⁴See cut.

Public Square.

Lot No. 24

Lot No 4

[Union St.]

Clark to
Geo. Gordon, 1793.

[Union St.]

Lot No 25

Lot No. 10

Clark to
Williams & Black,
1794.



L. Clark's
residence
1785-1794.

"Stone Wall"

[Clark Street.]

Lot No 26

Lot No. 11

Clark to S. Lewis
1744.

Clark to S. Lewis,
1793.

Cross Street

[Church St.]

Water Street. [First Avenue]

Cumberland River.

Lots 9, 10, 11.
Nashville
1784.

the "Ordinary" or tavern with its accompanying public bar, and forum of political discussion, held sway, and here the latest news by canoe and pirogue or by carrier from over the mountains, or up the Natchez Trail, was first disseminated. Somewhat of the old English type of town-house and public place repeated in the New England civilization, was established by such leaders of civic life as Mr. Clark. Thus his own home from the start, was a place of prominence and influence.

That he was a leader of thought and a molder of opinion is not to be gainsaid, as by rearing and culture, he was prepared above all other of the settlers perhaps, to make a contribution in this respect. The inventory of his private library found later²⁵ is a revelation in itself of what an ambitious, energetic person was able to attain under the limitations of the times and the meager facilities of the day. These volumes show that in early life in New Jersey, he had become familiar with a classical education, and on his emigration to the French settlements of the Illinois he had added to it the further culture of the French language and some of its literature. He later became the avenue by which further refinement was mediated to the settlement in that he imported volumes of literature for the inhabitants, causing some of the cultured ideals of the East to root in the wilderness.

The first volumes mentioned, of a legal character, made him intelligent on the basal things in the law of the country, and showed his desire to culture himself on the things that make for reasonable citizenship and discriminating social relationship. Incidentally they gave him preparation for the more practical duties of the office of Justice of the Peace which he was destined to fill. Other volumes in this library disclose an appreciative varied culture, there being representatives of English literature, in volumes of rhetoric, grammar, and works of Dryden, DeFoe, Addison, Erasmus and Chesterfield. Of history,—volumes of Hume's England, History of the United States, Morse's Universal Geography, etc. Of reference,—Dictionary of Arts and Sciences, of Music, etc., as well as volumes of French and German literature, and a number of other volumes of a more practical valuation.

In addition to the many other social contributions this mansion of Mr. Clark's made to the community, it is probable that it supplied also the place for an auditorium for some of the first religious services held in the village. With the clearing away of the tables, benches and chairs of the capacious dining room, the space was made to serve as altar and "long drawn aisle" for the wilderness penitent, and Parson Craighead, with

²⁵See Appendix in succeeding instalment.

the itinerant Ogden, found more congenial surroundings than even the little crowded Court House could afford.

This building stood about midway between our present Second Avenue and First Avenue on the present Clark Street,—faced the latter, the front edge of the porch being the present north side of Clark Street. The monumental character of the work in the village estimation seems to have been characterized by two items, viz: the great porch in front, called in many records of the day, “*the Piazza*,” and a certain “*stone-wall*” built to the right of the mansion, even with the front line of the “*piazza*” and extending to Second Avenue, serving both as a front fence and a terrace to hold back the soil of the garden.

All of lot No. 11 to the south was his hitching ground for customers, and perhaps served also as livery lots connected with the tavern matters, etc.

THE “ORDINARY,” OR TAVERN.

Since mention has been made of the fact that Mr. Clark combined with his business of merchant that of tavern keeping, it may be noted that in the olden time the official term used to denote the public boarding house, or hotel, was “ordinary,” and license for the pursuing of this business carried with it the privilege of selling the various liquors in use, and prices were duly set for same by the court under the head of “rates for ordinaries.” The form of bond given with its requirements is shown in one of a contemporary in the same village:

“Know all men by these Presents that we, Julius Sanders, Russell Gower, & Thos. Fletcher—

“Of ye County of Davidson in ye State of North Carolina are held and firmly bound unto his Excellency Alexander Martin, Esq. Governor &c. In and over the State, In the sum of One Hundred Pounds Current Money of ye sd: State, To be paid to his Excellency aforesd. his Successors in Office their Assigns. . . . To ye True Performance of which Payment Well & Truly to be made and done: We bind Ourselves and every of us. Our And every of our heirs &c Jointly and Severally Firmly by these Presents. Witness our hand & Seals this 6th day of July 1784. And in the Ninth year of the American Independence.

“The Condition of this Obligation is Such that Whereas the Above bound Julius Sanders—hath Obtained License to keep an Ordinary at Nashville—in the County of Davidson—. If Therefore ye sd. Julius Sanders—do constantly keep, find and provide in his said Ordinary: Good Wholesale Diet for Travellers; and Stabling, Fodder, Hay, Corn, Oats, or Pas-

turage as the Season shall require for their horses: for and during ye Term of One Year: or to the Court of ye County next Succeeding between ye first day of March and the Tenth day of June from the date of these prsnts—And shall not permit any unlawful gaming in his House. Nor on the Sabbath Day Suffer any Person to Tipple or drink any more than is Necessary—Then this Obligation To be Void. Else to Remain in full force & Virtue in Law.

“his Julius Sanders X-mark.

“Russell Gower.

“Thomas Fletcher.²⁶”

Nothing is more interesting today than data on the “price of living,” etc. The rules governing the administration of ye ancient tavern or ordinary of this date required a regulation charge of:

Whisky, per quart, \$1.00 and so in proportion. Dinner, two shillings (25 cts.); supper and breakfast, one shilling six pence (18 3-4 cts.). Corn, per bushel, 4 shillings (50 cts.). Beef, \$5.00 per hundred. Pork, \$8.00 per hundred. Good bear meat—without bones, \$8.00 per hundred. Salt, \$16.00 per hundred.

All of this will appear very reasonable when we compare them with prices of the earlier days of the settlement,—especially in the terms of depreciated money,—viz: as at the Falls of the Ohio in 1780, corn sold at \$130.00 per bushel, and on the earliest records of Jefferson County, Ky. (in which the Falls of Ohio were located), for this same early period is the following record:

“The court doth set forth the following rates to be observed by ordinary keepers in this county, to wit: whisky \$15.00 the half pint; corn at \$10.00 the gallon; a diet (meal) at \$12.00; lodging in a feather-bed \$6.00; stablage or pasturage on night, \$4.00.”²⁷

EASTERNER A SLAVEHOLDER.

Brought up in the environment of the East, it is not known what interest this citizen of Jersey had in the question of human servitude.

Yet even in New Jersey there are records concerning the buying and selling of slaves, and when Mr. Clark arrived at his first settlement in the Illinois he found the institution of servitude not only recognized by the Virginia settlers, as the country was then claimed to be a part of Virginia, but also it was known that previous to the occupation of the country by

²⁶TENNESSEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY MSS. *American Historical Magazine* Vol. vol. 5, p. 210.

²⁷Collin's *Common School History of Kentucky*, p. 372.

the English, even from the time of their first settlements, the French had established the institution of servitude, both with the captured Indians, and also the Africans imported from the lower Mississippi settlements. The North Carolina and Virginia pioneers in Davidson County brought with them their slaves, and the sale of slaves was continuously carried on between this settlement and those of the Illinois and lower Mississippi region. Possibly the Bowen family, into which Lardner Clark married, brought with them slaves to the Cumberland country,—anyhow, the demands of his mercantile business made it necessary to recognize the institution, as slaves were given in security for goods purchased, and likewise judgments were levied on same, etc.

We find that on July 2nd, 1787, James McFaddin sells to L. Clark, "one young negro wench, Sally, between the ages of six and seven years for \$225.00."²⁸ 1788, Oct. 4th, L. Clark

²⁸Davidson Co. Will Book I, p. 5.

buys of Anthony Crutcher, "a negro man, Augustus, for value received." 1789, Jan. 10, from Joshua Hadley, "a negro girl, Jemina," and the inventory of his estate in 1802²⁹ shows that the remnant of his slavery investment left at the last, was "and old negro man," who was so decrepid and useless as to bring the amount of \$5.00! Was this the noble *Augustus*, mentioned above!

THE "CITY OF OPPORTUNITY" IN 1785.

The temptation is too great to resist detailing at some length the conditions of life at Nashville at this time,—especially with reference to certain business features. The village was reached in this day from the eastern part of the country either by way of Cumberland Gap, Crab Orchard and southern Kentucky,—“the Wilderness Road,” or from the headwaters of the Potomac over to Ft. Pitt, down the Ohio to Maysville, thence across the country to Lexington, and on south, or the all-water route down the Ohio and up the Cumberland. From the south small trails came in from the Choctaw and Cherokee towns by way of Nickojack and from the Spanish settlements and Chickasaws over the “Natchez Trail.” Here is an original account of perhaps the first visitor to Nashville that is in print. It was written by a German merchant in Baltimore, Lewis Brantz, who visited Nashville in 1785. The narrative is quoted from the time that the traveler reached the mouth of the Cumberland, as he proceeded West, down the Ohio:

“The Cumberland River has its source near the Kentucky, but thence, making a curve, it runs in an intirely opposite di-

²⁹See Appendix in succeeding instalment.

rection; and after a course of about five hundred miles, discharges its water into the Ohio. When it is high, or even tolerably high, it is navigable for more than four hundred miles, but when the stream is low, it cannot be ascended more than two hundred and fifty. Its waters are said to be the quietest of all the western rivers. After passing a day at its mouth, we commence ascending the stream with the aid of eight oarsmen, but found the current much stronger than we expected, and thus we passed *fifteen days*, laboring harder than galley-slaves, before arriving at Nashville (Nash's Station) which is about two hundred and eleven miles from the mouth of the Cumberland. No navigable streams discharge themselves into the Cumberland. The only considerable ones are the *Little River*, the *Red River* and the *Harpeth*. Between the embouchure of the Cumberland and Nashville, there are some white settlements.

"Nashville is a recently founded place, and contains only two houses which in true merit that name;—the rest are only huts that formerly served as a sort of fortification against Indian attacks.

"It is only about five years since the country began to develop; and in the civilized portion of the Union, there are at present but few who know even its name.

"During the War with the British, the inhabitants of this remote station suffered greatly from the inroads of the Indians, and were almost exterminated, when the peace of 1783 released them at once from their dreadful sufferings and horrid anxieties.

"The people resemble those whom I have already spoken of in Kentucky; but their reputation for some time past, has been rather worse than that of their northern neighbors. It is said, however, that since they have come under the laws of North Carolina, their deportment has improved. Some distinguished official personages whose duty required their attendance at this post, have in some degree polished these rough dwellers of the wilderness, who, in their lonely and distant fastness, had in truth begun to live very much like the Indians. Nevertheless, I am sorry to learn that magistrates are occasionally found here with their ears cut off!

"Furs are the sole production of this region, with which the people supply their wants. The traders who supply them with merchandise are mostly Frenchmen, either from Illenois, or the Post Vincennes. The Illenois traders obtain their goods from Michilli-mackinac, or Lake Michigan, and their liquor from New Orleans, while the St. Vincennes people purchase their articles of traffic—(which are generally of a substantial

character) from Detroit, between Lakes Erie and Huron, and transport them up the Miami, thence nine miles by land to the Wabash, and then down the Wabash to the Post at St. Vincennes."³⁰

With reference to the "Circulating Medium" of this period it may be said: "the amount of silver and gold were very small, horses and cows, axes and cow-bells, constituted the ready circulating medium, to this indispensable but variable currency was added, the military warrants for land, and as *small change*, the "guard certificates." The expression was often heard in trade of 'three twenties',—'six forties,' I will give, or take, etc. . . . There is a 'six forty' near Nashville on the Lebanon pike which was once sold for three axes and two cow-bells. A 'faithful rifle' and a clear-toned bell were traded for another tract, each of the tracts are now worth many thousand dollars. Peltries and buffaloe hides served very well to supply the demand for 'foreign exchange,' or rather Eastern or Southern purchases. Small supplies of sugar and salt and coffee came from Orleans, usually by way of the Illinois and Kentucky."³¹

Lardner Clark in his merchandise business represented or bought goods both from Detroit and New Orleans, and also from his acquaintances in business in Philadelphia and the East. The especial firms patronized seems to have been those of George Meldrum & Parks of Detroit, James Albercrombie Co. and James Van-Uxen & Co. of Philadelphia.

WIDENING SPHERE OF INFLUENCE,—“CAPTAIN OF INDUSTRIES.”

The increasing influence which this young Jerseyman was exerting appears from the responsibilities that were about this time placed upon him. And this can be best understood by giving the history of certain movements instituted by enactments of the Assembly of North Carolina. In the year 1785, Davidson County was represented in the Assembly by Messrs. Anthony Bledsoe, in the Senate; William Polk and Elijah Robertson in the Lower House,³² through the influence of whom the following acts were passed bearing on the future of the western country.

1. An act for the inspection of tobacco at Nashville.³³

³⁰*Schoolcraft.*

³¹Putnam, p. 340.

³²N. C. State Rec., vol. XX, p. 1; vol. XVII, pp. 264, 266.

³³N. C. State Rec., vol. XXIV, p. 770.

2. An act for the promotion of learning in the County of Davidson.³⁴

3. An act for the establishment of a town in the forks of Red and Cumberland rivers (viz: Clarksville).³⁵

4. An act to prevent the distillation of liquors in Davidson County for a limited period.³⁶

5. An act for the establishing of a Superior Court for the County of Davidson.³⁷

6. An act for the creation of a Pension Board to care for deserving soldiers of the Revolution.³⁸

And to these may be added that of Nov., 1787.

7. An act to encourage the making of salt in Davidson County.³⁹

With reference to the real import of these acts it may be said that the act for the inspection of tobacco was seemingly anticipatory of the time in which it would be of practical import. Haywood is constrained to comment on its little need at the time, since the Spanish had closed the Mississippi and exportation had thus been blocked. The act to prevent the distillation of liquor had no reference to moral issues, but was a temporary expedient to husband the grain for food, because of the unusual number of emigrants to be cared for, then too it was limited only to about a year in effect.

Four of these enactments, however, deal directly with the subject of this study, that for the promotion of learning in Davidson County, the one for the laying off a town in the forks of Red and Cumberland rivers, the one for the creation of a Pension Board and the added one encouraging the making of salt in Davidson County,—all provided in the face of the act that Lardner Clark should be a trustee or member. Earlier attention has been called to the probability of Mr. Clark having rendered service in the Revolution.⁴⁰ Such a record may have had its influence in his being made Chairman of this new Board of Pensions. It is interesting to note in connection with the personnel of this Board, that Eusebius Bushnell—"a fellow eastener"—with Thomas Molloy, shared the responsibility with

³⁴N. C. State Rec., vol. XXIV, p. 751.

³⁵N. C. State Rec., vol. XXIV, p. 780.

³⁶N. C. State Rec., vol. XXIV, p. 771.

³⁷N. C. State Rec., vol. XXIV, p. 766.

³⁸N. C. State Rec., vol. XXIV, p. 735.

³⁹N. C. State Rec., vol. XXIV, p. 915.

⁴⁰See p. 32.

him. The act for the promotion of learning furnished Mr. Clark a field of influence, record of which will be recounted later, and that of encouraging the making of salt in Davidson County shows him indeed a "captain of industry" battling under severe limitations.

W. A. PROVINE.

(To be continued.)

DOCUMENTS

Letters of James K. Polk to Andrew J. Donelson, 1843-1848

INTRODUCTION.

In a former number of the *TENNESSEE HISTORICAL MAGAZINE*¹ there was printed a series of letters written by James K. Polk to Cave Johnson, in the years 1833-1848. Of these letters one group illustrated Polk's strenuous efforts to secure, in 1843, the nomination of the Democratic party for the Vice-Presidency, with reference to the approaching campaign of 1844. This group threw some light on the course of events that unexpectedly brought into Polk's grasp the nomination for the Presidency, and made clear Polk's activity in the management of his own campaign, and, to some extent, the plans which he made after his election as to the formation of his cabinet and the conduct of business.

Of the letters now printed below, the first group again deals with Polk's aspirations as to the Vice-Presidency, and with the campaign of the summer of 1844; another group has to do chiefly with the annexation of Texas; and the last is related to the diplomatic mission to Prussia of the person to whom the whole series of letters was written by Polk—Andrew J. Donelson, of Tennessee.

Andrew J. Donelson (1799-1871) was a grandson of John Donelson, the pioneer, and a nephew of the wife of General Jackson. Educated at Cumberland College and at West Point, he served as Jackson's aide-de-camp in the Florida campaign, and then studied law at Transylvania University. He was long a member of Jackson's family, and was made the President's private secretary. Thus responsibly and familiarly associated with General Jackson, Donelson established many long personal friendships with the circle of those politically close to the General, and some of these friendships he preserved long after the sharp political alignments which marked Jackson's Presidency. It was to be expected that those who sought to learn the General's views or to impress their own upon him should seek the favor of one so closely in his confidence. But Donelson was more than a secretary of Jackson, he was a man of independent thought. On the part of the United States he successfully negotiated the acceptance by Texas of the policy of annexation to the United States, and his course not only won the approval of Polk at that time, but in recent

¹*Letters of James K. Polk to Cave Johnson, 1833-1848*, Vol. 1, no. 3, pp. 209 ff. (September, 1915.) Hereafter cited as *Polk-Johnson Letters*.

years has been praised by the most critical student of that interesting episode in our history, Dr. Justin H. Smith.²

The immediate reward of Donelson's success in Texas was his appointment by Polk to the Prussian mission, where he succeeded Henry Wheaton, the great publicist in the field of international law. On the establishment of the German Confederation Donelson was made Minister to Frankfort. On his return from Europe he played an important part in the Nashville Convention of 1850, violently opposing the extreme Southern element. Next year he assumed the editorship of the Democratic "organ" in Washington, the *Union*, when its founder, the venerable Thomas Ritchie, was no longer able to please the various factions of the Democratic party. To accomplish this was too much for Donelson, also, and he soon resigned the editorial chair. When the Know-Nothing movement began its spread Donelson went over to it, and in 1856 accepted the nomination of the American party for the office of Vice-President upon the same ticket with Millard Fillmore. His later years were spent at Memphis.

The letters printed below form a consecutive group, comprising about one-half of a series written by Polk to Donelson, the earlier half of which, dealing chiefly with state politics, is now omitted. For permission to publish the letters we are greatly indebted to Mrs. Bettie M. Donelson, of Nashville.

ST. GEORGE L. SIOUSSAT.

- I. *James K. Polk to Andrew J. Donelson, October 19, December 20, 1843: June 26, July 11, 22, 23, August 3, 13, 27, 1844.*³

The circumstances which form the background for the letters of this group have been set forth at some length in the introduction to the corresponding group of the *Polk-Johnson Letters*.⁴ As in that introduction, a general reference may here be made to Justin H. Smith's *The Annexation of Texas*, which, in chapters 5-15, gives an excellent account of the campaign of 1843-1844.

²Justin H. Smith, *The Annexation of Texas*, ch. 20, *passim*, especially pp. 460-461.

³Unless otherwise indicated, the letters are autograph letters, signed. No changes have been made in the text other than the correction of obvious slips of spelling. Those which, like the use of "Brittish" for British, were constitutional with Polk, are allowed to stand. The formal words of salutation and farewell are omitted, as are also the frequent superscriptions PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL. Polk frequently spelled the name of his correspondent as "Donaldson"; but the correct form has been made uniform.

⁴Pp. 229-232.

1. JAMES K. POLK, COLUMBIA, TO A. J. DONELSON, NASHVILLE,

Oct. 19th, 1843.

The result of the elections in Maryland and Georgia,⁵ the close vote and possible defeat in Ohio, are enough to rouse the Democracy if not to a sense of their danger, to the fact now rendered certain that we are to have a hard contest in 1844. I am now anxious to hear from Pennsylvania. I have my fears that the recent defection of *Gen. Porter*⁶ may have produced some effect in that State. The indications are becoming stronger every day, that the Southern wing of our party are to give us trouble. It is most unfortunate that the period of meeting of the National Convention has been postponed so late as May. Should *Mr. Calhoun*⁷ and his friends, refuse to abide by its decision, as I fear they may, the time will be so short that it will require great energy and extraordinary exertion to rally the great body of the party on the nominee so as to avoid defeat. In this state of things what is the proper course to be pursued? In my judgment there is but one that is safe, and that is to denounce any such factious movement in advance, and for the Democracy at the North and East to take open and decided ground at once in expressing their preference not only for the Presidency but for the Vice Presidency also. In regard to the former there will be but little division of opinion, and if there be faith in men, the public opinion in that section of the Union is settled in regard to the latter also. Why then the studied reserve and silence of the Democratic press in that section of the Union in regard to it? The question must be settled in May at furthest, and an expression of opinion *now*, would be much less likely to do mischief, than if delayed until that time, which I have always believed greatly weakened the party in 1839-40, and contributed largely to the defeat which followed. Had the convention at that time nominated *any one* who was not positively objectionable, I have never doubted but that *Mr. Van-Buren* would have carried the vote of *Pennsylvania, Maine* and perhaps States enough to have elected him: at all events his vote would have been much increased. The same error is now I fear from over-caution, and the apprehension of giving offense to some about to be committed. It may now I think be regarded as settled that *Mr. Van-Buren* will be the nominee for the Presidency. *Buchanan* as *Mr. Horn*⁸ writes me may get the vote of *Pennsylvania* as a matter of compliment on the first ballot, after that, it will be given to *Mr. Van-Buren*. *Cass* has no embodied strength anywhere, though he has scattering friends everywhere. *Mr. Calhoun's* strength is confined to less than half a dozen small states South of *Virginia*. *Col. Johnson*⁹ may get the vote of *Kentucky* and possibly of *Arkansas* in Convention. If then *Mr. Van-Buren* is the nominee, the candidate for the Vice Presidency must come from the West,—and from a slave-holding state, and especially as *Mr. Clay* resides in a western slave-holding state; and my own opinion is, that

⁵Notwithstanding Whig successes in Maryland, Georgia, and Ohio, the Democrats gained the control of the Twenty-eighth Congress by a large majority. An explanation of the Whig victory in Georgia is suggested in TENNESSEE HISTORICAL MAGAZINE, vol. II, pp. 68-69. Van Buren's friends, opposed to Calhoun, threatened not to go to the polls and thereby to let the Clay Whigs beat the Calhoun Democracy.

⁶David Rittenhouse Porter (1788-1867), Governor of Pennsylvania, 1838-1844; later, with Sam Houston, interested in a railroad through Texas to the Pacific.

⁷As to Calhoun's course in 1844, see W. E. Dodd, *Statesman of the Old South*, pp. 141-147.

⁸Henry Horn of Philadelphia.

⁹R. M. Johnson of Kentucky, Vice-President in Van Buren's administration. He was obnoxious to Southern men. See *Polk-Johnson Letters*, pp. 236, 234.

Col. Johnson will ultimately yield his pretensions for the Presidency, and that he will be the only formidable competitor for the Vice Presidency. I am not conscious of any selfishness, and certainly of no unkind feeling towards *Col. Johnson*, when I say that if the party are made enough again to force him upon us, it is my deliberate opinion that we must be again defeated.

Since I saw you I have received another letter from *Gov. Yell*¹⁰ of Arkansas under date of 5th Oct. '43 in which among other things, he says: "Heretofore I was candid in expressing that I thought *Col. Johnson* the favorite in this State for the Presidency. I now doubt it, and if we have a full and fair convention (State Convention) I shall not be surprised if there was to be a majority for *Mr Van-Buren* and your self for Vice President. I am sure you are the strongest man in this State that could be selected and from that fact I am inclined to believe that your friends know to whom you should be connected, and besides *Mr Van-Buren* has now and always had numerous friends. I am sure they cannot get up a delegation who would prefer any one over you for the Vice-Presidency."

Have you written the letters of which we spoke when I last saw you? It is most important I think that they should be written without delay. Our friends at the North and East—should understand the true State of things in this part of the Union,—and take bolder ground before the public in reference to the Vice Presidency. By doing so they would concentrate public opinion in reference to both stations before the meeting of the convention, and thereby avoid much confusion and trouble. I do not understand *Blair's* course.¹¹ I wrote *Genl Armstrong*¹² a letter on yesterday in reference to it, which he will shew you. I do not think he is inclined to do me justice. Why I know not, unless it be that he has strong attachments for *Col Johnson*, and looks to his restoration with *Mr. Van-Buren*. But *Gen. Armstrong* will shew you my letter in which you will see the impressions I have and the suggestions I make. I have only one other remark to make to you, and that is that no one is now prominently presented for the Vice-Presidency, and that is the opinion of *Gov Yell*, *T. P. Moore*¹³ and others of my friends that the ground should be pre-occupied, before *Col J.* concludes to fall back upon it, as I think he will ultimately attempt to do. I will leave for my plantation in Mississippi on Monday next and concluded to write you promptly and without reserve what my views and impressions were. You will of course regard what I have said as *strictly confidential*. A letter addressed to me at *Somerville Tennessee*, any time within ten days or two weeks will meet me on my way up.

P. S. I will be back before the meeting of the state convention, and will be governed by the advice of my friends whether I will be at Nashville at that time or not. I must insist upon you to see *Laughlin*¹⁴ and *Humphreys*¹⁵ and have a proper address prepared before the convention meets.

¹⁰Archibald Yell, a close friend of Polk.

¹¹Francis P. Blair of the *Globe*. See *Polk-Johnson Letters* parts iv and v, and *Papers of Major John P. Heiss* (Second Instalment), TENNESSEE HISTORICAL MAGAZINE, vol. II, pp. 208 ff., hereafter cited as *Heiss Papers* (Second Instalment).

¹²Robert Armstrong of Nashville, one of the inner circle of General Jackson's friends.

¹³Of Harrodsburg, Kentucky.

¹⁴S. H. Laughlin, sometime editor of the *Nashville Union*. See *Diaries of S. H. Laughlin of Tennessee*, TENNESSEE HISTORICAL MAGAZINE, Vol. II, pp. 43 ff, Introduction.

¹⁵Possibly West H. Humphreys.

2. JAMES K. POLK, COLUMBIA, TO A. J. DONELSON, NASHVILLE,

Dec-20th 1843.

My letters received from *Brown*¹⁶ and *Johnson*¹⁷ since I saw you, wear a more favorable aspect, than the one I read to you from *Brown* at Nashville. *Brown* writes under date of the 9th Inst. "The relative strength is estimated as follows, Calhoun 24 or 25; Buchanan 11 or 12: Johnson 3 or 4: Cass now, not one I believe, unless the Michigan men be counted for him: All the rest for *Van-Buren*: As to the *Vice*, Col J has hung on so obstinately for the first office, that he is not now entitled to the second, if he should become willing to fall back on it. I have heard it confidently asserted that *Benton*¹⁸ and the Ohio-men, were all against him, and would be for you against him or or [sic] any body. I think it very probably so."

Johnson in a letter of the 11th confirms *Brown's*, views and adds: "All the fragments of our party seem likely to unite upon *Van-Buren*, make his nomination unanimous, and each party seek the succession by distinguished services in his behalf: The game for the succession is I think commenced. The friends of Calhoun are feeling to see how Mr C. would go down for the Vice Presidency. I heard S. W. jr¹⁹ say today, that would be worse than the old Candidate. Mr C's friends think he should be made the *Vice*, or that he should return to the Senate in the Spring. His wishes I presume are unknown, and will depend upon what he thinks will most advance his interests for the succession." *Johnson* says further, "Every indication is decidedly favourable" to my nomination.

Col. R. M. J. I have every reason to believe is now struggling to secure the *Vice Presidential nomination*. The last account of him, he was at Columbus Ohio, on his way home. The Democratic State Conventions in Ohio and Mississippi, will meet on the 8th of January next, and their action upon the subject, especially that of Ohio, whatever it may be, will go far to settle the question. Ohio is in my judgment, at this moment, the point of most interest,—though Mississippi is also important. The wing of *Col. Benton*, *Allen*²⁰ and *Tappan*²¹ will have a controlling influence in Ohio. Letters written to them by my friends here, presenting the views of the party in this state, would reach them in time for them to write to their friends in Ohio, before the 8th of January. *Mr Madiera*²² the Editor of the Ohio Statesman at Columbus, our old friend *Moses Dawson* of Cincinnati, and *Mr Medill*²³ of the last Congress are leading men and next to *Allen* and *Tappan*, give tone and direction to party movements in that State. It is very important that they should be written to, especially *Madiera*. If no one here knows him personally, his public position, will authorize any member of the party to address a proper letter to him. You know I cannot write, and it may seem immodest to make these suggestions even to you. I do so because I am satis-

¹⁶Aaron V. Brown, Representative in Congress. See *Polk-Johnson Letters*, *passim*.

¹⁷Cave Johnson, Representative in Congress. See *Polk-Johnson Letters*, Introduction.

¹⁸Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri, who was friendly to VanBuren, and bitterly opposed to Calhoun.

¹⁹Silas Wright of New York.

²⁰William Allen, Senator from Ohio, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations.

²¹Lewis Tappan, Senator from Ohio.

²²Samuel Medary. His newspaper, the *Ohio Statesman* of Columbus, was the leading Democratic paper of Ohio.

²³William Medill, of Lancaster, Ohio, appointed First Assistant Postmaster General and later Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

fied of their great importance. If your judgment is, that it is proper to write, do so, without delay.

From what I learn from *Laughlin* today, I fear [the] committee has mutilated the forth-coming *address*, so as to make it of little value. I hope I may be mistaken.

Tell the *General*,²⁴ that I had an interview with both Editors of the Union, when I was at Nashville and both agreed to take decided and bold ground for *Van-Buren* in their paper. If they do not do so, in their next paper I will write to them and urge it upon them.²⁵ The paper here has done so. If you know any leading political friend at Jackson Mississippi, when the Legislature will be in session on the 1st Monday in January, write to him also.²⁶ If you have any information of movements abroad other than what I have given to you, write to me.

3. JAMES K. POLK, COLUMBIA, TO A. J. DONELSON, NASHVILLE,

June 26th, 1844.

I call your attention to an article on the first page of the *Semi-Weekly Globe* of the 17th Instant, headed "SOUTH CAROLINA MODE OF ANNEXING TEXAS." The extracts which are given from the South Carolina meeting and newspapers, I think it was unnecessary if not of mischievous tendency to re-publish. They were only the opinions of a few persons, and do not embody the Southern sentiment on the subject of annexation.

My object in writing to you, is to suggest the importance of preparing with care a proper article for the Union. The idea of a Southern convention or sectional meeting to be held at Nashville or elsewhere *must not for a moment be entertained*.²⁷ In the article which I hope you will prepare for the Union, it will not be necessary to allude specifically either to the article in the *Globe*, or to the proceedings in South Carolina which it quotes. It strikes me that the object can be as well or better attained in a rallying article addressed to the Democracy of the whole Union, and calling upon, the North and the South, the East and the West to attend the proposed mass meeting at Nashville in August. Let the article strongly enforce the leading idea, that a meeting of the masses from all sections of the Union is what is intended, and let every thing giving it the appearance of a sectional or Southern affair be expressly negated. This would have the effect of allaying the fears of the North, by satisfying them that we in Tennessee gave no countenance to the suggestion for a Southern Convention upon the Texas or any other subject.

I suggested to Armstrong in a letter on yesterday that the State committee of whom I believe you are one, should in a publication over their names announce that the mass meeting proposal embraced the whole Union, and invite our Northern friends to attend it. A paper of this kind would be published in the Democratic papers of the North, and would at once quiet all apprehensions. This would be better than an Editorial.

²⁴Andrew Jackson.

²⁵See *Heiss Papers* (First Instalment), TENNESSEE HISTORICAL MAGAZINE, Vol. II, pp. 137 ff, especially p. 141.

²⁶Mississippi gave its approval to the candidacy of Polk. *Polk-Johnson Letters*.

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 245. Notwithstanding his close affiliation with the strong Southern element in the Democratic party, Polk held firmly to the Union attitude of Jackson. As to the proposal for a sectional convention of Southern states, see Smith, *Annexation of Texas*, pp. 209 ff.

I think the mass meeting at Nashville in August—properly gotten up and conducted will do great good. I have no doubt *Wright, Cass* and others would attend it. Will you go to Nashville on receipt of this letter, see my letter to Armstrong and prepare the proper paper for the committee to sign, or the proper article for the Union, or both as you may think best. It is important I think that it should be attended to without delay. Let me hear from you.

4. JAMES K. POLK, COLUMBIA, TO A. J. DONELSON, NASHVILLE,

July 11th, 1844.

Your letter of the 8th is at hand. I scarcely know how to advise about inviting Mr Tyler and his cabinet.²⁸ If letters were carefully *written* (not the *printed* copy), they could scarcely take exceptions to the civilities extended to them.

Genl-Jackson's letter to *Genl. Planché*²⁹ of New Orleans—which appeared in the Banner of yesterday, was manifestly not written for publication. It was imprudent in *Genl. Planché* to publish it. I think the suggestion should be made to *Genl. J.* to mark his letters not intended for publication *private*: You see the *Banner* is disposed to revive the wolf cry of *Dictation*. Care should be taken to prevent this. The *General's* wishes are now fully known to the country, and can acquire no additional force by the frequent re-declaration of them. I make this suggestion for yourself alone, and think it important.

5. JAMES K. POLK, COLUMBIA, TO A. J. DONELSON, NASHVILLE,

July 22, 1844.

Since the nominations at Baltimore, none can fail to have observed the *coldness* or *indifference* of the *Globe*.³⁰ After *Blair's* profession made confidentially to you, I had expected that he would come zealously into the support of the nominations, and not throw cold water upon them. To show you that I am not singular in the conclusions to which I have come in regard to the course of the *Globe*, I venture to give you the following extract from a *highly confidential* letter received from *Mr. Dallas* of date 10th Instant—viz—

“What does the *Globe* mean? Surely *Col-Benton* cannot cherish a lurking hostility to your nomination. He writes to his correspondents here that he is entering upon the canvass with ardour and he is not one to profess what he dont feel and think: yet certainly *Mr Blair's* columns are exceedingly *cold*, and now and then seize upon a topic the only tendency of which seems towards disaffecting the party.” He adds more and says he can “discern the effect upon a few of our active men here: They do not in the slightest degree resist or thwart the nomination, but they maintain *Col Benton's* theory, that the whole was a conspiracy against their favorite etc.” *Mr D.* asks if there is any way to remedy this, and induce the *Globe* to enter more zealously and decidedly into the contest. I know of none unless your intimacy with *Blair* would authorize you to write him a *plain*, but at the same time friendly and conciliatory letter, urging him as a mat-

²⁸The candidacy of Tyler was an embarrassment to the Democratic plans. See letter of July 11, below, and note 36.

²⁹Planché was in command of a battalion of uniformed volunteers at the time of the Battle of New Orleans. J. Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, vol. II, p. 34. The *Nashville Whig* of July 11, 1844, gives an extract from this letter, which expressed certainty as to the election of Polk and the annexation of Texas.

³⁰*Heiss Papers* (Second Instalment), Introduction, p. 211.

ter of duty to the party to take—stronger ground than he has yet done.

If the *Genl.* is able to write him one of his strong letters in his own hand-writing, and you could write one yourself it would effect the object. The truth is, that for several weeks *past* the *Globe* has scarcely alluded to the election in an editorial article. If he continues this course, the conclusion with many democrats will be that to say the least of it he is indifferent as to the result. Think of it, and if you think it proper, write yourself and get *Genl. Jackson* to write to *Blair*. When you write, beg him to cease the war upon *Mr C.*³¹ and his Southern friends, and upon the Texas question, until the pending election is over at all events. The only effect of keeping up that *war* is to weaken us. It can by no possibility do good.

I enclose to the General by today's mail a very important letter in relation to *Texian affairs* and the movements of Mexico, England and France. I have no great confidence in the writer, still he is at Washington and his letter comes to me under the frank of *Mr Senator Walker*³² of Mississippi. It may be of vast importance, not only as regards the ultimate annexation of Texas, but as affecting the pending political contest, that the General should write the letter to *H—*³³ suggested. If he and you think so, you must assist him in its preparation, and the sooner the better. You will of course see my letter to the *General* and the one enclosed.

Have you written the letters to our distinguished friends at a distance urging them to attend our mass-meeting on the 15th? To which of them have you written? Did you include *Senator Allen and Dr. Duncan*³⁴ of Ohio: in the number? If not will you yet write to them?

P. S. If the *General* writes to *Houston*, as I hope he will, let his letter be addressed in a different hand writing from his own and go *without his frank*. There is danger if it bears his frank that it would be arrested in passing through the mail. It might be enclosed to some reliable friend at New Orleans with a request, that he would give it a speedy conveyance.

6. JAMES K. POLK, COLUMBIA, TO A. J. DONELSON, NASHVILLE,
July 23rd, 1844.

I send by *Genl. Pillow*³⁵ a letter to *Genl. Jackson*, inclosing one to me from *Mr Senator Walker of Miss.* of the 10th Int.³⁶

It relates to *Mr Tyler's* position, and the means by which he may be induced to withdraw. It is of great importance that he should do so. *Mr Dallas* concurs in this opinion. I have given the *Genl* an Extract from a letter received from *Mr D.* of the 10th Instant. I believe *Genl. Jackson* is the only man in the country, who can affect [*sic*] it.

I desire *Genl. Armstrong*, *Genl. Pillow* and yourself to confer together freely in regard to what is proper to be done. I believe *Genl. Jackson* is the only man in the country whose advice *Mr Tyler* would take. I doubt the propriety of *Genl. Jackson's* writing a letter for the public, as suggested by *Walker*, but of this you will judge.

³¹John C. Calhoun.

³²Robert J. Walker, soon to be Polk's Secretary of the Treasury.

³³Sam Houston of Texas.

³⁴Mentioned elsewhere by Polk: *Polk-Johnson Letters*, p. 247.

³⁵Gideon J. Pillow, of Tennessee. See *Polk-Johnson Letters*, p. 238, note 124.

³⁶See *Heiss Papers* (Second Instalment), Introduction p. 211, n. 14; and Smith, *Annexation of Texas*, pp. 309-310.

Pillow knows the contents of my letter to *Genl. Jackson* and of course *Genl. Armstrong* and *yourself* will see it. I have handed to *Pillow* a letter received from *Walker* one day later than the one enclosed to the General.

From it you will see that a letter written by *Genl. J.* to some one at Washington is in the proper tone and would answer a most valuable purpose, but for an allusion in it to *Mr Benton*, which prevents it from being used or even shown to *Tyler*.³⁷ Another might be written leaving out that allusion, which might reach the President's eye. The Genl. can certainly induce *Blair* of the *Globe* to change his course. To continue his attacks on *Tyler* can do no good, but must result in harm. Confer fully and freely with *Pillow*, *Armstrong* and the *General*, and do what is thought best.

There is another matter to which I wish to call your attention. It is that mentioned in the enclosed letter of *James E. Thomas Esq* (former Speaker of the Ho. Repts. of our Legislature) to *Genl. Jackson*. *A. V. Brown* replied to *Mr. Henry's*³⁸ charge, and stated that it had been denied by *Genl. Jackson* and was untrue. He further stated that when *Mr Adams*³⁹ first made the statement some years ago, and *Genl. Jackson* denied it through the *Globe*, that it was ascertained by reference to dates that on the day *Mr Adams* stated he handed the Treaty to *Genl. Jackson* for his examination, being according to *Mr Adams's* statement the day before it was signed, that he *Genl. Jackson* was taking a public dinner at New York. This accords with my recollection of the facts as they occurred at the time. To this statement of *Mr. Brown* *Mr. Henry* replied that by an examination of the tavern-keepers books at Washington it appeared that *Genl. Jackson* was not in New York, but in Washington, on the day *Mr. Adams* said he had submitted the Treaty to him for his examination. Here as I learn the discussion ended. *Mr Thomas* deemed it to be necessary to go into these details in his letter to the General. Can you or the General turn to the *Globe* at the period and see what the statements and proofs were. If they are full it may be sufficient to republish, without calling a fresh letter from the General to the public. *Mr. Thomas* does not desire the Genl. to answer unless he deems it proper to do so. *Henry's* statement is calculated to do harm, if uncontradicted, and it is proper to meet it, either by a direct letter from the Genl. in reply to *Mr Thomas*, or by the publication of the old proofs. Confer with *Pillow* and *Armstrong*, about this also and let me know what will be done. *Pillow* is a friend, is an honorable man and you may safely confide in him.

7. JAMES K. POLK, COLUMBIA, TO A. J. DONELSON, NASHVILLE,

Aug. 3rd, 1844.

I will be at Nashville on Friday next on my way to Murfreesborough with my wife. I will be at *Wm. G. Childress's* on Thursday night, where I would be glad to meet *Armstrong* and *yourself* that we may have a full conference before the meeting of the 15th. If it does not put you to, too much inconvenience meet me at *Childress's* on Thursday night. I hope you can have the *Resolutions* for the 15th

³⁷*Ibid.*

³⁸Gustavus A. Henry, Representative in Congress from Tennessee; candidate for Governor of Tennessee in 1853.

³⁹John Quincy Adams had stated that Jackson was consulted before the treaty of 1819 was signed. This Jackson denied. On the controversy see C. F. Adams (ed.), *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, vol. IX., p. 280, and vol. XII, *passim*. Aaron V. Brown took an active part in the dispute.

prepared by that time. I have written to *Harris*⁴⁰ to aid you in their *preparation*. Every paragraph of them must be well considered, as great importance will be attached to them throughout the Union. *Mr Buchanan* is right in the caution which he gave to you.

I fear there is not entire harmony in the party in New York. I see *Bryant*⁴¹ of the *Post* and six others have issued a *private circular* about Texas, which has fallen into the hands of the editor of the *Pleabian*, [*sic*] who publishes it, and denounces the authors and reads them out of the party. This however being confined to a few, may not do much harm.

The chief trouble of our party however grows out of their divisions in the selection of a candidate for Governor. The *Hon. Mr Gillet* formerly of the Ho. Repts, writes to me that *Mr. Wright* will decline the nomination absolutely, and he fears the party will be weakened. Their convention to nominate meets 1st of September. *Gov. Marcy* too has written me expressing apprehensions concerning the nomination to be made. I have not written a word in reply to either. You will however see that it is of the greatest importance that harmony and union should be preserved in their state politics. I suppose *Butler*⁴² and others will do all they can to preserve the strength of the party. I cannot with propriety write to him or anyone else in N. Y. on the subject. A letter from you to *Butler* urging harmony and union in making their state nominations might draw his attention more earnestly to the subject and do good.

9. JAMES K. POLK, COLUMBIA, TO A. J. DONELSON, NASHVILLE,

Aug. 13th '44.

I was much disappointed in not meeting you here last night. Tomorrow the crowd will be coming-in and there will be so much confusion that nothing can be done with deliberation.⁴³

It is very important that you be here to night, that we may look over what you have written carefully. Come down without fail to night. I have a private room at the Nashville Inn. Your presence is indispensable not only in reference to the paper which you are preparing but to other matters also.

9. JAMES K. POLK, COLUMBIA, TO A. J. DONELSON, NASHVILLE,

Aug. 27th 1844.

I fear *Mr Tyler* may call Congress together. If he does, it will in my judgment do mischief. The present Congress will do nothing on the Texas question, however urgent the necessity for prompt action may be. It would be useless to call Congress with any such hope. The only effect of convening Congress would be, to bring together the leaders of Federalism who would do nothing but *agitate* upon the Presidential question. They would undoubtedly devote their whole time to laying plans and schemes to carry that election, and would think little and care less about Texas. I hope there will be no extra session. No good, but much harm I fear would result from it. *Mr*

⁴⁰J. G. Harris of the *Nashville Union*.

⁴¹William Cullen Bryant. The *Evening Post* was Democratic but of Anti-slavery principles.

⁴²Benjamin F. Butler of New York, Attorney General under Jackson and under VanBuren.

⁴³This was just before the great Democratic rally held at Nashville, August 15, 1844.

Tyler will listen to *Genl-Jackson*⁴⁴ and I hope if the General has not, that he will promptly advise him against such a step. I have not time to give you all the reasons for the conclusion to which I have come. I have a strong conviction that nothing could so much jeopardize the result of the pending Presidential election as the call of an extra session of Congress. I fear from what I learn that it may be now too late for a successful interposition to prevent it. Will you see the General, and if he and yourself concur with me in opinion, write immediately to *Tyler* advising against such a step.

II. *James K. Polk to A. J. Donelson, March 7, 28, May 6, 26, June 15, July 27, 1845.*

The letters of this group were written in the five months that followed the inauguration of Polk as President,—a period not covered by the *Polk-Johnson Letters*.

After the Senate of the United States had rejected the treaty for the annexation of Texas, the President brought the matter before the House of Representatives, but the session closed without definite results. In June T. A. Howard was appointed American chargé in Texas. When Howard, in August, died of yellow fever, Tyler appointed to the vacant mission Andrew J. Donelson. Donelson left New Orleans for Texas early in November, 1844, and was thereafter busy,—except for a visit to the United States in December,—with the difficult task of keeping track of the diplomatic activities of the Republic of Texas, especially in its relations with Great Britain, with France, and with Mexico. In March, 1845, he was again in the United States, awaiting the expected action of Congress in regard to annexation. This was completed on the last day of February, and March 3 Calhoun sent off to Donelson a dispatch instructing him to proceed at once to Texas, and acquainting him with the joint resolutions which had been passed by Congress, and with the interpretation thereof which Tyler had concluded to adopt. The next day Polk was inaugurated.

As a result of the bitter fight in Congress the joint resolutions possessed a double-barreled character. The first two submitted definite propositions to Texas, and needed only an acceptance by the Congress of Texas, which should call a convention to adopt a constitution, to be approved finally by the Congress of the United States. The third proposition, however, consisting of an amendment proposed by Benton of Missouri and adopted by the Senate, gave a discretionary power to the President of the United States to enter into further negotiations with Texas. Tyler and Calhoun resolved to use

⁴⁴An interesting testimony to the continued power of General Jackson in spite of his age and illness. Cp. Smith, *Annexation of Texas*, pp. 288, 322. Tyler had formally withdrawn his candidacy, August 20, 1844.

the first method and to disregard the second. The reason for this course, as outlined in Calhoun's dispatch, was the greater simplicity of this method, and the danger of rejection which attached to the second alternative, which was thought to require further action by the Senate of the United States. A week after Calhoun's dispatch had been sent, Buchanan, Polk's Secretary of State, wrote to Donelson the first official communication of the new administration. In the meantime, however, Polk wrote informally the first letter of the present group.

The official correspondence between Buchanan and Donelson is printed, sometimes with abbreviation, in the Documents accompanying Polk's Message of December 2, 1845 (29 Congress, 1st Session, Executive Documents, Vol. 1, Document 2, pp. 31-137). The letters of Buchanan are reprinted in J. B. Moore, (ed.) *The Works of James Buchanan*, vol. vi. The correspondence, with much other material, is calendared in G. P. Garrison (ed.), *Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas*, vol. i, pp. 44-49 (Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1907, vol. 2). A full narrative is in Smith, *The Annexation of Texas*.

10. JAMES K. POLK, WASHINGTON CITY, A. J. DONELSON, WASHINGTON, TEXAS,
March 7th 1845.

A despatch was transmitted to you by the late administration on the 3rd Ins.⁴⁵ In two or three days another will be forwarded to you on the same subject by a special messenger. But five members of my Cabinet have as yet been confirmed by the Senate; the remaining members I hope will be confirmed at the next meeting of the Senate. I write now to say that I desire you, not to take any definite action in pursuance of the instruction given in the despatch of the 3rd Inst. until after you receive the one which will be forwarded in two or three days, and by which the instructions will probably be modified. I write you this informal note for the reason that *Mr Buchanan* the Secretary of State has not entered on the duties of his office, and because I desire to have the Cabinet complete before definite action is had on my part.⁴⁶

[Endorsed] The President March 7th. Recd. from Mr. Pickett on the 19th at New Orleans.

11. JAMES K. POLK, WASHINGTON CITY, TO A. J. DONELSON, WASHINGTON, TEXAS,
March 28th, 1845.

Your two letters of this 18th and 19th instant were received this morning. The dispatch of *Mr. Buchanan* left here on the 10th, and will probably reach you as soon as that of which *Mr. Wageman*⁴⁷ was the bearer. The bearer⁴⁸ of Mr. B's dispatch will have put you in possession of facts which may aid you in effecting the object of your mission, and which could not be embraced in the dispatch itself. You

⁴⁵Calhoun's dispatch, referred to in the Introduction to this group.

⁴⁶On this letter see Smith, *Annexation of Texas*, pp. 353-354. Evidently Polk wished to commit Buchanan to the policy of following the course laid down by Tyler.

⁴⁷Probably George G. Waggaman, of the U. S. Army. See Smith, *Annexation of Texas*, p. 432, note.

⁴⁸Archibald Yell of Arkansas.

will at once recognize him as an old acquaintance and a gentleman of intelligence. Having proceeded directly from Washington he will be able to inform you of the disposition of the parties here on the Texian question, and of the determination of the Executive Government to effect annexation by all honorable means of which it can avail itself without compromising the national honour. Recent information received here will make it necessary to send another messenger with a dispatch to you in two or three days. Hon. Charles A. Wickliffe,⁴⁹ who designs visiting Texas with a view to emigrate to it, will be the bearer of the dispatch. He has *my confidence* and will be entitled to yours. He took a very active part in negotiating the Treaty last year, and will be able to give you valuable information. He will leave here on Monday the 31st, will take his family to Kentucky and after a very short delay, will proceed directly to Texas.

Learning that the bearer of this letter⁵⁰ would leave here for Texas this evening on his own private business, and in no way connected with the Government, I avail myself of the opportunity to address you this letter. I do not know him, futher than that he has been introduced to me as a gentleman of good standing.

The letter addressed to you by *Mr. Cameron*⁵¹ was without my authority. I heard of it a day or two after it was written. But though this is the case, the subject to which it related had been one of anxious thought by my friends, who with few exceptions concur in the opinion that a new organ will be indispensable to unite the whole Democracy, and consequently, for the success of my administration. In speaking of an organ to one or two confidential friends I had expressed the opinion that I would desire to have you connected with it, if it was consistent with your views, and I suppose *Mr. Cameron* had in some way heard this when he wrote to you. Since that time I have had full and free conversations with *Mr. Blair* and in good feeling frankly told him, that it was impossible for the whole party ever to be united in support of the administration whilst the *Globe* was regarded as the official organ, that I must have a new organ and that I desired you to be connected with it. Within the last forty-eight hours the matter has been brought almost to a head. *Mr. Ritchie*⁵² has been here. *Mr. Blair* has reflected about it and agreed as I learn willfully and cheerfully to sell out his establishment and retire, leaving *Mr. R.* and yourself to take charge of it as joint editors if you can agree upon the terms and you are disposed to do so. He wishes however to delay the consummation of the arrangement until he can consult *Mr. Van-Buren* and *General Jackson*. He says positively that if *Genl. Jackson* assents, he will at once sell and retire. He is [—]⁵³ and reasonable. I have written to the *Gen.* and hope he may assent. The business partner with *Mr. Ritchie* and yourself (not *Mr. Cameron*) would advance the whole purchase money. Neither of you would be required to pay a cent. Your names would go to the Head of the Editorial columns, with a first rate business man to conduct the financial part of the estab-

⁴⁹Of Kentucky; Postmaster-General under Tyler.

⁵⁰Referred to in the next letter as *Mr. Prentiss*.

⁵¹*Simon Cameron* of Pennsylvania had written to *Donelson* with reference to the establishment of a new paper in Washington. *Donelson* wrote both to *Polk* and to *Jackson* on the subject. The strife which later arose over the establishment of the Democratic newspaper in Washington is taken up in *Heiss Papers* (Second Instalment), Introduction.

⁵²*Thomas Ritchie* of the *Richmond (Va.) Inquirer*.

⁵³Illegible.

lishment.⁵⁴ There can be no doubt that with the printing of Congress which you could certainly obtain you would make a fine fortune in a very short time and that without any risk except your time. Should the arrangement be made it will be a provisional one, reserving an interest for you if you choose to take it, otherwise for Mr. *Ritchie* alone. If you do into it, after two or three years, I would be altogether inclined to gratify any other wishes you may have. I will desire to hear from you as soon as possible what your views are on the subject. A central organ headed by Mr. R. and yourself, having the countenance of the government, would be the most popular and powerful paper which this Country has ever had. Upon its establishment in my judgment depends not only the success of my administration, but of the Democratic party in the choice of my successor in 1848. The *Globe* in its long career has created too many hostile interests, to make it possible for the party to be ever united if it should be the organ. Upon this point there is not the shadow of a doubt. I most ardently hope that the arrangement now in progress will be effected, but if it should fail I am still deeply convinced that it will be indispensable to have a new paper and I have so informed *Mr. Blair*. Write to me by the first safe opportunity whether in the one contingency or the other you would be disposed to be connected with it. A new organ I must have. Without it I will be in a minority at the opening of the next Congress and throughout my administration.

Reflect upon the matter and let me hear from you. In the meantime remain at your post, in the most critical juncture of our affairs with Texas, when your services are so important. If you go into the arrangement here, the terms by the others in interest will of course be submitted to you for your assent; and after that assent is given, your successor in Texas must on your application for leave to return be appointed and be on the spot, before you can depart from Texas. I have written in great haste and have no time to copy.

12. JAMES K. POLK, WASHINGTON CITY, TO A. J. DONELSON,
WASHINGTON, TEXAS, May 6, 1845.

I enclose to you a letter from *Mr. Ritchie*, now the editor of the official organ here, under the title of "*the Union*." I send also a few copies of his paper containing an article setting forth the views of the executive Government towards Texas, if she consents to accept the terms of annexation offered to her under the two first of the joint Resolutions of Congress. I have no hesitation in confessing to you the confident opinion that if Texas shall accept the proposition as made to her, and thus put the reunion between the two countries beyond danger, that the U. States will afterwards adopt such measures as will meet all her just wishes. Her extensive domain is valuable, and may be purchased at a price which will enable her to pay all her debts, and take her stand in our Union unembarrassed. More liberal terms I have no reason to doubt would have been proposed by the last Congress, but for the peculiar state of parties, and that action upon the subject was to be had almost immediately after an exciting Presidential election. Every day adds to the strength of the policy of annexation in the United States, and opposition to the measure will hereafter will be nominal rather than formidable. It will be mainly confined to the Federal leaders.⁵⁵ The elections which have already taken place show that the Democratic majority in the

⁵⁴Major John P. Heiss, late owner of the Nashville *Union*.

⁵⁵The word "Federal" or "Federalist" long remained in Tennessee a Democratic term of reproach for the Whigs.

next House of Representatives will be large and commanding. There is as little doubt but that there will be a Democratic Majority in the Senate. As the Senate now stands the parties are equal, the Vice President having the casting vote. There are three vacancies, one in Virginia, one in Indiana and one in Tennessee. The late Virginia election showed a Democratic Majority of 32 on joint ballot in the Legislature, thus insuring the election of a Democratic Senator in place of *Mr. Rives*. In Indiana we have no doubt a Democratic Senator will be chosen, and our chances in Tennessee are more than equal. In addition to this *Iowa* and *Florida* were by an act of the last Congress admitted into the Union. They are both Democratic, and will be represented by four Democratic Senators next winter. Upon the Texas question we will command the votes of several Whig Senators in favour of the measure. Not a doubt remains therefore that their [*sic*] will be in both Houses of the next Congress a strong and decided Majority favorable to Texas annexation,⁵⁶ and the public sentiment of the country is now such that there can be as little doubt, that full justice will be done Texas, and all her reasonable wishes gratified, if she will now come into our Union so far as I am concerned, and in this I have the united concurrence of my cabinet, the whole power of the executive branch of the government will be exerted to extend to Texas liberal and satisfactory terms. We desire most anxiously that she will accept the offer as made to her, and if she does she may rely upon our magnanimity and sense of justice towards her. We will act in a way which will satisfy her. I hope her people and Government will not hesitate. Nothing could give me more pleasure personally, and nothing, I am sure would give a vast majority of our people more pleasure, than to see my old friend *Houston*⁵⁷ bring her Constitution in his hand as one of her Senators, take his seat in the Senate of the U. States next winter. Surely he will not, cannot hesitate. Make my kind respects to *Houston* and tell him that I hope soon to welcome the young Republic of which he was the founder, into our confederacy of States: and to see him the representative of her sovereignty in our Senate.

I wrote to you by *Mr. Prentiss* that I desired that you should be one of our editors of the administrative organ here. Under the uncertainty which existed, whether it was a situation which would be agreeable to you, or which would be accepted by you, Messrs. *Ritchie* and *Heiss*, purchased the *Globe* establishment in *their own right*, and are the sole proprietors. Should you desire to become interested in it, after termination of your mission, I think it probable that such an arrangement could be readily made. It will not however do for you for a moment to think of leaving your post in Texas, until the object of your mission is consummated. It would be disastrous to change our Representative to Texas, at the present critical juncture of affairs, and it will be expected that you remain at your post, until the object of your mission is consummated. Should you not become interested in "*The Union*," I hope it may be in my power during my term to gratify the wishes of your friends in other respects. We have great anxiety to hear from you, by every opportunity, the actually existing state of things in Texas, and hope you will write by any Steamer which may leave Galveston for New Orleans. As I have marked this letter *unofficial*, I have written freely and in haste, and have not had time to revise or copy.

⁵⁶The actual vote, in December, 1845, was, in the House of Representatives, 141 to 56, and in the Senate, 31 to 14.

⁵⁷Houston had been Governor of Tennessee.

When I last heard from *Genl. Jackson* he was declining in his health and strength. I hope he may live to see the last earthly object of his wishes consummated, the annexation of Texas to our Union, and what would be still more consoling to the closing hours of his life, to shake by the hand his old friend *Houston* as the Senator elect from the new State of Texas.

P. S. Mr. *Ashbel Smith*⁵⁸ has not been at Washington. It is now well understood that he is on a Mission to England and France. The English policy is undoubtedly to procure delay from the Texan Government, in this action on our proposition, with a view to induce Texas to decline with the ultimate object of making Texas in truth and in fact a dependency of her own. You will of course be at the seat of Government when the Texan Congress convenes on the 16th June. Early action on the part of that body is our policy and should be urged, whilst it will undoubtedly be the object of the British [*sic*] Minister to interpose every obstacle and hold out every inducement which may produce delay and gain time, with a view to defeat the object which we have so much at heart, both on account of Texas and of our own country.

13. JAMES K. POLK, WASHINGTON CITY, TO A. J. DONELSON, NEW ORLEANS, LA.,
26th May, 1845.

I have received your several letters addressed to me from New Orleans. Your public despatches have been received at the Department of State, and *Mr. Buchanan* has forwarded to you a despatch addressed to New Orleans,⁵⁹ which will probably reach you before you leave that City. *Gov. Yell* has been here and has given as all the information in his possession. I fear you may be too sanguine about the assent of *Texas* to our terms of annexation, though *Gov. Yell* concurs with you in opinion. There is danger I think that the friends of the measure may be lulled into a false security. There can be no doubt that the combined efforts of the *Brittish* [*sic*] *French* and *Mexican* authorities will continue to be to prevent it, as long as there is the slightest hope of success. Whilst this is the case, it is well known that many leading men in Texas are secretly opposed to the measure and are only restrained from making open resistance to it, by the popular opinion of the masses. I see too that some of the leading men of Texas favourable to annexation are in the U. States resting securely in the belief that the matter is settled. Two of these *Mr. Archer*⁶⁰ and *Genl. Green*⁶¹ called to see me two days ago, and expressed their intention not [to] return to Texas until the Autumn. In your letters you express a desire to leave your mission and return to the United States as soon as the Texian oCongress which will meet on the 16th June, shall have given their assent to our proposition. I do not think it will be safe or advisable for you to do so. The assent of the existing Government when given, will be but the initiatory step in accomplishing the object of your Mission. It will not be consummated and put beyond danger until after the convention of the people, shall have been chosen and given their as-

⁵⁸In 1842 Ashbel Smith represented the Republic of Texas in England and France, in 1845 he was Secretary of State of Texas, and later was again sent to England. On the policy of England see Smith, *Annexation of Texas*, ch. 18, especially pp. 413 ff., E. D. Adams, *British Interests and Activities in Texas*, and J. S. Reeves, *American Diplomacy under Tyler and Polk*.

⁵⁹Buchanan's dispatch of May 23.

⁶⁰Branch T. Archer, Secretary of War of the Republic of Texas, 1839-1842.

⁶¹Duff Green.

sent. In the progress of the measure it may be very important that the minister of the U. States should be on the spot, ready to counteract any influences or intrigues which may be brought to bear upon the measure to defeat. I know your anxiety to return to your family but you must remember that this is *the* great question of the times, and that no vigilance on our part should be omitted, and nothing left to chance or accident. By remaining, too you can aid the friends of annexation much, and can induce them to call their convention at the earliest possible day and to act speedily. I urge you therefore to remain in the country until annexation is consummated by the Texan authorities. If you fear your health may be affected at the Seat of Government you could retire for a time to some more healthy spot, but still be in the country and ready to act as circumstances may require. I am so deeply impressed with the correctness of these views, that I cannot too strongly urge their observance upon you. I had intended to write to you about other matters alluded to in your letters, but am called off to attend to other matters. I will write to you again in a day or two. You will of course keep us advised by every opportunity, of everything of interest which occurs, after the Texan Congress convenes. *Genl. Armstrong*⁶² reached here on yesterday on his way to *Liverpool*. He left the *Hermitage* on the night of the 15th and states that *Genl. Jackson* was extremely feeble. Your family were in good health.

14. JAMES K. POLK, WASHINGTON CITY, TO A. J. DONELSON,
WASHINGTON, TEXAS, 15th June, 1845.

Your Despatches of the 2nd and 5th Inst. were received at the Department of State last night. I received also letters of the 3rd and 4th from Mr. Wickliffe. The threatened invasion of Texas by a large Mexican army is well calculated to excite great interest here, and increases our solicitude concerning the final action by the Congress and Convention of Texas upon our proposition for annexation. In view of the facts disclosed by you, not only as regards the approach of an invading Mexican army,⁶³ but of the open intermeddling of the British Chargé d'Affaires,⁶⁴ with the question of annexation; I have lost no time in causing the most prompt and energetic measures to be adopted here. I am resolved to defend and protect Texas as far as I possess the constitutional power to do so. The despatches which will be handed to you by *Gen. Besancon*, who will leave here to night, with instructions to convey them to you with the least possible delay, will acquaint you with what has been done. An express messenger will leave at the same time (to day) for Fort Jessup, bearing orders for the troops to march immediately to the mouth of the Sabine, to be there in readiness to act as you may direct, under the instructions from the Department of State. The fine Steam Vessel, (*The Spencer*)—one of our revenue cutters—a small but most effective War Vessel with her guns mounted, has been ordered to proceed at once from New York where she now is, to Galveston, and report to you. An additional Naval force will be ordered to the Gulph to day or tomorrow.

I suggest to you that it will be very important that the *Conven-*

⁶²Armstrong was made Consul General at Liverpool.

⁶³Donelson had reported in his despatches of June 2 and 4, the belief in Texas that Mexico was concentrating troops upon the Rhio Grande. See Smith, *Annexation of Texas*, p. 447.

⁶⁴For the activities of Captain Charles Elliot, English consul and charge to Texas see Smith, *Annexation of Texas, passim*, and for the period under consideration, ch. 20.

tion of Texas, should on the day they meet, pass a general Resolution accepting our terms of annexation. The moment they do this, I shall regard Texas as a part of our Union: all questions of Constitutional power to defend and protect her, by driving an invading Mexican army out of her Territory, will be at an end, and our land and naval forces will be under orders to do so. Let the Convention pass this general Resolution, on the 4th of July, and they can then proceed in their deliberations in forming their State constitution, whilst we will protect them against their Mexican enemies, stimulated and excited as these enemies have been by British [*sic*] intrigue and influence. The assent of the Convention is all we want. Let that assent be gained and we will not wait for the tedious, process, which may occur in forming the New Constitution, but will feel ourselves fully warranted to act without that delay.

In the contingency mentioned in *Mr. Buchanan's* despatch, viz, that a Mexican army should cross the Rio-Grande, after The Congress of Texas have given their assent to annexation, but before the Convention have done so, it is submitted to your discretion to judge of the propriety or necessity of ordering our army and Navy to repel the invaders of Texas.⁶⁵ If that invasion in this stage of the action of Texas, shall be in your judgment calculated to overawe, or shall in fact interfere with or disturb the free and peaceful deliberations of the Convention, then in my judgment, the public necessity for our interposition will be such, that we should not stand quietly by and permit an invading foreign enemy either to occupy or devastate any portion of the Texian Territory. Of course I would maintain the Mexican title to the extent which she claims it to be, and not permit an invading enemy to occupy a foot of the soil East of the *Rio Grande*. I hope however that there will be no necessity to consider of what it may be proper to do under the contingency supposed. Our troops at Fort Jessup cannot reach the mouth of the *Sabine* before the 4th of July, (the day the Texan Convention convenes) and if the assent of that body is promptly given no question of our power to expel the Mexican army from her soil will exist, and it will be promptly and efficiently done.

P. S. *General Besancon* the bearer of despatches is a very intelligent gentleman, and can give you more in detail the public anxiety now prevailing in the U. States for the success of the measure of annexation. The Whig party seem but with few exceptions to have given up their opposition to the measure. The Genl. will return immediately, and will if you desire it be the bearer of despatches from you to the Government here.

P. S. Just as I had finished this letter *Mr. Eldridge* of Texas arrived direct from the *Hermitage* bringing the melancholy news of the death of *Genl. Jackson*. He died at 6 o'clock P. M. the 8th June. President *Houston*⁶⁶ arrived at the *Hermitage* two hours after he expired.

The Post Master General here will today issue orders to employ three Steamers to carry the mail three times a week each way between New Orleans and Galveston, which will greatly facilitate the transmission of information to and from Texas. You will of course keep us regularly advised of all that occurs in Texas, you will be expected to remain in Texas, as you were informed by *Mr. Buchanan* in his last despatch until after the Convention shall adjourn.

I write you this private letter in addition to the Public despatches

⁶⁵*Ibid*, p. 451.

⁶⁶Houston of course was Ex-President at this time.

which you will receive by Genl. Besancon, not that I deemed it to be absolutely necessary to do so, but to express to you in this informal manner my determination to stand by Texas and defend her in this crisis to the utmost of my constitutional power.

The people of Texas may be assured too, as I wrote you in a former letter, that when she becomes a member of our Union, we will not only defend her but do her full and ample justice. I have written in great haste, but as my letter is *private* and not *public*, I need not transcribe it or take time to put it into better form.

15. JAMES K. POLK, WASHINGTON CITY, TO A. J. DONELSON, TEXAS,
27th July, 1845.

Genl. Besancon arrived here this evening bearing your despatches announcing the gratifying intelligence that the Convention of Texas had accepted our terms of annexation as proposed to her without condition or alteration. You have had an important agency in consummating this great event, and it gives me pleasure to say to you, that your whole conduct meets the appreciation [*sic*] of your Government, as it must that of the country. You repeat your resuest to be permitted to return to your home. To this there can be no objection, now that the great object of your mission has been effected. I have accordingly directed *Mr Buchanan*, to give you formal notice, that you have leave to return, as you request and you can do so, immediately on receiving Mr B's despatch, or this letter, unless—you should see a necessity of remaining longer, which is not anticipated, and of which you will be the judge. I shall be gratified to see you here early after your return, that I may confer with you in relation to several important matters, which I have not time to state, nor is it necessary that I should do so. You will of course desire to visit your family before you come to Washington.

Congratulating you and the country on the success of your mission, . . .

III. *James K. Polk to Andrew J. Donelson, January 5, February 9, March 4, December 29, 1846, April 2, 1848.*⁶⁷

These letters, which have to do with the appointment of Donelson as Minister to Prussia, while not politically important, illustrate the inner workings of the diplomatic service in the time of Polk. The official dispatches of Buchanan to Donelson are reprinted in J. B. Moore, *The Works of James Buchanan*, vols. vi and vii.

In the latter part of September, 1845, Donelson was in Washington, in very poor health, and on the President's invitation he took a room at the White House.⁶⁸ September 25, Polk noted in his *Diary* that he had directed the Secretary of State "to write a letter to Mr. Wheaton, U. S. Minister to Prussia, that he would be recalled during the next Session of

⁶⁷A letter of May 29, 1846, from Polk to Donelson, with an inclosure from W. H. Haywood of North Carolina, requesting of Donelson a letter in support of the nomination of J. Geo. Harris of Tennessee for a pursorship in the navy, is omitted.

⁶⁸M. M. Quaife (ed.), *The Diary of James K. Polk*. . . . vol. 1, p. 37.

the Senate and a Successor appointed, but giving him an opportunity to resign if he chose to do so."⁶⁹

16. JAMES K. POLK, WASHINGTON CITY, TO A. J. DONELSON, NEAR NASHVILLE, Jany. 5th 1845 [1846].⁷⁰

I enclose to you herewith a letter from my old Congressional acquaintance, the *Hon. Ralph I. Ingersoll* of Connecticut,⁷¹ whom you met as a member of the Baltimore Convention in May 1844. Your wishes in regard to the object of his letter will be conclusive with me. I do not know the present Secretary of Legation, but understand he has had some difficulty with *Mr Wheaton*.⁷² If he was a proper man, he would be of great use to you, on your arrival, but of this I am unable to speak. Young *Ingersoll* is I have no doubt worthy. He would be an agreeable companion, but without possession or knowledge in diplomacy or European manners. How far, he may speak, as well as read the French language, I do not know. If there be any other whom you may prefer, you must have no delicacy in making it known to me. For the father of young *Ingersoll*, I have a very great regard, and would be pleased to gratify him if it can be done with propriety. I will probably make the nomination in February, that being the time which you intimated to me, would be agreeable to you. *Mr Wheaton* will expect to remain until the Spring, and that is as early as you could probably leave with convenience.

Mr Ingersoll will probably expect an answer from you, which you can make either directly or under cover to me as you may choose. I communicated *very confidentially*, to him, my intention in regard to yourself. I knew he was entirely trust-worthy and would not disclose the fact to any one.

I am too much pressed for time, to write you concerning other matters, as I would be pleased to do. . . .

P. S. If *Maj'r D.* should be absent from home and this letter should be opened by *Mrs. D.* she will see the propriety of not mentioning its contents to any one.

17. JAMES K. POLK, WASHINGTON CITY, TO A. J. DONELSON, MOBILE, Feby. 9th 1846.

I have received your two letters written at Nashville and Florence on your way to your plantation. The letter enclosed in the former for *Mr Ingersoll* of Connecticut I have not forwarded. In reply to your suggestion I have to remark that it would be embarrassing both to the administration and to yourself to take a Secretary of legation from Tennessee. It would be so to the administration because other sections of the Union (as I think without cause) have already been disposed to complain that too many appointments have been made in my own state. To take both the Minister and Secretary from Tennessee, would certainly revive these complaints. It would be embarrassing to you, because the Secretary could not speak either

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁷⁰Obviously a slip of the pen.

⁷¹Appointed by Polk Minister to Russia. His son was Colin Macrae Ingersoll.

⁷²Henry Wheaton (1785-1848), a graduate of Brown University, was reporter of U. S. Supreme Court, 1816-1827. He had been in the diplomatic service since 1827, and Minister to Prussia since 1835. On his return from Europe he was elected to lecture at Harvard on International Law, but died before entering on the office.

The Secretary, the Editor is informed by Dr. Gaillard Hunt, was Theo S. Fay of New York.

the French or German language, and would be wholly unacquainted with the public men, and manners and customs of the country. Indeed this I fear would be an objection to the selection of *Mr Ingersoll*, who has never been abroad, and in the habit of speaking the language of the country to which he would go. I was desirous to gratify *Mr Ingersoll* (the father) because he was an old friend, and a very worthy man, but since I wrote to you at his request, I have doubted whether I should have done so, and with my present views I will not forward your letter to him. My present impression is, that the present Secretary, can render more service, at least at the commencement of the mission than any new man: If after you reach the Court you should think it proper or necessary, to make a change it can be done. The present Secretary I understand is a literary gentleman of character and standing. He has been several years at the Court, and if disposed, as I have no doubt he would be, could render you essential service on your arrival. I believe *Mr Wheaton* has quarrelled with him, but who is in the wrong I have no means of determining. I will at all events act on your suggestion and make no nomination for Secretary until you reach Washington on your way. Your own nomination I will make at any time you may desire. I suppose however you cannot be prepared to leave before April, and if the nomination is made in the early part of next month, it will be in full time. There will be no necessity for your personal presence here, as I do not anticipate opposition to your nomination.

I will endeavor to provide for *Mr Coffee*.⁷³ If the new Regiments are raised, there may be an opportunity to do so, by giving him the situation which you indicate as acceptable to him.

Will you write to me, on receipt of this letter.

18. JAMES K. POLK, WASHINGTON CITY, TO A. J. DONELSON, NEAR NASHVILLE, March 5th 1846.

I have this day nominated you, to the Senate as Extraordinary and minister Plenipotentiary to Prussia. I presume there will be no objection to your confirmation.⁷⁴ *Mr Wheaton* our minister at that Court, understanding that it would be agreeable has asked to be recalled, so that in making your nomination, it has not been necessary to remove him. He will leave the Court about the first of May, and it is desirable that you should be there about that time. In regard to your Secretary of legation, my opinion expressed in my letter addressed to you at Mobile are unchanged. I am fully satisfied that the present Secretary will be more useful to you, at least for some months after the commencement of your mission than any new one could be. Under this impression and after the receipt of your letter from Mobile, my Private Secretary at my request addressed a letter to Mr. R. I. Ingersoll of Connecticut, informing him that you would probably desire to retain the present incumbent for the present. Your letter to *Mr Ingersoll* enclosed to me, has therefore not been forwarded to him. If after a few months residence at the Court, you should desire a change of your Secretary, there would be no difficulty in effecting it. I am sure it is wise to retain the present Secretary at least for the present.

⁷³The connection between the Donelson and Coffee families is made clear in the Introduction to *Letters of General John Coffee to His Wife, 1813-1815*, in *TENNESSEE HISTORICAL MAGAZINE*, vol. II, no. 4, pp. 264-265.

⁷⁴April 20, 1846, Donelson, on his way to sail for Prussia, called on Polk. *Diary*, vol. 1, p. 340.

19. JAMES K. POLK, WASHINGTON CITY, TO A. J. DONELSON, BERLIN,
Dec. 29th 1846.

I have received your letter of the 17th ultimo, written at London, and have conferred with *Mr Buchanan* in relation to your request to be permitted to return to the United States for a short period, during the spring. *Mr Buchanan* is of opinion, that during the war with Mexico, it is important that the United States should be represented at all the Courts of Europe, and that your absence from *Berlin*, at this juncture might prove to be detrimental to our interests. You are aware that a project has been suggested, of establishing a monarchy in Mexico and placing a foreign Prince upon the throne. There is reason to believe that some of the principal powers of Europe have been consulted upon this point, and that they would not be averse to see it carried into effect. Should such a project be attempted, it must be resisted by this Government, at any hazard. This was shadowed forth in a mild manner in my late annual message to Congress. Though Prussia would not have any special interest in the success of such a project, if seriously entertained by any of the other powers of Europe, it is yet deemed important that the U. States should be represented at that Court, should any such attempt be made. These reasons would seem to be conclusive in favor of your remaining at your post, and in this opinion *Mr Buchanan* most decidedly concurs. It is with great reluctance that both *Mr B.* and myself arrive at the conclusion that it would not be safe for you to leave *Berlin* at the present time. I hope through your brother *Genl. Donelson*⁷⁵ or some other friend you may be enabled to arrange your private business in the U. States satisfactorily, without the necessity of your personal presence. I should add that leave of absence has recently been refused to some other of our Diplomatic Representatives abroad, and for similar reasons.

I have much that I desire to say to you, but such is the pressure of my public duties, that I have been compelled to postpone writing until the latest moment so as to be in time to save the mail for the next steamer. I can only add that we have no assurance when the war with Mexico will terminate. Such is the distracted state of things in that unfortunate country that I fear no party in power will feel secure in making such a Treaty as ought to be satisfactory to the U. States. I will prosecute the war vigorously, as the best, if not the only means of securing a speedy peace. I have today sent a message to Congress, calling for authority to augment our regular army during the continuance of the war. I cannot add more and save the mail.

20. JAMES K. POLK, WASHINGTON CITY, TO A. J. DONELSON, BERLIN,
April 2nd 1848:

I have received your letter of the 22nd of February, requesting leave of absence, for a short period in order to enable you to visit the United States. Upon conferring with *Mr Buchanan* I had determined to accede to your wishes, and would have done so, but for the sudden revolution which has occurred in France. That great event, renders it highly necessary, if not indispensable, that all our diplomatic representatives in Europe should remain at their posts, that they should vigilently watch its effects upon the Governments to which they are respectively accredited, their policy in reference to it, and that they should keep their own Government regularly

⁷⁵Gen. Daniel L. Donelson.

and minutely informed, of whatever may transpire. For these reasons I have felt constrained to decline accepting a request made by *Mr Ingersoll* to be recalled from St. Petersburg. If in the course of the next Summer the condition of affairs in Europe should be such as to permit it, it will give me pleasure to grant the leave which you ask. At present I do not think that the U. States should be without a Diplomatic Representative of the first rank at *Berlin*.

The news of the sudden overthrow of the French Monarchy, and the establishment of a Provisional Government, based on Republican principles, in its stead, has been received with general joy throughout our Country. The National intelligence and a few Federal leaders, true to their instinctive hatred of free principles constitute the exception to the general rule. On tomorrow I will send a message to Congress, communicating a despatch received from *Mr Rush*,⁷⁶ in which I will express my full and unqualified appreciation of his prompt recognition of the new government. Your despatch, written after you had received the news of the revolution, has been received.

I have postponed writing this hasty note, until I have but a few minutes left, in order to be in time for the mail by the next steamer.⁷⁷

⁷⁶Richard Rush, Minister to France.

⁷⁷August 5, 1848, Polk nominated Donelson as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the German Confederation. *Diary*, vol. 4, p. 56.

HISTORICAL NOTES AND NEWS.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE TENNESSEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY FOR DECEMBER,
1916, AND JANUARY, FEBRUARY, 1917.

At the December meeting of the Society Dr. St. George L. Sioussat spoke on the question of transportation in Tennessee in 1845, and discussed the convention held at Memphis that year to attempt to solve this question. His subject was, "Memphis as a Gateway to the West; a Study of the Early History of Railway Transportation." At the January meeting Dr. A. H. Purdue, of the State Geological Department, spoke on "The Geological History of Tennessee." Dr. Purdue outlined the development of the geological formations of the state and brought out the possibilities of the industrial and manufacturing sections of the state. At the February meeting Dr. W. A. Provine delivered a lecture on "Lardner Clark, the First Merchant of Nashville," bringing out many interesting features of the trade of that period.

At the December meeting Mayor Robert Ewing presented to the Society on behalf of Mrs. Jane Curry Jones of Nashville, the original copy of an address delivered by Mayor Robert B. Curry in 1825 on the occasion of a visit of General LaFayette to Nashville.

A captured Federal sword was given the Society by Mr. W. F. Webb, of Birmingham, Ala.; a gun barrel made at the Confederate Gun Works at Pulaski was given by Mr. H. F. Webb, and a Confederate canteen of Mr. J. J. Nelson was also contributed. The above were presented through Mr. Laps D. McCord. Copies of prints of the First Mint and Examination of the First Coins were presented by Mr. Stewart of Philadelphia through Mr. Joseph S. Carels. An address containing the make up of brigades and commands of the general militia in 1812, written by Col. John K. Winn, and an address of General Jackson at Horseshoe Bend were presented by Mr. J. B. Shwab through Mr. Park Marshall. A copy of the charges and sentence of Sam Davis was presented by Mr. O. O. Poppleton, of Stuart, Fla., through Judge Mathews of Nashville. Mr. Douglas Anderson made donations of portraits of several distinguished Tennesseans, James Jackson, Jesse Cage and L. W. G. Harding, also a scrap-book and copy of the *American Banner* of April 19, 1856. Mr. Waldo P. McEwen contributed copies of Sevier papers of March 22, 1815, and Jan. 18, 1815; also an American flag and papers of the Putnam family, descendants of old Israel Putnam. A volume of the *Christian Advocate* for 1916 was contributed by the M. E. Publishing House.

The following is a list of the new members for the three months: Dr. G. B. Winton, Nashville; R. B. Casswell, Harriman; E. B. Cayce, Nashville; Dr. K. S. Howlet, Franklin; D. C. Webb, Knoxville; W. M. Randolph, Memphis; H. B. Lindsay, Knoxville; David Fentress, Memphis; Edmond Mager, Memphis; O. J. Timothy, Nashville; Thomas B. Johnson, Nashville; W. H. Swiggart, Union City; Thomas H. Malone, Nashville; G. W. Ewing, Lewisburg; Jeff McCarn, Nashville; J. Phil Fulcher, Nashville; Robert D. Fulcher, Nashville; John R. Aust, Nashville; John Thompson, Nashville; Mrs. Mary Coffee Campbell, Florence, Ala.; F. S. Houghteling, Sewanee; C. C. Luckey,

Knoxville; J. B. Shwab, Nashville; S. Homer Tatum, Alamo, Texas; J. Matt Williams, Nashville; Jas. W. Miller, Florence, Ala.; John T. Boddie, Chicago, Ill.; A. A. Adams, Lebanon; Mrs. Kate C. McDougal, Mare Island Navy Yard, Cal.; Judge J. W. Ross, Jackson; Mrs. J. C. Bradford, Nashville; Miss Eliza Alexander, Walker Hill; Robert S. Henry, Nashville; Chas. A. Butler, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Dr. C. E. Brown, Nashville; W. W. McLean, Fosterville; and D. O. Betty, Jamestown.

IRBY ROLAND HUDSON,
Recording Secretary.

THE TENNESSEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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FORM OF LEGACY

*"I give and bequeath to The Tennessee Historical Society
the sum of -----dollars."*

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TENNESSEE

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No. 2

MEMPHIS AS A GATEWAY TO THE WEST.

*A Study in the Beginnings of Railway Transportation
in the Old Southwest.*

II.

THE LITTLE ROCK BRIDGE: MEETINGS IN MEMPHIS.

We have spoken of the military road from Memphis to Little Rock, by which thoroughfare the transportation interest of Memphis was projected across the Mississippi towards the frontier. On January 1, 1845, it was advertised in the *Banner* of Little Rock, that ten days later books would be opened for subscriptions to the capital stock of the Little Rock Bridge Company. Commenting editorially, the *Banner* expressed the opinion that a bridge over the Arkansas River at this point would be profitable on account of the great amount of traveling through this place by emigrants to the southern portion of the state and to Texas. The architect of the Little Rock Bridge Company was to be Major Bingham, who had erected the bridge over the Warrior River at Tuscaloosa, Ala. February 3 the stockholders met and elected directors.¹

In the latter part of March Major Bingham went to Memphis to secure the co-operation of citizens of that town, and on the 22d of that month, at a preliminary meeting, Captain Bingham was heard, and a committee, composed of Dr. L. Shanks, H. G. Smith, L. Pope, Sr., J. H. McMahan and Col. D. Morrison was appointed to confer further with Bingham and to report to an adjourned meeting on the 25th. This second meeting gave opportunity to state the possibilities of Memphis. It was the most suitable point for the building of ships of war for the defense of the Gulf coast on the south and the Lake coast on the north. It was also a great storehouse for supplies and was the most suitable place for the construction and concentration of arms. Reference was made

¹*Little Rock Banner*, February 5, 1845.

to the naval depot and dockyard. Especially interesting was a review of the past progress of the town which had led to its preeminence. First in order was the recognition of the services of General Gaines, who was the first to publish to the world a broad and ample view of the situation of Memphis; the first to publicly urge the connection of the Atlantic and the Mississippi by a railroad from Charleston to Memphis; the first to propose the connection of the western frontier with the river at this point by the continuation of the railroad; and the first to propose other branches and collateral roads all concentrating here for commercial and military purposes. To him also credit must be given for urging the availability of water power to Memphis. All this he had done as commander of the western division of the country.

Next was mentioned the work of Lieutenant Maury. He had been the first to propose the construction of a western navy yard at Memphis. Upon the accomplishment of this his extended views of the wants of our country in case of war had suggested the importance and necessity of connecting the Mississippi, Ohio and Illinois rivers by a steamship canal with the Lakes, thus doubling the importance of the navy yard at Memphis.

The need was urged of a western armory and the fitness of Memphis as its site. Next in order came the Arkansas Road and a canal from Wolf River. Arkansas, by individual enterprise and capital, and the state by a charter to a company and by a memorial to Congress, was pressing the completion of the road. Memphis was more interested therein than any other place on the whole route. It was urged that an effort be made to help, that the stock be subscribed for, and that the town cooperate in a memorial to Congress to complete the road to Texas. For military purposes this would be indispensable, especially at a time when the navigation of the Arkansas and Red Rivers was suspended by low waters. A committee should be appointed to memorialize Congress and to obtain a memorial from the Legislature of Tennessee.

After some explanatory remarks by Dr. Shanks, the meeting was addressed by Bingham and by Col. W. B. Ferguson. Bingham stressed the central position of Memphis at the head of the uninterrupted navigation of the Mississippi, commanding supplies from all the country above and from the interior on both sides and an uninterrupted outlet to the market of all the country below, both in the southeast and the southwest interior. There was large water power for a navy yard and armory, and opportunity for the manufacture of cotton-wool

bagging, for a rope foundry, for wheat and sawmills, etc., which would unite the population and make a large city.²

THE CONVENTION CALLED.

A committee of nine was appointed to secure subscriptions to the stock of the Little Rock Bridge and to carry out the other purposes of the meeting of the 25th. Upon this committee were, at first, Dr. Lewis Shanks, H. G. Smith, E. J. Shields, S. Wheatley, J. Brinkley, J. J. Finley, F. P. Stanton, H. H. Means, and Jephtha Fowlkes. Later were added H. Van Pelt, E. H. Porter, Col. D. Morison, Colonel McMahan, and E. Hickman, so that the committee, as finally constituted, was composed of fourteen persons, all residents of Memphis.³ In April this committee put forth a call for a convention to be held at Memphis, on July 4, to be composed of delegates from the western and southwestern states. In its Address the committee explained:

“To the southwestern and the northwestern states, great channels of communication, with New Orleans as their southern, and New York as their northern emporiums, are important to their national prosperity in peace; and in war these channels of communication, with such means and public works for defense as are necessary to protect and defend the Gulf coast in the south and the Lake coast on the north, are indispensable to prevent the stagnation of trade—the devastation and ruin of everything valuable in these coasts, and the destruction of these emporiums. The great national objects of improvement, then, which the western and southern States should press upon the General Government are, the clearing out and improving of all the great rivers—the construction of the canal proposed, by Lieutenant Maury, to connect the Mississippi, through the Illinois River, with the Lakes—the establishment of such other shipyards, naval stations, etc., etc., as may be necessary, in addition to the navy yard at Memphis—to furnish the steamships of war, armed and manned, necessary for the defense of the southern Gulf and northern Lake coasts to make these channels of water communication, and these naval works of defense the more promptly and certainly available in securing the protection and defense of the country. Great central land thoroughfares are essentially important auxiliaries in war, and highly useful and important to commercial prosperity in peace.

“Among the most important roads to the south and west, both in war and in peace, is the great Atlantic and Mississippi

²*Ibid.*, April 9, 1845, citing *Memphis Enquirer*.

³*Nashville Republican Banner*, April 7, 1845, citing *Memphis Enquirer*, March 29.

Railroad from Charleston to Memphis, and its continuation by turnpikes at present, so as to admit of being connected with a railroad in future, from Memphis to the western frontier, and Texas, or at least to Little Rock in Arkansas.

“Besides these works of local and national improvement for protection and defense and commercial purposes, which ought to be maturely considered by a Convention, the whole system of agriculture in the South requires to be changed and improved to secure its general prosperity, and the proper reward for labor.”⁴

The principal objects of the committee were, then, those of transportation and defense. The matter of agriculture in the South, suggested in the last of the paragraphs which we have cited from the Address, seems, perhaps, not entirely germane to the foregoing topics. An explanation of the attention given to this matter is found, however, in the fact that early in March, in the *Memphis Enquirer*, a writer who styled himself “Old Planter” had broached this subject. Cotton was at the time at a ruinously low price, and “Old Planter” had suggested the assembling of a convention of delegates from all the cotton-growing states.⁵ This subject, therefore, we shall find constantly presented to public notice by those in charge of the proposed convention at Memphis.

In Little Rock on April 23 a meeting was held to respond to the address of the Memphis Committee. Judge Sam Roane presided. Bingham explained the objects that were intended, and proposed the appointment of a committee of fourteen to draw up an address and report to an adjourned meeting. Senator Ashley, who was present, said, when called upon by the chairman, that he would do all he could next session for the military road, but that whenever proposals had been taken up for continuing the road they had been embarrassed by the tacking on of appropriations for other purposes.⁶ At the adjourned meeting, held May 3, the committee reported and the plan for a convention in July was approved. The Arkansas meeting mentioned the following topics as worthy of discussion: The depressed price of the Southern staple; the need of self supply, that is, economic self-sufficiency; manufacturing and the development of resources; the construction of public works; emigration and settlement; the ship canal; the military road from Memphis through to Red River; the Cumberland road from Illinois through Missouri to Little Rock; the naval

⁴*Nashville Union*, April 22, 1845.

⁵Cited in *Little Rock Banner*, April 23, 1845.

⁶*Little Rock Banner*, April 30, 1845.

depot at Memphis. Finally a delegation was selected to go from Arkansas to the Memphis meeting.⁷

That in some quarters there was fear lest in the call of the convention there might be some ulterior political motives, and that suspicion fell upon the extreme state rights party of South Carolina, is evidenced by the fact that within a month after the March meetings in Memphis, the *Nashville Union*, the leading Democratic "organ" of Tennessee, humorously expressed the hope that the Whigs would not be frightened. The project of the proposed July convention was not a Democratic movement to bring South Carolina nullifiers to Nashville. This was a gibe at the alarm which had been professed by the Whigs at the assembling in Nashville, in August, 1844, of the great Democratic rally of the presidential campaign. This, said the *Union*, was a no-party proposal to the people of the South, the Southwest, and the Northwest to assemble at Memphis, July 4, to deliberate on all the great interests which connected the West with the South. The fourteen prominent gentlemen who issued the call embraced politicians of both sides. The editor approved the sending of delegates from Nashville.⁸ Of especial interest to Nashville, as we shall see later, was the matter of the railroad connection with Charleston.

ILLINOIS AND THE CONVENTION.

The steps which led to the convention of July 4 have been presented in this detail, because that great "source" for the student of American history, *Niles's Register*, in this case fell into error. The *Register* attributed the origin of the convention to a meeting in Illinois.⁹ This, as our narrative has made clear, was a mistake; but Illinois was, indeed, deeply interested. The file of the *State Register*, of Springfield, Illinois, reveals, first, that at this time Maury's "Harry Bluff" letters were being reproduced at length and were being received with deep interest; and that, besides the general improvement of the Western rivers and the defense of the Mississippi and the Lakes, the completion of the Illinois-Michigan canal was especially prominent in the minds of the leaders of opinion in Illinois.¹⁰ This work had been urged upon the attention of the Assembly of Illinois, at its last session, by that rising politician, Stephen

⁷*Ibid.*, May 14, 1845. Particular comment was made as to manufactures. In this respect there was going on a revolution in public sentiment, caused by the fall in the price of cotton. The use of slave children in factories was being considered. It is not without interest to find that in the midst of all this enthusiasm the editor was troubled with scruples as to the powers of the general government.

⁸*Nashville Union*, April 22, 1845.

⁹*Niles's National Register*, vol. 68, p. 312. Hereafter cited as *Niles*.

¹⁰*Illinois State Register*, May 2, June 13, 1845.

A. Douglas, who was then serving his first term as a representative in Congress. He stated that the canal project had not been originated either by Maury or by himself, but he gave it his enthusiastic support.¹¹ When the editor of the *State Register* complained of the failure, in the Twenty-eighth Congress, of the measures that were particularly important to Illinois,¹² Douglas retorted that Illinois, in common with other Western states, had profited through the passage of the river and harbor bill of 1844; that the effort to locate an armory at Fort Massac had failed was not the fault of the Illinois delegation. He threw the blame on President Tyler.¹³

But in June, 1845, before this letter of Douglas appeared in the *Register*, there was held at Springfield a series of meetings in support of the agitation for Oregon and the defense of the West. At the close of these Douglas moved to take up the question of the ship-canal and the convention at Memphis. The preamble and resolutions which he introduced, and which were adopted, eulogized Maury and, stating that "they had observed" the call for the convention at Memphis, urged the sending of delegates. Douglas made a fiery speech, in which he pressed the ship-canal as a means of defense against England, and as an offset to the Welland Canal. Douglas looked to an "ocean-bound" republic. As a result, ten delegates were appointed to attend the Memphis meeting. Besides Douglas, the list included the name of A. Lincoln. It was urged that anyone from Illinois who could attend should consider himself a delegate.¹⁴ The *State Register* published also a letter from J. A. McClernand, another Illinois member of Congress, in which he strongly supported the suggestion of the Memphis convention.¹⁵

THE SESSION OF JULY 4, 1845.

On July 4 the "Western and Southwestern Convention" met at Memphis, whose mayor, J. J. Finley, served as temporary chairman. When permanent officers were elected, Dr. Lewis Shanks, of Memphis, was chosen President, and G. T. M. Davis and William Walters of Illinois, T. Farrelly and W. D. Ferguson of Arkansas, M. McGehee and J. Ruffin of Mississippi, John Pope and J. Fowlkes of Tennessee, T. L. Brigham and S. W. Black of Pennsylvania were elected vice-presidents.

¹¹*Ibid.*, June 13, 1845. An interesting historical account of this enterprise, with a vigorous plea for Congressional aid, is found in a letter of John Wentworth to the Committee on Public Lands, in the Washington Semi-Weekly *Globe*, January 9, 1845.

¹²*Ibid.*, May 16, 1845.

¹³*Ibid.*, July 11, 1845.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, June 13, 1845. The editor again pressed the matter June 20.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, July 11, 1845. The letter was dated June 18.

A committee of three from each state was appointed to make suggestions. Delegates appeared from Tennessee, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Illinois and Pennsylvania, and persons from other Western states who happened to be in Memphis were invited to take part in the proceedings. Next day Shanks, as chairman of the general committee, brought in a report and some resolutions and the latter were offered to the convention by Walters of Illinois. The matters proposed were (1) the removal of the snags in the great Western rivers and the building of lighthouses on the coast of Florida, (2) the connection of the Great Lakes and the Mississippi by a ship canal to be built by the general government, (3) a general system of defences for the Southwest and the Northwest with the requisite number of shipyards and naval stations, besides the navy yard and depot at Memphis, (4) the completion by the Federal Government of the military road from Memphis through Arkansas to the frontier, (5) the establishment of a general system of levees, (6) certain and speedy mail conveyance utilizing steamboats and ships of war, (7) the maintenance of marine hospitals. W. C. Dunlap of Tennessee proposed that Congress should put on the footing of American seamen all persons engaged on the Western rivers. The purpose for which the Illinois delegates had come was revealed when G. M. T. Davis moved the adoption of a specific demand for the Western Armory at Fort Massac, and a ship canal from the Illinois River to Lake Michigan. Colonel Farrelly of Arkansas emphasized the need of reclamation and drainage and wanted the Cumberland Road continued through Illinois from Vandalia *via* Fort Smith to Texas. A. G. Mayers of Memphis urged large appropriations for Arkansas roads and rivers and better provisions for defense. John Pope of Tennessee spoke for the committee on Southern agriculture and suggested something like a grange, or farmers' alliance, to meet every two years and adopt measures which should be ratified by the several state legislatures. Major Morris urged that the Lagrange and Memphis Railroad should be turned over to a new corporation with a view to completing the connection with Memphis. S. J. Black of Pittsburgh moved that by reason of the imperfect notice given for the July meeting another session should be called for November 12 and that all the Western and Southwestern states and Western Pennsylvania and Virginia should be represented. A long discussion arose over the method to be followed in voting on measures before the convention. Before adjournment committees were appointed on publication, correspondence, military and naval resources and necessities of the West and South, the improvement of Western rivers, the improvement of the Ohio River, the ship canal between the Lakes and the

Mississippi, a Western armory, a military road through Arkansas, the forts and defenses of the western Indian frontier, the Western mails, Western marine hospitals, leveeing and drainage, the railroad connection with Charleston, agriculture in the South, manufactures in the South. The opinion was stated that the committee on agriculture and manufacturing had best not express any opinion as to the power of the Federal Government.¹⁶

As the call of the convention had been widely noticed in the newspapers of the country, so the proceedings of the body were commented upon at greater or less length. *Niles's Register* gave a very fair summary, taken from the *Atlas* of Cincinnati.¹⁷ The editor of the *Illinois State Register*, who had been present himself, gave an account with some interesting details.¹⁸ So did Davis, a delegate from Illinois, in the *Alton Telegraph*.¹⁹ The narrative of the *Little Rock Banner* we have drawn upon at some length. In Nashville the proceedings were published with the more willingness,²⁰ because, as we shall shortly make clear, Nashville was in the midst of a reawakening of the railroad fever. The general executive committee appointed by the July convention was composed of H. G. Smith, E. J. Shields, J. J. Finley, Seth Wheatley, E. W. M. King, J. Fowlkes and Lewis Shanks—the same group that had taken the initiative in March. This committee was very active in keeping alive the interest in the session to be held in November. In August it published a report which was largely statistical. Placing considerable dependence on Barrow's report to the Senate, in 1843, this showed the growth of the Valley as compared with the East. A strong appeal was made for unity of action between the West and the South.²¹ In October, this committee published another letter, and it became known that invitations had been issued to some of the most prominent men to attend the convention.²² Of these the one of chief importance to the history of the convention was John C. Calhoun, of South Carolina. Soon the public was informed that Calhoun had agreed to be present.²³

JOHN C. CALHOUN: SOUTH CAROLINA AND THE CONVENTION.

Calhoun's willingness to attend the November session, and the highly important part which he took in its delibera-

¹⁶*Little Rock Banner*, July 23, 1845.

¹⁷*Niles*, vol. 68, p. 312.

¹⁸*Illinois State Register*, July 18, 1845.

¹⁹*Ibid.*

²⁰*Nashville Republican Banner*, July 14, citing *Memphis Enquirer*.

²¹*Little Rock Banner*, August 13, 1845.

²²*Niles*, vol. 69, p. 100.

²³*Nashville Union*, October 18, 1845.

tions, are evidences of the new phase which the movement had taken on between July and November. At the July session, while the connection with Charleston had been a principal topic, apparently no delegates from South Carolina, Georgia or Alabama had been present. The convention was for the most part limited to the states that directly bordered upon the Mississippi. The causes which led to the vigorous participation of South Carolina in the November meeting must therefore now be explained. A political retrospect first becomes necessary.

The years 1844 and 1845, it will be remembered, witnessed the rise to the forefront of the political stage of the question of the annexation of Texas, and the combination with this of the agitation with regard to Oregon. These issues, united in the Democratic National Convention of May, 1844, were those on which the campaign of 1844 was fought, and on which James K. Polk was elected President of the United States. Before the close, on March 4, 1845, of the short session of the Twenty-eighth Congress, the joint resolution which offered annexation to Texas had been adopted, and Andrew J. Donelson of Tennessee had started upon his mission to persuade Texas to accept the American offer. Throughout the spring and summer of 1845 these negotiations were in progress, and Texas, through a convention, ratified the annexation on the very day that the July session of the Memphis convention assembled. The Congress of the United States had still to confirm the negotiations, but this was conceded to be a foregone conclusion. One immediate effect, therefore, of the action of Texas, was to draw the teeth of the danger to the Mississippi River region and to remove the problem of defense, so far as Mexico was concerned, to the soil of Texas. The tension in our relations with England and with Mexico, however, continued.²⁴

In that part of the negotiations which lay within the term of Tyler's presidency, the conduct of foreign affairs had been in the hands of Calhoun, who, disappointed in the hope that he might be the Democratic nominee in 1844, had accepted the Secretaryship of State in Tyler's cabinet. It fell to Polk to accept and complete the work of this regime, but Polk did not invite Calhoun to continue to hold his portfolio. Before Polk's administration had long assumed control, the discordant alliances of 1844, by which victory had been won, were strained nearly to the breaking point, and the feud between Calhoun's friends, on the one side, and the Van Buren-Benton faction on the other, appeared in all its bitterness. Calhoun, sincerely convinced of his own good will and his ability to save the

²⁴Justin H. Smith, *The Annexation of Texas*, Chaps. 18-20, *passim*.

country from war, began to listen again to the voices which held out to him the certainty of his nomination in 1848.²⁵

THE SOUTH AND THE WEST.

The natural basis for such a candidacy, particularly in view of the uncertainty of the Eastern states, was the old combination of the South and West. It therefore became the chief problem of the South Carolina leaders to find out how they could hold the West. Their tradition was one of strict construction and of the unconstitutionality of federal appropriations for internal improvements; yet this was the first and foremost demand of the West. Duff Green, connected with Calhoun through intermarriage between their families, and one of Calhoun's most faithful supporters, wrote to Calhoun in September, 1845:

"I saw Hannegan of Indiana yesterday. He says that the West will be united and will demand funds for the improvement of their harbors, rivers, and the Cumberland Road, and the graduation of the price of the public lands, and that if the South will give these to the West they will go with the South on the tariff. This is Benton's card."²⁶

This was the program that Calhoun and his friends had to meet. If we inquire, on the other hand, why the Memphis managers turned to South Carolina, we have only to recall the work of Gaines and Maury, described in the first installment of this paper, and to take up again the threads of the story of the railroad connection between the Tennessee-Mississippi region and the Southeast. As has already been explained, the decade 1830-1840 was nearly barren of accomplishment, so far as concerned the actual construction of the roads planned for the Mississippi Valley. The hard times that had followed the panic of 1837 were slow to improve. The scheme of direct trade from Southern ports to Europe, which had been urged in the Southern journals and agitated in conventions at Augusta and Charleston, resulted in nothing definite. In 1839 the death of R. Y. Hayne of South Carolina removed one of the ablest of the railroad pioneers. The Louisville, Charleston and Cincinnati Railroad, which had bought the Charleston and Hamburg Railroad, was amalgamated with the South Carolina Railroad Company, and the reorganized company abandoned its transmontane plan and limited itself to the construction of lateral branches. The task of westward connection passed to the railroads of Georgia—as Calhoun had urged from the

²⁵Gaillard Hunt, *John C. Calhoun*, pp. 277, ff.

²⁶J. F. Jameson (ed.), *Correspondence of John C. Calhoun*, p. 1055 (hereafter cited as *Calhoun Correspondence*).

beginning. The Georgia Railroad, which centered in Athens in the Piedmont region, and undertook to build from Augusta to Athens, reached Athens in 1841; and in 1845 there was completed an extension to Atlanta. Meanwhile the Central of Georgia had built from Savannah to Macon, and in 1845 another company, the Monroe Company, extending the communication towards Atlanta, went into bankruptcy when its tracks were within twenty miles of Atlanta. The twenty miles were shortly after completed, however, and the road reorganized, and thus by 1848 two roads were to enter the present capital of Georgia. As this consummation approached, the next link westward of the chain that had been conceived in the early days took definite shape. The Western and Atlantic Railroad, to run from Atlanta to the Tennessee River, was chartered in 1836. Construction was begun very shortly. Interrupted for a time by lack of resources, in 1843 the laying of the iron was in progress, and in 1847, with renewed activity, the completion of the road was pushed forward, so that Chattanooga was reached in 1851.²⁷

The railroad situation in the South, in 1844-1845, was, then, about to accomplish what had been planned in 1831-1833. Georgia and South Carolina were beckoning to the West to meet them.

The group of men who were responsible for the calling of the July convention at Memphis were the men who were in touch with the railroad interests of South Carolina. In November, 1843, Colonel James Gadsden, at that time the most active practical railroad promoter in South Carolina, wrote to Dr. Lewis Shanks, of Memphis, that South Carolina and Georgia were doing their part.²⁸ In June, 1844, a meeting concerned with the affairs of the Mississippi and Atlantic Railroad was held at Memphis, with Shanks as chairman. The editor of the *Memphis Enquirer* at this time congratulated General Gaines on the approaching success of his railroad plans.²⁹ In the autumn of the same year there was a railroad convention at Huntsville, Alabama, at which reports were made on the work done on the Alabama part of the proposed railroad.³⁰

CALHOUN URGED TO GO.

Like all men prominent in political life as real or presumable candidates for the Presidency, Calhoun was from time

²⁷U. B. Phillips, *History of Transportation in the Eastern Cotton Belt*, *passim*.

²⁸*Memphis Enquirer*, December 14, 1843. The letter is dated November 15.

²⁹*Ibid.*, June 16, 1844.

³⁰*Ibid.*, October 17, 1844, citing *Charleston Courier* of October 2.

to time besieged with invitations to visit the different sections of the country. He had viewed with disfavor the acceptance of such invitations, on the ground that he could not accept all, and that he could not acquiesce in some without giving offense to those who had extended others.³¹ In September, 1844, his friend Pickens, of South Carolina, who had just returned from a visit to Tennessee, and who was full of enthusiasm with regard to the candidacy of Calhoun in 1848, urged that Calhoun should visit the West in May, 1845, before any public move towards proclaiming his intentions should be made.³² In this year Calhoun had a personal interest in the West, as his sons, Patrick and John Calhoun, were "high up on the Mississippi, at Fort Leavenworth."³³ In the autumn of 1845, when the executive committee at Memphis, which was extending invitations to many prominent men, stressed his coming, he was pressed by his friends to accept the invitation and go to Memphis in November.

Expecting to be on a visit to his sons in Alabama at the time, Calhoun wrote to Gadsden on September 23 that if he could with propriety, he would make it a point to attend. October 9 James Gadsden wrote to him urging that whatever scruples he might have had before must now be removed by the formal invitation which he had received. It would seem that there was some lack of enthusiasm on the part of the South Carolinians most likely to be interested. Gadsden did not know of more than six or eight of their delegation that would go from Charleston. If he (Gadsden) went, it would be at great sacrifice, and he certainly would not go if Calhoun, King and Elmore should back out. But now, said Gadsden, was the time to shake off the Northern Democracy and appeal to the West. "Now is the time," he pleaded, "to meet our Western friends at Memphis—to set the ball in motion which must bring the Valley to the South, and make them feel as allies of the great commercial and agricultural interests instead of the tax-gathering and monopolizing interests of the North. I shall expect to see you at Memphis."³⁴

Almost at the same time came a letter from Elmore, to much the same effect. He could not go, but it was essential that Calhoun should be present. Calhoun had been too much secluded from the people, who had an inexpressible desire to see and know him, and on such an occasion as this, where so much might be done to advance Southern interests, to form

³¹Calhoun to R. M. T. Hunter, July 10, 143: *Calhoun Correspondence*, p. 541.

³²*Ibid.*, pp. 968-970.

³³Calhoun to T. G. Clemson, *ibid.*, p. 627.

³⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 1060-1062.

and consolidate a right sentiment, to unite our section upon the right policy and principles on which to place their destinies, it would be a sad oversight for Calhoun to decline. Elmore went on to consider the economic ends in view. "A Railroad Communication based at Memphis in a slave region and extended direct to Charleston, passing through the most martial portion of our people and who (*sic*) have, as at present situated, the least interest of all the South in slavery, would render their relations with us at Charleston and Memphis so intimate and advantageous, that their interests and ours would be indissolubly united. They would be to us a source of strength, power and safety, and render the South invulnerable. The influence of free intercourse could not be otherwise than happy and useful. The value of the trade I do not believe could be now estimated, and it would make the stocks of our railroad like the shares in the Bank of England, almost without price as the means of computing values in an enterprise to whose gains every moment is adding."³⁵

Early in October it became known that Calhoun had accepted. James Gadsden wrote to Dr. Shanks of Memphis to say, "I have just returned from a town meeting in which we have named delegates to your convention. Messrs. Calhoun and Elmore will attend, so will Mr. King and myself. We have named twenty-five representatives of which some twelve or fourteen will attend."³⁶ In September, as we have seen, Calhoun had written to his friend Gadsden that he expected to visit his sons in Alabama.³⁷ It was in the company of one of these sons, Patrick Calhoun, that he proceeded by way of Mobile and New Orleans to Memphis. As he approached his destination he was received with manifestations of enthusiasm, as the quaint account in the *Memphis Appeal* shows. "He was brought up on the Memphis, which had arrived several hours previously, and went down to meet the *Maria*, loaded to the guards with citizens and others, anxious to get a first sight of this truly great and distinguished statesman. These noble steamers passed in front of the city lashed together, amid the waiving [*sic*] of flags, the firing of cannon, and the huzzas of the people."³⁸

NASHVILLE AND CHARLESTON.

Though jealous of the new city at the Chickasaw Bluff,

³⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 1062, 1063.

³⁶*Little Rock Banner*, October 22, 1845, citing *Memphis Appeal* of October 8. A full account of this meeting at Charleston is to be found in *Niles's National Register*, vol. 69, p. 109.

³⁷*Calhoun Correspondence*, p. 1060.

³⁸*Nashville Republican Banner*, November 19, 1845, citing *Memphis Appeal* of November 13.

Nashville, as we have more than once suggested above, was likewise stirred with the railroad fever, likewise looked to Charleston for financial assistance, and thus must co-operate to some degree with the forces at Memphis. The earliest steps at Memphis had been brought to the attention of Middle Tennessee by the Nashville newspapers.³⁹ Gadsden and his co-workers had friends in Nashville, also.⁴⁰ The distance from Nashville to Chattanooga was but 120 miles, and the completion of the railroad connections would bring Nashville within twenty-four hours of the Atlantic. It was suggested that the line to Chattanooga would cost one million dollars, of which Charleston would subscribe \$200,000; Augusta, \$100,000; Nashville and Chattanooga, \$200,000, while the State of Tennessee should give \$500,000. The men of wealth of South Carolina and Georgia would then be seen buying summer residences around Nashville, instead of Greenville, South Carolina, or Buncombe, North Carolina, while a direct communication with Savannah, Georgia, would supply the two planting states with corn, bacon, beef, flour and iron, all abundantly produced in Tennessee.⁴¹ Among the most prominent of those who agitated this matter in and about Nashville was Dr. James Overton, who, on July 3, 1845, made a speech at Nashville on the proposed Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad.⁴² Not even a bitter political campaign, preliminary to the election of a governor, representatives in Congress, and members of the Assembly, could divert attention from the railroad issue.

Stimulated by the communications from Memphis and from Charleston, and by a growing appreciation of the probable importance of the coming gathering at Memphis, the railroad agitation at Nashville took on increased vigor. On October 22 a public meeting was held in Nashville at which J. M. Bass presided. A preamble and resolution, moved by General Barrow and seconded by Dr. James Overton, were adopted, and on the motion of V. K. Stevenson, a delegation of thirty citizens was appointed to attend the Memphis meeting and represent there the interests of Davidson County.⁴³ Other coun-

³⁹See notes 3, 4 and 8; also *Nashville Union*, April 26; June 19, 26; September 23, 1845.

⁴⁰*Nashville Republican Banner*, October 31, November 10, 1845; *Nashville Whig*, October 16, 21, 23, 1845.

⁴¹*Nashville Union*, June 19, 1845.

⁴²*Ibid.*, July 17, 1845.

⁴³On October 18 the *Nashville Union* said that South Carolina had chosen Calhoun and Elmore, two of the first men in the Union. The Memphis committee had invited several of the prominent citizens of Nashville, but the editor desired to see this matter acted upon in a public meeting and a large delegation of the first men selected to attend. The list of delegates for Davidson County chosen at the

ties followed the example. Besides the Davidson County delegates, another group went from Nashville in the name of the General Assembly of Tennessee, which was then in session. The latter were instructed especially to invite Calhoun and Clay to come to Nashville to attend a railroad meeting which it had been decided to hold there on November 24.⁴⁴ The two delegations chartered a special steamer, the *China*, and went by river to Memphis.⁴⁵

THE CONVENTION.

At eleven o'clock on the morning of November 12, 1845, the Southern and Western Convention assembled in the Methodist Episcopal church in Memphis. E. J. Shields of Memphis was made temporary chairman and a committee was appointed of one delegate from each state and territory then represented to nominate permanent officers. In the afternoon the appointments to the nominating committee were reported to the convention.⁴⁶ The next morning the nominating committee through their chairman, Doctor Fearn, submitted a report which was adopted, and the following were elected permanent

meeting of the 22d was as follows: Dr. James Overton, F. B. Fogg, Willo. Williams, S. D. Morgan, D. J. Walters, Dr. P. Lindsley, J. W. Horton, V. Vanlier, V. K. Stevenson, M. Watson, J. J. B. Southall, Dr. John Shelby, A. Ewing, E. H. Foster, W. Nichol, J. A. Porter, A. Allison, C. Connor, R. J. Meigs, John Bell, D. Graham, J. T. Elliston, W. G. Harding, J. G. Harris, W. H. Humphreys, W. Tannehill, A. M. Rutledge, G. W. Martin. Messrs. N. Cross, F. Robertson, and G. Troost had been included by the Chairman, but had stated their inability to attend. (*Nashville Union*, October 28, 1845.)

⁴⁴The legislature had convened October 6, and the session thus far had been one of great partisan bitterness. The Democrats had elected a governor for the first time in four years—Aaron V. Brown having given up a seat in Congress to wrest the state from the Whig administration of James C. Jones. It took the Senate 138 ballots to elect a speaker. In the election of an United States senator Hopkins L. Turney, by a deal with the Whigs, had beaten the regular Democratic candidate, A. O. P. Nicholson. This aroused much ill feeling. Both the retiring and the incoming governors, in messages to the Assembly, spoke of the Nashville-Chattanooga railroad connection. After some delay the Assembly decided to send a delegation to Memphis Convention. (*Journals, Senate and House of Representatives: Nashville Union*, November 6, 11, 1845.) Of these delegates ten were in attendance at the convention at its opening.

⁴⁵*Nashville Republican Banner*, November 7, 1845.

⁴⁶The members of the nominating committee were: For Tennessee, James A. Whiteside; Kentucky, David Banks; Arkansas, M. W. Izard; Mississippi, Reverend Wm. McMahon; Alabama, Doctor Thomas Fearn; South Carolina, Colonel James Gadsden; Illinois, Walter B. Scates; Indiana, A. T. Ellis; Iowa, A. C. Dodge; North Carolina, Richard Sneed; Missouri, J. E. Yeatman; Louisiana, James Dunlap.

The most important source for an account of the proceedings of the November session is the official pamphlet: *Journal of the*

officers: For President, John C. Calhoun, of South Carolina; for Vice-Presidents, Dr. James Overton, of Tennessee; Col. John Hanna, of Kentucky; Col. William Strong, of Arkansas; Gen. Roger Barton, of Mississippi; Capt. Henry M. Shreve, of Missouri; Hon. Clement C. Clay, of Alabama; Hon. O. J. Morgan, of Louisiana; Maj. Alexander Black, of South Carolina; Gen. Leonard White, of Illinois; Dr. Richard Sneed, of North Carolina; Mr. Joseph S. Hawkins, of Ohio; Hon. William Burch, of Indiana; Gen. A. C. Dodge, of Iowa; B. B. Minor, Esq., of Virginia: for Secretaries, Col. C. F. M. Noland, of Arkansas; Col. J. G. Harris, of Tennessee; Col. A. B. Chambers, of Missouri; A. V. S. Lindsley, Esq., of Tennessee; J. D. B. DeBow, Esq., of South Carolina; F. A. Lumsden, Esq., of Louisiana; T. B. Drinker, Esq., of Ohio: for Marshals, Gen. J. F. Farrington, Lewis C. Trezevant, Esq., Maj. Walter B. Morris, of Tennessee.⁴⁷

THE NUMBER AND PERSONNEL OF THE DELEGATES.

Both in the number of delegates who attended, and in the number of states which these represented, this session entirely surpassed that of July. By the second day, the papers reported that four hundred and fifty-six delegates were present;⁴⁸ before the adjournment it was estimated that between six and seven hundred had been in attendance.⁴⁹ The hospitality of the little town must have been taxed. In the list of states and territories which had representation are found Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa Territory, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania,⁵⁰ South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas,⁵¹ and Virginia. In several of the states the delegates were chosen for particular counties—those geographically the most interested. In others the delegates were elected

Proceedings of the South-Western Convention, Began and Held at the City of Memphis on the 12th November, 1845. Memphis, Tenn., 1845. The pamphlet contains in all 127 pages. Pp. 1-28 comprise the *Journal* of the proceedings: the remainder is taken up with the *Reports of Committees*. The pamphlet is hereafter cited as *Journal*. DeBow, in the first number of his *Commercial Review of the South and West* (January, 1846), devotes an entire article to the Convention. Additional details taken from *Niles's Annual Register* and other newspapers are duly noted in the proper places.

⁴⁷*Journal*, pp. 1-6.

⁴⁸*Nashville Republican Banner*, November 21, 1845; *Nashville Union*, November 22, 1845.

⁴⁹*Nashville Union*, November 25, 1845.

⁵⁰Although three delegates from Pennsylvania made their appearance upon the third day of the convention, and voted to the last, this state was not, apparently, honored with a vice-president.

⁵¹The Texas delegation, likewise, was not represented among the vice-presidents.

or appointed for the state at large. Some came from cities, as in the case of New Orleans, Charleston, Columbia and Richmond. As would be expected, the largest delegation was that from Tennessee, which sent over two hundred. Fifteen counties of the state sent some of their citizens to Memphis. Of these counties the larger number were located in Middle and West Tennessee, but Knox and Hamilton, in East Tennessee, were represented. The delegation from Shelby County, in which Memphis lay, outnumbered all others, and in its roll we find the names of nearly all those who had been prominent from the first in bringing to pass the assembling of the convention. From other states, the delegations of Marshall and DeSoto Counties, in Mississippi, and that of the city of St. Louis, were notable for their size.⁵²

Throughout the list of delegates, the names of editors and newspaper men are conspicuous by their numbers. Perhaps the most important of these were B. B. Minor, editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, and J. D. B. DeBow, who had been connected with the *Southern Quarterly Review*, and was soon to put forth the first issue of his *Commercial Review of the South and West*.⁵³ Those who had to do with engineering were well represented; to this group may be assigned Gadsden of South Carolina, Deshler and Troost of Alabama, Forshey of Louisiana, and Bingham of Arkansas. Henry M. Shreve, whose work of removing the snags in the Western rivers had been of the highest importance, was present as a delegate from Missouri. It was stated that Asa Whitney, the "railroad king," would be in attendance to urge the claims of his Oregon line,⁵⁴ but his name did not appear in the list of delegates. Among those already identified with the promotion of railroads, or soon to be so regarded, were James Guthrie of Kentucky, and Overton, Stevenson and Fowlkes of Tennessee. To these may be added the name of James C. Jones of Tennessee, who later was active in promoting the Memphis and Charleston Railroad. Jones had just been defeated for re-election as governor of Tennessee. Among others prominent in political life

⁵²*Journal, passim.*

⁵³*Niles* (vol. 69, p. 214), citing the *Memphis Enquirer*, listed as the editors present, in addition to Minor and DeBow, T. B. Drinker, *Cincinnati Union*; W. H. Hunt, *Southern Intelligencer*; R. L. Sanders, *New Orleans Bee*; Wm. Walters, *Illinois State Register*; T. A. S. Doniphan, *Natchez Free Trader*; Charles Cist, *Cincinnati Advertiser*; Robert Patterson, *Concordia Intelligencer*; George Weissinger, *Louisville Journal*; A. H. Arthur, *Vicksburg Whig*; Wm. Delay, Oxford, Miss., *Organizer*; F. Y. Rockett, Panola, Miss., *Register*; S. Benton, Ripley, Miss., *Advertiser*; J. J. Chandler, *Evansville Gazette*; Mr. Hamilton, Portsmouth, Ohio, *Tribune*. This list did not include the editors from Tennessee.

⁵⁴Lexington (Ky.) *True American*, November 18, 1845.

were Governor Thomas Ford and Leonard White of Illinois, Augustus Caesar Dodge of the Iowa Territory, C. C. Clay of Alabama, Ephraim H. Foster and John Bell of Tennessee. With the exception of Calhoun, no statesman of first rank was present. Henry Clay, Thomas Hart Benton and Lewis Cass might all have been thought to be interested in the West, but all were absent. It was but a few weeks before the time for the meeting of the Twenty-ninth Congress. This may explain, in part, the absence of these, and of men like Stephen A. Douglas. The prominence given to the coming of Calhoun no doubt must also be taken into account.

CALHOUN'S ADDRESS.

On Thursday morning, after Calhoun had been informed of his election and presented to the convention, he delivered the "address" which was to give the "keynote" of the meeting.

The object of the convention, he said, was stated as the development of the resources of the Western and Southwestern states. This region might be divided into three parts. The first of these was the Mississippi Valley; the second "that portion which stretches east from the mouth of the Mississippi River along the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean as far as cotton, rice and tobacco are cultivated"; the third "stretches from the Mississippi westward along the Gulf of Mexico to the Mexican line." He said the Mexican line, for although Texas was not yet annexed, the day was near at hand. The vast region comprehending these divisions might be justly called "the great agricultural portion of the Union." To develop its resources it was necessary to get a "fair remunerative price" for its products.⁵⁵ This could be done only by enlarging the market in proportion to the increase in production, and this could be accomplished only "by free and ready transit for persons and merchandises between the various portions of this vast region and between it and the other portions of the Union and the rest of the world."

Having thus at once reached the essential point in the matter of transportation, Calhoun touched rapidly upon the improvement of the navigation of the Mississippi and its great tributaries, and the adoption of such measures as should keep open at all times in peace and war a communication, through the coasting trade, between the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. He advocated, therefore, the establishment of a first-rate naval station at Pensacola or elsewhere, the fortification of the "Tortugas," the maintenance of a naval force of steam-

⁵⁵This was, of course, a reflection of the agitation connected with the low price of cotton. See above, p. 80.

ers or other vessels to command, at any cost, the coast and the opening of the bar at the Balize.

These topics were summed up in a few words. To the next, Calhoun devoted more time. The projection of Florida so far to the south, he argued, would always be an obstacle to the coasting commerce. What was needed to complete a safe, speedy and cheap intercourse between the Valley of the Mississippi and the Southern Atlantic Coast was a good system of railroads. He gave a clear, concise summary of the present status and future plans of the Southern states. In the Southeast the nature of the country was such that all the railroads projected or commenced, although each had looked only to its local interest, "must necessarily unite at a point in DeKalb County in the state of Georgia, called Attalanta, not far from the village of Decatur." He described the Western and Atlantic and the necessary junction with it of the Knoxville and Hiwassee in East Tennessee and the road to Nashville and the extension of the Decatur Railroad of Alabama. To the south the railroad from Vicksburg to Jackson and the projected roads from Grand Gulf and Natchez must in their eastern extension unite somewhere on the ridge between the Mississippi and Tombigby and thence in their extension toward the Southern Atlantic ports must join the railroad now partially completed between Montgomery on the Alabama River and West Point on the Apalatchicola and unite at the same place with the Savannah and Charleston road and the Georgia trunk; so again the short railroad from New Orleans to Lake Ponchartrain to Mobile, and thence by the Alabama to Montgomery. To the same point would come the projected road from Pensacola, while from Virginia the road from Richmond must necessarily pass near Abingdon down the valley of the Holston to Knoxville. He stressed the necessary inter-relation of these roads, which, he said, would, no doubt, appear more fully from the report of the Committee on Railroads. He had limited his remarks to the region east of the Mississippi through lack of information as to that west of it.

It was not enough that this means of transportation within the South and West should be completed, but the surplus products of the territory in question must be taken to other parts of the Union. In addition to the avenues already suggested, the Great Valley must be connected with the Valley and Lakes of the St. Lawrence by a canal.

Calhoun's next sentences were: "But how is all this to be effected? This, gentlemen, brings us to a more delicate question, and that is how far we may invoke the aid of the General Government for that purpose." Thus Calhoun passed to the ground of constitutional interpretation. The invention of

Fulton had in reality for all practical purposes converted the Mississippi with its great tributaries into an inland sea. He was therefore prepared to place it on the same footing with the Gulf and Atlantic Coast, the Chesapeake and Delaware Bays and the Lakes. But he was opposed to local improvements that could be accomplished, as the improvement of the Mississippi could not, by individuals or by states. These local expenditures would lead to log-rolling and terminate in useless and wasteful expenditures of public money.⁵⁶

There was no question of the competency of Congress to keep open the coasting voyage between the Gulf and the Atlantic. He therefore passed that by and proceeded to the railroads. Railroads were internal improvements which, as objects for appropriations, were not comprehended under the powers delegated to the General Government. But it might still be in its power to do something directly in aid of the execution of such a system where the roads passed through lands belonging to the United States. Here the government as the proprietor could grant lands to roads or canals where the effect of such grants would be to increase the value of the land. Thus he had never hesitated to vote in favor of acts granting alternate sections to railroads or canals under such circumstances. In particular he had cheerfully, as President of the Senate, given his casting vote in favor of an act granting alternate sections to the canal intended to connect Lake Michigan with the Mississippi through the Illinois River.

While expressing his unwillingness to touch upon the vexed question of a tariff, he urged the repeal of the duty upon railroad iron and injected a paragraph or two of good free trade arguments. He closed with a few words as to the construction of levees, seizing this final topic to bring out again his plan of former years, popular in the Western states, to graduate and reduce the price of the public lands and cede what was unsold to the states in which the lands lay. Looking toward the future, he predicted that "in less than one generation you will be engaged in deliberations to extend your communication to the Pacific as you now are with the Atlantic, and will ultimately be almost as intimately connected with the one as the other. In the end we will command a promise of both, and this great Valley become the center of the commerce

⁵⁶Calhoun here gave, apparently, a statement, not reported in the *Journal*, to the effect that the entire value of the works thus far completed as a result of the log-rolling method, at an expense of nearly \$17,000,000, was now reduced to about \$1,000,000. *Niles*, vol. 69, p. 213.

of the world as will be that of our great Union if we shall preserve our liberty and free popular institutions."⁵⁷

Except for an interruption to eject a drunken man, the speech was heard with intense interest, and when, through hoarseness, Calhoun was forced to bring his remarks to a close, he was urged to go on.⁵⁸

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONVENTION.

On the same day that Calhoun made his address—the second day of the convention—it was voted that each state and territory, Texas included, represented on the floor should have an equal vote.⁵⁹

The convention then adjourned until the evening,⁶⁰ when some reports were heard from the committees appointed at the July meeting. Dr. Shanks had a paper on the original purposes of the convention, but was excused from reading it on the ground that Calhoun's address made these sufficiently clear.⁶¹ On motion of Colonel Gadsden the names of members of the July committees were called to ascertain who were present. Some one was on hand to represent each committee except that on the improvement of the Ohio River. Each state or territory not represented in the different committees was given leave to add one member by appointment of its chairman.⁶² At this session Colonel Gadsden presented a map showing in detail the routes of the proposed railroad lines to connect the South and West.⁶³

Next day John P. Butler of Pennsylvania and General Gaines were added to the Vice-Presidents. There were several other additions to various committees and new committees

⁵⁷*Journal*, pp. 7-14. Calhoun's *Address*, carefully edited, was published in his *Works* (R. K. Cralle, ed., *Works of John C. Calhoun*), vol. 6, pp. 273 ff. The newspapers gave the speech at length, or copious extracts: e. g., *Niles*, vol. 69, pp. 212-213; J. D. B. DeBow, ed., *Commercial Review of the South and West*, vol. 1, pp. 14-15, *Nashville Union*, November 22, 1845, *Nashville Republican Banner*, November 24, 1845. Many of the Southern papers copied the accounts in the Memphis newspapers.

⁵⁸*Niles*, vol. 69, p. 213; *Nashville Republican Banner*, November 21, 1845.

⁵⁹*Journal*, p. 14. H. G. Smith of Tennessee had moved that the voting should be by states, in proportion to the federal population of each, exclusive of Virginia. This was ably opposed by B. B. Minor of Virginia, and then Coe of Tennessee moved that all states should have an equal vote. *Nashville Union*, November 22, 1845.

⁶⁰*Nashville Union*, November 22.

⁶¹*Journal*, p. 14; *Niles*, vol. 69, p. 214.

⁶²*Journal*, p. 15.

⁶³*Nashville Union*, November 22, 1845. *Nashville Republican Banner*, November 21, 1845. *Niles* seems to refer this to the following day (vol. 69, p. 212).

were appointed, one on the warehousing system, one composed of a delegate from each of the states of Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Arkansas, and Texas, to consider the construction of a military road from Vandalia, Illinois, to the frontiers of Texas, or of granting alternate sections in these states to aid in its construction; another on Lake harbors and Lake defenses; another on a memorial to the Federal Government in favor of a more exact and complete system of collecting the statistics of the Union. Judge Clifton of Mississippi submitted a series of resolutions covering most of the measures before the convention. These were laid on the table.⁶⁴ A suggestion that the convention should consider the extension of the National Road through Ohio, Illinois, Indiana and Missouri was opposed by C. C. Clay of Alabama, and was withdrawn as likely to lead to partisan debate, but was later reintroduced and referred to the committee on military and naval defenses.⁶⁵

Perhaps the most interesting episode of this session of Friday, November 14—the third day—developed out of the motion of S. Snowden Hayes, a delegate from Illinois, to the effect that the convention should recommend an application to Congress for aid only in those works of improvement which were acknowledged, by both political parties, to be within the scope of the constitutional powers of that body, and of national importance. Calhoun seems to have regarded some of Hayes's remarks as expressing strictures upon his speech—possibly upon his use of the phrase “inland sea”⁶⁶—for he took the floor and made an extended reply. He said that he wished to be distinctly understood. As he understood the national power, there was none beyond the Constitution. If a subject were of national character, it was comprehended within the Constitution. Our government was, in fact, an assemblage of nations, and he hoped that this proud feature might never be destroyed. He had seen enough to know that when Congress began making specific appropriations, there was no stopping place, in consequence of the log-rolling disposition, as it was termed, of our legislature. The power of the General Government to construct roads, etc., was limited to the purpose of defense of the confederated states. The improvement of all navigable streams, the jurisdiction of which is not confined to a single state, came within the constitutional competency of Congress. The General Government could not grant appropriations for local purposes not connected with the national defense, but the Mississippi River and its navigable branches were peculiarly an object within the range of their constitutional aid.

⁶⁴*Journal*, pp. 17-18.

⁶⁵*Nashville Union*, November 22, 1845. *Journal*, p. 19.

⁶⁶*Niles*, vol. 69, p. 213.

It washed several of these sovereign states, and in that view it might truly be considered as much an inland sea as either the Chesapeake or Delaware Bays. The resolution of Hayes was then adopted.⁶⁷

On Saturday morning it was voted that each delegate should contribute a dollar to pay for printing the proceedings of the convention. On the motion of Allen of St. Louis the convention disclaimed, by resolution, any purpose of sectionalism and expressed a patriotic national spirit. The principal secretary was authorized to have copied into the record book the report and proceedings of the several committees and to deposit such book in the state library at Nashville, Tennessee.⁶⁸ A resolution to the effect that the time had come to move the seat of the National Government to the West was "whistled at and laughed out of the convention."⁶⁹

When the roll of the committees was called the chairman of that on the military and naval resources of the South said that that committee was not prepared to report, but that General Gaines, a member of that committee, would present a series of resolutions instead.⁷⁰

GENERAL GAINES HONORED.

General Gaines, who must have felt some satisfaction at the size of the convention, the seriousness with which it was conducting its deliberations, and the subjects which occupied its attention, headed the delegation from Louisiana, and when he and his associates came into the convention, upon the second day of its sessions, the members honored the old soldier and received him standing.⁷¹ He now presented resolutions on military and naval defense, and accompanied them with a speech. He urged the completion of the southeastern railroads, and the extension of the railroad connection to Nashville and Memphis, and on to Little Rock—on to Texas. "We will not go further," said the General, "than the Rio Grande at present," but he desired to intersect said river at a place in a direct line between Memphis and California. (Cheers.) Not that he had any designs on California (laughter), but he desired the people of that country might know us. He wished them to have an opportunity of seeing our country and understanding her institutions. He believed it might be said of her, as Burns did of one of his sweethearts—

⁶⁷*Nashville Republican Banner*, November 21, 1845; *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, November 31, 1845; *Journal*, p. 18. Besides Hayes, Walters, of Illinois, was active in the Convention. (*Illinois State Register*, November 28, 1845.)

⁶⁸*Journal*, pp. 21-22.

⁶⁹*Nashville Union*, November 25, 1845.

⁷⁰*Journal*, pp. 22-23.

⁷¹*Nashville Union*, November 22, 1845.

“To see her is to love her,
 And love her but forever,
 For Nature made her what she is
 And ne'er made such another.”

He had no desire to go to war with Mexico. He had had sufficient opportunity to gain laurels in the field when opposed by British veterans. He desired the construction of a railroad to Mexico, that her people might have the opportunity of seeing us, loving us, and uniting with us. (Laughter.)⁷²

CONCLUDING SESSIONS; RESOLUTIONS.

Various other committees then presented their reports, all of which were received and laid on the table; among these was one by Gadsden on the railroads. Then upon motion of Ex-Governor James C. Jones of Tennessee a committee was appointed composed of a delegate from each state and territory, to which all the reports and resolutions were referred, including those of Judge Clifton of Mississippi, with instructions to examine these and report the subjects proper for the final action of the convention. The President appointed the following committee: James C. Jones of Tennessee; James Guthrie, Kentucky; H. P. Ellis, Indiana; Hugh S. Reeves, Iowa; T. B. Craighead, Arkansas; Clark Woodruff, Louisiana; James H. Lucas, Missouri; Elwood Fisher, Ohio; C. C. Clay, Alabama; C. R. Clifton, Mississippi; T. J. Bigham, Pennsylvania; B. B. Minor, Virginia; Richard Sneed, North Carolina; W. B. Scates, Illinois.⁷³

At an afternoon session one or two further resolutions were received and referred and the President announced that he would at the close of this session be obliged to withdraw from the chair. The thanks of the convention were unanimously tendered to Calhoun, and after the applause had subsided Calhoun rose and responded briefly and withdrew.⁷⁴ At the night session the select committee, of which Jones was chairman, reported nineteen resolutions which were adopted, with the exception of the sixteenth, that which related to the

⁷²*Ibid.*, November 25, 1845.

⁷³*Journal*, pp. 23-24.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 24-25. Concerning Calhoun's journey home from the Memphis Convention the following bit is gleaned from the New Orleans *Picayune* of November 21. Calhoun left Memphis early Sunday morning, on the steamboat Maria, with 130 cabin passengers. At Vicksburg he went to the Prentiss House, where he was welcomed to the city by Jeff. Davis, Esq. After a short response by Calhoun, and after many of the citizens had been introduced to him, his journey was resumed. At Natchez, on Wednesday, Mr. Calhoun held another reception at the City Hotel. Thursday the Maria made

improvement of the harbor at St. Louis; but a little later this was adopted by a separate vote, eleven states for and four against. Curiously—when one recalls the origin of the convention—the committee had omitted to bring in any resolution regarding the Arkansas military road, but this omission was now supplied by the convention.⁷⁵

The twenty resolutions as finally adopted by the convention may be roughly summed up as follows:

1. That the report and other documents should be printed;
2. That safe navigation between the Gulf and the interior, by the Mississippi and Ohio and their tributaries, was indispensable to the defense of the country;
3. That the improvement of the river system was an object truly national;
4. That the deepening of the mouth of the Mississippi was a work worthy of the nation;
5. That if war steamers should be added to the navy, the Western waters with their resources of iron, etc., were proper sources of supply;
6. That the projected ship canal between the Mississippi and the Lakes was a measure worthy of Congressional consideration;
7. That intercourse between the Gulf and the Atlantic coast ought to be preserved unimpaired;
8. That coast defenses for the Gulf and Lake coasts were of equal national interest with those of the Atlantic coast;
9. That Congress should establish a national armory and foundry at some point on the Western waters;
10. That the marine hospitals on the Western and Southern waters, authorized by Congress, should be completed at once;

the La Branche plantation, twenty-five miles above New Orleans, where the captain "politely waited for Mr. Calhoun to examine the sugar refinery, for which the gentlemanly owners afforded every facility." In this trip to and from Memphis the utmost respect was shown the great Southerner, who enjoyed the scenery and the productiveness of the Valley of the Mississippi.

A reminiscence of Calhoun's stop at Natchez, with a very interesting description of the appearance of the distinguished visitor, is found in Mrs. Jefferson Davis's *Memoir* of her husband (vol. 1, pp. 207-213). The author says Calhoun was returning from a convention held in Cincinnati. This, of course, is an error.

Writing to his son-in-law, T. G. Clemson, on December 13, Calhoun said that he had had an interesting tour in the West and expressed gratification at his reception everywhere, which in the respect accorded him equaled that of General Jackson. (*Calhoun Correspondence*, p. 674.)

⁷⁵*Journal*, pp. 25-27. A proposal to include the improvement of Mobile harbor was laid on the table, as was a resolution in favor of the warehousing system.

11. That the Western mail service required improvement, and that the magnetic telegraph should be extended by government through the Mississippi Valley;

12. That waste lands should be reclaimed, by grant of such lands or by an appropriation of money;

13. That railroads should be urged upon the public attention as affording profitable investments of capital;

14. That, to facilitate the progress of railroad building, committees should be appointed by the delegations present to apply to state legislatures for charters and ask for state aid;

15. That inasmuch as many of the roads projected passed through the public domain, Congress should be urged to grant right of way and alternate sections of land in aid of work so situated;

16. That the General Government should take the proper steps to move and prevent the recurrence of obstacles in the Mississippi, opposite St. Louis;

17. That Congress should make an appropriation for a military road from the west bank of the Mississippi through the swamps to the highlands of Arkansas;

18. That a dry dock should be established somewhere upon the Gulf of Mexico;

19. That the President appoint a committee of five to memorialize Congress;

20. That the President likewise appoint a committee of five to address the common constituents of the gathering upon the same subjects.⁷⁶

Under the terms of the nineteenth and twentieth resolutions, two committees were appointed to carry out the work of the convention, one to memorialize Congress and one to prepare an address to the people. The first was composed of James Gadsden of South Carolina, James Guthrie of Kentucky, R. Barton of Mississippi, LeRoy Pope, Jr., of Tennessee, and James H. Lucas of Missouri.⁷⁷ The members of the second were: John Bell of Tennessee, Thomas Fearn of Alabama, Lewis Shanks of Tennessee, S. S. Hayes of Illinois, Elwood Fisher of Ohio.⁷⁸ The activities of the second committee, if it

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 25-28. The resolutions were printed, in full or in summary, in many newspapers.

⁷⁷There were calls from various parts of the house to appoint James Guthrie of Kentucky as chairman of this committee. *Nashville Union*, November 25, 1845.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, p. 28. Clement C. Clay of Alabama was elected to preside over this last session. At the time he was not in the hall, and Dr. James Overton of Tennessee called the meeting to order and proceeded to make quite a lengthy speech, "to express his conviction of the intelligence and great wisdom of the convention, the great

carried on any, seem not to have attracted attention; of the Memorial drawn up by the former we shall have more to say below.

In conclusion, resolutions of thanks were adopted, including one in compliment to the chairman of this last session, and the convention adjourned.⁷⁹

POLITICAL BEARING OF THE CONVENTION.

That Calhoun's activities at Memphis were not limited entirely to the work in the sessions of the convention is suggested by a letter which a confidential correspondent wrote to the President of the United States, just after the adjournment: "The great So Western Convention is over and Mr. Calhoun has returned home, to go into the Senate. He repudiates any newspaper as his organ. He was very much pleased with his reception and entertainment here and our friends are satisfied, from his conversations, that he will when he goes to Washing-

importance of the subjects which had called them together, and the exalted character of the station he filled," when, "upon the arrival of Hon. C. C. Clay, he took his seat amid repeated peals of laughter." *Nashville Union*, November 25, 1845.

⁷⁹*Journal*, p. 27.

When, in accordance with the instructions of the convention, the report of the proceedings was published in pamphlet form, more than three-quarters of the pamphlet was taken up with the reports of the various committees. These reports, which, in general, were not published elsewhere, are full of valuable information. The first was that of James Gadsden, on railroad communications between the Valley of the Mississippi and the South Atlantic ports, to which was appended a statement concerning the health of the city of Charleston by Dr. Henry Samuel Dickson. Next came a long report by John Pope on the agriculture of the South, with resolutions recommending a compact among the planters of the South to reduce the planting of cotton, increase the raising of grain and stock, and substitute the cotton "comfort" for the woolen blanket for the use of the negro, and to form agricultural societies in every Southern state. The report on the improvement of the navigation of the Western rivers, likewise an extensive one, closed with recommendations calling for federal aid and particularly recommending an increase in the dimensions of the Louisville and Portland canal around the falls of the Ohio River. This was signed by A. B. Chambers of Missouri. The St. Louis delegates also submitted a short report on the improvement of the channel of the Mississippi opposite St. Louis. Thomas A. Bigham of Pennsylvania submitted a report on the improvement of the Ohio. Another document on the Ohio River referred to the standing committee and returned by them to the secretary without comment was printed without signature. There were minority and majority reports on the warehousing system, the former signed by B. B. Minor and nine others, the latter by W. H. Trescott of South Carolina, J. A. Briggs of Ohio, J. H. Lucas of Missouri, J. J. Chandler of Indiana, and T. J. Bigham of Pennsylvania. William Armour made a short report on manufactures in the South which merely recommended that the people of that section should economize their

ton, sustain and support the administration."⁸⁰ That this sanguine view was destined to disappointment was soon demonstrated by events. For the moment we must consider, not Calhoun's loyalty to Polk, but the opinions which were formed upon the significance, politically, of Calhoun's presence at Memphis. As we shall see, Polk took a position diametrically opposed to the principles which actuated the Memphis convention. The difference that existed between the two great leaders existed also in the minds of the rank and file of the Democratic party. In the Tennessee Assembly, when it was proposed to send official delegates to Memphis a division of

capital and erect mills and factories of all kinds. The committee on leveeing recommended the cession of submerged lands to the states, and submitted a report by Fermin A. Rosier of Missouri with an accompanying map, which was not printed. Wyatt Christian, M.D., for the committee on Western marine hospitals cited the act of Congress of 1798, by which a fund for the relief of sick and indigent seamen was to be raised out of the wages of all seamen and urged that persons navigating the Southern and Western rivers be included in an extension of that act. Congress should establish marine hospitals in the West. The report on lake harbors and lake defense by James A. Briggs gave statistics and recommendations for appropriations. The Arkansas military road was the subject of a report by G. H. Bingham, who urged the appropriation of \$250,000 by the next Congress, of which \$150,000 should be for the road from Memphis to Little Rock, \$50,000 for the portions between Little Rock and Fort Smith and \$50,000 for the road between Little Rock and Red River in the direction of Forts Towson and Washita. W. Walters, of Illinois, after breathing fire against England, offered for adoption a resolution on behalf of the ship canal connecting the waters of the Lakes with the Western rivers. The committee on forts and defenses of the western Indian frontier was divided. The majority, headed by A. G. Mayers, urged an increase in military posts, while D. D. Mitchell and H. T. Reeves, constituting the minority, pleaded for the Indians who should be looked upon as objects of remuneration rather than as dreadful enemies. M. B. Winchester of Memphis, chairman of the committee on Western mails, urged both the steamboat route from Pittsburgh or Cincinnati to New Orleans and the use of the Southern railroad route with post coaches for the part of the line not yet covered by the railroad. They favored an increase in postage with more efficient service rather than a decrease at the cost of such efficiency. Two other documents were included, the one a communication from the board of trade at Wheeling, the other a letter from Woodson Wren recommending the free transportation of newspapers within a radius of a hundred miles of publication. *Journal*, pp. 29-127.

⁸⁰S. P. Walker to James K. Polk, Memphis, November 17, 1845. Polk Papers, vol. 73, Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress.

Ingle, in his brief account of the convention (*Southern Sidelights*, pp. 220-224), says: "There was little, if any, politics at Memphis." As to the formal sessions, this statement is no doubt true.

sentiment had been expressed.⁸¹ Outside the state, from such opposite quarters as Cassius M. Clay's *True American*, the great abolitionist paper of Lexington, Kentucky, and the *Charleston Mercury*, there appeared adverse comment on the proceedings at Memphis, that is, on their political significance. "Some curious inquirers are giving out suspicions," said the *True American*, "that a political, President-making movement is on foot in this affair, covered and disguised by professions of devotion to the interests of the South and Southwest." This was denied by the *Mercury*, but the denial was discounted by the editor of the *True American*. To the *Mobile Advertiser* was attributed the searching comment: "It is certainly a little singular that the ultra strict constructionists of the State Rights party, par excellence, should be the most enthusiastic

⁸¹The following resolution, introduced in both houses of the Legislature, is indicative of the partisan feeling that appeared.

"Whereas the recent appointment of delegates to a convention to be held at Memphis has been so connected with the official character of the members of this legislature, as to give said convention all the impulse which the state can yield through her legislative character, unless such appointment should be divested of official influence, by a distinct announcement coming from this body; it is therefore resolved that no action in the convention tending to solicit the general government to open its treasuries for the purpose of promoting a system of internal improvements, will be recognized as an expression of the will of the people of this state."

This was amended by the addition of the words "unless the improvement or improvements proposed be purely national in their character and strictly within the constitutional powers of the Federal Government." Thus amended, the resolution was laid upon the table. (*Senate Journal*, 1845, November 7, *House Journal*, do.)

Although the delegation from the Assembly was selected from both parties and from every section of the state, it is evident that at Memphis there was some division of sentiment. On the second day of the sessions it was necessary for these delegates to ask leave to retire. (*Nashville Union*, November 14, 1845.) Next day it was announced that the following gentlemen had been appointed to cast the vote of Tennessee: On the part of the Legislature, Messrs. Cullom and Marr; on the part of West Tennessee, L. H. Coe; Middle Tennessee, John Bell; and East Tennessee, J. A. Whitesides. (*Nashville Republican Banner*, November 21, 1845.) The proceedings of the separate meeting of Thursday, E. J. Shields reported, "which gave rise to some difficulty on yesterday, have been reconsidered in a full meeting of the delegation this morning and placed on such a footing as will enable the committee of the legislature to co-operate with the business of this convention." (*Journal*, p. 19.) The difficulty, whatever it was, did not affect the influence of Tennessee in the convention, for, as we have noted, both ex-Governor Jones and John Bell were made chairmen of very important committees. The selection of these prominent Whigs was doubtless little pleasing to the Democrats.

On their return from Memphis the delegation made a brief report of the proceedings, which is to be found in the *Appendix* to the *Journals* of the Assembly for 1845.

advocates of a convention, the avowed object of which is to induce the General Government to engage in the most vast and stupendous scheme of internal improvement that was ever originated in this country."⁸² The *Mercury* itself, whatever it professed to think about Calhoun's presidential intentions, roundly denounced the recommendations of the convention so far as the intervention of the Federal Government had been suggested.⁸³ An article upon Internal Improvements, which appeared in the *Southern Quarterly Review* for January, 1846, discussed at greater length the arguments which Calhoun had employed, and criticized severely and with some ridicule, his assertion that the invention of Fulton had converted the Mississippi with its great tributaries into an inland sea. Calhoun was irritated by this article, which, he said, was inspired by Col. F. W. Pickens, and written by the editor with Pickens's help.⁸⁴ He must indeed have felt wounded in the house of his friend. It was to be expected, therefore, that when the work of the convention should be brought, in concrete form before the Congress of the United States, the large plans of the convention would not have easy sailing.

THE MEMORIAL TO CONGRESS.

The resolutions adopted by the Memphis Convention were embodied in the Memorial which, under the terms of the nineteenth resolution, was drawn up by the committee of which Gadsden was chairman. After repeating at length the several resolutions, the Memorial proceeded to a defense of the requests contained therein. The attention of Congress was first called to the earnest effort of the convention to be non-partisan and to avoid any doubts of a constitutional sort; and from such doubts, it was maintained, the proposals now submitted were all free. All the objects prayed for were not within the jurisdiction of a single state, but common in their benefits for the whole Union. The assistance of Congress was justified from the standpoint of constitutionality on three grounds: first, the commercial jurisdiction of the General Government; secondly, the obligation to provide for the general defense; and thirdly,

⁸²Lexington (Kentucky) *True American*, November 11, 1845.

⁸³*Niles*, vol. 69, p. 214, citing *Charleston Mercury* of November 29.

Mrs. Jefferson Davis in her account of Calhoun's visit to Natchez, cited above (Note 74), mentions the doubt with which her husband received the "inland sea" ideas of Calhoun.

⁸⁴Calhoun to his daughter, Mrs. T. G. Clemson, June 11, 1846; *Calhoun Correspondence*, p. 696; and to J. E. Calhoun, July 2, 1846, *ibid.*, pp. 698-699. The article in question is found in vol. 9, pp. 243-272, of the *Southern Quarterly Review*, and not in vol. 10, p. 337, as indicated in the note on p. 696 of the *Calhoun Correspondence*. The latter article appeared after these letters were written.

the power of the government as a proprietor of the public lands.

"The Valley of the Mississippi," pleaded the committee, "is no longer a territory or frontier." The importance of the rivers from the standpoint of commerce and from that of defense was strongly urged. Some qualifications were expressed in the approval given to the St. Louis harbor project and to that of the military road through Arkansas.

With regard to the matter of the railroads, Gadsden, as one would expect to find, was particularly emphatic. Only one paragraph in this connection is for our present purposes specially interesting: this was one which undertook to describe the Western railroad projects that had already been conceived. Those recommended to the convention were "roads passing at right angles to the natural outlets or avenues of trade; crossing the ridges and mountains, and intersecting interior districts remote from navigation, and hitherto from their secluded situation, of little value. . . . These roads are in the direction from the seaports of South Carolina and Georgia—first, in a northwestern direction to Nashville, on the Cumberland; second, to Memphis on the Mississippi; third, by Montgomery to Vicksburg, Grand Gulf and Natchez; fourth, from Montgomery to Pensacola, Mobile and New Orleans. Though these roads, in their incipient conception, are made to terminate on the Gulf of Mexico and the Mississippi, they must and will advance with the onward population west, and find no *termini* short of the *Pacific*."

The Memorial concluded with a clear statement of the significant changes wrought by the discovery and use of steam and electricity.⁸⁵

It was not until February 3, 1846, that the Memorial of the Memphis Convention drawn up by Gadsden's committee was submitted on the same day to each of the Houses of Congress. The time was not a very felicitous one, for the most prominent question before Congress was that of giving notice to Great Britain of the termination of joint occupation of Oregon, while, in the meantime, Polk was pursuing the hazardous course which fortunately resulted in the treaty of 1846. In this agitation the Northwest found some of the Southern members distinctly lukewarm and charged them with bad faith, inasmuch as they had been supported in their efforts to annex Texas by Northwestern votes. When, therefore, I. E. Holmes of South Carolina, saying that while he was not for taking all of Oregon, he was in favor of promoting the interests of the West, presented the Memorial of the Memphis Convention and

⁸⁵*Works of Calhoun*, vol. 5, pp. 297-310.

moved that it be referred to the committee of the whole and printed, he was giving offense to the Northwest on the question of Oregon; while the hostility of the strict constructionists appeared in the fact that objection to the reception of the Memorial was offered by G. S. Houston of Alabama. Holmes moved a suspension of the rules, but the House adjourned⁸⁶ and the next day refused to suspend the rules and receive the Memorial. This was done by a light vote in which party lines seemed to be drawn, the Whigs supporting the reception of the Memorial, the Democrats opposing it.⁸⁷

In the Senate the Memorial was presented by Calhoun himself, who moved that it be printed and referred to a select committee of five. He expressed a general approval of the principles of the Memorial but declared there were some things included with which he could not agree. As members of the committee to serve with Calhoun were appointed Senators Atchison, Semple, Barrow, and Chalmers.⁸⁸

No more was heard of the Memorial until, on June 26, Calhoun reported from the select committee a bill authorizing the appointment of a board of engineers to make an examination and survey of the Mississippi with a view to the improvement of the navigation; and providing also for the gradual reduction of the price of the swamp and inundated lands lying in Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi, Illinois and Missouri. Calhoun briefly reviewed the work of the Memphis Convention, and submitted a lengthy report on the Memorial. The committee, Calhoun said, had confined their attention to four or five of the more important of the twenty resolutions of the Memphis Convention. The committee were unanimous that Congress had the power to improve the navigation of the Mississippi; all the members but Barrow agreed that the powers of Congress were restricted to the removal of obstructions. Calhoun moved to set a special date for the consideration of the bill. About the only comment was that of Breese of Illinois, who regretted that a provision which affected the public lands had been included. The Senate voted to print 10,000 copies of the Report.⁸⁹

CALHOUN'S REPORT ON THE MEMORIAL.

An examination of the document itself shows that the first part of it was practical and statistical, giving information upon the increase in the population and commerce of the Mississippi Valley. This was derived chiefly from the Memorial

⁸⁶*Cong. Globe*, 29 Cong., 1 Sess., p. 304.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, p. 306. The vote was, yeas 72, nays 78. Stanton of the Memphis District, Democrat, voted yea with the Whigs.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, p. 297.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, p. 1028.

from the city of Cincinnati. The surveyor of the port of St. Louis also was quoted, to show the losses to navigation from obstructions in the river. But this much accomplished, Calhoun turned to the question, "Who has the power, and whose duty is it, to improve the navigation of the Mississippi and its great tributaries?" There followed a characteristic disquisition upon the relation of state and federal powers, subtle and refined, but calculated to divert men's minds from the things to be done to the theories upon which they could or could not be done. In his report on Roads and Canals, in 1819, Calhoun had stressed the element of military necessity as a basis for the internal improvements then under consideration; now he felt that neither the "common defense" nor the "general welfare" clause of the Constitution could be made to justify the federal activities for which the Memphis Convention had asked. But he found a way out, through the power of Congress to regulate commerce with foreign nations and among the several states. The removal of obstructions was as necessary to commerce as lighthouses, buoys and beacons, and was equally constitutional. By a curiously refined argument, Calhoun maintained that Congress could not act in the case of a river whose navigable waters were confined to *two* states; but where three were concerned, *only* Congress could act. Congress could establish harbors only for naval purposes; commercial harbors must be left to the states. As to reclaiming by embankments public lands subject to inundation, Congress should appropriate money, and then sell the lands at graduated prices. In regard to the railroad scheme that had been promulgated, Congress had no powers to act where the roads would run through states; but where the course of such roads lay through the public domain, the United States, in their character of proprietors, might contribute to what would make such lands more valuable. But as only a small part of the mileage of the proposed roads would be so situated, he recommended as more important the removal of the duty on iron to be used for rails. Finally, the cutting of a canal to connect the Mississippi with the Lakes was beyond the powers of Congress, while the establishment of a naval station at Pensacola or some other favorable point to maintain the free navigation between the Gulf and the Atlantic coast, was eminently constitutional and proper.⁹⁰

CONGRESSIONAL MEASURES.

On July 13 a bill for the improvement of the navigation of the Ohio and Arkansas rivers came up in the Senate. Cal-

⁹⁰29 Cong., 1 Sess., Sen. Doc., vol. 8, Doc. 410. *Works of Calhoun*, vol. 5, pp. 246-293.

houn wished to lay it on the table, on the ground that a bill recently reported by him from a select committee would cover the whole ground. In this he failed, but succeeded in amending it by adding to it the first two sections of his bill providing for the appointment of a board of engineers. The bill was passed by the Senate, but was rejected by the House.⁹¹ The bitterness of partisan feeling is vividly reflected in the remarks which Calhoun's inveterate enemy, John Quincy Adams, noted in his Diary. The bill he called "a notable device of the political mountebank, John C. Calhoun," and he ascribed the large majority which defeated it as "formed by the sense of the House that the bill itself was a swindler's trick."⁹²

The action of Congress directly on the Memorial was, then, inconsiderable, and Calhoun's scheme for a general investigation and survey fell a victim to the political prominence of its author. Nevertheless, echoes of the convention and of Calhoun's doctrines were heard, especially in connection with the river and harbor bill of 1845-1846. In the debate over this bill, which at times was bitter, Payne of Alabama announced that he was opposed to the "Inland Seas" doctrine.⁹³ Rhett of South Carolina thought the Mississippi stood in no different relationship from other rivers. The Democratic party of the West and Northwest might go for internal improvements with the Whigs and be Federalists that far and the Democratic party of the North might go with the Whigs for the Tariff and be Federalists that far. He stood for the Constitution.⁹⁴ Andrew Johnson of Tennessee, while endeavoring to secure \$500,000 for the Tennessee River and \$250,000 for the Cumberland, in case the bill did go through, declared that he did not commit himself to the theory of internal improvements. Where was the line to be drawn between these and the Mississippi? He wished to test his colleagues. He pointed out the enormous cost of such undertakings and continued:

"The system of internal improvements had recently received an impetus from the assembling of the Memphis Convention, at which a distinguished statesman of the South had attended, and who was claimed in his speech on that occasion (which was said to have been approved as substantially true by himself) to have conceded this enormous power to the Government as well as the expediency of exercising it. Hence all the powers of the Constitution were to be clearly leaped over and broken down."⁹⁵

⁹¹*Cong. Globe*, 29 Cong., 1 Sess., p. 1094.

⁹²C. F. Adams (ed.), *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, vol. 12, p. 269.

⁹³*Cong. Globe*, 29 Cong., 1 Sess., p. 428.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 438.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 472.

The outcome was the veto, August 3, 1846, of the river and harbor bill, in which Polk demonstrated his intention to follow the school of strict construction and to shut the door to internal improvements through Congressional action.⁹⁶ But though he claimed to be following the tradition inherited from Jefferson, Madison, Monroe and Jackson, and though individual Democratic Congressmen from the Northwest might approve his course, in point of fact this veto message and that with which he met another river and harbor bill in the succeeding year were endangering his hold upon that section.

CALHOUN VS. POLK.

Before we bring to a close our discussion of this topic, it will be well to glance for a moment at Calhoun's own opinion of his Report and of the effect which it produced. To his family and friends he wrote of the interest which he had in the preparation of the Report.⁹⁸ Just after it had been presented in the Senate he wrote:

"The South and West have never been so strongly united before; not only in reference to the tariff, but the public bonds [*sic*], the warehousing policy, and all other questions save Oregon, which now that it is settled, will soon disappear. To this desirable result, my report on the Memorial of the Memphis Convention has greatly contributed. . . ."⁹⁹

Polk's veto of the river and harbor bill only strengthened his opinion. "The President," he wrote, "in his unwillingness to take my ground, placed his veto on grounds wholly indefensible. Nothing is now left for all interested but to rally on mine. They may stand there, without fear of a veto."¹⁰⁰ The veto message itself was "a poor document."¹⁰¹

His own Report, on the contrary, he regarded "as one of the most effective State Rights papers I ever put forth, and that too on a portion of the Federal Constitution, heretofore the least understood. It draws a broad line between internal and external improvements, and restricts the Federal Government more rigidly to those belonging to the external relations of the states, than any other view ever undertaken. Indeed, I have

⁹⁶J. D. Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, vol. 4, pp. 460 ff.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 610 ff. (December 15, 1847, M. M. Quaife (ed.), *Diary of James K. Polk*, vol. 2, p. 171; vol. 3, pp. 117, 247-249; vol. 4, pp. 53, 64, 66, 128, 363-364.)

⁹⁸*Calhoun Correspondence*, pp. 694-695, 697, 698.

⁹⁹Calhoun to T. G. Clemson, July 11, 1846, *ibid.*, pp. 700-701. The word "bonds" in the second line should beyond question be "lands."

¹⁰⁰Calhoun to J. E. Calhoun, August 8, 1846, *ibid.*, p. 703.

¹⁰¹Calhoun to T. G. Clemson, August 8, 1846, *ibid.*, p. 704.

heard no objection to the argument, as it relates to the improvement of the Navigation of the Mississippi."¹⁰²

FAILURE OF CALHOUN'S SCHEME.

Calhoun's hope that the friends of internal improvement would rally to his own doctrine—and perhaps to himself—was not, however, borne out by events. The Northwest proceeded to defy Polk's pocket veto of a second bill by holding at Chicago, on July 5, 1847, another convention. The difference in the sections represented is significant: the New England states, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, the states of the upper Mississippi Valley and Missouri gathered on this occasion, but it may be noted that South Carolina and Georgia sent delegates. Unchecked by any Calhoun, the convention passed broad construction resolutions.¹⁰³

But the larger reason for the failure of Calhoun's hopes and plans is to be found, of course, in the political happenings of the months that followed—the war with Mexico, and the resulting territorial problems, and, above all, the Wilmot Proviso and the renewed agitation of the issues of slavery. It has been argued that the introduction of the Proviso was the expression of Western vengeance for the failure of the South to

¹⁰²Calhoun to J. L. M. Curry, September 14, 1846, *ibid.*, pp. 705-706.

Interesting in this connection is the following letter, written by Robert Barnwell Rhett, of South Carolina, to his friend F. H. Elmore, in regard to the affairs of the *Southern Quarterly Review*:

"I send off today my article on Mr. Calhoun's Report. It is so full as entirely to dispense with the publication of the Report itself in this number. That will best come out side by side with Davy's article. I conclude the article in the following words:

"A single word before we conclude, as to the merits of this Report which doubtless our readers from the [word illegible] we have adduced already anticipate. It is an effort worthy of its great author, not only for the intellectual ability it displays but for that far seeing patriotism, which seeks, by anticipating public evils, to avert them. Whether its reasoning is assented to or not the foes at least of internal improvement by the General Government will acknowledge that the effort is great, the object noble, and the policy in entire congeniality with those great principles of the State Rights party of the South, of which he has been at once the prime creator and vindicator.

"If I was a greater coward than I am I would not write this article for fear of the imputation of subserviency to Mr. Calhoun, but it is nonsense to attempt to run him for President unless there is some favorable decision on this point. He is not understood, and must be understood or he is useless, and no one can tell two years hence what will be our condition as to the Presidency . . ."

The letter, dated September 6, 1846, is in the Elmore Papers, Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress.

¹⁰³Washington *Union*, July 13, 15, 1847.

support the taking of all of Oregon.¹⁰⁴ The developments which we have traced in this paper show that Calhoun's efforts might, if successful, have worked to prevent or to postpone the breach.

PRACTICAL RESULTS OF THE CONVENTION.

There remains to be emphasized the fact that in one respect the Memphis Convention was a complete success, although perhaps in a more indirect manner than had been intended. This respect was that which was original in the minds of the men who called the convention. If the alliance with those who wished the improvement of the Western rivers—so necessary to give weight and prestige to the convention—had failed of result after serving that one purpose, on the other hand the real object which the Memphis men had in view—the completion of the railroad connection with the East—went on apace. In due time Memphis did become the terminus of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad. When the water of the Atlantic, transported by rail to Memphis, was poured into the Mississippi, the dreams of Elliott, of Gaines, and of Gadsden and the other promoters of this convention were actually realized.¹⁰⁵ And in the years between the assembling of the Memphis Convention of 1845 and the completion of the railroad to Charleston, the further vision of Gadsden had become a matter of constructive effort—the continuation of the railroad to the Pacific.

But it was not only Memphis that profited by the convention. After it had done its work there appeared all over the Southwest a renewed activity in the building of railroads. Nashville held¹⁰⁶ a railroad meeting within ten days after that of November at Memphis, and the Assembly gave a charter for the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad.¹⁰⁷ Other cities to the southward were stimulated to like activity, particularly Natchez, Vicksburg, and New Orleans. To these as to Memphis, the annexation of Texas and the territory gained by the treaty of Guadaloupe Hidalgo extended the possibility of putting into effect the connection with the Pacific Coast.

In these later phases of the railroad history of the Southwest, other large conventions were held at Memphis. Even to summarize their actions would expand beyond all due limits

¹⁰⁴C. E. Persinger. "The 'Bargain of 1844' as the origin of the Wilmot Proviso," *Annual Report of the American Historical Association*, 1911, vol. 1, pp. 187 ff.

¹⁰⁵J. Phelan, *History of Tennessee*, p. 289.

¹⁰⁶The meeting was held November 24, 1845. *Nashville Republican Banner*, November 26, 1845; *Nashville Whig*, November 25-27, 1845.

¹⁰⁷Acts of Tennessee, 1845-1846, chap. 1; *Nashville Whig*, December 16, 18, 1845.

this already lengthy paper, and that very interesting task must be deferred to another occasion. In the present article, if our interpretation has been correct, we have shown that the city on the Chickasaw Bluff, through its location, through the vigor of some of its own citizens, through the assistance rendered to it by Gaines, Maury and Gadsden, and through the presence at the Memphis Convention of Calhoun, was the geographical center of events and tendencies worthy of record in the history of the Southwest.¹⁰⁸

ST. GEORGE L. SIOUSSAT.

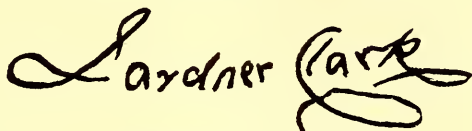
¹⁰⁸The Memphis Convention received little or no attention at the hands of the older school of writers upon American history. No investigation of the work was undertaken, apparently, by E. R. Johnson and his collaborators, in the recent publication of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, *History of Domestic and Foreign Commerce of the United States*. To this and to the paper by I. Lippincott "The Internal trade of the United States," in *Washington University Studies* the reader's attention has already been directed (I, note 4). Another interesting article of recent date is that of R. S. Cotterill, "Southern Railroads and Western Trade," 1840-1850," in the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, vol. III, No. 4 (March, 1917), which gives a brief sketch of the Memphis Convention. In his essay on Calhoun included in his volume, *Southern Statesmen of the Old Regime* (pp. 148-149), Prof. W. E. Dodd writes the following paragraph:

"The leaders of opinion in the Northwest, men like Douglas of Illinois and the Dodges of Iowa and Wisconsin, had planned a great Mississippi Valley convention which was to meet in Memphis in November, 1845. The Southern states and their railway builders were invited to attend. General James Gadsden of South Carolina, Major Tait of Alabama, both railroad presidents, and the industrial leaders generally were interested in the Meeting. The Southerners were particularly concerned with expanding their transportation facilities northwestward, while the upper Mississippi states were already looking toward the Pacific. By combining these groups of interests the region which had dominated the country during the Jackson "reign" would come again to power; congress could be induced to make land grants to new railroad ventures and the post-master general would give bonuses for carrying the mails. All this would hasten Western statemaking and permanently fix the power of the proposed Southern-Western alliance. The one great interest of the South, cotton growing, would be advanced and its twin sister, slavery, the more firmly established, for the growing trade between the farmers of the Ohio and the upper Mississippi valleys and the plantations of the South would tie the two sections together."

It will be observed that this account fails to distinguish the July and November sessions, and gives a somewhat different interpretation of the origin and purpose of the Convention from that offered in the present paper.

LARDNER CLARK, NASHVILLE'S FIRST MERCHANT AND FOREMOST CITIZEN.¹

[Continued from March, 1917, page 50.]

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lardner Clark". The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent flourish at the end of the word "Clark".

[Signature of Lardner Clark.]

NASHVILLE'S FIRST MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY,— THE SALT WORKS.

Perhaps the first manufacturing attempt in the village of Nashville or Davidson County, was that of making salt from the local salt-lick or spring. When the Assembly of North Carolina made its reservation of western lands for the Continental Line, it made specific exemption of all salt-licks and salt-springs, together with the 640 acres adjoining them.⁴¹ Thus early was it recognized that this natural resource should be regarded as a public good, since it was the source of a primary article of domestic life, especially so under pioneer conditions. The act recited that no grant of lands "shall include any salt-lick or salt-spring, which are hereby declared to be reserved as public property, and not subject to future appropriation."

Such, however, was the tedious and laborious process of salt-making in vogue, that few could be found who would undertake it save in a small way for family use. It was soon concluded that there was no possible chance to develop this industry without putting a premium on individual initiation, and this could never take place unless there was personal ownership. At first it was decided that both ends could be met in having the licks and springs deeded to the public corporation of the Trustees of Davidson Academy, then to be let by them to individuals,—the profits to accrue to the Academy. To this end a bill was introduced in the Lower House of the Assembly in December, 1786, but met rejection on reaching the Senate.⁴²

Again in November, 1787, it was represented to the Assembly "that the salt springs cannot be of any public use unless some person or persons have the exclusive right of improving the same." Then was passed, the before mentioned bill, entitled "An Act to Encourage the Making of Salt in Davidson County."

⁴¹N. C. State Rec., vol. XXIV, p. 915.

⁴²N. C. State Rec., vol. XXIV., pp. 275, 147.

This provided that the springs or licks commonly called French Lick, Neeley's Lick, Gaspers Lick and Ramsey's Lick, with lands adjoining, be vested in John Kirkpatrick, Lardner Clark, Jonathan Drake, William Simpson, John Boyd, Ephraim McLean and Robert Edmonson to lease or rent for any term not exceeding ten years, from and after the passing of the act, and the money arising from such leases or rents was to be applied to the public use of the inhabitants of the County of Davidson. The Trustees were required to make a faithful accounting annually to the County Treasurer, and to make public advertisement of the date when such lease would be made, and such licks and lands rented,—at least ninety days previous to the leasing, the same to be done at the Court House.

Just here comes upon the scene of action, in the history of our settlement, another most interesting character in the person of one James Cole Montflorece, Esq., the story of whose life may provoke another chapter in like annals to this. He is introduced here because of his initiative at this time in the developing of the salt manufacture. The above advertisement of the leasing of the salt springs having gone forth, on Sept. 12th, 1788, James C. Montflorece entered into a written agreement with one William Terrill Lewis, then of Surrey County, North Carolina,—but formerly of southwest Virginia,—to bid in the proposed leases in Davidson County, said Lewis to be given one-fourth interest in the leases. On October 7th following,—the morning of the date fixed for the giving out of the leases,—Montflorece entered into a like written agreement with Lardner Clark to take one-half of his remaining interest, or a three-eighths interest in the whole.⁴⁵ Possibly Clark was a prospective competitor in the bidding, and in this way kept down the price. It is to be noted that another interested party in the deal was Eusebius Bushnell, who has before been mentioned, and that Lewis had probably had experience in the salt business in southwest Virginia where he had formerly resided.

On October 7, the public lease was made and was bid in by the firm of "Clark, Montflorece & Lewis." Thus was launched Nashville's *first manufacturing industry* fraught with much that was speculative as to valuation, since it was a most tedious, laborious and patience-trying undertaking. The only plant put in operation was the one located at the French Lick, now familiarly known in the sporting columns of the local papers as "Sulphur Dell." Here was established the institution that received the dignified title of the "Nashville Salt Works!"

Large caldrons and kettles of various shapes and sizes were

⁴⁵Davidson County Will Book I, p. 222.

packed, over the mountains from the Holston settlements, and an elaborate furnace erected in the lowlands about the spring. A great amount of slave labor was employed building same and keeping the furnace furnished with wood for fuel purposes.

Just what the results were in this venture, present data do not furnish an answer, but such "relief acts" as the following, are indicative of very limited success:⁴⁴

"Whereas the Committee appointed by act of the Assembly to Encourage the Making of Salt in the County of Davidson have leased out by virtue of said act the salt-licks known as French Lick, Neely's Lick and Gasper's Lick, with the lands thereunto belonging for the term specified in said act, lessees having covenanted and agreed to manufacture annually a certain quantity of salt at each of the aforesaid salt-licks, which salt when made was to be sold by the lessee for their use and benefit etc. These lessees shall be exonerated from making one-half of the amount of salt they were to make annually, and the quantity they fall short in making in any one year, shall be made up in the next, so that the whole amount shall have been made by the time of the expiration of the said lease."⁴⁴

The lack of success in the undertaking becomes more apparent in another record of June 23rd, 1790:

"Know all men that I, Anthony Hart of Davidson County and State of North Carolina promise to pay and deliver unto Lardner Clark or James Cole Montflorenc the full quantity of 600 pound weight of good dry salt, having leased and hired their Salt Works at the French Lick for four weeks, to begin on the first Monday in September next and continue till the said time expires, whether I do work the furnace or not, and I hereby oblige myself under the penalty of 100 Pounds to leave the works at the expiration of my lease in the same order as I shall receive them, and to pay for all damage that might be done to the works during the time of my lease, and also not to burn any of the rails belonging to the fences joining the works.

"Witness my hand and seal, the 23rd. day of June, 1790. Provided that should the furnace burn down, or the arches break by accident and not by wilfull neglect or design, then I am not to pay for the same."⁴⁵

With reference to this lease of Anthony Hart's, it is said "he certainly made salt, or obtained it elsewhere, for on the 27th. of the month the contract is credited by 150 pounds for the rent of the kettles the first week, and other quantities are credited as appears upon the lease."⁴⁶

⁴⁴April, 1790. N. C. State Rec., vol. 25, p. 311.

⁴⁵TENNESSEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY MSS., Box H, No. 39

⁴⁶Putnam, p. 212.

It soon became evident that the reservation of large tracts made in connection with the salt-licks and springs was a superfluous measure, as few of them promised anything as a basis of manufacture, besides the large amount of lands reserved with them could be put to a far more practical use. Too, the sources for the manufacture of this article salt had been gradually enlarged, and it was being manufactured in vast paying quantities both in southwest Virginia, a district in southeast Illinois and in southeast part of the present State of Missouri. Also, the facilities for marketing same in the various new settlements were largely increased. Thus the need and field of the local plant grew less, and the demand for their existence not so urgent as appeared under earlier conditions. The result was that the Assembly of 1789 authorized the permanent disposal of these reservations, and instructed the courts of Sumner, Davidson and Tennessee (now Montgomery) counties at their April terms following, to make a list of all licks fit for the manufacture of salt, including Heaton's, Denton's, French Lick, Gasper's, Neeley's, Madison's, Drake's, Stoner's and Bledsoe's—which were to be sold. All other licks and salt-springs not deemed by those courts to be fit for salt manufacture were declared vacant lands, with the lands reserved with them, and subject to location and entry. Commissioners were to have them surveyed,—where it had not already been done,—those several licks and springs deemed fit for manufacturing purposes, together with their adjoining reserved lands, were to be advertised in a public manner for three months at the door of the several court-houses, after which they were to be sold to the highest bidder on two years credit,—all of which was to be done during the ensuing twelve months. Reservation was made in the act of the Assembly by which the French Lick and Gasper's Lick were given to Davidson Academy, for which deeds were accordingly issued to the Trustees. The remainder of the income from the sales of these springs and lands was appropriated to the public use of Mero District, which embraced the territory of the three counties.⁴⁷

EDUCATION WEST OF THE ALLEGHANIES.

Before the Assembly of North Carolina in 1785, Governor Martin gave utterance to the following impressive words:

“Let me call your attention to the education of our youth; may seminaries of learning be raised and encouraged, where the understanding may be enlightened, the heart amended, and genius cherished, whence the State may draw forth men of ability to direct her councils and support her government.”⁴⁸

⁴⁷N. C. State Rec., vol. XXV, p. 31. Ramsey, p. 506. Haywood, p. 258.

⁴⁸N. C. State Rec., vol. XVII, p. 38.

Spoken as they were, to a people wrecked and impoverished by the Revolution and oppressed with debt and poverty, these breathe forth ideals worthy of a great people and prophetic of things to come.

As early as 1783 the Assembly had passed an act authorizing the establishing of two institutions to the West, one to be known as Morgan Academy,—located in Burke County, and the other Martin Academy, to be located beyond the Mountains in Washington County,⁴⁹—now eastern Tennessee. The district of country embraced by the settlements on Cumberland River,—Davidson County, in contradistinction to those on the Holston, soon began to be spoken of as the “Western District,” and after the erection of the State, became “West Tennessee.” It was many years later that the name came in use to denote the part of the State west of Tennessee River. It was about 1784 perhaps, that Rev. Thomas Brown Craighead, a cultured Presbyterian minister who had been reared in North Carolina, educated at Princeton, and settled for a while in a pastorate near Abingdon, Virginia, on the removal of members of his congregation to Davidson County, determined to follow them. This gave to the settlement a leader to inaugurate measures for the establishing of an institution of learning among them.

Accordingly, the Assembly of 1785 passed an act entitled, “An Act for the Promotion of Learning in the County of Davidson.”⁵⁰ Mr. Craighead with eight additional prominent citizens were made Trustees. (One of these only was from out the community, Hon. Hugh Williamson of the old part of the State.) Among these noted pioneer trustees in the furthest-west educational institution of the Mississippi Valley, was our subject, Lardner Clark. The Assembly provided in the act of incorporation that the institution should bear the name of “Davidson Academy” and the first meeting of its Board of Trustees bears the date of August 19th, 1786. All the trustees seemed to have been present at this meeting except Mr. Williamson,—who was not expected to share in the formal administration of affairs,—and Lardner Clark. The probability is that the latter was at the time serving the infant institution in a more important way than meeting with the Board, as he, having to go east to Philadelphia to buy goods,⁵¹ no doubt used his opportunity to bring before his friends there the needs of this flickering light in the wilderness. It is most probably true that he brought back with him the first supply of text books and such other volumes as he was able to solicit as gifts for the infant library. So when the train of pack-horses

⁴⁹N. C. State Rec., vol. XXIV, p. 535.

⁵⁰N. C. State Rec., vol. XXIV, p. 571.

⁵¹See Putnam, p. 174.

reached Nashville with his importations of goods and notions for the first store in the settlement, it also unloaded a bale of "goods" for Davidson Academy. For many years to follow, he was to be the "business man" of the institution,—he rented its lands and cleared them that they might be productive of an income, also let contracts for the leasing of the "ferry," which the County allowed the Board to inaugurate as a means of increasing the small stipend to the amount of \$100 per year. Since the school for many years was taught at Spring Hill, in the old stone church near the residence of Mr. Craighead some six miles away, we find that the hospitality of the "house-with-a-piazza," was oftentimes shared for the meetings of the Board. Here no doubt, this worthy company sat with knitted brow and serious countenance over their "problems!"

Note a few items from these minutes of Board meetings:

1791. Oct. 8. "Board met at Spring Hill, adjourned to meet at Mr. Clark's in Nashville, at 10 o'clock Monday the 10th."

Oct. 10th. "Board met according to adjournment at Mr. Clark's in Nashville. Ordered that Mr. Andrew Jackson be appointed a Trustee in the room of Col. William Polk removed. Board adjourned to meet at Mr. Clark's in Nashville on Friday the 4th instant next, to survey the cleared lands in the lands of the Academy, and to settle with Mr. Clark."

It seems that Mr. Clark agreed to rent or lease the Academy lands personally for a number of years, during which time he was to make them more valuable by certain improvements.

1787. Dec. 1. "Ephraim McLean rented to Lardner Clark all of the arable land belonging to Davidson Academy for four years. He agreed to put all the arable land under good fence, and leave it so at the close of his lease, rental to be ten shillings per acre in current money per year, only he is to deduct one half of the price of mauling the rails. Further, one half of ten shillings rental should be paid in corn at current prices of the country."⁵²

It appears also that his fences sooner or later got in the way of the new public road which the County laid off from Nashville to Buchanan's Mill on Mill Creek, since at the January Term of the Court in 1789 it was

"Ordered that Lardner Clark remove his fence so far as may be necessary, so far as will admit the road from Nashville to Buchanan's Mill to pass below the spring branch and the fence below the little spring above the town."⁵³

⁵²Putnam, p. 641.

⁵³Davidson Co. Min. Bk. I, p. 272.

The "ferry" lease may interest some:

"Know all men by these presents that by virtue of Power and Authority to me given by the Trustees of the Academy of Davidson County, I have leased unto John Boid of the town of Nashville, the Academy Ferry and Ferry Boat for the space of one year, to commence either from the first of next February, or the sixteenth day of this instant, as the said John Boid may determine upon in the course of the present year. For the consideration of his pay at the expiration of the lease, thirty pounds in Cash in good inspected Leaf tobacco well prized and delivered in Hhds at Nashville at the price current at the time of delivery; and for and in consideration of his giving bond and security to keep constant attendance at said ferry, during the term of his lease and to deliver the Academy boat at the Academy ferry landing in as good order as he now receives her,—if she should be in better condition when returned than when delivered, He, the said Boid is to be allowed the difference, which is to be deducted from the rent.

"And will warrant and defend to said Boid the sd Ferry Landing and Ferry Boat, to him and his heirs during the above term, against all Persons whom may unlawfully claim them or either of them.

"Given under my hand at Nashville, 17, March, 1789.

"Test. James Maxwell.

LARDNER CLARK (Seal).⁵⁴"

It has been appropriately said in reference to the varied service of these early servants of education that, "these are strange duties for Trustees of a literary institution, mauling rails, making fences, building houses, keeping ferries, surveying lands, clearing, renting, collecting, measuring and selling corn!"⁵⁵

The direct connection of Lardner Clark with Davidson Academy possibly closed about 1795, as we find a general settlement with him in business matters during this year,⁵⁶ and it is known that not long after this he sought for a new opening of business elsewhere. There is preserved a memorandum of certain books, property of the Academy, left in his care which he officially turns over to another party. It is interesting in that it gives the decided classical caste that characterized the studies in this wilderness school:

"Invoice of Sundry Books belonging to the Academy of Davidson County, left in the care of Bennett Searcy, Esq, by Lardner Clark, subject to the order of the Trustees of said Academy, viz:

⁵⁴TENNESSEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY MSS. 1-C-70.

⁵⁵Putnam, p. 641.

⁵⁶TENNESSEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY MSS. 1-C-72.

- 1 vol. Ferguson's Astronomy.
- 3 Lexicons.
- 2 Virgin [Virgil?] Delphine.
- 2 Davidson's Virgil.
- 3 vol. Hutton's Logarithms.
- 1 vol. Simpson's Euclid.
- 1 vol. Xenophon.
- 1 vol. Harvey's (2nd. vol.)
- 2 Ciceros.
- 1 Terence.
- 2 Ovids.
- 3 Nepos.
- 3 Sallusts.
- 3 Lucius.
- 7 Maire's Introduction.
- 5 Greek Grammars.
- 1 Dillworth's Assistant.
- 2 Erasmus.
- 1 Esop.
- 3———(illegible).

Total, 48 volumes.

Received, April 11th. 1795, the above forty eight volumes of Lardner Clark.

B. SEARCY."⁵⁷

THE MAGISTRATE—JUSTICE OF THE PEACE.

1790, April 2nd, marks the date when all of that part of the State of North Carolina now included in the bounds of the State of Tennessee, made its first step toward statehood. First having been officially ceded to the general government of the United States, by North Carolina, on the above date it was officially accepted, and henceforth was to be known as the "Territory South of the River Ohio." The President of the U. S. on June 8th following, issued a commission to William Blount by which he became Governor of the new territory. On the 10th of October he arrived within the bounds of the Territory, and at once set about the organization of government.

By virtue of the new conditions, all commissions civil and military formerly issued by the State of North Carolina became void, and it was necessary for the Governor to issue new commissions throughout all the counties of the Territory both civil and military. Davidson Co. had been by this time divided into three, Davidson, Sumner and Tennessee (later Montgomery) and comprised the judicial District of Mero.

After organizing the county life of the eastern part of the

⁵⁷TENNESSEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY MSS. 1-C-73.

Territory, Gov. Blount came to Nashville, and on December 15 at the Court House issued commissions for new County Courts in Davidson, Sumner and Tennessee counties. The office of Magistrate was one for life, hence only worthy and prominent citizens were nominated to this honor. The list for Davidson County comprized nineteen names. Some of them had served under the old Court, but many new were also added, one of them being Lardner Clark.⁵⁸

The Court record of the above is in these words :

"L. Clark, Esq. produced his commission from His Excellency aforesaid, bearing date also as above, commissioning him as a Justice of the Peace in the County of Davidson, Whereupon the said Clark took the test approved by Congress, Likewise the oath of a Justice of the Peace in open Court."⁵⁹

Later records show that from this time on Mr. Clark was intrusted with many civil obligations, as trustee, security, power-of-attorney, administrator, chairman of committee to repair Court House, inspector of the paper currency in circulation, etc. One record speaks of "My trusted friend Lardner Clark of Nashville."⁶⁰

CLOSING YEARS.

It is apparent by the year 1790, that the business interests of Lardner Clark began to be seriously involved. It seems that the store sought to be operated at Kaskaskias in the Illinois under the firm name of Wicoff & Clark, proved a financial failure.* It became necessary to wind up this unfortunate affair, and possibly matters at Nashville were no improvement, as his credit system kept him all the while in litigation, and collections were almost impossible from the transient citizenship and the disturbed conditions of the country occasioned by Indian inroads and massacres. It became necessary for Mr. Clark to dispose of practically all of his large land holdings,—and this no doubt at a sacrifice. Such interests as he seemed to have in the East, left perhaps by the estate of his father, also were lost in the attempt to satisfy his creditors for goods bought, etc. Firms in Detroit and

⁵⁸Haywood, p. 262. *American Historical Magazine*, vol. II, p. 230. List: Robert Hays, Robert Weakley, Ephraim McLean, Samuel Barton, Elijah Robertson, James Mears, James Mulherrin, Edwin Hickman, Joel Rice, James Ross, Robert Ewing, Thomas Molloy, John Donelson, Robert Edmonson, David Hay, James Robertson, Lardner Clark, Adam Lynn, John Kirkpatrick.

⁵⁹January Term, Davidson County Court, 1791. Min. Bk. 1, p. 400.

⁶⁰Davidson Co. Will Bk. I, p. 22.

*The partnership was settled by arbitrators Dec. 1, 1790. Davidson County Deed Book C, p. 65.

Philadelphia filed suits for collection against him and embarrassment shadowed him on every hand. The following record is indicative of the pathetic situation in which he found himself at this time:

"May 18, 1791. Lardner Clark gives Power of attorney to Elisha Clark⁶¹ of the County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey:

To enable my above named attorney to settle with and in my behalf, to convey such parcels of land to sundry persons in Philadelphia and elsewhere, being the net amount of sale of sundry invoices of goods to Wm. Wicoff, Jr. of Monmouth County, New Jersey under the firm of Wicoff and Clark, *in order to have that unfortunaate affair closed.*"⁶²

In 1794 it became necessary for him to dispose of his own residence, which two years later he had to witness go up in flames. Thus closed the history of the "house-with-the-piazza."⁶³ A modest home was now sought out in the country, perhaps in the neighborhood of his old friends, the families of Frazier, Titus, and Cartwright in the Dry Creek or Mansker's Station country.

Here, at times, were left the wife and group of girl children by the disheartened father, while he made excursions to distant countries seeking to find a new start in life, hoping once again to recuperate his failed financial condition. In 1796 he seems to have returned to his old first love settlement, Kaskaskias of the Illinois, for his name appears April 14th of that year signed as a "pro-notary" in the Territory of the United States, Northwest of the Ohio, Randolph Co., Ill.

The last land sale in Davidson County on record bearing the name of Lardner Clark, is that of Lot No. 6, in the Town of Nashville, to Joseph and John Hay, Feb. 14, 1798.⁶⁴

The final record discloses that, some time previous to 1801, our subject went over from the Kaskaskias settlement in Illinois to the then Spanish settlements west of the Mississippi River,—Upper Louisiana, first to St. Genevieve, and from there to the regions termed the "Salines."

Toward the close of the eighteenth century there was quite an emigration to the region of Upper Louisiana (present Southeast Missouri) from the United States. Among these were persons with whom Mr. Clark had been associated from an early

⁶¹His brother.

⁶²Davidson Co. Will Book 1-2, p. 204.

⁶³The poet laureate of the Cumberland made this "conflagration" the subject of one of his efforts. Clark's *Miscellanies* (1811), Putnam, p. 537. Davidson Co. Deed Bk. C-360, D-76.

⁶⁴Davidson Co. Deed Book D, p. 311.

date, both by his former residence at Kaskaskias and during his business career at Nashville. Jacques Clamorgan settled near the Meramac on the west side of the river, Israel Dodge and son about this time operated salt-works at the mouth of the Saline, James Cunningham, with the Bartons, from Tennessee settled in Francisco County and was related to the Bowen family, and in Ste. Genevieve County there was a settlement on the Saline which at first was known locally as "New Tennessee."⁶

Possibly Clark sought interest in the salt industry or was investigating the mineral interest of this lead region. Here his life came to an end, February 18th, 1801.

After death, his body was brought to the old Catholic church at St. Genevieve and duly interred within its place of the dead. The old parish records of St. Genevieve gives us these last words:

"Le dix huit de Fevrier, 1801, a été inhumé dans le ceme-tière de Ste. Geneviève le corps de Lardner Clark, mort à la Saline, muni du sacrement de la penitence, en foi de quoi j'ai signé

MAXWELL, *Cure.*⁶⁵

W. A. PROVINE.

**Southeast Missouri*, by Douglass, vol. 1, pp. 66, 66, 176, etc.

⁶⁵Death Book II, p. 47.

APPENDIX.

I. THE ESTATE OF LARDNER CLARK.

1802. April (12th) Term of Davidson Co. Court.

"Ordered that Betsy Clark have letters of Administration on the estate of Lardner Clark, deceased. & having given bond of one thousand dollars, with William Renocks her security for her faithful administration. qualified accordingly."⁶⁶

1802. July Term of Davidson Co. Court.

"An inventory of the chattel estate of Lardner Clark, deceased, was returned into Court by Elizabeth Clark administratrix, and the Court ordered that order of sale be issued to said Elizabeth Clark, to sell said estate, giving legal credits to the purchasers."⁶⁷

1802. October Term of Davidson Co. Court.

"An inventory of the sale of the chattel estate of Lardner Clark, deceased was returned into Court by Elizabeth Clark, administratrix.

Sale was publicly made at the house of Elizabeth Clark in Davidson County, Aug. 16th, 1802, and cried by Samuel Thompson, who was duly appointed to do so by Elizabeth Clark, Administratrix."⁶⁸

II. INVENTORY OF THE ESTATE OF LARDNER CLARK.⁶⁹

To Elizabeth Clark, 1 large Bible.....	\$ 3.00
To Martin Whitford, 1 vol. of Jones' Reports.....	2.50
To Martin Whitford, 1 vol. Cases in the Court of the King's Bench	3.00
To Martin Whitford, 2 vols. of Cay's Abridgement.....	6.12½
To Martin Whitford, 1 vol. Letters to Blackstone on His Commentaries	1.12½
To John Whitford, 1 vol. The Conductor Generalis	3.00
To Rebecca Frazier, 2 vols. of Laws of the United States....	5.06¼
To James Walker, 3 vols. of Dictionary of Arts and Sciences..	6.00
To Elizabeth Clark, 1 vol. French Dictionary.....	1.50
To Elizabeth Clark, 1 vol. The Art of Rhetoric.....	.63 1-3
To Elizabeth Clark, 1 vol. Morse' Geography (small).....	.50
To Elizabeth Clark, 1 vol. Crispus Sallustius.....	.50
To Elizabeth Clark, 1 vol. Burchan's Family Physician.....	1.25
To Elizabeth Clark, 7 vol. Hume's Hist. of England.....	8.00
To Elizabeth Clark, 1 vol. Dryden's Works.....	.50
To Elizabeth Clark, 1 vol. The Schoolmaster's Assistant.....	.60
To Elizabeth Clark, 1 vol. "The Christian's Voyage" (French) .....	.25
To Elizabeth Clark, 1 vol. Ray's "Wisdom of God".....	.50
To Elizabeth Clark, 1 French Testament .....	.50
To Elizabeth Clark, 1 old Latin Grammar.....	.02
To Elizabeth Clark, 1 vol. Gulliver's Travels.....	.50
To Elizabeth Clark, 1 vol. The Spectator.....	.13 ½
To Elizabeth Clark, 1 vol. Erasmus .....	.50

⁶⁶Davidson Co. Min. Book. 1799-1804. p. 285.

⁶⁷Davidson Co. Min. Book. 1799-1804. p. 314, & Will Book 1, p. 252.

⁶⁸Davidson Co. Min. Book. 1799-1804. p. 342, and Will Book 1, pp. 264-5.

⁶⁹The inventory of the estate as filed July, 1802, and same giving names of purchasers at sale, Aug. 16th, 1802, is here combined. W. A. P.

To Elizabeth Clark, 1 vol. De Stratgenes de Fontaine (?)...	.02
To Elizabeth Clark, 5 small Dutch volumes.....	.05
To James Walker, 1 vol. Geography of Youth.....	.19¾
To Elizabeth Clark, 1 vol. Rider's —— (?).....	.90
To Elizabeth Clark, 1 vol. Chesterfield's Advice.....	.18½
To Elizabeth Clark, one music book .....	.51
To Elizabeth Clark, one blank book .....	.57
To Elizabeth Clark, one Testament .....	.07¼
To Elizabeth Clark, 1 Funeral Sermon of Richard Stockton..	.06¼
To Elizabeth Clark, one Dutch oven (small).....	.13½
To Elizabeth Clark, one Dutch oven (small).....	.13½
To Elizabeth Clark, one small pot.....	.13½
To Elizabeth Clark, one small kettle .....	.26
To Elizabeth Clark, four old trunks	5.02
To Elizabeth Clark, two brass candlesticks .....	.50
To Elizabeth Clark, two tin candlesticks.....	.12½
To Elizabeth Clark, one copper coffee pot.....	.12½
To Elizabeth Clark, one tea kettle .....	.13½
To Elizabeth Clark, one bed and bedding.....	5.00
To Elizabeth Clark, one tin canister .....	.06¼
To Elizabeth Clark, one Japanned canister .....	.06¼
To Elizabeth Clark, one earthen crock .....	.10
To Elizabeth Clark, one earthen dish .....	.06¼
To Elizabeth Clark, four old pewter plates.....	.13½
To Elizabeth Clark, one pair of steelyards.....	.50
To Elizabeth Clark, one clothes-brush .....	.10
To Elizabeth Clark, one iron shovel .....	.50
To Elizabeth Clark, one frying pan .....	.10
To Elizabeth Clark, one smoothing-iron .....	.50
To William Rinnick, one old gun barrel.....	1.00
To Elizabeth Clark, one old negro man.....	5.00
Total sales	<u>\$68.07</u>

III. GENEALOGICAL MEMORANDA.

Family of Lardner Clark.

Married, July 22nd, 1784, at Nashville to Elizabeth Bowen.

Children:

1. Mary (Polly): Married,⁷⁰ Sept. 17, 1802, to Martin Whitford.
2. Elizabeth: Married Feb. 17th, 1803 to James Bennett.
3. Rebecca Van-Uxen: Married Sept. 4th, 1805 to Adam Hope, Jr.
4. Jane: Married Nov. 18th, 1806 to James Bracken.

The Bowen Family.

About the year 1698 a large company of Quakers from Wales came to America and settled on a 10,000 acre purchase made by them in Guinnett Township, Chester County, Penn.

Among these emigrants were Moses Bowen and his wife Rebecca Reese. Their son,—John Bowen married Lilly McIlhaney, daughter of Henry and Jane McIlhaney, Scotch-Irish settlers. (At this time Henry McIlhaney was dead, and his widow had married a Mr. Hunter, by whom she raised the second family of children.)

John Bowen and his wife Lilly McIlhaney came from Penn. to Virginia, settling in what was then,—1730,—Augusta County. Mrs. Bowen lived till 1780.

⁷⁰Marriage Register of Davidson Co.

Their children were:

1. Moses Bowen, died at age of 20. in Rev. Army. Left a son, John Bowen who heired a land grant from his father, located on Stuart's Creek, a branch of Stone's River, now Rutherford, Co. Tenn.⁷¹
- ⁷¹Davidson Co. Deed Book A, p. 166.
2. John Bowen: (See below.)
3. Jane Bowen: Married 1st Mr. Cunningham, 2nd. Mr. Jos. Loving.
4. Nancy Bowen: Married Archibald Buchanan, came from Va. to Dav. Co. settled on the "Clover Bottom" plantation.
5. Rebecca Bowen: Married a Mr. Whitley. Their son Moses Whitley, was a Royalist in the Revolution, & went to Canada. Their daughter, Lilly married an Episcopal minister & went to England.
6. Reece Bowen: Lieutenant in the Revolutionary War. noted action in Battle of King's Mountain.
7. Henry Bowen: Married Anne Cunningham.
8. William Bowen: Captain in the Revolution. Married Mary Henly Russell. Settled in 1785. in Davidson Co. at mouth of Mansker's Cr.
9. Arthur Bowen: Married Mary McMurray.
10. Robert Bowen: Married Mary Gillespie. Settled in Hickman Co. Tenn.
11. Mary Bowen: Married a Mr. Porter.
12. Charles Bowen: Married Nancy Gillespie. He was a soldier in Revolution and at Battle of King's Mo.

Family of *John Bowen* (2).

John Bowen married Rachel Matthews, and possessed a plantation on James River in Boutetourt Co. Va. He was a soldier in the Revolution. After his death, his widow and a part of the family came about 1783-4 to Davidson Co. She later married Ebenezer Titus. (See Titus Family.)

Children:⁷²

1. John Bowen.
2. William Bowen. (remained in Boutetout Co. Va.)
3. Nancy Bowen: Married John Matthews. Settled in Dav. Co.
4. Rebecca Bowen: Married Daniel Frazier. Settled in Dav. Co.
5. Elizabeth Bowen: Married Lardner Clark. (see Sketch.)

Family of Daniel Frazier.

Daniel Frazier married Rebecca Bowen. He died July 22. 1819 in Dav. Co. He bought of N. C. a plantation on Dry Creek, 1786, where he lived and died.⁷³ His will, recorded Aug. 14, 1820, mentions the following children:

1. Sarah (Sally). wife of R. O. Childress.
2. John.
3. Moses Bowen.
4. William.
5. James.

⁷²*American Historical Magazine.* Vol. VII, p. 324. Pilcher *Historic Sketches*, p. 253. Spence History of Hickman Co. Tenn., p. 209, 216. Davidson Co. Deed Book C, p. 126, 127.

⁷³Deed Book A. I. 124.

6. Ebenezer.
7. Daniel. Married July 22, 1819. to Lucy A. Clay.
8. Emaline: Married Mr. John M. Dickerson.
9. Stephen D.

Rebecca Frazier, wife of Daniel, died cir. 1833. The inventory of her estate was taken out Oct. 22, 1833.⁷⁴

An Old Document.*

“State of Tennessee
Davidson County.

To any lawful ofser you are heir by command to sum Mons Daneel frazor John hope Jeams Bowers Joseph Show William Boen David Shannon Jeams Shannon Samuel Shannon abner Johnson abso-lam Hooper BenJamon nickols John worker Jock Mack farling to a pear be for Me or some other Jistis of said county to anser the complaint of Robert Cartrigh over sear of the rod for Default in working on said rod given under My hand & seal this 30th June 1797.
Joseph Philips.”

Family of Ebenezer Titus.

Ebenezer Titus was probably from the Eastern States, he came to Nashville soon after the settlement of the colony. Name appears among those that signed the “Compact,” 1780-83. He was employed as a chain-carrier in the Commissioner’s party who in February 1783 laid off the claims of the North Carolina Continental Line. Was a successful and much respected citizen of Nashville for many years. Following notice appears in the *Impartial Review*, pub. at Nashville, September 17, 1807.

“Died. On Monday last. (Sept. 14.) Mr. Ebenezer Titus.

He was a man of the most virtuous deportment and was beloved by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance.”⁷⁵

Ebenezer Titus was married 1st. to ———. and had the following children:⁷⁶

1. Joseph Titus. Married Elizabeth Matthews.
2. James Titus. Married 1st. June 10. 1795 Rebecca Buchanan. Married 2nd. May 17. 1808. Nancy Edmonson.
4. ——— (daugh.) Married William Crawford.

Ebenezer Titus owned a plantation on Dry Creek, in the northern part of Dav. Co. Also lands on Mill Creek in the south-east part of the county. Before his death some years, he divided his lands between his children. The graves of himself and wife are on his old plantation on Dry Creek. He married 2nd. Rebecca Bowen, nee Matthews, widow of John Bowen. (See Bowen Family.)

1806. Jan. 26. James Titus and George Titus sell their plantations on Dry Creek to George and Samuel Wharton.⁷⁷

1808. July 8. George Wharton sells to James Titus 40 ft. square of above plantation, viz: burial place of his father and mother.⁷⁸

1809. William Crawford (son-in-law of Ebenezer Titus) sells his plantation on Dry Creek to David and Jesse Cartwright.⁷⁹

*Pub. in Nashville *Daily Gazette*, May 18, 1858, from “old papers in the possession of the Tenn. Historical Society.”

⁷⁴Davidson Co. Will Book H, p. 416, and Will Book No. 10, p. 552.

⁷⁵Tenn. Hist. Society file.

⁷⁶Davidson Co. Deed Book F, p. 317. Davidson Co. Minute Book I, p. 114.

⁷⁷Deed Book G, pp. 3 and 15.

⁷⁸Deed Book G, p. 30.

⁷⁹Deed Book F, p. 65; G, pp. 487, 488.

1812. George Titus of Madison County, Terr. of Miss., mentioned.⁸⁰

1825. Aug. 31. Frazier Titus married to Ann Edmonston.⁸¹

Families of Adam and John Hope.

About 1788-89 there came to Davidson County Adam and John Hope, brothers.

Adam Hope was born November 1, 1761. Married first Rachel ———. In 1789, July 6th, he purchased of Jason Thompson a plantation of 320 acres on the waters of Mill Creek, not far from the present Antioch and thereafter made his home here until his death, December, 1841.

His wife, Rachel ———, was born October 6, 1762, and died September 6, 1809. Adam Hope married second March 12, 1814, Mary Brown, born in 1757, died March 23, 1833. The graves of Adam Hope and his wives are still plainly marked in the burial ground on the old plantation, in later years called the "Cook Place." The will of Adam Hope is recorded in Davidson County, dated April 26, 1841; probated at the January term of court, 1842.⁸²

The following children are mentioned:

1. Mary Jane. Married James Cook. (They were married March 15, 1817.) She was given by the will a part of the old home place later known as the "Cook Place."

2. Mary (Polly). Married Edmund Owen (February 6, 1818). After the death of Mr. Owen she married Charles Cook. Children: First marriage, (a) Adam Hope Owen. Married Mrs. ———, of Brentwood. After her death he went to Texas. Second marriage: (a) Benjamin Cook; (b) ———, married Mr. Ezell.

3. Thomas (an afflicted son). Given by will during his life the home place. He was to be cared for by his brother, Samuel W., and at his death this portion of the home place was to become the part of Samuel W.

4. Samuel W. Married January 25, 1816, to Fanny R. Butt. Children: (a) Martitia; married John Wilkerson; lived at Clarksville, Tenn. (b) John. (c) Mary A.; married Mr. Nevills. (d) Rachel; married Richard Sands; went to Texas. (e) Richard. (f) Elizabeth; married Mr. Betts; went to Texas. (g) Samuel. (h) Arthur; settled in Arkansas. (i) Sherman W.; still lives on part of the old homestead; aged, 1917, 77 years.

5. James R. (1841, a minor.)

6. Elizabeth. Married Mr. Chambers. Settled at Woodville, Miss.

7. David B. (1841, minor).

8. Adam (1841, a minor).

9. John (1841, a minor).

John Hope married Anne, daughter of David Beattie. The latter entered land on the upper waters of Brown's Creek in Davidson County and later gave same to John Hope and wife. John Hope, about 1789, bought a plantation on Dry Creek, in the northern part of Davidson County, living here till his death, March 6, 1805. His will is dated October 23, 1804, a codicil is added December 22, 1804, and the will was probated at the April term of court, 1805.

⁸⁰Deed Book I, p. 297.

⁸¹Marriage Register, p. —.

⁸²Davidson County Will Book No. 12, p. 258.

He gives to his wife "two hundred acres on which I now live, and mansion house, etc., which is to be taken off of the upper end of the tract, his distillery, etc., until his son, William, is 21." The following children are mentioned:

1. Adam. (Married September 4, 1805, Rebecca Van-Uxen Clark (see sketch of Lardner Clark). He was given 160 acres off the lower end of the home tract.

2. Francis. (Married, June 6, 1805, to William Seargent.)

3. Agness R. Born July 20, 1790. Married March 16, 1807, to Matthew P. Walker. Was given land on Brown's Creek. She died August 17, 1872, and is buried at Spring Hill Cemetery. Matthew P. Walker, born August 10, 1787; died August 12, 1849. Buried at Spring Hill Cemetery.

4. Mary. (Married James Burford, April 6, 1810.) Given land on Brown's Creek.

5. William. (Married, first, October 24, 1821, to Mary Walker. Married, second, July 12, 1825, to Narsissa Sampson. Mar. Licen. Book.) He was given the 200 acres of his mother's after her death.

John Hope's son, Adam Hope, Jr., and his brother, Adam Hope, Sr., were made his executors.⁸³

Others of the Hope Name.

We find the name of "Joseph Hope," also that of "William Hope," who, April 6, 1802, buys of John Magnus 166 acres of land on Stuart's Creek, a branch of Stone's River, Rutherford County.⁸⁴

FAMILY OF WIGKHOF.⁸⁵

This name, found with various spelling, viz.: Waychoff, Wikoff, Wycoff, Wykoff, Wycough and Whyckoff, etc., in American genealogy, is of Dutch origin. One, Nicholas Claesen, left Amsterdam October 1, 1636, and landed at New Amsterdam (New York City) March 27, 1637. He was the descendant of an ancient Gothic family, true Norse or Viking, which included many noble and royal names, among them, Eric, King of Sweden, cir. 750-800 A. D., Harold, the last Saxon King of England, who died 1066 A. D., and the royal family of Denmark. This Nicholas Claesen, following the precedent of his ancestors, led a sea-faring life. In his young manhood served in the Thirty Years' War, being captured at the Battle of Mittau, however afterwards making his escape. He brought with him to America his only son, Pieter Claesen. This Pieter Claesen served as a magistrate in his town of Amersfoort, on Long Island, now a part of New York City. After the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam was taken by the English in 1664, the citizens had to be enrolled and take the oath of allegiance to the King of Great Britain, and to distinguish himself from others of the same name, Pieter Claesen adopted the surname of "Wigkhof," a compound Dutch word, "Wigk," denoting "town," and "hof," meaning "court," hence Claesen of the Town-court, viz: the Magistrate.

Two sons of Pieter Claesen Wigkhof, viz: John and Garet, settled in Monmouth County, New Jersey. John was the father of WILLIAM WYCOFF.

⁸³Davidson County Will Book II, p. 17.

⁸⁴Davidson County Deed Book F, p. 9.

⁸⁵Data furnished by Wm. F. Wyckoff, Jamaica, New York.

WILLIAM WYCOFF, born 1707, married 1729 Agnes Van Doren. He resided near Freehold, Monmouth County, N. J.; was a man of large property and great influence. Died 1782. His sons were:

1. Jacob Wycoff.
2. Peter Wycoff.
3. Isaac Wycoff.

JACOB WYCOFF (1), born 1730, married 1754 to Sarah Conover, lived at Manalapan, Freehold, N. J.; died March 5, 1812. He left an only son:

WILLIAM WYCOFF, born March 16, 1755. Was a colonel in the Revolution. In 1782 joined Lardner Clark in the opening of a merchandise establishment at Kaskaskias in the Illinois. Owned large landed estates in Tennessee and other states of the South. Returned East and married, October 17, 1787, Hannah Scudder and lived near Freehold, N. J. Died May 8, 1824. Davidson County Records show that on October 8, 1809, Wm. Wycoff of Freehold, N. J., gave power of attorney to his son, Nathaniel Wycoff, of said Monmouth County, N. J., to sell certain lands in Tennessee.⁸⁶ Again, 1819, Wm. Wycoff gives power of attorney to Philip I. Scudder to sell lands in Tennessee, witnessed by Nathaniel Wycoff and Daniel Wycoff.⁸⁷ Nathaniel Wycoff, born August 11, 1788, died September 30, 1859, without issue.

PETER WYCOFF (2), born 1735; married March 30, 1769, Althea Cox of Philadelphia. He with his brother Isaac (3) were associated in business in Philadelphia. Was aide de camp to General Washington at the Battle of Monmouth, N. J. Date of death not given. His only son was:

HENRY WYCOFF, born —. Graduated at Princeton in 1792. He owned the township of Blocksley, now a part of Philadelphia, and lived in great state in his mansion on the banks of the Schuylkill. He joined in an order giving power of attorney, April 14, 1823, to John H. Smith to sell lands in Tennessee. Given at Philadelphia.⁸⁸

Had a son, Henry Wycoff, Jr., born 1812, a lawyer, who never married; a diplomat serving under the British Foreign Office when Lord Palmerston was Prime Minister, was an author of note, having written several books, was a close friend of Napoleon III and the great men of France and England, was Chevalier of the Legion of Honor of France. Died 1880.

ISAAC WYCOFF (3), born 1739. Married, January 9, 1766, Martha Cox. Was associated in merchandise business with his brother, Peter Wycoff, in Philadelphia. His sons were:

(a) Jacob (C.) Wycoff. Lived in Philadelphia. Married, 1792, Charlotta File. Has grandchildren living.

(b) Ann Wycoff.

(c) Peter, whose family history is not known.

(d) Isaac Wycoff, born 1783. Married Rachel Hickman. He was a physician and resided at Easton, Pa. Died October 29, 1870. His son was General Charles A. Wycoff, U. S. Regular Army, killed in the battles around Santiago, Cuba, in 1898.

(e) William Wycoff. Settled in Louisiana. Married sister of Gayoso, the last Spanish Governor of Louisiana. He owned a large

⁸⁶Davidson County Deed Book I, p. 17.

⁸⁷Davidson County Deed Book N, p. 379.

⁸⁸Davidson County Deed Book X, p. 105.

plantation on the Mississippi River near Baton Rouge, and is said to have possessed one thousand slaves. He left two sons: (1) William Wycoff, who married a Miss Soule, and (2) Peter Wycoff, a lawyer.

At Philadelphia, April 14, 1823, the following "sole heirs" of Isaac Wycoff, deceased, signed an order of power of attorney to John H. Smith, to sell lands in Tennessee, viz: Jacob C. Wycoff, Ann Wycoff, Peter Wycoff, Isaac C. Wycoff and William Wycoff (by his attorney, Jacob C. Wycoff).⁸⁹ These were all children of Isaac Wycoff (3), mentioned above, and the "William" who signs through his attorney, Jacob C. Wycoff, must have been the non-resident William Wycoff of Baton Rouge, La.

⁸⁹Davidson County Deed Book X, p. 105.

DOCUMENTS

Selected Letters, 1844-1845, from the Donelson Papers.

INTRODUCTION.

In the preceding number of the *TENNESSEE HISTORICAL MAGAZINE*¹ there was published a series of letters written by James K. Polk to Andrew J. Donelson, during the years 1843-1848, selected from the Donelson Papers, then in the possession of Mrs. W. A. Donelson, of Nashville. The letters printed below constitute a further selection from this valuable collection of manuscripts, which has now been transferred by Mrs. Donelson to the Library of Congress. To present to our readers a closely related group of letters, we chose the most important documents of the two years, 1844 and 1845. This period covers the election of Polk, the mission of Donelson to Texas, and the consummation of the project of annexation. The fact that Jackson, Polk and Donelson were all Tennesseans, and that Sam Houston and Thomas Hart Benton had come from Tennessee, make the letters which refer to Texas of especial interest to the readers of the *MAGAZINE*, while these and others reveal the remarkable vigor with which General Jackson, though ill and nearing his end, clung to political affairs. The letters show, also, the affectionate relations that existed between General Jackson and Andrew J. Donelson and his wife.

A sketch of the life of Andrew J. Donelson was prefixed to the *Polk-Donelson Letters*.

As before, we must express our obligation for the use of these letters to Mrs. W. A. Donelson, and must now add a similar note of appreciation to Dr. Gaillard Hunt, of the Division of Manuscripts of the Library of Congress.

ST. GEORGE L. SIOUSSAT.

1. A. J. DONELSON, NASHVILLE, TENN., TO [MARTIN VAN BUREN]² May 16, 1844.

I am here on my way to Baltimore³ having been detained a day or two by the Genl⁴ who is overwhelmed with letters produced by the prominence which has been given to the Texas question.

It is inexplicable to me how this question could have been swelled to such importance without a knowledge on the part of some of us

¹Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 51 ff. (March, 1917.) Hereafter cited as *Polk-Donelson Letters*.

²A retained copy. That it was written to Van Buren is deduced from the contents. Probably this is the letter listed in West, *Calendar of the Papers of Martin Van Buren*, p. 523.

³Donelson was leaving to attend the Democratic National Convention at Baltimore.

⁴Andrew Jackson.

here of what were your views and feelings on it.⁵ Being necessarily much absent from home during the past year and particularly for the last three months, I would give but little attention to general politics, and indeed felt that there was no occasion as the choice of the Democratic party pointed alone to you. I could not but suppose that the Genl had exchanged opinions with you, and that there was at least such an understanding as would have prevented an issue calculated to divide the party.

I now see and lament my mistake, but still hope that there is room to repair the error. But I have but a moment before the close of the mail to drop this line, informing you of my intention to go immediately to Baltimore, and after the adjournment of the convention of going directly to your house. My son is with me, and will be left at West Point as a cadet.

I enclose a copy of a letter which the Genl. has directed to be published in the *Union*, in reply to the many letters reaching him daily on the Texas subject. As his letter will be read with some interest, I have thought you ought to see it, if possible before the convention meets.

I carry a letter to Mr. Butler⁶ to whom you had better write, if you deem any further communication necessary after what has occurred. I can only add that our country is full of terrible accounts of divisions amongst our friends, and that I am distressed beyond measure.

2. A. J. DONELSON TO ANDREW JACKSON, HERMITAGE,

May 16 [?], 1844.

There was not time after the Col. [*sic*] Polk reached Nashville to publish the letter. I have therefore sent it to you for your perusal after being copied, and also for your signature.

I will see you early in the morning.

3. GEORGE BANCROFT,⁷ BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, TO A. J. DONELSON,
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE,

July 6, 1844.

The journey you propose to me⁸ is precisely one which I desire most earnestly to undertake; but as I believe I said to you, my engagements this summer are too numerous to enable me to leave home. Besides, I am at the head of our State Democratic Organization; and meetings are appointed, which I must attend, and which occur at such intervals and times, as keep me near Boston during this whole month and the next, though we remain in a minority.

Our nominations at Baltimore have been astonishingly successful. Everywhere they are received with exultation. In a letter from Mr. Van Buren this week, he gives the most cheering account of the enthusiasm and effort [?] in New York. I think at the North Polk will carry as many votes as Van Buren could have done; and he will win at the South several states, which Van Buren could not have carried. In New England, Maine and New Hampshire are certain for us, and for Connecticut we have some increasing hopes. The elections which are to take place within a few weeks, will, if I read the future rightly, dispirit our opponents and elevate our confidence.

⁵See *Letters of James K. Polk to Cave Johnson*, TENNESSEE HISTORICAL MAGAZINE, Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 229-232. As to the letters of Jackson in the *Union*, see *Polk-Johnson Letters*, pp. 240-241, and note 132. (Hereafter cited as *Polk-Johnson Letters*.)

⁶B. F. Butler of New York.

⁷Secretary of the Navy in the cabinet of Polk.

⁸Bancroft had been invited, with other leading Democratic politicians, to attend the great Democratic rally to be held in Nashville, August 15, 1844.

I am most happy to hear, that General Jackson bears up so nobly against accumulating years. God grant that we may long retain him and that from a great and happy old age he may take his flight to the better world. The coming election is to decide, whether we are to see the fruits of his civil career perish and decay, or to see them preserved in their freshness and glory by the virtue and firmness of the people.

4. ANDREW JACKSON TO A. J. DONELSON, AT HOME.

July 17, 1844.

The enclosed letter,⁹ I rec[eive]d by Capt. Miller since you left me you will discover from it—that the only hope of success by the Whiggs are from slander—they must be met at every point and put down. I knew all the old stock of the Polks. They were all good 76 Whiggs—old Col. Thos. Polk the first mover of Independence in Mecklenburge County—all the Polks then grown were good 76 Whiggs, and Col. Wm. Polk, son of Thomas, got twice wounded in the war of the Revolution and I think a brother killed in battle.¹⁰ I never heard one branch of the family charged with toryism before. The rumor that when Gov. J. K. Polk was running for Governor that this charge was circulated against him I never heard. If any such slander was circulated, you as one of the Democratic central committee, must heard of it, and it will be proper for you to join me in a statement, that the statement of the Whigg elector is entirely false. This ought to be done soon. It appears from Capt. Miller's statement that from what he heard at Smithland that the Whigg statement of the election of New Orleans are not true. Falsehood is their aliment.

5. JAMES BUCHANAN,¹¹ LANCASTER, TO A. J. DONELSON.

July 17, 1844.

I have this moment received your kind letter of the 8th Instant inviting me to the Mass meeting at Nashville. I sincerely wish it were in my power to accept it both for the sake of meeting the Democracy of Tennesse[e] and once more enjoying the privilege of seeing General Jackson. I have always felt a strong desire to visit him at the Hermitage; but whether I shall ever be able to perform this labor of love is extremely uncertain. I know that at the present moment I can be more useful to the common cause in Pennsylvania than I could be in Tennessee. I had received an invitation from your Committee some time ago and then returned an answer.

I confess that I view the meeting at Nashville with much solicitude. Every resolution which may be adopted there will be considered as the echo of Mr. Polk's opinions; and hence the necessity of extreme caution. In this State the present Tariff is very popular; and the Whigs seem to have abandoned all other questions and are making prodigious efforts to identify our party with free trade. Colonel Polk's descreet letter to Mr. Kane has, I think, check-mated them on this question. I trust nothing may be done at Nashville to impair the effect of this letter. I need not caution you to avoid, in your proceeding's every appearance of the slightest tendency towards nullification or disunion. I know that many of our Southern friends are under the deep, though, in my opinion, mistaken impression that

⁹The inclosure has not been identified.

¹⁰See *Papers of Major John P. Heiss* (First Installment), TENNESSEE HISTORICAL MAGAZINE, Vol. II, No. 2, p. 144, and note 17. (Hereafter cited as *Heiss Papers*. First Installment.)

¹¹Secretary of State in the cabinet of Polk.

incidental protection is ruinous to their interest and have determined that it shall be abolished. M' Duffie's speech at Richmond on this subject would be truly alarming if it were supposed to speak the sentiments of any considerable portion of the Southern Democracy. I again repeat;—be cautious at Nashville and keep an eye upon the Northern as well as the Southern Democratic States. The more you say against the Bank and Distribution and in favor of Texas; so much the better for Pennsylvania. I have just sent my Texas speech to the *Globe* for publication.

If I had not been so grossly deceived as to the vote of this State in 1840, I should unhesitatingly say we would carry it triumphantly for Polk and Dallas. So far as I can learn, the party is every where throughout its borders firmly and enthusiastically united. We are well organised and shall do our duty. Still Herculean efforts are making and will be made by the Whigs; but I do not entertain any fears of the result, unless the Tariff question should operate against us more than I have at present any reason to anticipate. I am myself in favor of a Tariff for revenue; but with such discriminations as will prevent the important branches of our Domestic Manufactures from sinking under the weight of foreign competition. A universal, horizontal, ad valorem tariff is a mere humbug which never has existed and never can exist in any commercial nation. One year's experience under the 20 per cent compromise Act would have blown it sky high. General Jackson with that sound practical wisdom and foresight which has always characterised him came out decidedly, in his message of the 10th January, 1833, against a horizontal Tariff.—But I am writing too much.

Please to remember me in the kindest and most respectful terms to the General and believe me to be sincerely and respectfully your friend.

6. ANDREW JACKSON, HERMITAGE, NASHVILLE, TO J. Y. MASON.¹²

August 1, 1844.

I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letter marked *private and confidential*, of the 23rd ultimo,¹³ and altho worn down by debility from a bad cough, pain in my left side, and shortness of breath I with pleasure endeavour to answer it.

Whilst I sincerely thank you for your kind attention to my request in favour of the youth John Adams, I do assure you, I highly approve your course not to permit an infraction of the law under any circumstances—this is the imperious duty of all executive officers in our republican Government which is based upon the virtue of the people and can only endure by such administration.

I have always knew [*sic*] you to be a real republican, and when you were called upon by Mr. Tyler to become a member of his cabinet he having given evidence that he would administer the Government upon the pure Jeffersonian principle, I believed it the duty of any Democrat that he might solicit to aid him in the administration of the Government to yield to his call, and I can assure you when he made the call upon you to come into his cabinet, it gave me confidence in his declarations that he would administer the Government on the pure principles of Jefferson, and I was, when I heard you had accepted the appointment, I was glad and hope Mr. Tyler will continue so to act, that he may go thro his term with the confidence of the Democracy, with Honor to himself, and to our national character.

¹²Secretary of the Navy in the cabinet of Tyler.

¹³This letter is in the *Jackson Papers*, Vol. 112, Library of Congress.

With much frankness I give you my opinion of the course that Mr. Tyler ought to pursue with regard to the presidency, if he expects to retire in the confidence of the Democracy, and adding to his popularity. *He ought to withdraw from the canvass*¹⁴ with such an address to his supporters for the presidency as his good sense may suggest. My reason—1st Mr. Tyler has no possible chance of being elected—all the democracy being pledged to abide by the nomination of the Democratic National Convention at Baltimore—This now all his friends as well as himself must see; 2nd His enemies falsely charge that the Texas question was introduced by him to enhance his popularity and make him president. Mr. Tyler by withdrawing will relieve himself from this false imputation of his enemies—Thirdly—By withdrawing he will relieve himself from the imputation of holding on to the Canvass when he can have no hope of being elected, to aid and strengthen Mr. Clay, and to injure the Democratic cause. This, if Mr. Tyler holds on to the Canvass will be a heavy charge and will forever hereafter destroy him with the Republican and Democratic party. Should he soon come out with an address to the Democracy, and withdraw from the Canvass, he will retire the 4th of March next with a greater popularity than he ever possessed, and the Democracy supporting him for the presidency of course fall into the ranks of the whole Democracy without any distinction whatever. I have been asked by several Tyler men, but who go with the Mass of the Democracy to the support of Poke [*sic*] and Dallas the nominees of the Baltimore convention, what will Mr. Tyler do. I have answered as a Democrat having now no chance to be elected he will withdraw from the Canvass. This they all say is his proper course to retain his standing with the Democracy, and free himself from the imputation of his holding on *now when he has no hope of being elected*, is to favor Clay. If Mr. Tyler ever expects to be before the Democracy for any public office he must withdraw from the Canvass *now*—If he does not, he will retire forsaken by the true Democracy of this union never to be able to regain their confidence when by now retiring he carries home with him the confidence and respect of all the Democracy of this Union.

Should Mr. Tyler not withdraw from the Canvass his cabinet will be rather in an unpleasant situation, but my dear sir, I do not believe it would be a sufficient cause for you to resign your situation so long as Mr. Tyler administer the Government on the true Republican Jeffersonian principle—All the Democracy here who know you, believe your political principle too pure to be contaminated by Whiggism Clayism or conservatism, therefore I say as my opinion the course of Mr. Tyler holding on to the Canvass I cannot think would justify you in withholding from the cabinet—There is but a few months to the 4th of March when from every appearance in the South and West Democracy will be triumphant, and we will have in Polk and Dallas a pure Jeffersonian administration to which you have always belonged and allways supported.

My dear sir I am exhausted, and must close. My own opinion is, that Mr. Tyler will withdraw from the Canvass, and the sooner he does the more credit he will get for the act. I cannot correct or copy, I know that under the pain and difficulty I wrote you will overlook all errors it contains.

¹⁴For the plan to have Jackson bring pressure on Tyler, see *Polk-Donelson Letters*, pp. 58-59; and *Papers of Major John P. Heiss* (Second Installment), TENNESSEE HISTORICAL MAGAZINE, Vol. II, No. 3, pp. 208 ff., especially Introduction, p. 211, and note 14. (Hereafter cited as *Heiss Papers*, Second Installment.) Tyler's candidacy was withdrawn August 20, 1844.

7. J[OHN] C. CALHOUN, STATE DEPARTMENT, TO A. J. DONELSON.

August 23, 1844.

I have read the letter of General Jackson to President Houston,¹⁵ enclosed in your's with deep interest. It is written with great power, and the appeal to his patriotism, honor and future fame cannot but have a powerful effect on him. But, I agree with you, that it will depend much on the prospect of Mr. Polk's election, whether the appeal will prove successful or not. Should Mr. Clay be elected, the door would probably be closed against the admission of Texas, and, if closed, she would be almost forced to seek the alliance of Great Britain, however disastrous it might prove in the end to her, to the United States, and, I might add, to this Continent. No one, however sagacious can tell where the calamity would terminate. But, I trust, the good sense and patriotism of the American people, by defeating Mr. Clay and electing Mr. Polk will avert the danger and disasters to which the madness of faction has exposed both countries. I think the prospect of his election is good. The people are becoming daily more sensible of the importance of the questions at issue and the Republican party more zealous and united. It has thus far, not only held its own, compared to the election of '42, when the Whigs were so signally defeated; but has actually, either increased its majority, or deminished that of the Whigs, in every state, where there has been a trial of strength. It proves that ours is a growing cause; and I can see no reason why the tide should turn before the election; but should it not, and the States, which have not yet voted, should do as well in proportion as those which have, Mr. Polk's election will be certain.

Before I received your letter with its enclosure, I received a copy of the letter addressed by Gen[era]l Jackson to Col. Gadsden, alluded to in your's. The course of policy which it suggests is marked by that boldness and decision which so strongly characterizes the thoughts and actions of the General. I deemed it to be my duty to bring it, as well as the one inclosed in your's, to the notice of the President; and, accordingly I loosed [?] no time after his return from old Point Comfort in doing so. After bestowing on their contents the attention due to their importance, and the source from which they emanated, he is of the opinion, that his position is too weak for him to undertake so bold and decided a movement, and I must say, that my opinion concurs with his.¹⁶

The question, what under all the circumstances of the case ought

¹⁵Sam Houston, President of the Republic of Texas, at one time Governor of Tennessee, and a warm friend of Andrew Jackson.

¹⁶One of the important features of this part of President Tyler's course, when the Texas issue was at its height, appeared in the approaches made to General Jackson. In the summer of 1844, through James Gadsden as intermediary, there was an attempt at a similar rapprochement between Calhoun and his South Carolina following, and Jackson. Donelson, who had kept on good terms with Calhoun, had written from Nashville to Calhoun, July 29, 1844, stating that he had seen a letter which Gadsden, after conversing with Calhoun, had written to Jackson (J. F. Jameson (ed.), *Correspondence of John C. Calhoun*, pp. 964-965). No time had been lost. Donelson said, in addressing to Houston a letter warning him of the designs of Great Britain, of which Gadsden, apparently, had told Gadsden. Donelson explained the difficulties that were in Houston's way, and sent Calhoun a copy of Jackson's letter to Houston. The success of the effort to persuade Houston turned, Donelson thought, upon their ability to convince him of the certainty of the election of Polk. The letter of Calhoun here printed is without doubt the reply of Calhoun to Donelson's letter of July 29. This letter of Calhoun carefully veils the nature of the suggestion which Jackson had made to Gadsden: but Gadsden's reply, which is in the Jackson Papers in the Library of Congress, perhaps gives a hint. Through the kindness of Dr. Gaillard Hunt, of the Division of Manuscripts, a copy of Gadsden's letter, dated Charleston, August 1, 1844, is here presented, as follows:

"Your letter of the 29-ulto was received, on the same day in which we had a meeting of our Texian Committee: raised by the Citizens to correspond, and take

to be done is one of deep interest. It became a subject of conversation at the last meeting of the cabinet, but nothing was definitely decided on. The subject of calling Congress to convene before the constitutional period, say the 1st of Novr., was alluded to, but it was thought advisable to wait for farther developments, and in particular from our Charge in Texas Genl. Howard, who had just arrived, by the last accounts.

I am disposed to a decided course; and am of the impression that honor as well as expediency demands that we should defend Texas against Mexico, should she undertake to invade her, while the question of annexation is pending, as I still consider it to be. The treaty, it is true, is rejected, but Texas has not yet withdrawn her assent to be annexed, nor is the joint resolution moved by Mr. McDuffie on the subject in the Senate yet disposed of. Both parties, indeed, appealed to the people, before whom it may now be fairly considered as pending, and as constituting the leading question, now at issue, to be decided in the pending presidential election. It is, in my opinion, an insult to us for Mexico under such circumstances, to undertake to attack Texas for accepting our invitation to treat with her on the subject of annexation and entering into an agreement to that effect.

Thus thinking, I have thought, that Congress ought to be called to meet at a day earlier than that fixed by the Constitution, so as to

the measures necessary to keep the question alive before the Community. It was submitted to the Committee, composed in part of some of our Ablest Lawyers; and the Chairman of which is our Atty General. We concurred unanimously in the views you had taken on the subject; and your letter, on the recommendation of the Committee was transmitted to Mr. Calhoun: who will bring the subject probably to the Consideration of the Executive. I fear however My Dear General the golden opportunity is lost. The movements in Mexico: under advisement, no doubt with the British Government; may force Texas into terms. Her situation without aid, will make her to [*sic*] victim of French and British policy. If the Citizens of Texas could be moved to rise in Mass: again tender the Country to the U. S., and insist on the provisions of the Treaty of 1803, our President might be stimulated to the course you suggest. But I anticipate no such result. I fear Texian necessities, back [*sic*] by a spirit of speculation: will throw them into the hands of Great Britain; and as skilful Diplomatsists I am not so sure but that Texas sought annexation (knowing it would be rejected on our part), to stimulate Great Britain into such overtures as Texas could advantageously accept. Indeed were I a Texian, I would hesitate between the two offers of annexation to the United States or Independence under a free trade system—Freed from the oppressions of a Tariff of protection—At liberty to trade unrestricted to all quarters of the Globe, and Texas would become from her position, soils, climate and productions one of the most flourishing of Countries. Indeed it would be difficult to estimate the extent of prosperity to which she would attain: while our Southern States would be declining and withering under cold blasts of a Tariff of protection.

"I agree with you that the indications for Polks election look encouraging. In New York there seems to be some dissatisfaction—in the Democratic ranks on the subject of Annexation; and in this quarter Polks letter to Kane has occasioned some coolness. It probably cannot affect the vote in Carolina; that seems to be fixed. But in No Carolina and Georgia coldness or want of very great activity on the part of the Democrats will surely bring defeat on them. The Tariff is the absorbing question in Georgia, and you may recollect that one of the Wig [*sic*] Members of Congress very recently deserted Clay on the Tariff question believing Polk sound; as his votes had shown. But his letter to Kane has disconcerted them; and the Wigs [*sic*] are making all the capital they can from it. So Carolina, you will see from our Papers is quite excited. It is difficult to keep the people quiet and a knowledge of the fact that with a decided Democratic Majority in the House no effort was made to modify the Tariff of 1842. Ten times more objectionable than those of 1828 and 32. We of the South, My Dear General are in a bad way. The spirit of plunder and abolition, is threatening our very existence as a free people. We will await quietly the result of the Ballot Box in 1845. If this does not bring redress of the wrongs we have so long complained of I cannot vouch for the Consequences. Our People are now like a stifled volcano; ready to break out at the first signal, and now only kept under by the great exertions and greater discretion of the Leaders. Mr. Calhoun is in some quarters, amid his oldest friends now denounced for supineness. His exertions are to keep things quiet and await the results of the Ballot box. (*Jackson Papers*, Vol. 112.)

be prepared to act, if an invasion should take place, which I presume must be in Novr. if at all; but I find many of our best friends here object on the ground that there is nothing to hope from Congress, and that the call might possibly affect injuriously the result of the Presidential election.¹⁷ That certainly would constitute a strong objection, if it be well founded; but according to my observation, where you are right, boldness is the best policy.

I am happy to inform you that our intelligence from France is very favourable. She is opposed to the annexation on commercial principles, but we have strong assurances, through our minister, that she will take no position hostile to us, and has not, as it has been rumored, agreed to unite with England in a joint protest against the annexation.

Although I have marked this private and confidential, I can have no objection to your showing it, either to Gen. Jackson or Mr. Polk.

8. [—————], CHARLESTON, S. C., TO A. J. DONELSON,

August 26, 1844.

I fear that you had no So. Caroleneans [*sic*] with you at your Great Democratic Meeting at Nashville. We knew you could spare our men all of whom were needed in Georgia where the Wigs [*sic*] were making a desperate thrust at the Democrats. It was necessary to sustain our friends and we have reason to believe that our assistance was not without its good.

Our Democratic Bretheren in Georgia are now aroused and all seem encouraged with the prospects of a favourable result in Novr.

If we can carry Georgia, in November, the South will most probably be united. So Carolina is a dead shot: so much so that we fear a domestic quarrel among members if the same family, for its honors. We will not be divided however on the General election. Polk Dallas and Texas are our watchword. You will see in the proceedings of our Great Dem meeting in Charleston on the 22 instance [*sic*] our position defined, in spite of the slanders of Clay and the echoes of such men as Dr Shelby and others. They may dissolve, as they have violated the compact of the constitution. We stick to the Bond and will not accept of any other they might wish to impose on us. The cry of Disunion in So C is all a Humbug, Political capital manufactured under a deceptive protective Tariff to divert the mind from other subjects of more importance and for which we will hold the Wigs responsible. We must not let them off on the Texian issue. They made it and we must keep them to it. Agitate, agitate Texas annexation in every paper. You must write, short but spicy pieces. I send one for consideration which you can have printed in the *Union* if you approve.

TEXAS INVADED.

When all the world is at peace, when a political Millennium has been proclaimed as the forerunner of that Christian Millennium which is to extend good will and harmony to all nations, we find Mexico alone sounding the Toscin [*sic*] of War—Texas threatened with an invasion and her frontier to be exposed to all the horrors of savage massaere. Her cities are to be sacked, and her fields rendered desolate, for presuming, in the exercise of a Sovereign independence, to

¹⁷Cp. a letter of Polk to Donelson, August 27, 1844, *Polk-Donelson Letters*, pp. 60-61.

¹⁸This letter, though addressed apparently to Donelson, is directed to General Andrew Jackson. It may be a copy. There is no signature to the letter but the piece for the newspaper at the end is signed "Calhoun." Whoever the author may have been, it was certainly not John C. Calhoun.

treat with a neighbouring power. Let the Citizens of the States, read attentively the manifesto of General Wood, and ask themselves, whether they are willing to see a Sister Sovereign overwhelmed for daring to negotiate with the united States. Yet such is the fact. The Mexican General proclaims that Texas shall be visited with a war of extermination, for her treachery in presuming to treat with those U States. Are we to remain indifferent? Not to protest, and interpose our power to protect a Sister, and neighbouring community, when her only crime has been to negotiate with us? She sought that Union with us, which we promised in the Treaty of 1803. She desired under her Sovereign independence (an independence which we recognised 8 years ago) to become a member of the Union and for presuming thus to desire, and so to negotiate for, Mexico openly proclaims, assisted by British Gold, and savage vengeance, that she shall as a nation be extinguished. Can the U States; shall the people of the Valley of the Mississippi permit it? Forbid it Justice. Forbid it Heaven. People of Tennessee. People of the Great Valley of which Texas is a part; to the valley. It behoves you one and all to sustain Texan independence as you would your own. The Army which would invade Texas because free, would extend her inroads, if she dared, within the frontiers of the U states. Now is the time to meet these forces on the territory of Texas, and to renew the triumphs of San Jacento.

9. ANDREW JACKSON, HERMITAGE, NASHVILLE, TENN., TO MRS. ELIZABETH DONELSON.¹⁹
November 14, 1844.

I have the pleasure to assure you, from letters I received from New York and Cincinnati, that New York, Michigan, Indiana and Virginia have gone for Polk and Dallas by large majorities, and Polk is elected by a large majority. Providence was on our side, and shielded the Democracy from the vilest corruptions, combinations, bribery, and fraud, ever witnessed in any country, or clime—even here bribery and double voting stalked abroad, and men who stood too high to bribe for votes stand charged with this heinous offence—both against the laws of our country, and every principle of christianity. But enough a kind providence was on our side and we have succeeded.

I send you the within letter, that you may enquire amongst [sic] Major A. J. Donelsons paper for the receipt that Mr. Dawson alludes to. The Major told me he had closed his newspaper account, and I have no doubt where he did he took receipts. We all salute you.

10. ANDREW JACKSON TO MRS. ELIZABETH DONELSON,
November 26, 1844.

I have rec[eive]d from Col. Thos. Marshall a letter in which he begs to be kindly presented to you, and begs me to remind you of your promise in sending the Epitaph of my dear Mrs. Jackson.²⁰ If you will draw it off I will inclose it to him.

We learn that Governor Polk will be here tomorrow, and some friends with him from Nashville. Will you come over and dine with him? I learn Mrs. Polk will not be with him.

I am very unwell today. I received a letter from the Major, at New Orleans, he was in good health, and was to leave N. O. the next morning.

¹⁹The wife of Andrew J. Donelson.

²⁰The inscription upon Mrs. Jackson's tomb at the Hermitage.

11. ANDREW JACKSON, HERMITAGE, NASHVILLE, TENN., TO A. J. DONELSON, WASHINGTON, TEXAS, December 2, 1844.

Your letter from Galveston²¹ of the 11th has been received and now before me. By Mr. Rucker I wrote you who goes direct to Washington, enclosing you a letter from your dear Elisabeth, which I hope has reached you in safety, and has informed you that Polk and Dallas have been elected, getting 15 States and 170 votes Clay getting 104 electoral votes, by which our country is saved from corruption and misrule—our Republican System and glorious Union preserved. We lost Tennessee by the vilest corruption and fraudulent votes.

The Eastern Federal con Whiggs of Boston has since the election of Electors, endeavoured to corrupt the electors of South Carolina to cast their votes for Calhoun, reduce Polk and Dallas below a majority, throw the Election into Congress, when the Federalists of the East and North will unite and elect Calhoun. This Gadsden informs me, was rejected with that scorn and indignation that it merited. Col. Gadsden gives me an extract from the Boston letter without name, which I hope will be exposed in due time to the people, and its authors meet with that indignant frowns, that such corruption merits.

The glorious result of the presidential election has rejoiced every democratic bosom in the United States, and as to myself I can say in language of Simeon of old, "Let thy servant depart in peace, as I have seen the salvation of the liberty of my country and the perpetuity of our glorious Union. We now feel here that Tennessee is truly democratic altho we lost the State by 113 votes thro the vilest frauds. Col. Polk spent two nights with me. We had a full and free conversation upon all matters and things. He has the utmost friendship for you, and your interest, and wishes will be carried into effect as far as can be with propriety. I find he would like to have you near him. But he will have some difficulty in arranging his cabinet, but arrange it he will to have a unite, [*sic*] and no aspirant to the presidency in it. I need say nothing to you on the subject of your dear family, as I inclose you a letter from yr dear wife.

I have duly noted your remarks, as to the indications [*sic*] of the Texians to being reannexed to the United States. I would suppose that the declarations of Genl. Ferrel, minister to France, and Mr. Rily, minister to the U. States, are merely held out to induce the United States to grant them better terms; it cannot be that they believe that it is for the benefit and prosperity of Texas that it should remain independent of the U. States.²² If Texas does she will be a province of England in less than ten years and be involved in war with the United States. She will be inundated with emigrants from England, a majority of her voters, in two years will be foreigners, her government will be in their hands—the constitution changed, abolition of Slavery the result. Her american population will abandon Texas, and she will become worse than a colony of England, involved in constant conflict with the United States, until she is conquered by the United States, when a population again from this Union may reclaim, foster and perpetuate her republican principle as part of our confederacy. Surely Genl. Houston and her president elect sees these events as clearly as I do, for as sure as annexation

²¹Donelson had left New Orleans for Texas early in November. See *Polk-Donelson Letters*, pp. 61-2.

²²For the pressure exerted upon the Texas authorities by emissaries of Great Britain and France see Justin H. Smith, *The Annexation of Texas*, Chap. 18.

does not take place the american population now there will leave Texas, and return within our Union. Many in the last nine months has assured me of this. The safety, prosperity and greatness, both of Texas and the United States depends upon the whole limits of Louisiana, now Texas, being united. Polk being elected it is sure to be done Texas consenting, and that agreeable to the treaty of 1803, as ceded by France if the congress of Texas pass a law, demanding of right all those benefits secured to the people within the boundary of Louisiana as ceded by France. Congress of the U. States will at an early day of her now Session bring in a bill for the reannexation of Texas, and the voice of the people in their election of Polk has pronounced upon the subject and will pass. And you may assure my friend Genl. Houston, if annexation does not take place, Britain gains the ascendancy in Texas, and Texas and the United States will be plunged into a war against each other. England wants Texas, next Cuba, and then Oregon. The people of Texas are lost to their own interests, safety and prosperity, if they do not see and adopt a course that will secure their rights, their liberty, and prosperity forever, and it is only demagogues who are looking to their own aggrandizement, that will or can oppose this all important measure for the safety and prosperity of Texas—demagogues who expect to become a portion of the Gentry, and aristocracy of England and who wish to make the labourers of the country, hewers of wood and drawers of waters for the grandees of Texas, as they [*sic*] labourers of England are now for the grandees and aristocracy of England, Ireland, and Scotland, and the labourers of that country reduced to pauperism, Starvation, and want. These results I trust will be well wayed by the great mass of the new population of Texas and that they will decide wisely; and heart and mind, unite in being reannexed to the United States, and shut the door whilst they can from being governed by the emigrants from England, and Europe, as they are surely to be, in three years, as their constitution makes all citizens after ten months residence. And I repeat if Texas is not annexed to the United States a great many of these from the U. States will leave the country, and Texas will have to depend for emigration on the paupers of England sent there to control their republic, and make it worse than a colony of England.

I have been quite sick since you left me, and I had to use the lancet yesterday and of course am not in condition to write today. But give my kind regards to Genl. Houston and his family. Bring those things I have expressed to his view. How much more honorable to be a Senator representing a free and an enlightened people, than the president of a people, a mere colony of England, and fighting against the United States that gave them birth, to rivet the chains of despotism upon the only free people on earth. But my friend Genl. Houston has too much patriotism not to see the great benefit of being united with us, as one great state of our confederacy. I must close write me, and as I have received no answer to any of my letters wrote to Genl. Houston would be happy to hear from him, on all the subjects on which I have addressed him.

All your friends are well—your Whigg friends have long faces and are greatly depressed. The Whiggs, the betting Whiggs, are all broke, and the Glaves [?], etc., etc., with John Dismukes have lost all the horses and mules that they had, and more than they could spare.

With my best wishes for your success on your mission, your prosperity thro life, with the kind wishes of all my family, I remain your affectionate uncle.

12. W. B. LEWIS,²³ NASHVILLE, TENN., TO A. J. DONELSON, TEXAS,
Dec. 6, 1844.

Before Mr. Vanzant, Texan charge de affairs, left the city of Washington I put into his hands a claim upon the Texas Government amounting to some upwards of \$2200, and which Mr. Vanzant said he thought the Texan Congress would make some special provision to pay. Indeed he was kind enough to say that he would himself make application to that body to make an appropriation for its payment. This is a matter of some importance to me and, if you can aid him in getting it you will confer a very great favor by doing, as I am needing just now, all the money I can get. I beg you therefore to see and confer with Mr. Vanzant upon the subject, also my old friend Genl. Houston who knows all about the claim and will I doubt not aid in getting it paid. Indeed he long since ordered his Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Smith, to pay it, as you will see by the papers and documents in the hands of Mr. Vanzant. I spoke also to Genl. Henderson upon the subject before he left Washington, and he was good enough to say he would do all he could to have it paid.

The debt was contracted by the escort who accompanied Genl. Santa Anna to Washington City in the winter of 1836-37. Being out of funds they were under the necessity of obtaining a loan of \$1500, which they effected at the Metropolis Bank by giving myself and others as their endorsers, and which we had to pay. Our endorsements were based upon the faith of their Government whose honor we thought was involved in the matter, not doubting but it would release from our responsibilities as soon as the transaction should be made known to it. In this I was not *altogether* mistaken for President Houston like a man of honor, ordered its payment, as stated above, but unfortunately his *exchequer was empty*. Now this is but a small sum and can, I am sure be paid without any great inconvenience if the Government will only resolve to do so, as I think they ought and will. Do attend to this matter, my dear Major, for altho' the amount be small it is of importance to *me*, besides they *ought* to pay it.

I returned last evening from the Hermitage, and shall leave perhaps, in 24 hours for the City of Washington, as I am only waiting for a Steam Boat which is hourly expected. I left the good Old General as well as he has usually been for some time past, and exceedingly gratified at the election of Col Polk and the *defeat* of Mr. Clay, as you may well suppose. I was also at your house and have the pleasure to inform you that I found your wife and the children quite well with the exception of slight colds. . . .²⁴

When and where shall I have the pleasure of seeing you next? Will the situation of affairs in Texas admit your coming on to witness the Inauguration of Governor Polk? If not will you be at home next Spring, say in May or June? The situation of my private affairs will require me to be here about that time, and if I should not see you before, I hope we shall then meet each other once more at the Hermitage and find its illustrious inmate *living*, and in as good health as can be expected, from his advanced age and feeble and almost exhausted system.

Please present my kind regards to Genl Houston, for whom I cherish the warmest feelings of friendship, not forgetting Genl Henderson, Mr. Vanzant, and my young friend, Mr. Miller, the late Secretary of the Texan Legation. . . .²⁵

²³Jackson's friend of "kitchen cabinet" fame.

²⁴An omitted paragraph relates to Lewis's domestic affairs.

²⁵An omitted postscript relates to a business matter in Tennessee.

13. ANDREW JACKSON, HERMITAGE, NASHVILLE, TENN., TO MAJOR WM. B. LEWIS, WASHINGTON, D. C.

December 18, 1844.

I hope this will reach you enjoying good health, and that you found Mr. Pajout [*sic*]²⁶ and your dear daughter and little grandson in good health to whom I beg you to present to them our kind salutations and best wishes. I see that Congress is in session and that old wicked scamp J. Q. Adams has at the threshold introduced the firebrand of abolition.²⁷ When will the wickedness of this old disorganizer cease to distract Congress. I observe there are much speculation in the papers who are to compose the Cabinet of Col. Polk—and whether the present Cabinet are to remain. Believing as I do, that it would be both improper and unsafe for the Harmony of the counsils of the president that any aspirant to the presidency should compose his cabinet, will you, *confidentially*, gather from the leading politicians, who would meet and unite the wishes of the great body of the Democracy of the different States of our confederacy, and what effect it would produce by changing *entire* the present cabinet—you can from your own views, on your own information, and by consulting, *confidentially*, with my friend Mr. Blair, (to whom and family you will please present our kind regards, and say to him, I have received his kind and interesting letter, which I will answer soon) you can communicate to me very correctly views of the majority of the democracy of Congress—could Judge Wilkens of the war Department and Mason of the Navy, be consoled, and their states, by foreign missions if it becomes necessary to part with the whole cabinet, to prevent invidious distinctions—Col. Polk, as I believe, will not, nay cannot in safety to his administration of the Government on his own avowed principles retain the present cabinet. I wish your and Mr. Blair's views fully on this head—so much for politics. . . .²⁸

P. S. Confidential.

Judge Catron thinks it will be improper to change the present cabinet—I think differently. Col. Polk can never carry out his own principles with aspirants round him for the Presidency. *This I well know*, and that from experience.

14. DUFF GREEN,²⁹ WASHINGTON, TEXAS, TO MAJOR A. J. DONALDSON [*sic*], NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA. December 20, 1844.

Captain Elliot³⁰ arrived here last night. He promises that in case Texas will pledge herself against Annexation England will obtain the consent of Mexico for her Independence. He says that a friend of his direct from Lexington told him that Mr. Clay had said that Mr. Wright is to be Mr. Polk's Secretary of State. This argues that the Whigs and Benton will unite in favor of some proposition for annexation on terms that will be rejected by Texas, with a view to defeat annexation, intending to create an agitation on the tariff that will cause the next Presidential election to turn on the question of nullifi-

²⁶Pageot, son-in-law of Lewis.

²⁷See C. F. Adams (ed.), *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, Vol. 12, pp. 115-116. On December 3 Adams had moved and carried the repeal of Rule 25, against the reception of seditious petitions.

²⁸An omitted paragraph relates to the possibility of securing an office for T. J. Donelson, brother of Andrew Jackson, Jr., the adopted son of General Jackson.

²⁹The former editor of the *Telegraph*, connected by marriage with Calhoun, and one of his most zealous supporters.

³⁰Captain Charles Elliot, British consul in Texas.

cation believing that if they can get up that issue they will defeat Mr. Calhoun.³¹

I am apprehensive that Benton's project will prevail in the Senate, if so I hope it will be defeated in the House. There is nothing to fear in Texas by deferring the question until next year.

I have a letter from the Collectors in New Orleans which I will forward to Galveston with instructions to forward or retain as you may have given directions. Elliot can do nothing here. Make yourself easy as to his movements.

15. DUFF GREEN TO MAJOR [?] DONALDSON [*sic*], AT MR. LOCKHEART'S. Tuesday Morning.³²

From a rumor that reached me last night there is cause to apprehend that there is a wish to take advantage of your desire to adjust the matter between me and the President, and to extort some concession which may be used against me hereafter. You know that I have at all times disclaimed having at any time offered to bribe or to intimidate the President. That I have always said that I was acting, as I believed, with his approbation, and could have had no inducement to do either. This disclaimer I made to Mr. Allen, I made it to you, and I will always make it before the world. I learn that the President's friends are saying that he requires an admission that my language was susceptible of such a construction. I do not wish to throw any difficulties in the way of an adjustment if it can be made on terms mutually honorable to both, but I cannot make any concession that will in any way imply that I concede that anything I said was susceptible of the interpretation which the President has given to it.

That he may have misapprehended me I can and do admit. It is proper that in charity I should believe so, but further than this I cannot go. Further than this he should not expect me to go. I am the injured party, by accepting my disclaimer he admits that he has done me injustice—I do not say intentionally, because I am willing to believe that he acted under a misapprehension. To require of me a concession that would imply that there was, or might be, a doubt of my innocence would be to require me to admit myself guilty when he admits the belief of my innocence. You know me too well to suppose that I can be induced to do this, but in your anxiety to adjust this matter you may concede what may be very material under a belief that it is not so. Will you let me see you before you act further?

16. J[OHN] C. CALHOUN, WASHINGTON, TO A. J. DONELSON.

January 9, 1845.

I regret to learn by your's of the 26th Decr. that the cause to which you alluded should have taken you back to Galveston. The dispatch contained nothing but documents; the President's Message with the accompanying reports from the Departments. There has, indeed, been nothing of importance to communicate since the dispatch, which conveyed your appointment.

I am happy to inform you that the course you have pursued has met the entire approbation of the executive. The important points were to secure the confidence of the government of Texas and to

³¹An indication of the fact that Calhoun was already laying plans for the Democratic nomination in 1848.

³²The letter is undated and is inserted here merely for convenience of reference.

keep open the question of annexation, in both of which your efforts have been entirely successful.

That question is now under discussion in the House of Representatives, and by a judicious division of the question, the first vote will be on the naked question of annexing Texas, free from all details. I can hardly doubt but it will be carried by a large majority,³³ and if it should, that it will contribute much to its final success. But I fear the fate of the measure is very doubtful at this session; and that if it should fail *now*, there is great danger of its ultimate failure. That such a measure, at so favourable a moment for its accomplishment, should be seriously opposed is, indeed, wonderful, and can only be accounted for, to speak plainly, on the assumption that the spirit of faction and opposition to the South on the ground of slavery are stronger than the love of country. I regret to say that the assumption would embrace a portion of our party, not very numerous, indeed, but active, artful and incessant in their efforts. I fear nothing can conciliate them, and that they will agree to no terms but such as Texas will reject and the South and West will be compelled, in self-defense, to oppose.

This may be a dark picture, but I fear it will prove too true. But we must not despair, nor even show distrust. The discussion has been able and animated on our side. By keeping it up, and thereby [?] enlightening the people and rousing their feelings, combined with well timed and judicious concessions to weak friends, and sterner resistance and exposure of the motives of secret enemies, I trust it may yet be carried, during the present session. I rejoice to learn by your last letter that the Whigs of Louisiana begin to indicate a better disposition, and that there is hope that the Tennessee Senators may be brought to vote for it. It would be a great point and do much to ensure its success, I hope when I write next, I shall be able to present a more favourable state of things here.

I am instructed by the President to grant you the leave of absence you request, leaving it to you to decide at what time you can best leave consistently with the duties of your mission.³⁴ The duration is also left to your discretion, with the single condition that it will not be longer than the exigency which requires it may demand.

17. THOMAS H. BENTON, WASHINGTON CITY, TO A. J. DONELSON,
NEW ORLEANS, - January 10, 1845.

I am under great obligations to you for your kind letter from New Orleans, and hasten to reply to it. The real friends [*sic*] to the acquisition of Texas have a hard time of it between two parties one of whom is utterly hostile to the whole measure, and the other fatally bent upon using it for selfish and sinister purposes.³⁵ Every day gives birth to some new plan, but without a head to the government, congress can seldom do any thing. It is now a sort of *interregnum*, and considerate men expect nothing to be done except to lay a foundation for the new administration to act on. Mr. Jefferson in 1806, when proposing to acquire Florida, first obtained the sanction of congress, in a resolution and an appropriation of money, thus combining legislation and negotiation, which was eventually successful. Something of the same kind is now expected, and if a resolve is adopted in favor of annexation by treaty with Texas—another

³³See Smith, *The Annexation of Texas*, Chap. 16.

³⁴Donelson visited the United States in December.

³⁵The northern anti-slavery opposition and the Calhoun faction. To the latter Benton was a bitter enemy.

in favor of adjusting the boundary with Mexico—and an appropriation to carry them into effect—it is as much as I expect at this session. If such resolves are adopted you may have to treat with Texas, and I wish you every success in it.

I am glad to hear that my old friend President Houston is in favor of annexation: circumstances had induced me to suppose that he was indisposed to it; and the use of the word “spurn” applied by him to the rejections of previous applications by Texas for admission, had countenanced that idea. But you explain the policy which misled me; and he, and the new President Jones, both being favorable, and Polk sincerely so, I shall expect from you all a treaty which I can cordially support.

Mr. Polk's administration will have many difficulties to encounter. His administration is not to be, “sleep on a bed of roses.” Do not be surprised if you see two conventions in session for the dissolution of the Union before his four years are out. Massachusetts and South Carolina are each in a bad state, and each creating a bad feeling around them. It will require all the prudence and firmness of temperate, considerate, and disinterested men to get along safely for some years. Tariff, Texas, and Slavery are the three wedges with which two extreme parties are working to split the Union, and each of them are of a nature to enlist the feelings of many good men who abhor the results to which they may lead.

You will see that I have been reelected to the Senate. *I was not a candidate*; but left it to my friends to do what they thought was best for the country.

18. ANDREW JACKSON, HERMITAGE, NASHVILLE, TENN., TO MRS. ELISABETH DONELSON,
January 16, 1845.

I have waited all day to hear from your conclusion on your trip to New Orleans.

I wish to write Major Donelson and say to him my objections to your going.

1st. The many accidents lately to steam boats on the Mississippi, dangerous to passengers—many lives lost, and you having no one with you on such an event to take care of you and the child. 2nd The uncertainty of his being able to meet you at N Orleans as if the Texas question now under discussion should pass his whole time will be required at Texas to obtain her approval of the law passed by Congress, and if he would meet you at N. O. he might not have more than one or two days to stay with you. 3rd the difficulty [*sic*] from the low price of cotton to raise means, even to meet our pressing pecuniary matters, let alone trips of pleasure. 4th If Congress passes the reannexation resolutions and Texas approves, his present diplomatic mission ceases, and he will come home and be here by the 4th of March. These are my reasons for dissuading you from the trip at present as the Major will be able to join you here soon which will save the risque and expence of your trip to N. Orleans.

19. A. J. DONELSON, WASHINGTON, TEXAS, TO H. MC. LEOD,
January 21, 1845.

I have received your eloquent note referring to the interposition of my friend and relative Genl. Andrew Jackson in effecting your release from the prisons of Mexico. It will give me great pleasure to convey it to him, because it cannot fail to contribute to his happiness to know that his exertions in the sacred cause of humanity are so justly appreciated by those who were benefitted by them. I was present when he wrote his last letter to Genl. Santa Anna, in which

he made an appeal to him in behalf of all the prisoners in the Castle of Perote [a ?] Whether that letter had any agency in effecting the liberation of those prisoners, I have not learned: but there could have been no stronger appeal, none presenting in more fo[r]cible and delicate terms the necessity of such an act of clemency to shield the character of Genl. Santa Anna from imputations of indifference to the sanctions of enlightened and christian moderation in the exercise of power.

It gives me pleasure to say also in answer to your allusion to the active interest always manifested by Genl. Jackson in behalf of Texas that I had a letter from him a short time since in which he still expresses the same interest. He still looks upon the reannexation of Texas to the United States as a measure of vital importance to the security and happiness of both Republics, and one that the people ought not to allow to be defeated. He considers that the inhabitants of Texas are entitled to the benefits guaranteed to Louisiana by the Treaty with France of 1803, and that reannexation is but a restoration of former rights and a fulfilment of obligations which the Treaty of 1819 with Spain ought never to have disturbed.³⁶

But independent of, and above, these considerations, he regards the will of Texas, made free and national, by the valor and prowess of her own citizens, and declared in favor of annexation, as constituting an appeal to the United States which cannot be resisted. This position of Texas remedies the errors of the Treaty of 1819, reopens the door for the consummation of the pledges contained in the Treaty of 1803, and restores to the valley of the Mississippi its unity in surface, its population, government defence, and future security against foreign influence.

With these views the Genl. is still sanguine of the success of the measure of reannexation, and awaits with confidence the fulfilment of the popular wish in the United States by those charged with the administration of the Government.

20. ANDREW JACKSON, HERMITAGE, NASHVILLE, TENN., TO MAJOR WM. B. LEWIS, WASHINGTON, D. C., February 4, 1845.

The president elect spent the night of the 30th with me, and left me on the 31st January, and on the 1st [*sic*] left Nashville for Washington. Ever since he left me I have been endeavoring to snatch a moment to write you and my friend Mr. Blair, but I have been so beset with company that until this night I had not a moment of time for this object.

You may rely upon this, that Col. Polk will have none of the present Cabinet in his, nor no one who is aspiring to the succession, or whose name has been urged by any portion of the people for the Presi: unless a withdrawal in writing over their own signatures that they will not permit their names to be used as a candidate for the succession. *Under this special rule*, Mr. Buchanan may be brought into the cabinet and be made secretary of State.

The Cabinet, I suppose will be then: Mr. Buchanan sec[retary] of State, Mr. Flagg sec[retary] of the Treasury, Mr. Stevenson, secretary of war, and Mr. Bankeroft [*sic*] sec[retary] of the Navy. Mr. Walker attorney Genl. and a man from Tennessee Postmaster Genl. This man if he will accept it, I believe will be Cave Johnson. So much for the Cabinet.³⁷

³⁶This was Jackson's theory of the "reannexation."

³⁷If Polk was frank in his conversation with Jackson, it is evident that circumstances that developed after his arrival in Washington changed decidedly his plans. It will be noted that R. J. Walker, here assigned the Attorney-Generalship, in

Col. Polk will enter on his administration upon written rules, and will fearlessly carry out all his principles heretofore acted upon neither turning to the right or to the left. He will be governed by no cliques. You can shew, in strict confidence, this letter to my friend Mr. Blair *and to no one else*, and then burn it. Col. Polk goes on with the best feelings towards Mr. Blair and will have with him a frank and full conversation. I shew Col. Polk Mr. Blair letter inclosing me the confidential letter. The Col. observed when he had read them that he well understood all about it. The Col. has been assured by some one from the city that Benton would oppose his administration and that Mr. Blair would sustain Benton, and particularly on the Texas question. But I assured him this would not be the course of Mr. Blair, and Col. Polk does not believe a word of it. You will find Col. Polk right upon all matters, and will pursue an energetic course in his administration. Say to my friend Blair I will write him as soon as I am able and get free from company. In the mean time, please to thank him for the straight jacket he has put on John Q. Adams.³⁸ The old man must be deranged, or superannuated to make such notorious falsehoods, as he has in his speech on the Texas question, with regard to Slavery in 1825 and 27 in Texas and Mexico. I can write *now* no more I am exhausted. My dear Major how much I am indebted to you and Mr. Blair in protecting my character and fame. My gratitude to each is all I have to bestow. My whole family unites with me in kind salutations, your friend.

21. ANDREW JACKSON, HERMITAGE, NASHVILLE, TENN., TO A. J. DONELSON, TEXAS. February 10, 1845.

We have had great anxiety about you for some days. A letter from Capt. Eastland, giving the substance of one from Capt John. C. McLemore dated at Washington, Texas, the 9th of January assured us you were out of danger, and convalescent [*sic*]. The New Orleans papers, reiterating this grateful intelligence to us, we have sanguine hopes that you are perfectly recovered and this will reach you in New Orleans, where you will meet the gratefull intelligence, that the Representative Branch of Congress has passed the joint Resolutions for the reannexing Texas to the United States, which is now before the Senate where, letters of the 30th of Jan[ua]ry to me says it will pass, Col. Benton with all his powers sustaining them.

I have just received the inclosed letter from Mr. Van Buren. I enclose it to you for your information.³⁹ Our crop of cotton from here, was forced into the market, and 37,000 pounds of baled cotton netted us only \$1312. After paying our overseer, and drafts upon our cotton left us \$36 to pay our debts here. And our overseer below, a great scamp, managed to get all the proceeds of cotton there and left us in arrears with Genl. Planche and Co.—not much short of \$2000 [?] I name this to shew you that it is impossible for me to aid you. Our pecuniary matters are pressing me to death, and I am so low and afflicted and chooked [*sic*] with shortness of breath that it is with great labour I can wield my pen. We have put ten hands to wood cutting, if this does not relieve us, I am determined to sell the place below, with some of the negroes with it to clear us from

reality became Secretary of the Treasury, and that New York, which was unrepresented in the outline of the cabinet which Jackson makes in this letter, received the Secretaryship of War, to which post Polk appointed W. L. Marcy, thereby giving grievous offence to Van Buren.

³⁸See Blair's long editorial in the *Washington Globe*, January 20, 1845.

³⁹Jackson wrote the same day, February 10, to Van Buren.

debt. This Mr. A. Jackson Jr. is opposed to. He thinks it an independent fortune, and he thinks rightly, for so it is, if we were clear of debt. But whilst the grass grows the steed starves, and what would become of property *now* sold by the sheriff. This adage ought never to be lost sight of. The place is now, by a levy, two feet above high water, nearly secured from all freshets and \$1500 of more labour would free it from all freshetts and the timber on it is a fortune, each acre worth to the owner, at least \$100—in wood for the Boats. Still twelve dollars per acre for all the land will buy the place. This you may say to any solvent man who wishes to purchase. If I can sell, I am determined to be clear of debt. Our ten hands are cutting about one hundred cords of wood per week. This is making money, if we can sell, fast.

Your family all enjoy health, but are experiencing great anxiety about you. Let us hear from you. I send this under cover to Capt. Eastland, with directions to hand it to you, or give it a safe and speedy conveyance. I am truly exausted and remain,

22. A. J. DONELSON, FLORENCE [ALABAMA], TO GENL. ANDREW JACKSON.
March 9, 1845.

I reached here this evening, but was so unfortunate as to meet no stage from the south. From the state of the roads, and the quantity of rain which has fallen here today, I suppose that it is impossible for the mail to be carried in a stage, I must therefore either hire a horse or take a steam boat and go on immediately for New Orleans. Before starting I will advise you of my route.

As I left Nashville I received a letter which much surprised me, and which I would have shown to you if there had been any mode of conveying it. It is from Genl. Simon Cameron of Penna. proposing to start a new paper at Washington, as the Govt organ and to make me the editor.⁴⁰ He says he writes at the instance and request of Mr. Walker the Brother in law of the President—and after consultation with many other intimate personal friends of the President—adding also that he was applied to because of his known intimacy with Mr. Buchanan. Other remarks in the letter indicate a determination to start a new paper and that it is to be conducted as the organ of the administration, not in association with the *Globe*, but independent of it, if not in opposition to it.

Such a proposition, under existing circumstances coming from such a source, could not but surprise me, First—because if made with the knowledge of the President, it seems not to correspond with the disposition of my services communicated to me in our last interview—but secondly, and mainly—because it seems to be based on the fact that the support of the administration involves a reformation in the newspaper organ at Washington, or in other words a dismissal of the *Globe*.

In the latter point of view, if I have not mistaken the character and design of the proposed change, it becomes a subject of great public importance, and touches interests which are too vitally connected with the past relations of the Democratic party to be overlooked or disregarded. Before I could concur in such a proposition, I should have to be in possession of facts which have not yet reached me, shewing that the future course of the *Globe* will not be controlled by the true interests of the country and an anxious desire to justify the confidence of the Democratic party, so signally expressed by the election of Col. Polk. To assume that the *Globe* cannot longer be trusted,

⁴⁰On this matter see the letter of Polk to Donelson, March 28, 1845, in *Polk-Donelson Letters*, pp. 62-64; and *Heiss Papers*, Second Installment, Introduction.

implies that its past conduct has been wrong, a judgement which no information before me would authorise.

I do not mean to say that the course of the *Globe* has in no particular been faultless or might not in many instances have been different and produced happier effects on the organization of the Democratic party. But if I have understood its motives or its influence they were such as to command the respect of the country, and were powerfully instrumental in the atcheivement [*sic*] of the recent victory.

So believing I could not give my assent to a scheme calculated to withdraw the public support and confidence from that journal. I leave out of view in coming to this conclusion the personal considerations involved, whether they relate to my own pecuniary interests, or to the feelings natural to an old acquaintance with Mr. Blair and his family, which would forbid taking any step of the kind without first consulting them, and knowing that it was not calculated to do them an injury.

It may be that the proposition spoken of has not the sanction of President Polk—or if it has, that Mr. Blair has been consulted, and the apparent objections to it obviated. However the facts may be I have felt bound to advise him of the proposition and of the impression it has made on my mind.

Under any circumstances I should feel a great reluctance in undertaking such a trust as that contemplated by Genl. Cameron, and nothing but necessity could induce me to do so. The discharge of such a trust would require great labor, and I fear more talent and literary training than I possess.

I write this rather that you may know what is proposed on this subject, than to tell you what is my decision on it. Perhaps a suggestion from you, guarding the President against the dangers which will result from a hasty reorganization of the newspaper organ, may do good. Let me hear from you at New Orleans. Until I reach that place I shall not answer the letter.

I hear that Mr. Coffee and all friends here are well. I have seen as yet but few of them.

23. ANDREW JACKSON, HERMITAGE, NASHVILLE, TENN., to A. J. DONELSON, NEW ORLEANS. March 12, 1845.

Mr. Floyd Waggaman, nephew of president Tyler, and bearer of dispatches to you from our Government, has just left me. Mr. Waggaman proceeds on to New Orleans with the dispatches where he hopes to find you, and by whom I will send this letter.

I received your letter of the 7th instant, and wrote president Polk on the subject, inclosing your letter to me, and I have no doubt but it will be a pleasure to president Polk to gratify Genl. Houston by bestowing a clerkship on Mr. Miller the confidential friend of the Genl. and whose character and qualifications so well fit him for the appointment. I have said to Col. Polk, that he can thro you make known to Genl. Houston the pleasure it will afford him, in gratifying him by the appointment of Mr. Miller to such a clerkship as his qualifications entitle him, and which he may do with propriety.

Inclosed is a few lines for my friend Genl. Houston.⁴¹ The putting an end to all colonisation grants in Texas is so obvious for the interest of Texas, that I cannot refrain from bringing the subject to his view. Every foot of land not already granted to actual settlers in Texas

⁴¹Jackson's opinions on the policies of lands and currency are the more interesting in view of the important part which these matters played in his own administration as President of the United States.

should be carefully husbanded to pay their debt and then enrich their treasury, so as to provide funds for education, and the improvement of their State. Therefore all these colonisation grants should be by legislation closed, and laws allowing to all actual settlers a pre-emption right at the minimum price of her public lands, which ought [to] be as low as the minimum price in the U. States.

A three per cent stock receivable for her public land will soon redeem her debt, and bring immense ["stock" stricken out] sums of specie into Texas to buy up this scrip at par, to pay for land, the three percent interest will be an object with land buyers to lay up for the sales [?]. This plan adopted, and by their constitution, all Banks of paper issues positively prohibited, allowing no Banks to be established, but those based upon a specie basis, and positively limited to deposit and exchanges. This will free their State forever from the great curse of a depreciated paper, and her Legislature from being constantly annoyed by the speculators wanting to establish a paper credit system, so injurious to the morals, and great interests of the labouring classes. Genl. Houston has acted so noble a part, that I wish him to consummate the whole by these wholesome regulations for the benefit of his country. I hope all his influence will be used to close the colonisation grant to that scamp Mercer who is a Bankrupt, both in character and property and has not the means of taking one family to Texas.

I have been greatly afflicted since you left me and am now labouring under [—] ⁴² affliction, that I can scarcely wield the pen but could not forego the attempt by so favorable a conveyance. Write me on receipt of this—your family is well, and we have a high freshet in Cumberland.

With my prayers for your safety and success and a speedy return to your family, I remain your affectionate uncle.

P. S. Whilst in Texas if you could get a confidential man to examine the land. I took from Mr. Alsbury in discharge of the debt he owed me, and report the quality [of] the title—and its favorable or unfavorable locality, it would oblige me—I would willingly pay the expences—If the land is good the title secure, and its locality favorable, I might get something for it that would aid me out of my pecuniary liabilities,—now pressing hard—A. J.

24. SAM HOUSTON, MONTGOMERY, TEXAS, TO A. J. DONELSON, WASHINGTON, TEXAS,
April 3, 1845.

Your favor of yesterday came to me soon and safely.⁴³

I regret that it is out of my power go to Washington directly. It is my intention to be there during court. I am happy that matters are moving on quietly and hope that they will ultimate well for both countries. I fear that your President has assumed a wrong *basis* for the accomplishment of annexation. The law never would have passed in Congress, had it not been for the 3rd Section of the Bill. You will I apprehend find that negotiation thro' commissioners will be the only means by which the desired object can be attained and that all other means must fail. The present excitement will give place to inquiry, and that to reasoning on the matters, involved in the measure.

But as I hope soon to see you, I will not pretend to discant, on

⁴²A word illegible.

⁴³Donelson, upon the advice of Jackson, was acting on the belief that Houston, though no longer President of Texas, was still the most important factor in the negotiations as to annexation, hence the necessity of bringing over from the independent attitude which he had assumed.

the subject. It is of too vast magnitude to speak of or treat of in haste!!! It may be that the prosperity of Texas is to be ultimately advanced, by an equitable arrangement. But is most clear, that the salvation and future growth, prosperity, and safety of the States depend, upon the annexation of Texas to the Union. The Statesmen of the U. S. seem not to be impressed sufficiently with the importance of Texas, or they are opposed to the prosperity of their country. Of this we will discourse when we meet, which I hope will be soon.

Every thing which you write of the Great Chief, or your family interests me deeply. I regret that your lady could not visit Texas at this time, and that the indisposition of your little one, was the cause. I will be very happy if in May next you should, visit the U. S. as we hope to go, on at that time.

Before I see you, I intend to inform myself as well as possible on all the matters now astir. I have not had time to read, or to reread the resolutions, since I received your favors and *enclosures*.

May God bless you. Thine Truly

[P. S.] Please when you write home commend Mrs H. and myself to your Lady, the Old Chief, and Family. Thine

25. SAM HOUSTON, MONTGOMERY, TEXAS, TO A. J. DONELSON, WASHINGTON, TEXAS,
April 6, 1845.

I take pleasure in rendering you my thanks for your last favor. Had it not been for bad roads and high waters, I would have made an effort on yesterday to get to Washington. When I will get there I can't say. I fear that I will have to visit Madam and Sam before it will be in my power to see you, unless you could fall in this way. As to the propriety of the visit I can say nothing touching public affairs, but I will regret, that I cannot see you for some time. I cannot be at Washington previous to the 24th or 5th Instant. Notwithstanding my anxiety to see you, I would not for the world that my desires, should cause you to do any thing, which might, by misconception, cause you regret.

But for the rains I would certainly have had the pleasure to embrace you in this hour!

As to the Barbecue, it will not be in my power to attend it, and as you desire me, to say what I deem proper for you to do in the case, I can only [say], that unless you have a strong desire to be there, I would write a kind apology and make my official engagements an excuse for declining the invitation!

Since I last wrote you, I have reflected much on the terms, or basis of the proposed annexation, and I have come to the conclusion, that annexation can only be effected, by negotiation. It is plain and manifest, that without the amendment the Bill, or resolutions never would have passed the Senate! Then if Texas on the Basis of Browns Resolutions⁴⁴ were to accede, it is almost certain that she would be rejected, and thereby, utterly degraded, in the eyes of all nations. The boundary of Texas must be defined. It is insisted upon by some, that we will be "reannexed" as a part once of Louisiana. Now if this be true, the Rio Grande, was the boundary of the U. States Territory previous to the Treaty of 1819. The sentiments of the U States Congress indicates, a different, and more contracted boundary. I heard the most ardent friend of annexation that I know declare, that he would not consent to any terms, that would not admit the Rio Grande, as the boundary of Texas, and that negotiations would be proper, under the action of the U States Congress. I fear the U

⁴⁴The resolution of Milton Brown of Tennessee: Smith, *The Annexation of Texas*, p. 332.

States have made a false step, in proposing Browns resolutions. These are my private views, for I will not discuss matters in their present attitude. I wish matters to move on, in the appropriate channel of intercourse between nations! Diplomacy is [the] most wise, and suitable mode of settling, grave and important affairs between nations. Annexation is a subject of the most profound importance, and you may rely upon it my friend, that no mortal forecast, can embrace, one out of an hundred consequences, which are to result to this continent, and it[s] inhabitants, if it should [] consummated. Undoubtedly, it is more necessary to the U States, than it can be beneficial to Texas. I only desire if it is done that it may be accomplished upon fair, just, and honorable conditions, to both countries. I only intended to write you a note, and have written you a long letter—too long. Write often.

26. ANDREW JACKSON, HERMITAGE, NASHVILLE, TENN., TO A. J. DONELSON, WASHINGTON, TEXAS, May 24, 1845.

I received last night your affectionate letter of the 15th instant, with one enclosed for your dear Elisabeth, which I sent her forthwith and your kind letter of the 13th this morning. Your family was here yesterday—all well—but looking out for you hourly. I assured Elisabeth that you could not leave your mission before the Texan Congress acted upon the subject with which you was charged. I shall admonish her to be patient and await your return which will be the moment your honor and duty will permit.

I rejoice at the prudent course our mutual friend Genl. Houston has taken.⁴⁵ It is what I calculate he would take, and it is worthy of him, as a true patriot and friend to the rights of man and it will be profitable to him in any views hereafter for his own preferment. Be assured that Genl. Houston and his family will be received as he ought by the good citizens of Tennessee.

My dear Major, I rejoice that you will nobly execute your mission and Bring the lone star into our glorious Union. It will give you such a standing in our country that Col. Polk can yield to you such an appointment as will be both agreeable and profitable. This he is pledged to do and *will do* I had liked to have said, *must do*.

I have just received from Col. Polk a letter of the 12th instant handed to me by Mr. La Branche, which I enclose you. Mr. La Branch goes directly on to Texas and will hand you this letter, and I beg leave to introduce him to you as worthy of your confidence and attention. I need say no more I know to secure to Mr. La Branch your kind attention.

My dear Andrew, what may be my fate God only knows—I am greatly afflicted—suffer much, and it will be almost a miracle if I should survive my present attack. . . .⁴⁶ How far my God may think proper to bear me up under my weight of afflictions, he only knows [*sic*]. But my dear Major, live or die you have my blessing and prayers for your welfare and happiness in this world and that we may meet in a blissful immortality. Jackson is doing well at the academy. He will realise all our best wishes. My whole family children and all kindly salute you, your affectionate uncle.

27. A. J. DONELSON TO ANDREW JACKSON, May 28, 1845.

I sail tomorrow, but without any news from you or Elizabeth, of course I have a sad and afflicted heart.

Gen. Houston leaves here in a day or two for the Hermitage, with

⁴⁵Houston had now thrown his weight on the side of annexation.

⁴⁶Some details of General Jackson's illness are omitted.

his lady and son, and his friends Mr. Miller and Col. Elredge. You will find that the Genl. has redeemed his pledge to restore Texas to the Union whenever the door was opened by the United States, and reasonable terms were offered. He thought at first we might have negotiated on Mr. Walker's amendment, but when convinced that there was danger in delay, he has nobly advised the Government and the people to ratify the proposals offered by me, without dotting an i, or crossing a t.

You will find Mrs. Houston a most amiable, pious, and cultivated lady. When they arrive let Mrs. Donelson know it, to whom I have written requesting her to open her house to the Gen[era]l and suite.

I saw Genl. Planche this morning. He says he wants to spend the 4th of July with you, and will be ready to accompany me if I can get back from Texas in time. This I hope to do, and to be in New Orleans by the 25th of June.

I have a letter from Washington last night, promising me a dispatch by the next mail. Col. Polk wishes me to remain in Texas until the convention meets—but this I trust will not be insisted on, as after the acceptance of our proposals by Congress, nothing more of importance can be done by me.⁴⁷ Texas is very unhealthy on the sea coast—, and without a strong public necessity I wish not to be exposed to the causes of disease.

My great wish is to see you again. May Heaven bless the wish, and save your life yet longer for the good of our country, and the happiness of your friends and relations.

28. [A. J. DONELSON] NEW ORLEANS TO T. RITCHIE.⁴⁸

May 28, 1845.

Our friends here treated Houston kindly, having invited him, to a public dinner, and afforded him an opportunity by public speech to explain his course on the annexation question. He declines the dinner, but makes the speech this evening—after this he goes to Nashville by the first good conveyance.

He delivered a temperance speech yesterday evening, gratifying a large audience by an elocution and sentiment that would have commanded applause before the best critics. The truth is Houston is a reformed and improved man. Fortunately married to a lady of fine endowments, combining genuine religion with an amiable simplicity of manners, natural goodness of heart with a romantic taste he realizes in the connection those fruits so happily described by Fredrica Brehmer as the effect of a happy union of the sexes.

Chastised by deep affliction, and wonderfully preserved by Providence from the wreck which usually overtakes those who embark on a sea of wild adventure, Houston comes back to his native land with a renovated constitution, and a mind greatly enlarged. He seems determined to atone for the disappointment of his friends, when he exiled himself, and sought an asylum in the hospitality of old *King Folly*, by dedicating his future life to their service, as the able advocate of virtue, and the firm supporter of those great principles which form the basis of the Democratic party—There was never a man more popular than he now is with his countrymen—and this is no small compliment when we look at the trials he has encountered with them and the magnitude of the interests he managed for him. It was his policy and tact, maintained against all the obstacles, which

⁴⁷See letter of Polk to Donelson, *Polk-Donelson Letters*, pp. 66-67, in which Polk requested Donelson to continue his work until the convention had met.

⁴⁸The former editor of the *Richmond Enquirer*, now editor of the "organ" of Polk's administration, the *Washington Union*. This is a draft or retained copy.

envy and recklessness could throw in his way, that destroyed Santa Anna. So also was it his Will and judgement that saved the Republic in its civil administration from being torn to pieces by the spirit of reckless extravagance.

We should not be surpris'd then if he has sought for Texas better terms for its incorporation into our Union there are offered by our Joint Resolution should we blame him if he is less noisy than some others of his countrymen in welcoming the Union of the two republics. He was determined never to abandon the cause of annexation—And hence baffled every proposition to enter into alliances or Treaties with other powers, that would have created an interest adverse to Union with us. But he hoped for a better law than that passed by our Congress.

He did not understand as we did the composition of parties in the United States. He did not see that the British feeling, aiding the abolitionists and ever ready to sustain the influences adverse to the true theory of our system of government, might put it out of the power of the Democratic party to pass a better bill for Texas at the next session of Congress. Let us not blame him then for supposing that under Mr. Walkers amendment more satisfactory terms might have obtained.

It is enough for us to see that when informed of all the circumstances which bore upon the subject he made no opposition, and in reality has by the influence of his talents and counsels secured to the measure the almost unanimous vote of his country.

He has enemies that will be less charitable. I must confess that at one time that I was among those who feared he had meditated the establishment of an empire in Texas adverse to the United States. But now that the measure is safe, a calm examination of his acts, and the decisive aim he gave the measure, when the designs of Great Britain and Mexican folly develop'd [*sic*], I am satisfied that we cannot too much thank him.

During the whole of his administration he kept at bay all foreign influence: and though always tempted never once swerved from the road which led to the restoration of Texas to the Republican family. He goes to the Hermitage to carry to its venerable tenant the pleasing tidings of the attain[men]t [?] of all his hopes on this great question, and to pay him the homage which is due to him. Remember that Houston was once a private soldier, then a sergeant, then a lieutenant and in all the stages of his service he received instruction and friendly aid from Genl. Jackson. He even goes so far as to give Genl. Jackson the credit of the victory of the battle of St. [*sic*] Jacinto, saying that it was the result of the principles which he had seen illustrated at the Horse shoe, Emukfau, and Talegdega.

With such feelings and an admiration thus formed it is but natural he should wish to pay a visit to his early friend and benefactor before he sinks to the tomb; and I pray that the Almighty may bless his visit to the good of the country, and the happiness of the aged and infirm tenant of the Hermitage.⁴⁹

29. JOHN C. MCLEMORE,⁵⁰ SMITHLAND, TO MAJR. A. J. DONELSON.

Private.

August 24, 1845.

I arriv'd here last night from Nashville in the Steamer Sharon and regret I did not know you had pass'd up in the Canay fork,—had I have known you were on board, would have retur[ne]d with you to

⁴⁹A dramatic episode of this part of the career of Houston was his arrival at the Hermitage a few hours after General Jackson had died.

⁵⁰A relative of Andrew J. Donelson, much given to speculation.

Nashville—as I wish much to see you. I am indeed happy to hear of your safe return in good health. I saw by the papers you had gone to Aransas, with some of our troops, from which I inferred we should have a small brush with the Mexicans—but think it now likely we shall have nothing more than a bare declaration of war—no fighting.

You have nobly sustained yourself as our Minister—and mark now what I am about to say—which is in my humble opinion, more than probable—that if you continue to manage political matters with the same skill and ability—and to display the same talent you have throughout Genl Jackson's administration and since—and if you can keep yourself constantly in prominent positions before the nation—and should live—and commit no great political blunder—you will be nominated (if the Democrats should be in power as I trust they will)—and be elected President of the United States. think a moment and you will come to the same conclusion—Mr. Polk is pledged to go out of end of his four years, when Wright, Buchanon, Calhoun or Cass who all went for him will expect to fill his place. At the expiration of the four years after Polks time expires—we shall require another "Young Hickory" a son of Tennessee, to whom the sword presented by Tennessee to the old Hero was by him bequeathed in these words: "I bequeath to my well beloved Nephew Andrew J. Donelson etc., the elegant sword presented to me by the state of Tennessee with this injunction: that he fail not to use it when necessary in the support and protection of our glorious union, and the protection of the constitutional rights of our beloved country, should they ever be assailed by foreign enemies or domestic traitors." You will I know not fail to use it as above, and it is more than probable you will have occasion to use before the expiration of eight years—or whether there be an occasion or not we all know—you will always be ready when the occasion occurs to use it and these to your great talent which is acknowledged throughout the nation being the private secretary, relation and confidential friend of the old Hero—the writer of many of his most able state papers etc etc—can you be surprised if at the end of eight years you are nominated and elected President—upon who else that is qualified to fill the Presidential chair can the strength of the old Hero be concentrated as well as upon yourself—think of these suggestions and look up to the Presidency at the proper time. keep yourself before the public—go in for a high Mission.⁵¹ You are eminently qualified to fill the highest and deserve it at the hands of Polk. *Set your pigs [pegs?] for it at once*—put your southern and all your strong friends at work—concentrate your affairs at home—sell your Mississippi farm—and give up yourself to public life and my word for it in eight years you will have reached the highest destiny the world can bestow, the Presidency. I am serious and of course feel a deep interest for your success. And I beg of you strongly to reflect on these suggestions just made and shape your course accordingly. . . .⁵²

30. SAM HOUSTON, GALVESTON, TEXAS, TO A. J. DONELSON, NASHVILLE, TENN.
December 4, 1845.

You will please to excuse me for addressing you on the present occasion. It is presumed that so soon as annexation is completed, the

⁵¹Donelson was honored by Polk with the appointment to the Prussian mission. *Polk-Donelson Letters*, pp. 69-71.

⁵²The rest of this letter, which is of great length, is omitted, as it deals with private affairs, especially with McLemore's wish to receive Donelson's assistance in bettering his own fortunes.

U. S. Government will erect some Military establishment at this place, and that some corps will remain here. In the event that such should be the case it is the intention of our friend Doctor Robert H. Wynne to apply for a medical situation and it is his desire that his name should be laid before the proper Department and when the time may arrive, he will be further represented so that the Head of the War Dep[artmen]t may be well advised, and the President enabled to decide, upon the merits of the applicant.

I need not speak to you of Doct[or] Wynne, or his qualifications, as you have so long, as well as so recently known him, not only as a man, but a professional Gentleman. If my knowledge, can command any consideration, for the claims of Doct[or] Wynne, I can with pleasure state, that I have known him for more than twenty five years, when he was a student of medicine, and since, that time, I have known him as a professional man. If he can obtain a situation which would render him permanent here, he would with the aid of his private practice, procure for his family, which is large, and peculiarly interesting, a handsome living. Believing that you feel a proper interest in the welfare of the Doctor, and feeling a most ardent desire for his prosperity, I have thought it proper that the intimation should be made through you to the Head of the proper Department, as I have not the pleasure to claim his personal acquaintance.

31. SAM HOUSTON, GALVESTON, TEXAS, TO A. J. DONELSON, 'TULIP GROVE,
December 9, 1845.

Nothing but bustle [?], business, idleness, and laziness have prevented me from writing to you, and giving the chain of friendship a rub, to keep it bright.⁶³ Not that I deem it needful, but by way of increasing the chances of hearing from you, and your most estimable family. To us they are truly so, for I assure you that neither time, nor distance has, in the least abated our regard for them, nor have they ceased to be objects of affectionate admiration. Your absence caused us the only unhappiness, which we experienced at Tulip Grove, and that was sympathy, for Mrs Donelson, whose anxiety for your safety, and return, was immeasurably great. I feared for your return myself, or I would have left, the Cane which I intended for you, and will send it on by the first chance, so soon, as I return home, where it is now.

You are now remote enough in situation for the people here as well, as my self, to appreciate your conduct, and bearing while engaged here, in your important and manly duties, *manly*, for you rendered all your duties, *manly*, and noble.

Your bearing insured you success, for had you acted as others did, instead of having the people, and the honest patriotic portion of the community with you, you would have arrayed them against you, and raised a bother in the affairs of the two nations! Had you been a *two penny* fellow, such, as Gov Wickliff, or Commodore Stockton, you would have forfeited the respect of all but such as the clique of this place, and as it now is, you retain the respect, and regard of all but the Clique, and I have been told by very clever gentlemen, that *they* wish you at Old Nick. That this is so I have no doubt. Your ordering your trunk from "Davis free Tavern" was an act of open rebellion. Wickliff, and Stockton stood forth, in the first ranks, of his political menagerie! They were the "big beasts," and as for the small ones and monkeys, there was ready material at all times. Such men, such scoundrels, ought to be repudiated, or

⁶³An interesting verbal reminiscence of Houston's long residence among the Indians, with whom this was a favorite phrase.

abated as nuisances. Nothing but respect for the President Polk, has prevented the exposure of their conduct. Love you know is a most rabid Whig. and a great rascal. Well he is doing all in his power, to get a seat in the Senate of the U. S. He can't go it, unless the Representatives, deceive the people! My friends have urged me to permit my name to run for the Senate, and I have consented on certain conditions, and they are, that should my friends and the true friends of the country be satisfied that my services are of paramount importance in the Senate, to all others, and really necessary. I have agreed to serve, if elected. At the same time, I assure you if I were to pursue my individual inclinations I would not quit my home, for any other station on earth! If the votes of the State, or the people, had to elect a Senator, I would no doubt get two thirds of all the votes. I have given myself no trouble about the matter, for I really do not know who are the candidates, in three counties. I came here more than a month since to meet Mrs Houston, and family, and owing to the weather, and fear of exposing my family, I am here yet. Such a spell of weather, I have never seen in Texas before.

When will you come over to see us all? You will find the true friends of Texas, and annexation ready to render you all thanks, and possibly from interested motives, others may not openly say what they feel, but you may rest assured, at heart they will never cease to hate you! To countervail their hatred, you have the love, and esteem, of nine tenths of the solid, and people with you! [*sic*]

I suppose you have felt for me! Just think of the books and letters written against me!! Well it is true, I have—never read one of them, nor do I think, I ever will, so long as I have my senses. Occasionally to pester these rascals, I will let something be published, or about the time, that they are ready to enjoy a triumph, I write a letter, make a speech, or publish some letter, or “secret message,” and throw them all aback!!! In this way I amuse myself and harrass those, who love me not!

You will doubtless see, ere this reaches you that some letters, and a message have been published, which, will settle the subject of annexation. It[s] origin, and how it was to be managed, as I conceived! [*sic*]

I have taken no care, to justify myself, because, there is no necessity for justification, there being no truthful imputation brought against me. It is my duty to present truth with no other motive than that my country may have it before them, and in acting for the future welfare, and the public weal, take care that men who are not deserving may not obtain places, of either, honor or trust.

You will, with your knowledge of our affairs, judge correctly of the importance of my design. The most inveterate, Whigs, Nullifiers and Bank men while in the U States, are attempting to form a party, called “The Annexation Democratic Party.” This won't take, while I am in the way. Instead of calling the sentiment just expressed *egotism*, I wish you to regard it, as my secret conviction, which modesty induces me to repress!!! I cannot judge for the want of some more light what you are all at in the land of Uncle Sam. I hope such men, as you are will, on all occasions, and always, be as you have been, the sturdy friends of the people, not to amuse them with baubles, but, secure, to the industrious classes, a recompense, for their toil, and a reward for their thrift—I am more impressed of late with the dangers arising to free government, from monopolies, than, I have been at any former period, of my life. If I were asked for the most direct plan to destroy liberty, and estab-

lish monarchy, I would say "*encourage monopolies, and establish primogeniture.* They are the soul, of monarchy, and cannot long, remain seperate. They are in fact the essence of Despotism! The Federal powers as defined, are worth the union, but the moment that they cease to be, limited, to the objects for which they were designed, it will require a great political, if not a civil Revolution, to restore matters to a healthy Democratic State again. Write to me.

Mrs. Houston unites with me in sincere, and faithful regards, to yourself and family. In reply to Mrs H-s remarks, and mine, Sam says, "where is little Danny? I would be happy to see him." Salute all friends.⁵⁴

⁵⁴Endorsed, "Handed to me on the 22d Feb., 1846, by Capt. Eastland at New Orleans."

HISTORICAL NOTES AND NEWS.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE TENNESSEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY FOR MARCH, APRIL AND MAY, 1917.

At the March meeting Dr. J. H. Stevenson, of Vanderbilt University, delivered a lecture on "Modern Warfare in the Garden of Eden," in which he discussed the present British campaign in Mesopotamia. The speaker gave a very vivid description of the nature of the country and the character of the people of that section. He outlined some of the most interesting features of the diplomatic relations of the East and brought out the possibilities of the section under British control. At the April meeting Mr. Nathan Cohn read a paper on the Revolution in Russia. This address was in line with much of the present study of conditions in Europe. The speaker traced the liberal movement in Russia and concluded his address with a description of this greatest of revolutionary movements. At the final meeting of the year it was appropriate that the Society should have as its speaker Dr. Sioussat. His subject was "The Tennessee Bank of 1820." A strong contrast in the present methods of banking, as illustrated by the Farm Loan Bank, and the methods in vogue in Tennessee in 1820 and the previous years furnished the main theme of the discussion.

At the May meeting the following officers for the ensuing year were elected: President, Mr. John H. DeWitt; Vice-Presidents, Judge E. T. Sanford, Hon. Park Marshall, Judge J. P. Young, and Mrs. B. D. Bell; Recording Secretary, Irby R. Hudson; Assistant Recording Secretary, Mr. A. P. Foster; Corresponding Secretary, Mr. W. A. Provine, and Treasurer, Mr. Joseph Carels.

The Society has received the following donations during the past three months: The Hettie McEwen Flag given by Mr. Waldo McEwen; a copy of speeches delivered by Hon. John F. House, presented by Mr. A. B. Goodpasture; a copy of "Woodville," the first book of fiction published in Tennessee (1832), given by Mr. Robert Dyas; an ancient powder gourd presented by Mr. S. M. Young of Dixon Springs, and a picture of the house where Andrew Jackson was married, presented by Mr. A. G. Brandau.

The new members were: Mr. O. G. Boisseau, of Holden, Mo.; Mr. J. H. Smith and Mr. James P. Dale of Nashville.

IRBY ROLAND HUDSON,
Recording Secretary.

THE TENNESSEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1849
INCORPORATED 1875

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FORM OF LEGACY

"I give and bequeath to The Tennessee Historical Society
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JOHN STUART: SUPERINTENDENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT.*

By the treaty of Paris in 1763, England acquired more than mere territory—the valleys of the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi—for in this territory were powerful Indian tribes which had been directly or indirectly connected with the French. These two factors, the natives and the land with all its virgin wealth, had much to do with bringing about the readjustment of Great Britain's policy toward her American colonies which hastened the revolt of the latter.

In order to facilitate the management of Indian affairs and control western colonization, the new territory was divided into two districts, a northern and a southern, and a general superintendent appointed for each.¹ Owing to the fact that it included the older and more densely populated provinces and because of the importance of Sir William Johnson, who had long been a prosperous and prominent resident of New York, both the northern district and its superintendent have been given very careful study, the results of which occupy a large place in the books on this period of our history. But in many respects the southern district was of nearly equal importance with the northern district; it early claimed the attention not only of the colonial officials and speculators, but also of the

*A paper prepared in a graduate course in American history in Vanderbilt University, as part of the work for the degree of Master of Arts. It will be understood that Mr. Jackson has made use only of printed sources accessible in Nashville.—[Ed.]

¹In 1755 the home government took over the control of Indian affairs and appointed two superintendents for the different tribes. (Alvord, "Genesis of the Proclamation of 1763," in *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections*, XXXVI, 25.)

Sir William Johnson and Edmund Atkin became the first superintendents. After the death of Atkin and after the department of Indian affairs was reorganized in 1763, John Stuart was appointed to succeed Atkin in the southern district.

British ministry, and it came into prominence both as a cause of the Revolution and as an important factor in determining the results of it. However, the southern district and its superintendent, John Stuart, have received but little attention from students of history. It is with the hope of stimulating interest in this phase of our colonial history that this sketch of the life and activities of this little known but important official is written.

The first fifty years of Stuart's life are veiled in obscurity. In the ordinary records there appears but little more than the statement that he was born in England about 1700 and came with the early settlers to Georgia in 1733.² It is reasonable to infer, however, that during his first twenty years in America he not only received the training of an ordinary frontiersman, but that he was among the Indians a great deal and learned their ways and needs, because he is characterized, at the end of this period, as "An officer of great sagacity and address and much beloved by the Indians."³

During the Seven Years' War in America, Stuart was on the Southern frontier and among the Southern Indian as a captain of militia. From this time, the correspondence of Stuart and the contemporaneous records furnish ample information as to the activities of this man who had already spent half a lifetime in touch with the Indians, and who gave the closing years of his long existence in faithful service to the Indians and to the British government.

In the early years of the war with France, Stuart was with his company on the Southern frontier, and when Fort Loudon was completed (1756), this veteran frontiersman proceeded with his company to this post within the heart of the Cherokee country and was second in command of the garrison stationed there under Captain Demere. When Fort Loudon was forced to surrender (August 7, 1760), it was Captain Stuart who went to the Indian village near the fort and concluded with the Indians the terms of capitulation. In the treacherous massacre which followed the surrender, Stuart was saved by the intervention of his Indian friend, Chief Little Carpenter, and escorted by him safe to the Virginia border, where he was allowed to join the Virginia forces under Colonel Byrd. When this officer was in the following summer entrusted with the command of a large force composed of companies from Virginia and North Carolina sent against the Upper Cherokees, he made special request that Captain Stuart be permitted to accompany

²Appleton's *Cyclopedia of American Biography*, s. v., Stuart, John. Sabine, *Loyalists of the American Revolution*, Vol. II., pp. 242-243.

³Hewit, in Carroll's *Historical Collections*, Vol. I, p. 461.

the regiment as one of its officers, because of his knowledge of the Indians and their country.⁴

Though Captain Stuart remained in Virginia during the remainder of this war, he was identified with South Carolina, and his fellow-citizens from this colony, in recognition of his services at Fort Loudon, petitioned the British government and obtained for him in 1763 the sum of £1,500 and the appointment to the office of Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Southern District to succeed Edmund Atkin, appointed as the first superintendent in 1756, and also secured for him a seat in the South Carolina Council.⁵

The first important duty performed by Stuart as Superintendent of Indian Affairs was to arrange for a congress of all the southern tribes at Augusta, Georgia, where the chiefs were met by Governors Fauquier of Virginia, Dobbs of North Carolina, Boone of South Carolina, and Wright of Georgia. After the Treaty of Paris was ratified by England, February 10, 1763, King George directed the governors of the southern provinces with the newly-appointed Indian agent to meet the representatives of all the Southern Indians in order to relieve the Indians of the fear that since the French had been driven out of the Mississippi Valley, their own possession of this territory as homes and hunting grounds might be endangered. Another purpose of the congress was to assure the Indians of the good intentions of the English and to conclude with them a general treaty.

Stuart and the governors of Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina met at Charleston, October 4, 1763, and sent word to Governor Wright of Georgia that they were ready to proceed to Augusta hold the congress, but that it would be impracticable to go so far into the interior; therefore, they asked that the chiefs—already ordered to assemble at Augusta—be directed to come on to Dorchester or to Charlestown for the congress. Governor Wright considered the change unwise and unnecessary; and Stuart, who had now gone to Augusta, reported that the Indians had already come a long journey to reach Augusta and were unwilling to go further. After a month's delay, the governors proceeded to Augusta, and in a congress which lasted from the 5th to the 10th of November, 1763, they concluded a treaty with the chiefs of the Cherokees, Catawbas, Creeks, Chickasaws and Choctaws.

By this treaty Stuart and the governors, on behalf of the English government, promised protection and supplies to the

⁴H. R. McIlwaine (Ed.), *Journal of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1758-1761* [Draper MSS. 4ZZ, 31].

⁵Appleton's *Cyclopaedia of American Biography*.

Indians, and agreed to respect the rights of the Indians to their hunting grounds. The Indians promised safety to the English settlers and traders and friendship and loyalty to the British government.

The boundaries for the Catawbias and the Creeks was described as follows: "For the future the Boundary between the English Settlements and our Lands and Hunting Grounds shall be known and settled by a line extending up Savannah River to Little River and back to the Fork of Little River to the ends of the South Branch of Briar Creek and down that Branch to the main Stream of Ogeechee River, and down the main stream of that river just below the path leading from Mount Pleasant, and from thence in a line cross to Santa Savilla on the Matamaha River, and from thence to the southward as far as Georgia extends or may be extended to remain to be regulated agreeable to former Treaties and His Majesty's Royal Instructions."

Likewise the Catawbias agreed that their reservation should consist of a territory fifteen miles square which they were then occupying. The treaty closes with a repetition on the part of the Indians of the fact that all the lands south and east of the above-described line should forever belong to the English. The treaty was signed by Stuart, the four governors and twenty-one chiefs.⁶

Stuart's activities as Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Southern District fall naturally into two periods: First, the period of organization and development (1763-1774). Second, the period of Revolution (1775-1779). In the first period there were many factors with which he had to deal, and conflicting opinions and interests which made his work peculiarly difficult. These factors were the Indians, to whose interests, from first to last, Stuart seems to have been sincerely devoted; the individual settlers of the frontier, who were always coveting newer and richer lands beyond their borders; traders, both as individuals and representatives of companies, who wished to exploit the Indians; the separate colonies, each jealous for its power, and ever seeking to extend its authority and its borders westward; while last, and not least important, was the unsettled state of British politics, which prevented the formation of any final and permanent policy concerning the Indians and westward expansion.

Since the Indian agents had no control over British politics and could have but little influence in determining what should

⁶*North Carolina Colonial Records* (referred to hereafter as *N. C. C. R.*) Vol. XI, pp. 156-205. [British Public Records Office, S. C., Vol. XX, M. 92.]

be the policy adopted as to the development of the West and the management of the Indian trade, the consideration of the various complications and suggested plans does not properly belong in this sketch.⁷ In the British Ministry there were two main factions, with reference to the Western Colonial policy, which may be designated respectively as imperialists and anti-imperialists. The latter party sought to secure for the existing colonies the authority to control and the right to exploit the Western Territory. The former, which stood for retaining in the Home Government the control of the West and the regulation of Indian affairs, triumphed in the early period when it succeeded in carrying through the measures incorporated in the Proclamation of October 7th, 1763. This Proclamation limited the established provinces to the territory east of the Appalachian divide. The territory acquired by the Treaty of Paris was divided into five parts. Four of these divisions, namely, the territory reserved for the Indians, and Quebec, East Florida and West Florida, were formed from Canada and the Mississippi Valley; the other division, Granada, lay outside the continent and is not directly connected with our subject. The territory reserved to the Indians for their homes and hunting grounds included the territory bounded on the south by the thirty-first parallel, on the east by the Appalachian mountains and Quebec (forty-fifth meridian), on the north by the territory of the Hudson Bay Company, and on the West by the Mississippi River.⁸ The authority to make purchases from the Indians within this reservation was to be entirely in the hands of the home government. Freedom of trade was permitted to those who would obtain license from the governor of the colonies within which they resided. The duty of enforcing these regulations was given to the military commanders and the Superintendents of Indian Affairs.

During the year following the issuance of the Proclamation. Hillsborough, who was then President of the Board of Trade, and was appointed the first Colonial Secretary in January, 1768, outlined an elaborate plan for the use of the Indian Agents. The British territory was divided into two districts, north and south, by the Ohio River. The superintendents of the two districts were to have full power to regulate trade, make

⁷Those who are interested in studying the subject further will find a full and scholarly treatment in—

(1) C. E. Carter, *Great Britain and the Illinois Country* (1908).

(2) C. W. Alvord, *Mississippi Valley in British Politics* (1917).

⁸(1) Macdonald, *Select Charters and Other Documents* (1606-1775), pp. 267-272. (2) Alvord, *Genesis of the Proclamation of 1763*.

(3) Alvord, *Mississippi Valley in British Politics*, Vol. I, ch. 6-7.

treaties, etc., without outside interference. They were to be assisted by three deputies, and at each post a commissary, an interpreter and a smith. The commissary was to have the powers of a Justice to pronounce sentence subject to appeal to the Superintendent.⁹ The regulations concerning the purchase of Indian lands and trading rights had been fixed by the earlier Proclamation.

The Hillsborough, or Grenville-Bedford, plan was never approved by Parliament and was only partially carried out by the superintendents. The superintendent of the Southern District was the first to attempt to inaugurate the new scheme. He received a copy of the plan in 1764 and proceeded to select commissaries¹⁰ for the various Indian tribes. However, he appointed at this time only one deputy, his brother Charles Stuart, who resided in West Florida.¹¹ During the remainder of 1764 and 1765 Stuart was engaged in the task of reducing the chaotic conditions to some kind of order. He sent broadcast among the traders printed copies of instructions, held conferences with the Indians, and secured treaties containing concessions of land and promises from the Indians and gave to them assurances of the favor and good faith of the British government toward them.

Much of Stuart's time—though his headquarters were at Charlestown—was spent in the two Floridas with Governor Grant and Governor Johnstone, assisting them in the organization of the new provinces, making peace with the four neighboring tribes, and ascertaining the boundary lines between the surrounding tribes and these provinces.¹² At Mobile, March 26th to April 4th, 1765, the superintendent and Governor Johnstone held a congress with the Chickasaws and Choctaws, and at the close of the congress a treaty was signed by the superintendent and the chiefs.¹³ A similar congress was held with

⁹*Canadian Archives, Report, 1904, p. 244, cited in Carter, Great Britain and the Illinois Country, pp. 16-17, 80.*

¹⁰The commissaries were as follows: John McIntosh for the Chickasaws; Elias Legarden for the Choctaws; Alexander Cameron for the Cherokees; Roderick McIntosh for the Upper Creeks; and Charles Taylor for the Tribes on the Mississippi.—Lansdown MSS., Vol. VII. (Quoted in Alvord's *Mississippi Valley in British Politics*, Vol. I, footnote 508.)

¹¹Alvord, *Mississippi Valley in British Politics*, Vol. I, p. 289.

¹²Stuart to Tryon, Feb. 5th, 1766. *N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, pp. 164-165. (*B. P. R. O.*, Am. & W. Ind., Vol. 269.)

¹³Concerning the congresses and his work in the Floridas, Stuart write: "Our endeavours were crowned with success, having obtained several concessions of land, and in a great measure effaced the bad impression left on the minds of the Savages by the insinuations of the French." (Report of Stuart and Johnstone, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, Vol. I, pp. 215-249.)

the Creeks and Catawbas at Pensacola from Sunday, May 26th, to June 4th, 1765; it was concluded with a treaty similar to that of the Mobile congress. These treaties fixed the boundaries between the Floridas and Georgia on the one side and the Indian tribes on the other. They also gave expressions of friendship and loyalty on the part of the Indians and of good will and protection on the part of the superintendent and governors.¹⁴

While the superintendent was busy treating with the tribes in the South, the Cherokees were becoming more restless because of the influence of the conspiracy among the Northern Indians and because of some other events which occurred about this time. Some discontentment was caused by the fact that Stuart repeatedly declined to grant the frequent requests of certain Cherokees who wished to visit England. A greater cause of trouble is related in a letter of Colonel Lewis to Governor Fauquier which is dated Augusta County, May 9th, 1765. The story narrated in the letter is that a party of Cherokees were going to Winchester to proceed thence to fight with the Indians on the upper Ohio. They had been given passes, but while they were encamped in an out-house on the plantation of John Anderson, near Staunton, they were attacked by twenty or thirty "villianous, bloody-minded wretches," who killed the two chiefs and four others and wounded two more.¹⁵

Writing to John Pownall in August of the same year, Stuart mentions the above incident together with other causes of disaffection among the Indians as follows: "To the Northward the Province of North Carolina granted lands as far back as the Mts. and deprived the Indians of the Lower Cherokee Towns of the most valuable part of their hunting grounds. In May (1765), some Cherokees being among the Settlements of Virginia with friendly intentions were set upon by a party of the

¹⁴*Mississippi Provincial Archives*, Vol. I, pp. 211ff.

In this report an account is given of the unsettled state of the Indians when they came among them, but hope is expressed that conditions may be better since the treaties have been made. However, the thought is expressed that it may be necessary to starve or whip the Indians into submission; and if the latter course must be resorted to, all the traders from the different colonies should be withdrawn at the same time, and a concerted attack made against the Indians in order to subdue them as had been done in the case of the Cherokees.

The report concludes with the statement that "The greatest Indian leaders whose influence threatens the British are Pondiac of the north; The Mortar, Chief of the Creeks; and Old Alabama Mingo, Chief of the Choctaws. They are endeavouring to get the tribes to unite against the English—their common enemy.

¹⁵*Journal of the House of Burgesses of Virginia (1661-1765)*, p. 20. (Bancroft Transcripts, Library of Congress.)

inhabitants and five of them were killed and some of those who escaped were wounded, of which they died after the return to their towns." Mr. Cameron and Ensign Price, the commander at Fort Prince George, could hardly keep down a massacre to avenge the wrong. The encroachment on Indian lands is given as a very great cause of trouble. Trade among all the tribes was at this time in confusion because South Carolina and Georgia would not observe the regulations agreed to in West Florida. Importation of rum from South Carolina had been complained of in a communication to Governor Bull. Lastly, Governor Bull had negotiated with the Cherokees concerning the boundary without consulting Stuart.¹⁶

A few months after the murder of the Cherokees in Virginia, and as a result of that crime, Boyd, a Virginia trader, was murdered near the Cherokee towns by some Indians, and his body thrown into a stream.¹⁷ Cameron, who arrived at the Cherokee towns, May 25th, 1766, and assumed his duties as commissary, after an investigation, confirmed the report as to the murder of Boyd and his two companions, Fields and Burk. It was his conclusion that the Cherokees committed the murder, being prompted to do so by the grudge which they bore the Virginians for the murder of their kinsmen. However, the Cherokees denied, to a man, having any hand in it, and Cameron was not able to cause the conviction and punishment of any one for the murder.¹⁸

This first report of Cameron to Stuart throws light on the attitude toward the English and of the relations existing between them and the traders and settlers at this time. For this reason a part of it is given here: "The Little Carpenter's

¹⁶Stuart to Pownall, Charlestown, Aug. 24, 1765. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, pp. 108-112. (*B. P. R. O.*, Am. & W. Ind., Vol. 269.)

¹⁷Ramsey, *Tennessee*, p. 143. Ramsey's statement is that Andrew Greer of the Watauga settlement, while trading among the Cherokees, gained a suspicion that some harm was being plotted against him and returned by other than the ordinary trail up the Nollichucky Trace to Watauga. Boyd and Doggett, who had been sent out by Virginia, traveling on the path which Greer had left, were met by the Indians near a creek, were killed by them and their bodies thrown into the water. This creek is said to be in Sevier County, Tennessee, and has ever since been known as Boyd's Creek. A watch with Boyd's name engraved on the case, and other articles were afterwards found in the creek.

¹⁸Ramsey's charge seems unfair to Stuart and Cameron, when he says that "This (murder) was the commencement of the Cherokee hostilities, and was believed to be instigated by agents of the British government" (meaning Cameron and Stuart). (*Ramsey, Annals*, p. 143.) Though this statement is true when applied, not to those earlier hostilities, but to the greater outbreak of the Indians in 1776-1777.

brother brought in a scalp two days ago, another was brought in by a party off the Great Island, and two more to Chuoee above Chilhoee. It is shocking to express the tearing, cheating and horse-stealing that have been committed among the Indians by the traders and pack-horsemen last winter in this Nation. Various and numerous are the complaints made to me against them, but I was too late to redress them; it is no wonder the Cherokees should withdraw their affections from us when we allow such villains to trade or reside amongst them. The Indians seemed extremely satisfied with the appearance of Mr. Ross, who arrived here a few days since from Virginia. He is Factor to the Public Trade to be carried on by that Colony with the Cherokees. He made them a proposal of settling a store fortified with stockade on Long Island on the Holston. They replied that his talk was very good and agreeable to them, but that they would not allow any store to be fixed¹⁹ for the following reasons: that that was their last hunting ground, and that their young fellows might steal some of their horses and kill their cows, and that the white people would be for taking some satisfaction; that the issue of this would be their breaking out in open rupture.

"The Assembly of Virginia has voted £30,000 (South Carolina currency) for the support of this trade, and to continue for seven years. It seems that their views are not to make money, but to supply the Indians on the cheapest terms possible.²⁰ Mr. Ross promises to send ammunition in a couple of moons if the Norwards permit, and intends carrying all his goods by water. He sets off tomorrow for Keowee, thence about to Virginia, as the path this way is very dangerous."²¹

These letters and reports reveal the fact that the Indians more and more were coming to dislike and to distrust their white "brothers" as a result of the treatment they were receiving at the hands of the latter; therefore, the difficulties of Stuart's task increased from week to week as he stood as the mediator between his Indian wards and his own countrymen

¹⁹Later the Indians agreed to have Ross's store at Chiswell from which point traders might be sent to them. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, p. 217.)

²⁰Stuart objected to the Virginia plain of trading with the Indians without profit on the grounds that all the Indians would expect this of the provinces, and those in the South were not able to do this. Stuart suggested that Virginia's reason for making the offer was to appease the wrath of the Indians for the murder of the Cherokees in Augusta County the previous year. (Stuart to the Board of Trade, July 10, 1766.—*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, pp. 232-240; *B. P. R. O., Am. & W. Ind.*, Vol. 270).

²¹Cameron to Stuart, June 1, 1766. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, pp. 215-216; *B. P. R. O., Am. & W. Ind.*, Vol. 269.)

who sought to debauch and to defraud them. As the reports from the interior came to Stuart's headquarters at Charleston, the crisis became more evident to him. The Southern Indians had not only refused to take any part in the conspiracy of Pontiac, but in the latter period of the conflict they had given valuable aid, especially by helping the Thirty-fourth Regiment in its ascent, in 1765, up the Mississippi to the Illinois country. The Chickasaws and Choctaws kept hostile tribes from hindering the ascent of the regiment and furnished the troops with buffalo, bear and venison. The Cherokees proceeded north of the Ohio and rendered valuable service by holding the French and Indians in check while the regiment was establishing itself in the Illinois forts. However, the attitude of the Indians during the following year had greatly changed, since through shortsightedness and a policy of economy, the supply of presents had been diminished and since the trade with the Indians was so disorganized and so dishonest. Therefore, Stuart recommended that the British officials encourage the continuance of the strife between the Northern and the Southern Indians, and also advised that the Chickasaws be kept in a state of war with the Creeks as a means of keeping the latter so engaged that they could not make trouble for the English.²²

Earlier in the year Stuart, in a report to the Board of Trade, made the following statements: "The Creeks since the Congress at Pensacola [June 4th, 1765] have been insolent and suspicious. Their Messengers and Emissaries have been through all the great tribes sounding their inclinations to a general rupture. They have been insolent to the new Settlers in West Florida, and one John Kemp was murdered by them near Pensacola. The reasons for this given by the Creeks are:

"(1) Our supplying arms and ammunition and other necessities to the Indians of the new-ceded territory as well as to the Choctaws and other small tribes on the Mississippi.

"(2) That the English had sent arms and ammunition to the Chickasaws to get them to join with the Choctaws against them (the Creeks).

"(3) Creek chiefs on their way to treat with the Choctaws had been ambushed.

"(4) The English set the Indians to fighting each other.

"(5) That they received a message from Cornelius Doharty, a leader in the Cherokee Nation, with a roll of tobacco and a white wing by a Cherokee warrior, acquainting them that the

²²Stuart to the Board of Trade, Dec. 2, 1766. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, pp. 279-283; *B. P. R. O.*, A. & W. Ind., Vol. 270.)

intent of the English in taking possession of Pensacola and the new-ceded countries was first to lull them into a state of supineness and security and afterwards to destroy them and take their lands; that as a friend he gave them this timely notice and was ready to supply them with arms and ammunition.

“(6) That the prices were not lowered as demanded by them at Pensacola on which last article they greatly insisted.”²³

In a report to Hillsborough written two years later, Stuart gives causes for the bad disposition of the Indians towards the English, and lays the blame on the latter. This report suggested many of the difficulties to be overcome by the superintendent; because of its special significance it is incorporated in this paper: “In my letter which I had the honor of writing your lordship the 15th of September, I mentioned my intention of visiting the boundary line; accordingly after having finished with the Cherokees I set out upon the service accompanied by some Indians and rode along that part of it which divides this province from the lands reserved by the Indians. It is marked at least 50 feet wide, the trees within which space are blazed on both sides. The country near the line is very full of inhabitants—mostly emigrants from the North Colonies. It is remarkable that in going hence to the frontiers I rode at times 30 or 40 mi. without seeing a house or hut, yet near the Boundary that Country is full of Inhabitants which in my memory was considered by the Indians as their best hunting Ground, such is the rage for settling far back. The people inhabiting the Frontiers of this Province carry on a trade with the Indians by bartering rum for Horses, the Chiefs complained of this as the source of many disorders, their young men being thereby encouraged to steal horses from the neighboring Provinces, besides the danger of committing outrages when intoxicated which may involve their Nation in trouble. These back settlements pay little or no head to law or government of which I beg leave to give your Lordship an instance. One Mr. Summerhall who had formerly been in the Commission of the Peace by which means he became obnoxious to the neighbors was about a year ago taken out of his house by some who having stripped and tied him to a tree opposite to his own door, whipped him severely, upon which he commenced a prosecution against them when the Term approached they again seized and chained him to a post. He had been seven days in this position when his wife came and implored my assistance. I applied to a person who chose to attend the Congress

²³Stuart to Board of Trade, July 10, 1766. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, pp. 232-240; *B. P. R. O.*, Am. & W. Ind., Vol. 270.)

with the Cherokees who I understood to be a Captain of Militia and prevailed upon him to go and rescue Mr. Summerhall which he effected. . . .²⁴

"In Georgia I found it still worse. People violently seized the Indian's horses in open daylight. The Magistrates were remiss in doing their doing. I was obliged to send some persons who attended me to recover them by Force altho I had no authority. The Indians detest the back Inhabitants of these Provinces which will account for the reluctancy with which they give up any part of their Lands, being anxious to keep such neighbors at a distance. I beg leave further to observe to your Lordship that the Congress being unattended by any of the Militia and there being no Patroles or Guard any where in the Country through which such numbers of Indians passed, had such an air of supineness and insecurity as might have encouraged the Indians to execute their bad intentions had they been possessed of any."²⁵

During these years of organizing and mediating and of vain attempts to hold in proper relation and check the various conflicting elements with which he had to deal, Stuart lacked authority and was not given proper respect and consideration by the Provincial authorities, and could not enforce the regulations necessary to his plans for protecting the interests of the Indians and for developing the trade and resources of the western territory. Especially was it true that the Governor of Virginia and the land speculators of that colony were disposed to disregard the authority of Stuart as the Superintendent of Indian Affairs.²⁶ Much had been accomplished during the

²⁴This same spirit of lawlessness and rebellion against the authority of the Indian Agents is indicated by a letter to Stuart written by a back-settler:

"Horse Creek, Nov. 10, 1768.

Sir, To inform you of illdisposed people. There is one Laurence Rambo being on Noth Creek has boldly said and published that he should think no more of you than my self for he would have you taken and whipped as soon as any other Man and shackle you had you offered to give out any authority to had them taken for false imprisonment they used me with (.) What are you he says nothing but an old Cherokee Agent and indeed thinks your honor ought to be taken and whipped and your goods taken from you and as you are a giving to the damned Indians to kill the Back Woods People. Pray dont think this ill of my acquainting your Honor of the poor insipid fools but to inform you the ill that is in some people and vulgar discourse without Fear or Wit.

So no more at present but wishes your Honor Well and Humble
Servant to Command.

JACOB SOMMERHALL."

²⁵Stuart to Hillsborough Charlestown, Jan. 3, 1769. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, pp. 1-3; *B. P. R. O., Am. & W. Ind.*, Vol. 273.)

²⁶Stuart to Fauquier, Nov. 24, 1766. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, pp. 267-271; *B. P. R. O., Am. & W. Ind.*, Vol. 260.)

first five years that Stuart was superintendent, but the system needed improving, as the following report to Hillsborough makes evident:

“I have the honor of laying before your Lordship the arrangements which I humbly conceive to be necessary for conducting the business of the Department, which His Majesty has been graciously pleased to commit to my care:

“That two deputies be constantly employed, one of whom to reside in West Florida to manage the affairs of the Choctaws and Chickasaws and small Nations on the Mississippi; the other to assist the superintendent in transacting the business with the Creeks, Cherokees and Catawbias.

“That these deputies shall be ready upon all occasions to go upon any extraordinary duty when ordered; and that the ordinary duties of their office shall be to visit the Indian Nations and to report upon situations, with regard to each other and their disposition toward us; to learn their designs and to hear their complaints and grievances, as well as to demand satisfaction and to obtain redress for insults and irregularities committed by the Indians.

“That an intelligent person be retained in each Nation who shall understand the language of such Nation so as to serve occasionally as interpreter to deliver messages sent to, and receive messages from the Indians; and that such person shall not be hindered to trade, and shall have a small annual salary, and be allowed extraordinary pay when required to attend any great meeting when attending the deputies or sent upon any extraordinary duty.

“That an interpreter of the Choctaw and Chickasaw languages be established at Mobile, at a certain allowance, who shall act under the direction of the deputy there and attend him upon all occasions.

“I shall accordingly retain such officers to be paid out of the sum provided by estimate till his Majesty's pleasure can be known.

“I also humbly submit to your Lordship if it may not be necessary for his Majesty's service, that the traders be instructed by the respective governors to attend the superintendency when summoned to any general meeting of, or interview with the Indians of the particular Nations in which they trade. That there are now no Posts garrisoned with his Majesty's forces in the Indian Countries, or on the frontiers of any Province within this District, an escort or guard of the militia of such province where the Superintendent shall happen to be may be ordered to attend any Congress or Meeting with the

Indians, to be held therein for any of the purposes enumerated in the Report of the Lord's Commissioners of Trade.

"That upon complaint from any Indian Nation of encroachments on their lands, irregularities or abuses committed by the back Inhabitants, or by the Traders, the Superintendent may be instructed to whom he is to represent such complaint in order to obtain redress immediately without troubling your Lordship.

"I beg leave to submit to your Lordship if it may not be proper to ascertain the jurisdiction that shall henceforth be exercised by the respective Governors beyond the boundary line that may be ratified."²⁶a.

Soon after the above plan was submitted to Hillsborough, Stuart made an additional request that the superintendents be given rank corresponding to the dignity and responsibility of their positions.²⁷ He also petitioned that he be appointed as "extra Member of the several Councils in the District for which he acts," since this would be "very useful and advantageous for his Majesty's Service, for by his Majesty's instructions he is to confer and consult upon many matters with the Governors of the Provinces and their Council which will be much more effectually done when he can attend personally than by letters, as he will thereby have an opportunity of clearing up many occurrences which otherwise might appear dark and intricate, and as he must be supposed to be better acquainted with the Indian affairs from his station, his presence will be very useful in framing any Provincial Law or Regulation respecting the local and immediate concerns of any particular Province; it will likewise give the Superintendent a respectable Rank in the Community."²⁸

To this request Hillsborough replied that he was "not without apprehensions that the giving of any particular Rank to the office of Superintendent, more especially in the Military line, will be attended with insurmountable difficulties and objections." However, he promised to present to the Board of Trade that part of the petition which pertained to the appointment as an extra member of the Provincial Councils.²⁹

On January 5th, 1770, the Lord's Commissioners of Trade

²⁶a Stuart to Hillsborough, Sept. 15, 1768. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, pp. 839-840; *B. P. R. O.*, Am. & W. Ind., Vol. 272.)

²⁷Stuart to Hillsborough, Jan. 3, 1769. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 2-3; *B. P. R. O.*, Am. & W. Ind., Vol. 273.)

²⁸Stuart to Hillsborough, July 30, 1769. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VIII, p. 62; *B. P. R. O.*, Am. & W. Ind., Vol. 273.)

²⁹Hillsborough to Stuart, March 24, 1769. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VIII, p. 21; *B. P. R. O.*, Am. & W. Ind., Vol. 273.)

recommended to the King that he appoint Stuart as an ex officio member of the Councils of the Provinces of his District. The King made the appointment, restraining the Indian Agent, however, from serving as a Judge or as in charge of the government which might otherwise become his privilege as a member of the Councils.³⁰ Stuart took the oath as member of the Georgia Council (October 23, 1772),³¹ and it is probable that he also assumed the duties as member of the Councils in other Provinces, but the records do not show that he ever attended the meetings of the Councils of Virginia and North Carolina, and it is not probable that he ever visited the capitals of these Provinces.

In spite of the increased authority and the more complete organization of the system, there existed much disorder in the management of Indian affairs, due to the lack of proper regulations of the commerce among them. Though this was regarded as a source of disorders that could not fail to have the most fatal consequences, the King and Council still "thought best, upon the ground of the Representations of the several Colonies that they were themselves the best judges of what those Regulations should be, to leave this matter entirely to them and to lay aside a plan which the Board of Trade had with unwearied attention prepared for that purpose."³²

This want of regulation among the traders resulted in much harm to the Indians, particularly to the Cherokees who had been permitted to contract great debts. To Hillsborough, Stuart wrote that "At their return from hunting, the traders to whom they are indebted seize their skins and leave them destitute of any supplies but what they may choose to trust them with, under such circumstances they have been for many years past extremely uneasy and have lately proposed to give up a considerable tract of country as satisfaction for their debts, but the land which they have proposed to give up on this account is claimed by the Creeks. The Traders greedily grasped at the offers and went so far as to draw up an instrument of Cession which they got signed by the principal Chiefs, and in consideration all the goods they were possessed of in the

³⁰*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. XI, pp. 230-231; *B. P. R. O., Am. & W. Ind.*, Vol. 108, p. 139.

³¹*Georgia C. R.*, Vol. XII, p. 133. Stuart had been appointed as one of the Commissioners of Justice in the Province of Georgia, May 10, 1764. *Colonial Records of Georgia*, Vol. VII, p. 179.) October 23, 1772, Stuart was appointed Justice of the Peace in the lands newly ceded by the Creeks and Cherokees. (*Colonial Records of Georgia*, Vol. XII, p. 395.)

³²Hillsborough to Stuart, July 3, 1771. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. IX, p. 8; *B. P. R. O., Am. & W. Ind.*, Vol. 275.)

Nation. This very irregular and very wrong step was taken without giving me the least intimation."³³ Stuart was instructed to warn every one against attempting to secure Indian lands, and he was specifically not to allow any of his deputies to become involved in such transactions.³⁴ The rumor that Cameron, deputy among the Cherokees, had been guilty of having some part in these questionable transactions had already reached England, but the charges seem not to have been well founded.³⁵

This problem of guarding the interests of the Indians while land companies and individual speculators were endeavoring to secure concessions west of the mountains required all of the time and skill of the superintendent for several years immediately preceding the Revolution. During this period the boundary line between the Provinces and the Indians from Georgia to the Ohio was run, several important treaties were concluded with the Indians, and concessions of territory were secured from them. These were matters of supreme importance both in America and in England,³⁶ and Stuart's responsibility and influence in the final settlement were recognized as being important.

Since the boundary lines were determined by treaties, the two may be considered together. Previous to May, 1766, the line had been run from Savannah River to Reedy River at a point then thought to be on the North Carolina line, and the Indians had agreed to wait till the following September for the line between them and North Carolina which they wished to continue straight from Reedy Creek to Chiswell's Mine on New River in Virginia.³⁷ Since the proposed line from Reedy Creek straight to Chiswell's Mines would cut off a part of Rowan and

³³Stuart to Hillsborough, April 27, 1770. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 553-554; *B. P. R. O.*, Am. & W. Ind., Vol. 295.)

³⁴Hillsborough to Stuart, July 3, 1771. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. IX, p. 8; *B. P. R. O.*, Am. & W. Ind., Vol. 275.)

³⁵The North Carolina Council made an investigation (October 16, 1770) of the charges as to Stuart's and Cameron's conduct toward the Cherokees, and reported that it was their unanimous opinion "that the suggestions set forth are false and frivolous, and that the discontent of the said Indians appears to have been excited by the traders settled amongst them." (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 250-251; *Mss. Records in the Office of Secretary of State.*)

³⁶It is beyond the scope of this article to consider the various colonization schemes and companies formed to exploit the natural resources of the Mississippi Valley. The interested reader is referred to Alvord, *The Mississippi Valley in British Politics*, and Carter, *Great Britain and the Illinois Country*.

³⁷Cameron to Stuart, May 10, 1766. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, pp. 207, 213-215; *B. P. R. O.*)

Mecklenburgh Counties, Governor Tryon of North Carolina suggested that the line should be extended due north from Reedy Creek to the mountains, thence straight to Chiswell's.³⁸ At a meeting of the Cherokees held at Fort Prince George, October, 1765, the chiefs had agreed to the line as suggested by Governor Tryon,³⁹ and the following June the North Carolina Council authorized Governor Tryon to issue warrants on the Quit Rents for funds to meet the expense of extending the line.⁴⁰

Having requested Stuart to arrange for a meeting of the Chiefs at Salisbury, Governor Tryon went in person to the appointed place, escorted by fifty of the Militia and a number of surveyors and woodsmen.⁴¹ When the party reached Salisbury, May 16th, 1767, the Governor was greatly disappointed by the fact that neither Stuart nor the Chiefs had arrived. After waiting four days, Governor Tryon led the party south to Reedy Creek. Stuart was not present at the running of this line because at that time he was occupied with affairs among the Creeks. He wrote an explanation to Governor Tryon and arranged for the Indians to assemble at Reedy Creek instead of Salisbury, a distance of 180 miles beyond the place where the line was to be run.⁴² He also wrote to Cameron, instructing him to render all necessary aid in running the line.⁴³ The fact that Tryon was to be met and assisted by the deputy instead of the Principal of the Department was humiliating to the pride of Governor Tryon, who wished to impress the Frontiersmen and Indians with the dignity and greatness of his office and power.

At "Tyger" River, June 1st, 1767, Governor Tryon held a "talk" with the Indians, reminding them that he had come more than 400 miles and had been away from home twenty-six days. Since he did not bring presents with him, and since the supply of meal and flour would last the entire body of whites and Indians present not more than fourteen days, which would

³⁸Tryon to Stuart, June 17, 1766. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, pp. 220-221; *B. P. R. O., Am. & W. Ind.*, Vol. 269.)

³⁹Tryon to Rutherford, Palmer, and Frohock, June 6, 1767. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, p. 468; *Tryon's Letter Book.*)

⁴⁰*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, p. 288. (The time set for running the line in the previous autumn had been changed on account of sickness among the Indians. See *N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, pp. 267-271; *B. P. R. O., Am. & W. Ind.*, Vol. 260.)

⁴¹*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, pp. 460-461; *Tryon's Letter Book.*

⁴²Tryon to Lord Shelbourne, July 8, 1767. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, p. 500; *Tryon's Letter Book.*)

⁴³Tryon to Cameron, June 6, 1767. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, pp. 468-469; *Tryon's Letter Book.*)

not be sufficient time for the survey, the Governor conferred full authority, for running the line, upon three commissioners, John Rutherford, Robert Palmer and John Frohock.⁴⁴ He arranged that the Militia and all the others but the necessary workmen and a few Indian helpers return with him—the Indians, except the guides and those who were to go to Salisbury for the purpose of receiving the presents for the Nation, were to return to their homes.⁴⁵

The line was run from Reedy Creek north to a tree in the mountains at the headwaters of the Packet running into Broad River and of White Oak Creek running into Green River, a distance of fifty-three miles. Since it was very difficult to run the line through the mountains to the mines, it was agreed to consider such a line as the boundary without running it.⁴⁶

By the Treaty of Hard Labour (South Carolina), October 13th, 1768, Stuart and representatives of the Indians gave official endorsement to the line as previously run from Towhouhe on the north bank of the Savannah, thence to Dewisses Corner, thence in the same course to Waughee, or Elm tree, on the south side of Reedy Creek, thence north to a Spanish oak tree (marked, etc.) on the top of a mountain now called Tryon's mountain, thence north and northeast course straight to Chiswell's Mine, on the east bank of the Great Conhaway in Virginia. The treaty also provided that this line should be extended from Chiswell's Mine to the mouth of the said river at the Ohio, this section of the line to be marked by representatives of Indians with the superintendent or his agent, and certain commissioners of Virginia to be appointed for this purpose.⁴⁷

At this point the rights of the Indians and the purposes of Stuart as Superintendent of Indian Affairs came into sharp conflict with Virginia's plans for westward expansion. The Province was jealous of the schemes of the speculators for establishing new colonies in the West which were now being urgently presented to the home government for its endorsement.

⁴⁴Tryon to the Commissioners, June 6, 1767. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, p. 468; Tryon's Letter Book.)

⁴⁵Tryon's Talk to the Cherokees, Tyger River, June 1, 1767. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, pp. 462-464; Tryon's Letter Book.)

⁴⁶Agreement between the North Carolina Commissioners and the Cherokees in regard to the dividing line. June 13, 1767. Signed by Cameron, the three commissioners, and six chiefs. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, pp. 469-471; MSS. Records.)

⁴⁷(a) *N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VII, pp. 851-855. MSS. Records. (b) *N. C. C. R.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 25, 26. MSS. Records. (c) Stuart to John Blair, Hard Labour, South Carolina, October 17, 1768. *Journal of the House of Burgesses of Virginia (1766-1769)*, pp. XXVI-XXVIII.

The matter was now complicated by the provisions of the treaty of Fort Stanwix, November 5th, 1768, by which the Iroquois ceded to Great Britain all the land south of the Ohio between the Great Kanawha and the Tennessee,⁴⁸ which territory was claimed by the Cherokees, a part of which they had ceded to Great Britain by the treaty of Hard Labour twenty days before the treaty of Stanwix.

Virginia was not satisfied with the line as fixed by Stuart in the treaty of Hard Labour and asked him to call another meeting of the Chiefs for the purpose of changing the line to conform to the terms of the Fort Stanwix treaty.⁴⁹ Colonel Lewis and Dr. Walker who were sent as commissioners from Virginia to confer with Stuart at Charlestown, arranged, through Governor Tryon of North Carolina, for a meeting with the Indian chiefs at Fort Johnson (North Carolina), January 13th, 1769, and there they secured the consent of the Indians to run a new line.⁵⁰

Before a line could be run through the mountains to the Ohio, the House of Burgesses addressed a memorial to Governor Botetourt asking that the southern boundary of Virginia be extended due west to the Ohio instead of north to the mouth of the Kanawha.⁵¹ To this proposal Stuart gave the following objections: This line would not strike the Ohio, but would be very near the towns of the Cherokees and the Chickasaws. It would thus cut off to Virginia the best Indian hunting grounds. This territory would be open to settlement by whites who were hunters and otherwise objectionable to the Indians. For these reasons trouble with the Indians would follow, and even then Northern Tribes and Cherokees were among the Creeks to arrange for a general confederacy to resist the whites. Moreover, it was reported that the head-chief of the Cherokees, Oucnastotah, had gone with thirty canoes of armed men to reconnoiter the settlements at Holston's River to see how far the Virginia settlers extended beyond the line agreed upon by the treaty of Hard Labour.⁵²

⁴⁸Alvord, *Mississippi Valley in British Politics*, Vol. II, pp. 64ff.

⁴⁹*Journal of the Virginia House of Burgesses* (1766-1769), pp. XXXI-XXXII.

⁵⁰*Journal of the Virginia House of Burgesses* (1766-1769), pp. XXXV-XXXVIII. Lewis and Walker advised the Governor of Virginia to deal directly with the Indians rather than through Stuart, on the grounds that he could make better terms with them.

⁵¹House of Burgesses to Governor Botetourt, December 13, 1769. (*Journal of the House of Burgesses of Virginia* (1770-1772), pp. IX-X.)

⁵²Stuart to Botetourt, January 13, 1770. *Journal of the House of Burgesses of Virginia* (1770-1772), pp. XI-XII.

Failing to obtain the superintendent's approval of the plan for the new line, Virginia next asked that the west line extend from a point where the North Carolina line intersected with the Holston River, north to the mouth of the Kanawha.⁵³ On June 21st, 1770, Governor Botetourt presented to Stuart the request of the House of Burgesses; and on July 12th, Stuart replied from Charlestown that he would hold a congress of Cherokee chiefs at Lochabar, October 5th, 1770.⁵⁴

The line fixed by the treaty of Lochabar, October 18th, 1770, is therein described as extending from the termination of the line between North Carolina and the Cherokee hunting grounds "in a west course to a point six miles east of Long Island in Holsten's River, and thence to said river six miles above the said Long Island, thence in a direct course to the confluence of the Great Conhoway and Ohio Rivers. . . . His Majesty's white subjects inhabiting the Province of Virginia shall not, upon any pretense whatever, settle beyond the said Line." This treaty was signed by Stuart and sixteen chiefs.⁵⁵ The west line of Virginia was surveyed in 1771 by commissioners of Virginia and of the Cherokees who ran it further to the west than agreed upon by the treaty of Lochabar. The explanation for this change was that it was impracticable to run the line as first agreed upon because of the mountains and rivers and "therefore the commissioners at the earnest request of the Cherokees have marked a natural boundary by running the line from the Holston to the Louisa River and down that stream to the Ohio."⁵⁶

Soon after the line was surveyed the claim was made by Western expansionists that the Louisa River described by the surveyors as the boundary line was really the Kentucky River, and this interpretation was accepted both in America and in England. Lord Dartmouth, the successor of Hillsborough as Colonial Secretary, readily agreed to consider the Kentucky River as the boundary line. Stuart was responsible for the origin of the mistake. At the request of Lord Dartmouth for a map showing the whole southern Indian boundary, Stuart prepared the map and sent it to England, February 25th, 1773. Both on the map and the letter accompanying it Stuart identified the Louisa with the Kentucky River. Since his deputy, Alexander Cameron, was with the surveying party, surely the

⁵³*Journal of the House of Burgesses of Virginia (1770-1772)*, p. XIII.

⁵⁴*Journal of the House of Burgesses of Virginia (1770-1772)*, p. XII.

⁵⁵*Journal of the House of Burgesses of Virginia (1770-1772)*, pp. XV-XVI.

⁵⁶Alvord, *Mississippi Valley in British Politics*, Vol. II, pp. 83-84.

superintendent was well informed as to the events which occurred during the survey. Therefore, he must have been led into making the mistake through his lack of knowledge of the geography of the country, or he was led to make the change purposely to favor the land speculators. Now, it cannot be proven that he was even remotely connected with such schemes, but it is well established that he always opposed any schemes for taking the land of the Indians. The only reasonable conclusion, then, is that he was misled by using as a basis for his map a very imperfect one drawn earlier by John Mitchell.⁵⁷

Before the new boundary line received the official endorsement of the British Ministry, Wharton and Trent had gone from Philadelphia to England to obtain for the company which they represented a grant of 2,500,000 acres on the upper Ohio. The petition was later changed to 22,000,000 acres in the territory south of the Ohio lately ceded by the Iroquois by the treaty of Fort Stanwix. Many prominent Englishmen and some Americans were members of this company which now included the older "Ohio Company" and was called the Walpole, or the Grand Ohio Company. It was now planned to form a colony separate from the Virginia Province.⁵⁸

Virginia speculators were seeking some of the same territory as that included in the plans of the Ohio Company, hence there arose a clash of interests and delay, but Virginia insisted on the boundary as interpreted by Stuart. Such speculators as Washington, Lee, Henry, Mercer, Walker, Lewis and Preston sought patents to lands in the West—some as far as the Tennessee.⁵⁹

There were other companies formed, such as the Transylvania, represented by Richard Henderson of North Carolina, which in 1775 purchased directly from the Cherokees two large tracts, of which the larger extended from the Kentucky River to the Cumberland, while the other included land lying on the Holston, Clinch, Powell and Upper Cumberland.⁶⁰ Stuart protested to Lord Dartmouth against this purchase.⁶¹

⁵⁷Alvord, *Mississippi Valley in British Politics*, Vol. II, pp. 85-89.

⁵⁸Alvord, *Mississippi Valley in British Politics*, Vol. II, pp. 104ff.

⁵⁹Alvord, *Mississippi Valley in British Politics*, Vol. II, pp. 111ff. Lee represented the Mississippi Company which sought to obtain lands on the upper Ohio. Washington purchased the claims of the veterans of 1754 which had been granted them by the Proclamation of 1763.

⁶⁰Alvord, *Mississippi Valley in British Politics*, Vol. II, p. 206. Ramsey, *Annals*, p. 191. *Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (1883-1884), pp. 148-149.

⁶¹Stuart to Dartmouth, January 3, 1775. *N. C. C. R.*, Vol. IX, pp. 1106-1107. Stuart to Dartmouth, March 28, 1775, *N. C. C. R.*, Vol. IX, p. 1173. (*B. P. R. O.*, A. & W. I., Vol. 279.)

The western settlement which resulted in the most serious trouble with the Indians, and against which the superintendent made the strongest protest, was the Watauga, which was established not by a company, but by individuals from Virginia, North Carolina and other colonies, as early as 1768. Since the Proclamation of 1763 made it illegal to purchase Indian lands, a lease was secured for a period of ten years. Later, in 1775, the Watauga settlers purchased their lands from the Cherokees."⁶²

February 22nd, 1774, Stuart sent to Governor Martin of North Carolina a request concerning the Watauga Settlement, the essential parts of which are here quoted: "I have received a message from the Cherokees expressing the strongest attachment to his Majesty's white subjects. . . . That Nation is still extremely uneasy at the encroachments of the white people on their hunting ground at Watauga River, where a very large settlement is formed upwards of fifty miles beyond the established boundary, and as I am apprehensive that it consists of emigrants from your Province to which it is contiguous, I must beg your excellency's interposition to endeavour to prevail on them to remove, otherwise the consequences may in a little time prove fatal. I have in the meantime ordered an interpreter with a party of principal Indians to warn them to remove within a certain time, and should they through neglect to move off, I am afraid it will be impossible to restrain the Indians from taking redress themselves by robbing and perhaps murdering some of them. (Signed) William Ogilvie for John Stuart.

"P. S. Mr. Stuart is so excessively ill of the gout that he cannot even sign his name."⁶³

As a result of this protest from Stuart, Governor Martin issued the following proclamation:

"I have therefore thought fit, by and with the advice and consent of his Majesty's Council, to issue this Proclamation, hereby strictly enjoining and requiring the said settlers immediately to return from the Indian Territory, otherwise they are to expect no protection from his Majesty's government."⁶⁴

Before he could secure a satisfactory adjustment of the affairs connected with the settlements west of the Indian line, and while he was hindered by a change of policy by the home

⁶²Ramsey, *Annals*, pp. 134ff. Stuart to Dartmouth, January 3, 1775. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. IX, pp. 1106-1107; *B. P. R. O., Am. & W. Ind.*, Vol. 279.)

⁶³Stuart to Martin, Charlestown, February 22, 1774. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. IX, pp. 825; *Mss. Records.*)

⁶⁴*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. IX, p. 982; *Mss. Records.*

government which cut off a large part of the appropriations for presents and for administering the affairs of his District,⁶⁵ the war of the Revolution had brought about a radical change in the plans and activities of the Superintendent for the Southern District. Stuart, from the first of the trouble between the colonies and the home government, adhered to the interests of the crown. In order to prevent him from setting the Indians against the colonists, an attempt was made to place him under guard. At the same time the report was circulated that the superintendent had sent his deputies to arm the Indians and Negroes (who were to be given their freedom), and to lead them against the whites. Believing that his safety and the interests of the King demanded it, Stuart fled to Georgia, June 1st, 1775, thence to St. Augustine.⁶⁶ Concerning his escape, Stuart said, "Although I was extremely ill and confined to my bed, an idea that my falling into their hands might prove detrimental to his Majesty's service determined me to remove to Georgia, which I undertook and arrived there the beginning of June. I beg your Lordship's permission to submit the enclosed letters which will show your Lordship their intentions and how narrowly I escaped falling into the hands of an incensed mob at a time when my state of health rendered me very incapable of bearing rough usage; my family and property are still in their power, the latter they threaten to confiscate, and I anxiously wish the former from amongst them."⁶⁷ In the early part of 1776 Stuart was at Cape Fear until the removal of General Clinton's troops. He sailed from there May 20th, 1776, and returned to St. Augustine and Pensacola.

The question as to Stuart's responsibility for the Cherokee war of 1776-1777, and as to his schemes for influencing the Indians to attack the provinces, is an important one. The Indian agents disavowed having caused the uprising, while the Colonists maintained that they were guilty of both charges. Ramsey says that "one of the measures adopted (by British officials) to oppress and subjugate the disaffected American colonies was to arm the neighboring tribes and to stimulate them against the feeble settlements on their border. . . . Early in the year 1776 John Stuart, the Superintendent of Southern Indian Affairs, received his instructions from the British War Department and immediately dispatched to his

⁶⁵Alvord, *Mississippi Valley in British Politics*, Vol. II, p. 53.

⁶⁶*American Archives*, Fourth Series, Vol. IV, p. 329.

⁶⁷Stuart to Dartmouth, St. Augustine, July 21, 1775. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. X, pp. 117-119; *B. P. R. O., Am. & W. Ind.*, Vol. 279.) Also extract from "Cape Fear Mercury," Thursday, August 7, 1775. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. IX, pp. 1219-1220; *B. P. R. O., Am. & W. Ind.*, No. 222.)

deputies, resident among the different tribes, orders to carry into effect the wishes of the government. Cameron, agent among the Cherokees, called the Chiefs to a Congress and persuaded them by means of presents and promises to join with the British."⁶⁸ On this point Ramsey⁶⁹ quotes from Steadman's "History of the American War":

"It has been shown how unsuccessful every attempt had hitherto proved to detach the Southern Colonies from the support of the common cause to their own immediate defence, by involving them in civil war through the means of the Regulators and the Highland Emigrants in the Carolinas, or of the Negroes in Virginia. It has also been shown that the Provincials adduced these attempts as charges against their several Governors. Unsuccessful as these endeavours had hitherto been, the consequences that would result from such a plan of operations were too important to be neglected. British agents were again employed in engaging the Indians to make a diversion and to enter the Southern Colonies on their back and defenceless parts. Accustomed to their habits of mind and dispositions the agents found but little difficulty in bringing them over to their purpose by presents and hopes of spoil and plunder. A large body of men was to be sent to West Florida in order to penetrate through the territory of the Creeks, Chickasaws and Cherokees. The warriors of these nations were to join the body and the Carolinas and Virginia were immediately to be invaded. At the same time the attention of the Colonies was to be diverted by another formal naval and military force which was to make an impression on the seacoast. But this undertaking was not to depend solely on the British army and Indians. It was intended to engage the assistance of such of the white inhabitants of the back-settlements as were known to be well-affected to the British cause. Circular letters were accordingly sent to those persons by Mr. Stuart, requiring not only the well-affected, but also those who wished to preserve their property from the miseries of a civil war, to repair to the royal standard as soon as it should be erected in the Cherokee country with all their horses, cattle and provisions for which they should be liberally paid. . . . Matters were not yet ripe for execution when the Creeks, a bloody and cruel race eager to partake of the expected plunder, resolved not to await the arrival of the British troops, but to commence the insur-

⁶⁸Stuart to Lord Germain. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. X, pp. 607-608; B. P. R. O., Am. & W. Ind., Vol. 280.)

⁶⁹Ramsey, *Annals*, pp. 161-162.

rection immediately. They proceeded in the execution of their intentions with incredible barbarity."⁷⁰

At the time of the outbreak, Jarrett Williams, who had recently been among the Cherokees, made a statement under oath before a Justice of the Peace to the effect that when he left the Cherokee country, July 8th, 1776, the Indians were preparing supplies and other things for the war which was to begin immediately. According to his statement, Alexander Cameron, deputy under Stuart, was with them and had planned to have them spare all settlers who would take the oath of allegiance to the king and to destroy without mercy all who refused.⁷¹

This charge that Stuart, as a loyalist, was forming plans for using the Indians in helping to subdue the rebellious colonists, is substantiated by Stuart's letters. Writing to Lord Germain, July 20th, 1776, he said: "I have been told that the Indian Agents appointed by the Continental Congress have had meetings with the Creek and Cherokee Indians, at which a great many of each Nation attended and engaged to remain neuter in the quarrel between Great Britain and her Colonies, notwithstanding which, I do not despair of getting them to act for his Majesty's service when deemed necessary. As I have no instructions from General Howe or General Clinton to employ the Indians, and as no plan for my government has been communicated to me, I shall use my utmost endeavour to keep the Indians in temper and disposed to act when required."⁷² Soon after this, Stuart reported to General Gage that he had received his commands and would do all in his power to forward the interests of the government; that he had sent his brother, Henry, to enlist the help of the Cherokees; and that he planned to collect some Indians at St. Augustine for purposes of defence. He advised against an indiscriminate attack by the Indians, and said that he would hold them for a concerted action.⁷³ In the autumn of 1776, Stuart received instructions from Lord Germain to prepare the Indians of the South for a concerted attack at the same time when the invasion was to be made from the east coast by the British regulars.⁷⁴ Also, large

⁷⁰Steadman, *History of the American War*, Vol. I, p. 248 (quoted in Ramsey, *Annals*, pp. 161-162).

⁷¹*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. X, pp. 660-661.

⁷²Stuart to Lord Germain, Cocks Spur in Georgia, May 20, 1776. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. X, pp. 606-608; *B. P. R. O.*, Am. & W. Ind., Vol. 280.)

⁷³Stuart to Gage, St. Augustine, September 30, 1775. *American Archives*, Fourth Series, Vol. IV, p. 316-317.

⁷⁴Lord Germain to Stuart, November 6, 1776. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. X, pp. 793-795; *B. P. R. O.*, Am. & W. Ind., Vol. 280.)

quantities of arms, ammunition and supplies were sent to Stuart for the Indians, and he was directed to enlist the Creeks and other tribes to join with the Cherokees in the war they were then waging against the "Rebels."⁷⁵

The facts stated above seem to be conclusive evidence that Stuart was a loyalist true to his Majesty till the last, and, therefore, as a matter of course he used his influence, which was very important at this time, in every possible way to help bring victory to the king's armies. Perhaps, if there had been no other cause for ill-feeling on the part of the Indians, such as the encroachments of the Watauga settlers on their territory, they would not have entered so fiercely into the war. Yet the influence of the Indian agents was no doubt the real cause of the uprising at this particular time. Henry Stuart, who had been sent with ammunition and supplies, was among the Cherokees when they began the war on the settlers, and he has given account of the immediate events which led up to it. According to his report, the Indians denied that they had sold any land to the Watauga settlers. Isaac Thomas was dispatched by H. Stuart and Cameron with a "talk" to the settlers at Watauga and Nollichucky. In ten days Thomas returned with a letter from the settlers signed by John Carter, and another signed by Aaron Pinson. These letters asked that the whites be allowed to remain on the land till the times were more settled and till they could find a place to which to remove. To these letters the Indians replied that they had agreed to allow the whites to occupy the lands only for a certain time which had now expired, therefore, they must move off. The Indians admitted having received goods from the settlers, but claimed that this was for deer which the whites had killed, and for other damages. After many days Thomas returned with an unsatisfactory reply from the settlers, and the Indians, led by Chincanacina, or Dragging Canoe, decided to attack them. The Indian agents, however, secured their promise to respect the innocent, especially women and children, and to cease when they should so order.⁷⁶

This war, after a fierce struggle of twelve months in which the militia from all the Southern states combined against the Indians, was terminated by two treaties, one made at DeWitts Corner with commissioners from South Carolina and Georgia,

⁷⁵Germain to Stuart, November 6, 1776. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. X, pp. 893-895.)

⁷⁶Report of Henry Stuart, Pensacola, August 25, 1776. (*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. X, pp. 763-785; *B. P. R. O.*, Am. & W. Ind., Vol. 280.) Stuart states in his report that he and Cameron endeavored to prevent the Indian attack by threatening them with the king's disfavor and with the cutting off of their supplies.

the other at Fort Henry near Long Island in the Holston River with commissioners from Virginia and North Carolina, July 20th, 1777. By the second treaty the Watauga settlers were granted the lands (to which a small area was added by the treaty) which they had held since 1772.⁷⁷

After the Cherokee war was ended, Stuart and his deputies seem to have lost their influence and opportunities with the Indians, and were too much occupied with the progress of the Revolution to continue their ordinary duties among the Indians. In 1775, the Continental Congress had appointed, as Indian Commissioners for the South, George Galphin, Robert Rae, John Walker, Willie Jones and Edward Wilkinson.⁷⁸

In the meantime, Stuart, now old and infirm, was alone, his wife and daughter being kept under guard in South Carolina,⁷⁹ to which Province he dared not return. The Commissioners of the treasury allowed Mrs. Stuart £100 per month, currency, for her maintenance, the same to be reimbursed out of the profits of Stuart's estate by the committee in charge of it.⁸⁰

The records close with Mrs. Stuart and her daughter still in prison, from which there is relief for only a few minutes at a time (under guard) for exercise and fresh air, which the doctor insisted was necessary for Mrs. Stuart's broken health. Stuart himself, after a long life, forty-six years of which had been spent on the American frontier and among the Indians, for whose interests and protection against the greed of the white man he had labored untiringly during the last sixteen years of his life, returned to England, where he died in 1779;⁸¹ his death, no doubt, being hastened by the strain of the Revolutionary period and by the failure of the plans for the accomplishment of which he had given the best years of his life.

GEORGE B. JACKSON.

⁷⁷Garrett and Goodpasture, *History of Tennessee*, p. 62.

⁷⁸*N. C. C. R.*, Vol. X, pp. 330-331.

⁷⁹*American Archives, Fourth Series*, Vol. V, p. 574.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, p. 635. (Stuart's estate was confiscated in 1782.)

⁸¹Appleton, *Cyclopedia of American Biography*.

WILLIAM FERRELL.

There are two or three points of contact that we may use to bring William Ferrel into significance in our local history. First, he lived in Nashville, or in the vicinity of Nashville, for about eleven years, as teacher, student and author. Second, his scientific studies bore their first fruit here, where he wrote and published his first great essays on meteorological subjects. The connection is further strengthened by the fact that his interest in meteorology was stimulated by the writings of one whom Tennesseans honor and like to claim as their own—Matthew Fontaine Maury, who spent his boyhood in Williamson County, and who wrote a great book, "The Physical Geography of the Sea," which was found by Ferrel in a Nashville book store, in the spring of 1856, not many months after it came from the press. This book of Maury's first turned Ferrel's attention to meteorology, as Ferrel himself states, and caused him to write the paper on "Winds and the Currents of the Ocean," which was the beginning of his work in revolutionizing the science of meteorology.

A word as to the characteristics of the two men seems appropriated. Maury is known to all of us. He was not only a great scientist, but was a gifted lecturer and writer, and possessed of most attractive personal traits, all of which parts made him popular and successful. Possibly some of the older members may have heard Maury lecture before the Tennessee Historical Society. I learn from the annals of the Society that he delivered 'his celebrated lecture on the physical geography of the sea before this Society on September 8, 1859.' This was about a year after Ferrel left Nashville.

Ferrel was a different type of man from Maury. He was an unusual genius in mathematics and physics, and perhaps a deeper reasoner and delver into the causation of things, than Maury, but at the same time the most diffident of men; so shy and diffident, that it seems as if his gifts were saved to the world only by the fortunate appearance at intervals of men who recognized his powers and called them forth—men like Prof. W. K. Bowling, of the Nashville Academy of Medicine and editor of the "Nashville Journal of Medicine and Surgery," who persuaded Ferrel to write for publication. After Ferrel was once discovered by the scientific world, he was, of course, in continual demand. He was fond of attacking the most abstruse and complex mathematical problems, and he did it in an original way and with such keen reasoning as to delight men who were able to follow him.

Shortly after Ferrel's death, in 1891, a brief biographical

memoir¹ was prepared by Prof. Cleveland Abbe. I quote a few lines, which will set the man Ferrel before us. Addressing the National Academy of Science, Professor Abbe said: "We are assembled to think and speak of one who was known to very few by name or by face, and yet who has done more than any other single person to establish on firm foundations the mechanics of that branch of science which we call meteorology. Since the days of Galileo men have accumulated observations of the temperature, humidity, pressure and movement of the air for all parts of the globe. From these have been formed charts of the monthly and annual average features, and even tri-daily charts showing momentary conditions in the rapidly changing atmosphere. Innumerable studies have been based upon purely statistical methods, but whenever an attempt has been made to explain the causes of things and to trace out the interaction of the diverse forces, the mind has recoiled from a strictly logical, deductive method, in view of the extreme complexity of the conditions, and has had recourse to crude hypotheses and approximations. All honor therefore, to our colleague William Ferrel, who, animated by the conviction that no unknown or mysterious forces were present, attacked one problem after another, and, by the logic of his thought and the invincible tenacity of his purpose, broke down the barriers of ignorance and opened the way for future explorers. But successful studies in meteorology could only have become possible to a mind disciplined by a long series of struggles with, and triumphs over, less complex problems; this, in fact, was the work of Ferrel's early life."

Ferrel's early life was not spent in Nashville, or this part of the country, but a brief review of it, showing how he came to Nashville will be permissible. If space permitted, I would quote freely from a short sketch² which Ferrel prepared at the request of his friend, Prof. Alexander McAdie. His story is a homely romance, with a wholesome, pioneer flavor that is quite genuine and acceptable. This autobiographical sketch recites a number of incidents in Ferrel's early life, showing his humble origin, his eager pursuit of science, especially mathematics, even as a child; how he conquered the difficulties of educating himself, etc. He was born in Bedford (now Fulton) County, Pennsylvania, January 29, 1817; moved to Berkeley County, Virginia (now West Virginia) when he was twelve years of age; lived on a farm, remote from good schools or

¹Memoir of William Ferrel, 1817-1891, by Cleveland Abbe. Read before the National Academy, April, 1892.

²Autobiographical sketch. Written in January, 1888, by William Ferrel, at the request of his friend, Mr. Alexander McAdie.

educated people, with very few books or literature of any kind available. But at the age of twenty-seven, July 4, 1844, he graduated from Bethany College, of which the Rev. Alexander Campbell was president. This was the first graduating class of that college. He then went to Liberty, Missouri, and settled there as farmer and teacher. There he discovered a copy of Newton's "Principia," which had been left in a store by an itinerant school teacher. He promptly procured it and devoured it as rapidly as his health would permit. His health failed in the spring of 1846 and he started to return to Virginia, but was persuaded by a friend to go to Clarksville, Tennessee, and thereabout. He very soon found a little school about fifteen miles out from Clarksville, at Hadensville, and later at Allensville, Todd County, Kentucky, where he remained for about seven years, teaching, studying the "Principia," and also the "Mechanique Celeste" of Laplace, which he had now procured. He was also now beginning to write scientific papers, when, in 1854, he settled at Nashville.

I endeavored to gather some facts or reminiscences of Ferrel and his life in Nashville from local sources. With the assistance of Dr. John M. Bass, and others, some possible avenues to personal recollections were followed out, but the results were meagre. We know that Dr. W. K. Bowling was a warm friend of Ferrel, and doubtless other men of that type were his friends here; but he was an exceedingly quiet, diffident man, and probably had few close friends. Doctor Bass interviewed Mr. William Woodfolk, of Nashville, who says he remembers seeing Ferrel often; remembers his having a school here for several years. Mr. Woodfolk's brother owned race horses, and Mr. Woodfolk says his brother took Ferrel to the races sometimes. He remembers Ferrel as associating with some of the distinguished people and those of scientific inclinations, among them Dr. W. K. Bowling, Dr. John W. Waters, and Dr. Thomas Buchanan. He says Ferrel lived for several years at the Verandah House, located just below the site of the present store of Gray & Dudley, and kept by one Scott, and that Ferrel was very friendly with Mr. Scott's son, Hugh Scott.

Mr. John S. Ramage, of Nashville, remembers Ferrel distinctly. He states that his brothers went to school to Ferrel, and that Ferrel had often been in the Ramage home, which was on Gay Street, near the Capitol.

In searching the files of Nashville newspapers of those days, 1854 to 1858, I found "W. Ferrel" making some announcements relative to his school. He first had a small private school at the "Cooper Building"; then moved to "the room lately oc-

cupied by Mr. Pascal, near the depot"; later, he announced that he would "resume his school in the basement of the "African Church." Just before he left Nashville he had a partner (whose name I could not ascertain), and they conducted a commercial school. He left Nashville in the spring of 1858 and went to Cambridge, Massachusetts, having been invited by Professor Winlock, superintendent of the American Ephemeris and Nautical Almanac, to take a part in the computations for that work.

Later he was employed by the Government Coast and Geodetic Survey, on account of his remarkable studies of the tides and ocean currents. He invented a "maxima and minima tide-predicting machine," which the government put in use. He was employed by the U. S. Signal Service (now Weather Bureau) to carry on investigations in meteorology and to elaborate his explanations of the phenomena of cyclones and anti-cyclones, thunderstorms, and tornadoes. In each case he was sought out and proffered the position. He died at Maywood, Kansas, September 18, 1891, and is buried there.

I imagine the years Ferrel spent in Nashville were remembered by him as one of the most satisfactory and happy periods of his life: for it was here that he met with the fortunate friendship of Dr. W. K. Bowling, who encouraged him to write for the *Journal of Medicine and Surgery*. His successful days dawned rapidly here. The "Essay on the Winds and Currents of the Ocean," possibly the greatest chapter in all his writings, was written and published here. It was in this paper that the full importance of the effect of the rotation of the earth upon atmospheric and oceanic motions was first stated. The main idea expressed in this paper was later formulated into what has since been known as "Ferrel's Law," which, in his own words, is as follows: "In whatever direction a body moves on the earth's surface there is a force arising from the earth's rotation which deflects it toward the right in the northern hemisphere, but the contrary in the southern." It was by applying this law that Ferrel was able to satisfactorily explain many things in regard to the winds and ocean currents that Maury, at that time, left in doubt.

Ferrel wrote more than a hundred important scientific papers in the years 1856-86, that are recognized and valued the world over, but probably none distinguishes him more than the one upon "The Winds and the Currents of the Ocean," which was drawn from him by Maury and Bowling, at Nashville, and was first published in the *Nashville Journal of Medicine and Surgery*. It seems proper to make a note of this in our local history.

ROSCOE NUNN.

DOCUMENTS

I.

Correspondence of John Bell and Willie Mangum, 1835.

INTRODUCTION.

The following letters come to us from the Mangum Correspondence, which is being edited and prepared for publication by Dr. Stephen B. Weeks, of Washington, D. C.

After service as a judge in North Carolina and as a member of the House of Representatives, Willie P. Mangum (1792-1861) became United States Senator from North Carolina, in 1831, and served till December, 1836, when he resigned because of instructions by the Assembly of North Carolina in the matter of the Expunging Resolutions. In December, 1840, he again took his seat as Senator, and served continuously till March 4, 1853. He was president *pro tempore* of the Senate, 1842-1845, and in 1852 declined the Whig nomination for Vice-President on the ticket with General Scott. He left a large and valuable correspondence, which is important for the information which it gives concerning the growth and development of the Whig party. His Tennessee correspondents included, besides Bell, Governor Newton Cannon, and Senators Hugh Lawson White and Ephraim H. Foster.

John Bell (1797-1869)¹ began his career in national politics as a member of the House of Representatives from the Nashville district of Tennessee in the Twentieth Congress (1827-1829), and was a member of each succeeding Congress to the Twenty-sixth, inclusive. June 2, 1834, after the resignation of Andrew Stevenson, Bell was elected Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Twenty-third Congress, under circumstances which became important in the long and bitter political controversies in Tennessee between the party of Andrew Jackson and the followers of Hugh Lawson White. In the *MAGAZINE* for September, 1915,² there was published a series of letters written by James K. Polk in which is given an account of the political developments of this period from

¹It is regrettable that so important a figure in Tennessee and national politics as John Bell has not been the subject of an adequate biography. A thoughtful sketch is that of J. W. Caldwell, "John Bell of Tennessee," in the *American Historical Review*, Vol. 4, pp. 652-664. In the *Nashville Banner* for March 19, 1910, Mrs. Octavia Zollicoffer Bond gave some interesting personal details of Bell and his family. A. C. Cole's *The Whig Party in the South* shows Bell's relation to the Whigs, at various times. An article by Mr. A. V. Goodpasture, *John Bell's Political Revolt, and his Vauxhall Garden Speech*, in the *MAGAZINE* for December, 1916, (Vol. 2, pp. 254 ff), furnished a good account of Bell's earlier life, and constitutes a good introduction to the letters now printed. See also the next note.

²Vol. 1, pp. 209 ff (hereafter cited as *Polk-Johnson Letters*). See particularly the second group of the *Letters*, and the introduction thereto by the editor.

the standpoint of a loyal supporter of Jackson; the other side of the controversy is revealed in the letters of Polk's great rival, John Bell, now published.

In accordance with the wish of Dr. Weeks, the editor of the *MAGAZINE* has adopted a slightly different style in the publication of these letters. In particular, the abbreviation "&" has been retained.

ST. GEORGE L. SIOUSSAT.

1. JOHN BELL TO W. P. MANGUM.

WASHINGTON CITY, Feby. 25th, 1835.

Dr. Sir

During the last summer & fall I was furiously assailed by my political opponents for creating a division in the Jackson-ranks in the election of Speaker of the H. Rep., & I was particularly charged by the partizans of Col. Polk³ with having obtained a triumph over him, by an intrigue with the opposition, & by pledging myself to their interests & feelings upon various subjects.

In many parts of Ten. where I was but slightly known, these reports operated to the prejudice of my political reputation; and I now ask of you as an act of justice between me and my accusers, fully and frankly to state, to what extent the charges are true as regards myself, & how far the impression prevailed with the political party to which you belong, that Col. Polk was more identified in feeling & opinion with that party than myself, & to what extent, this impression was excited [?] by Col. Polk, or his political friends

Your obt. srvt.

Hon

JNO: BELL.

Mr. Mangum
of U. S. Senate

[Addressed:]

The Honble
Mr. Mangum
of U. S. Senate

2. JOHN BELL TO W. P. MANGUM.

N. Y. Mch 19th, 1835

Dear Sir

I was somewhat disappointed in not receiving the statement, you were good enough to promise me, before you left Washington. I suppose your engagements would not allow you to make it out before you set out.

You will greatly oblige me by forwarding it to Nashville as soon as you may have leisure to make it out.

Let me know also, if you please, how things look in N. C. & what we can do to aid the cause of Judge White⁴

Yours, truly

JNO: BELL

Hon. W. P. Mangum.

P. S. Here the war will be better sustained on the side of Judge White than I supposed.

³See the preceding note.

⁴Hugh Lawson White, elected Senator from Tennessee in 1825, (*vice* Andrew Jackson, resigned) and reelected; President *pro tempore* of the Senate.

3. WILLIE P. MANGUM TO JOHN BELL.

RED MOUNTAIN N. C. June 15th 1835.

My dear Sir,

I have received your second note requesting me to reply to the enquiry contained in a former one, "Whether I know or have any reason to believe that you or any of your friends on your behalf made any, if any, what advances to the States Rights party in the last Congress to secure your election as Speaker of the Ho. of Reps." and secondly, "Whether I know or have any reason to believe that you or they made any advances to any other party with a similar object,—& to state my recollections of that election, if agreeable to me."—

I can have no motive to withhold my entire recollections on this subject, & have to regret that a severe bilious attack from which I am just recovering has delayed a reply for some time—

First then I have no knowledge, nor reason to believe that you or your friends had any intercourse with the states rights party *as such*—On the contrary I have the strongest reason to believe that no such thing took place.—I know that several gentlemen of that party (your personal friends) were thoroughly for you; but the mass of the party was not only opposed to your elevation, but had strong prejudices against you.—It is due to candour, to say that I was one of the latter description.

The most of that party had *been compelled* to take position against the administration either partially or thoroughly. They, or at least many of them, ascribed that necessity to the selfishness, the ambition, & the intrigues of Mr. Van Buren,⁵—while many of them deplored the separation from the President, they regarded Mr Van Buren with the deepest aversion & even abhorrence.—They could not have been induced to aid the views of any man who was known to stand in the relation of political friend to Mr. V. B.—

Those with whom I associated were regulated in their course as to the election of speaker mainly by this consideration and by the wishes of the Kitchen Cabinet which latter were of moment only as they were regarded as a fair exponent of Van Burenism.

That party then turned their eyes first upon Mr. Wilde⁶ of Georgia, but in the event of his defeat, which was regarded very probable, they then looked to Mr. Polk of Tenn:

Many of us had been assured from a source speaking as if from full knowledge, that we need entertain no hope of your cooperation in resisting Van Burenism.—That Tennessee had two parties and that the only hope for co-operation in that respect rested upon the party with which Mr. Polk was identified, & that therefore as between you & Mr Polk, the obvious interest of the States rights party was to support Mr. Polk, & that reliance might be placed upon the friendly sympathies of that party, & their effective co-operation, if the course of events should render it safe & practicable.—

Mr. Grundy⁷ well known as entertaining many opinions in common with southern gentlemen, & possessing the confidence of many

⁵Martin Van Buren, Senator from New York, 1821-1828; Governor of New York; Secretary of State, 1829-1831; Vice-President, 1832-1836.

⁶Richard Henry Wilde, Representative from Georgia in the Fourteenth, Eighteenth, Twenty-first, Twenty-second, and Twenty-third Congresses.

⁷Felix Grundy, Representative from Tennessee in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Congresses; United States Senator, 1829-1838.

of them, especially urged, (which I am sure is in the recollection of many of them) that Mr Polk was the only candidate from Tenn: upon whom reliance could be placed to resist Van Burenism & the Kitchen Cabinet.—With these representations & the impressions they were calculated to produce, The party *as such* determined to hold themselves together—to vote for Mr. Wilde as long as he had the least prospect of success, & when he should sink out of view, to move *en masse* to the support of Mr Polk. The lamented W. R. Davis⁸ was by a sort of common consent charged with the duty of giving the “word” when the fire was to be poured in for Mr Polk.

In the progress of the ballottings Mr. Wilde was reduced to a very small number—his prospects were regarded as utterly hopeless.—In this state of things the contest waxed warm & warmer between you & Mr Polk—every one in the Capitol seemed alive to the contest & the result, upon the announcing of a ballot, the tidings instantly flew to the other end of the Capitol & the sensation in the Senate seemed almost as strong as it was in the House.—

Upon one of the ballots Mr Polk has risen, & had drawn closer to you, the result was announced in the Senate Chamber to a groupe in the rear of the Vice Presidents⁹ chair, the Vice President being one of the groupe.—I witnessed the scene at the distance of 15 or 20 feet,—I heard nothing, my eye only gave me the information.—The Vice President, seemed much elated beyond his wont. I instantly heard the same intelligence as instantly had a strong suspicion excited in my mind that we were imposed upon—or to use the language I then employed, that “we were cheated”

I hastened to the House & urged Mr Davis in the most earnest & the strongest terms, to withhold his fire, not to give the vote to Mr Polk, for that I had the strongest reason to believe that “we were all cheated.”—I never exchanged a word with Mr Polk during the canvass on the subject of the election, that I remember, until the instant after I spoke to Mr. Davis—Mr Polk was passing me hastily stopt an instant & remarked, that “if my States rights friends intended to do him any good or to aid him, then was the time, then was the critical moment” or words substantially of that same import & passed on.—

In reference to any advances made by you or your friends to *any party*, I have neither knowledge nor information.—In truth I have no recollection of hearing any of yours [*sic*] friends (out of the States rights party) speak of it, except the Hon Mr. Peyton¹⁰ of Tenn: who called at our mess the day before the election as I understood to see one of your friends, Mr. Fulton¹¹ of Virginia.—I heard him converse at some length on the subject.—

I understood Mr. Peyton to say, that you were a candidate upon administration grounds—that you would continue to give a cordial support to the views of the administration but at the same time, in the event of your election, you would feel it your duty to award to all parties all their parliamentary rights.

That the only pledge or guarantee that you would or could give was to be found in your known principles & your past public life.

⁸Representative from South Carolina in the Twentieth to the Twenty-third Congresses, inclusive. Died January 29, 1835.

⁹Van Buren.

¹⁰Baillie Peyton, Representative in the Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Congresses.

¹¹John H. Fulton, Representative in the Twenty-third Congress.

This is the first time I have written since my confinement by sickness. It is written in great haste & in some pain. I could be much more minute, but I trust I have substantially & satisfactorily replied to your interrogatories.

I am dear Sir
 With great respect
 Your Obt Sert
 WILLIE P. MANGUM.

[Endorsed:] Copy of letter to Hon. John Bell, Tenn.

4. JOHN BELL TO WILLIE P. MANGUM.

NASHVILLE July 2nd 1835.

Dear Sir

I have recd. your letter of the 15th June accompanied by a statement which is entirely satisfactory, *except in one part*, in which I am sure you made a mistake which your own recollection will enable you to correct. Your statement corresponds precisely with what you stated to me last winter except in this particular. The published statement of the ballots will shew that I am right. I allude to the *cause* of your *suspicion* that *you were cheated*. It was the *consternation* or *depression* you saw in Van Buren's countenance which alarmed you. Col. Polk was ahead of me until he had about 76 votes I think, & at that point I either came very near him or passed him. I have not the state of the ballot before me; but I am sure I am right in substance. It was at this point of time that you got alarmed & came down to the House. I have sent your letter back to you, that you may correct this mistake, if you shall find it one as I am sure you will. I have merely indicated by inserting some words the part of your statement which is erroneous. I hope you will, without delay, forward me a corrected statement.

I will write you soon on the state of our coun. I am now too much engaged.

Your friend & servant

JNO: BELL.

Hon. W. P. Mangum.

[Addressed:]

The honble.

Willie P. Mangum

Red Mountain

Orange Cty.

N. Carolina.

II.

Letters of John Bell to William B. Campbell, 1839-1857.

INTRODUCTION.

The letters printed below were written by John Bell, of Tennessee, to Col. William B. Campbell, of the same state. A sketch of Col. Campbell, by the present writer, was given in an introduction to the *Mexican War Letters of Colonel William Bowen Campbell*, published in the issue of the MAGAZINE for June, 1915.¹

The series is the more interesting, as it throws light upon the later career of John Bell, of which less is known. When the campaign of 1840 resulted in the election of Gen. W. H. Harrison to the Presidency, John Bell was appointed Secretary of War, and served in that capacity until, after the death of Harrison, the famous quarrel arose between the Cabinet and John Tyler. With the rest of the Cabinet,—except Daniel Webster, who was still engaged in delicate diplomatic negotiations,—John Bell resigned. Thereafter, until 1847, he was without public office. In 1847 Bell became a member of the House of Representatives of Tennessee, and at the session of that body which began in October, 1847, he was elected to the Senate of the United States. In 1853 he was re-elected, and served the full term until 1859. These twelve years were fateful in the history of the United States, and, in particular, witnessed the disintegration of the Whig party and the growth of the breach between the North and the South.

For the use of the letters here printed, the MAGAZINE is indebted to the courtesy of Mrs. J. S. Pilcher and Mr. Lemuel R. Campbell, of Nashville. Unless otherwise stated, the letters are autograph letters, signed. In the case of a few words and phrases, the handwriting of John Bell, always exceptionally difficult to read, has proved beyond decipherment by the editor. Words supplied by the editor are inclosed in brackets, and doubtful readings are indicated by marks of interrogation or in the notes.

1. JOHN BELL, NASHVILLE, TO W. B. CAMPBELL.

August 10, 1839.

You have had a dreadful campaign² and so have I. Yours from what I have heard was worse than mine—Stokes³ has told me much

¹Vol. 1, pp. 129 ff.

²In the campaign of 1839, one of peculiar bitterness, the Democrats elected James K. Polk as Governor of Tennessee. John Bell, however, carried his district, and entered upon his last term as member of the House of Representatives. Campbell also won his reelection.

³Probably W. B. Stokes, later a Representative in the Thirty-sixth Congress.

but long to hear all and to hear from your own lips. When can you come down and stay a few days?—Can you not bring your family with you? and remain a week sometime soon. I have written to many of our friends to know when they can be here. We must have a pretty full council and hear all that can be said and then make up our minds as to what we ought or can do. I tell our friends here that we must advise with our friends all over the state before we act. If we cannot act in concert it will be useless to act at all. I am *done done*, as a public man, unless we can have some better understanding with each other and all will agree to give the *working men* more assistance than we have heretofore had. A few of us have had to bear the brunt all the time and but few willing to do more than go out to a public meeting.

Tell me all you have time to say in a letter. Let me know your griefs and consolations, what it was that hurt us most, where the weak points are etc.

2. JOHN BELL, NASHVILLE, TO W. B. CAMPBELL, LEBANON.

October 28, 1839.

I have been deeply grieved to hear of your repeated relapses. I hope you are now entirely clear of disease. Until a day or two past I have anticipated the pleasure of seeing you on my journey to Washington. I intended to have passed by my friend Parson[?] Kellogg's and to have gone out[?] to your father's to see you, but I find it will be my safest and best route to go by Maysville and Guyandotte, Va.

If you have strength enough to travel without risk to your health, I shall feel some interest in your being at Washington certainly on the first day of the Session—as one vote may decide which party shall have the advantage in the organization of the House¹—but if you are doubtful you cannot stand the journey—I would not have you set out for any consideration until you are entirely restored.

I would have written you before, but I have been engaged so constantly either in private or political matters that I have only had time to think about you.

P. S. I shall set out in the morning with my family.

3. JOHN BELL, NASHVILLE, TO W. B. CAMPBELL.

December 8, 1845.

I got home last night from Louisville after a most distressing detention by ice and sandbars in a trip of eleven days from Louisville. Until I reached Smithland² on my way home, I never heard a word of the difficulties in the District, except that there were several candidates which I did supposed [*sic*] would have been remedied by a convention of our friends. You may feel assured that nothing would have been more agreeable to me than your return to Congress. You above all men I would have preferred, feeling entirely confident both of your friendship and competency to do the best for the party and the country, under all the circumstances of the times. But I did not suppose that you could or would go after what you told me lately in a conversation³ on that subject: and our friends here I mean the

¹On the strife which marked the assembling of the House of Representatives of the Twenty-sixth Congress, and which resulted in the election of R. M. T. Hunter of Virginia as Speaker, see Schouler, J., *History of the United States*, Vol. 4, pp. 320-324.

²At the junction of the Cumberland and the Ohio, where it was usually necessary to change boats in going between Nashville and Louisville or Cincinnati.

aspirants have been too rampant and devoid of all proper delicacy and tact. I am not at all surprised at the stand taken by you and your friends in that country. Indeed I now fear that many in this quarter disgusted or displeased with the course of Ewing⁶ and Borrow [sic]⁷ will not come to the polls and we shall lose the election. But this result ought to be avoided if possible. As things now stand you will see I can not run. Nothing could induce me to do so under better prospects than the securing of the District. From what I have heretofore told you—it would be next to absolute ruin to my private affairs to leave home now—but were I to agree to run now (Ewing in the field now and no time to have any concert) the chances would be against my success. Our friends would be confused and divided. I fear I shall be held responsible for this state of things but my absence was innocent and unavoidable—I could not have anticipated any call upon me. I told Cullum⁸ that I would vote for him if he were to run when I heard that Borrow was in the field and so I would. When I heard that Ewing also was in the field, I looked with confidence to a convention to settle the matter, as between them, Cullum and anyone else who might come out. So I do not feel that I am to blame.

Hall [?]⁹ tells me all about the stand taken by the Whigs in Smith and no one reprobrates more strongly than him the course of others here. But after all, my dear sir—ought we not under all circumstances to save the district by uniting upon Ewing. I would give a great deal if you were here just now to state your views and to advise me what to do. I have given you above the result of my reflection since I got home. Nothing but the *necessity* of the case and the certainty that I could remedy what would otherwise be without remedy could induce me to return to the Ho. Rept. But it seemed to me, that even I, by giving my name, as the case now stands, could not insure the result. In truth would I not be increasing the present difficulties. There would then be two Whig candidates. There is not time for Ewing to decline in my favor and have that fact known throughout the District.

In fine, I am satisfied that you and you alone can now save the election. If you just take the field in Smith, discard all feeling in reference to Ewing's course and call upon the Whigs to go for him, you may elect him. Otherwise he is beaten.

With a hundred affectionate recollections of our friendship and none of any other sort.

P. S. The above, as you will see was written in great haste and contains the impromptu expression of my feelings and judgement.

4. JOHN BELL, NASHVILLE, TO W. B. CAMPBELL, MONTEREY.

October 31, 1846.

Capt[ain] Smith of the 3d Infantry is to leave in a day or two for Monterey and I cannot forbear to avail myself of the privilege which his departure affords to write a few lines. All tongues here are open in laudations of your conduct in the late Battle¹⁰ and that

⁶Edwin H. Ewing, elected as a Representative to the Twenty-ninth Congress. In Tennessee the domination of the party convention was only gradually developed, and rivalries between candidates of the same party were frequent.

⁷Washington Barrow, elected a Representative in the Thirtieth Congress.

⁸William Cullom, Representative in the Thirty-second and Thirty-third Congresses.

⁹Doubtless Allan A. Hall, well known as a Whig editor.

¹⁰The Battle of Monterey. See *Mexican War Letters of W. B. Campbell*, pp. 143-146. William B. Campbell was now Colonel of the First Tennessee Volunteers.

of your Regiment. Tennessee—all Tennessee—you may rely upon it, feel[s] grateful and exult[s] in the circumstances which shed so much honor, which add fresh laurels to her brow. I doubt if the Whigs will not nominate you for Governor, whether you desire the nomination or not. The general impression here is that you and your Regiment will be accounted the *Heroes* of the late Battle, notwithstanding all that is said of the Texan rangers and the losses of the 3d Infantry. But we do not know all the particulars here yet. We understand that your Regiment was in *front* in the charge upon the Fort or Battery—the Mississippi Regiment in your rear—also that the Regulars had judged it prudent to weaken the enemy in the neighborhood, or to take some *other batteries* before they made or should make an assault upon the one you took. We suppose we will soon hear how all this may be. Depend upon it, Tennessee *at home* will sustain you and *your* Regiment in your claim to the first and highest honor of the Battle, if things turn out as we now think them to be.

We have no news here worth recounting. I suppose you sometimes see our papers—if you do not you will miss but little.

I heard from Mrs. Campbell today by Mr. Bowen, who saw her last night and she is very well.

Remember me kindly to Peyton¹¹ and Haskell¹² if you meet them and say to them that we are looking out to hear of something to elevate them still higher in the opinion of their friends though we do not want them to be shot. I suppose Peyton was by the side of Genl. Worth in the Battle, but the loss was so small on that side, that we are apt to think here that the danger was not so great.

P. S. Captain Smith who bears this letter is regarded here as a very gentlemanly and clever man, though I think he is a little sore under what he hears said here of the superior daring of your Regiment. Still, he says nothing improper and gives you high praise.

N. B. Mrs. Bell desires her particular regards to you and says she feels a great interest in all that concerns you. I think this rather particular for my part.

5. JOHN BELL, NASHVILLE, TO W. B. CAMPBELL, MONTEREY.

November 22, 1846.

(Private)

I wrote you a short letter not long since by Capt. Smith in which I stated that I thought likely that you would be taken up *Nolens Volens*, and made Governor.¹³ I now see that unless you countermand the proceedings that in very deed[?] you will get the nomination, and *my opinion is that you can be elected without going into the canvass in person or actively*, but while this is my opinion I do not say that I am satisfied that you ought to let this be done. There are two considerations which I think deserve attention before you commit yourself in regard to this matter and I sit down to write you now to bring these considerations before you. One is that there are a number of leading and exceedingly clever fellows in the State that

¹¹Baillie Peyton, Representative in the Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Congresses.

¹²W. T. Haskell, Representative in the Thirtieth Congress.

¹³In December Col. Campbell declined to be a candidate for election either to the governorship or as Representative in Congress. See *Mexican War Letters of W. B. Campbell*, p. 150.

have or have had their eyes on this post at the next election. I speak of such as are known and talked about. There may be others whose friends have not spoken out. I do not take into view either Foster¹⁴ or Jones,¹⁵ as it seems now to be taken for granted that whatever may have been their [views?] they were laid aside before you were spoken of. I allude to N. S. Brown,¹⁶ G. A. Henry,¹⁷ and M. P. Gentry.¹⁸ Milton Brown¹⁹ is also spoken of lately in the Western District. The three former or rather their friends appear to have taken the deepest interest in the question. Now there is not one of these, I take it upon myself to say, who would wish to stand in your way, should they be led to understand that you really desire the place,—but they all are or may be made to understand that although the richly earned fame you have recently acquired in the late battle has caused men to look to you as one of the favorite sons of Ten. [*sic*] and one upon whom they would bestow upon you [*sic*] any honor in their gifts, yet they at the same time: do or may be made to understand that very active steps are and have been taken to bring you on the *track* with the object of gratifying their [*sic*] person[al] feelings and views of *opposition* to them. I mean the three gentlemen above mentioned. They will and no doubt do feel this keenly, and whatever deference they might and no doubt do feel toward you and your claims, they also feel that by this opposition you are sought to be brought out to disappoint them. All these gentlemen have their very warm friends all over this State. Now, *unless you really desire the place* you could strengthen yourself with the friends of all these gentlemen by declining to serve and be in a position to have the undivided friendship and support of all their adherents at some future time if you should need or want them for any object. By agreeing to accept the nomination you seem to be lending yourself to their enemies. This is one view of the subject. Another consideration is that should you be nominated, there will still, notwithstanding the admiration and good feeling which is now universal toward you, there will spring up some heart-burning and unkind feeling. This connected with your absence from the State until a very short time before the election comes on, during all or most of the time before your arrival your opponent Gov. Brown²⁰ or some other man will be in the field actively engaged, and it [is] not to be supposed that your military fame, great as it is, will gain very many democratic votes, it may turn out that you would not be elected. I have already said that my opinion is that you can. But there is great odds against the candidate in high July times who is not present or who cannot

¹⁴Ephraim H. Foster, U. S. Senator, 1838-1839 and 1843-1845. Defeated by Aaron V. Brown in the gubernatorial election, 1845.

¹⁵James C. Jones, Governor of Tennessee, 1841-1845; U. S. Senator, 1851-1857; a would-be rival of Bell for the leadership of the Whig party in Tennessee.

¹⁶Neil S. Brown, elected Governor, in 1847, in the race with Aaron V. Brown, who sought reelection; defeated by William Trousdale in 1849 for the same office.

¹⁷Gustavus A. Henry, defeated by Andrew Johnson in 1853 in the election for Governor; later a Senator in the Congress of the Confederate States of America.

¹⁸Meredith P. Gentry, Representative in Congress from the Twenty-sixth to the Thirty-second Congresses, inclusive, with the exception of the Twenty-eighth; later Representative in the Confederate Congress; one of the ablest of the Tennessee Whigs.

¹⁹Representative in the Twenty-seventh, Twenty-eighth, and Twenty-ninth Congresses; prominent in the Congressional fight over the annexation of Texas.

²⁰Aaron V. Brown, Democratic Congressman in the Twenty-sixth, Twenty-seventh and Twenty-eighth Congresses; elected Governor, 1845, and defeated for reelection in 1847 by Neil S. Brown; an intimate political friend of Polk, and one of the trusted lieutenants of the Jackson party; prominent in the Nashville Convention of 1850; appointed Postmaster-General by Buchanan.

enter actively upon the canvass and this leaves or gives a chance for defeat. Again as part of the same view of the subject, should you get home in time either upon the conclusion of peace or the expiration of your term of service, you will find it very irksome and annoying to have to canvass the whole State after your arduous military services [?] merely for the *honor* for there is no adequate pecuniary emolument of being Governor. This concludes my second consideration which I proposed for your *attention*.

If you desire to be Governor at any time and our Whig party should succeed in the next election, as it now appears they may, you can be elected Gov. without the labor of travelling over the whole State and making speeches in humour and out of humour, in health and out of health etc.

You will receive letters no doubt on this subject from many *dis-interested* friends or those who profess to be so. Many of them will be so and others will not be more so than I am. I claim to be your friend and I am now looking for nothing and until my private affairs are completely *righted* I will look for nothing. But as your friend I do not wish to see you step into this contest. It is not best for you as I candidly think. It will look as if you were very eager and prompt in gathering the fruits of your newly acquired laurels and a little holding back will do you no []²¹. On the contrary, wise and good men will say, There is a man who deserves to be promoted, because while he is more deserving than anyone else he is less eager to press his claims. Now this is my candid opinion, but if you think that you ought not to let this opportunity of promotion pass then I hope you will think my opinion of no consequence and believe that I will go into your support as heartily as any man in Ten. But I still say that I think this is not *the tide in your affairs* that you should lay hold of—for when you are Governor you will not be in a better position for rising to something that will be really worth acquiring than you would be without it.

Again, I do not think you should decline public life. The question is will it suit you better to be Governor, or to go back to Congress. One or the other places or positions I think you must occupy. Unless you are sick or richer than I suppose you to be, I think Congress is decidedly your best position for the present. There you will be with and among men who will make or have the means of making out the list of all the future incumbents of the high offices—the desirable stations under the government during the next administration, that is if our party succeeds as I think they will. If you desire any office, there is the place to be, during the next Congress. You can also better afford to be in Congress than to be Governor. You can save some money in Congress, as Governor you could save nothing, as you would have to come to Nashville to live. Ewing has declined running for the next Congress and you would do a favor to the district to come back and run for that place. You would settle all the strife that is likely to rise in settling that post without you, and no one will or can complain. You can be elected in the district very probably without any opposition even from the democrats as they know that the party could elect you anyhow—but be that as it may, you can go to Congress without getting on the stump at all or even without coming into the district. Jennings, Barrow and Cullum I suppose will be the aspirants if you do not wish to run.

²¹Illegible.

One other point. It may be pressed on you that by allowing your name to be used in the convention for nominating Gov. you may thereby prevent bad feelings that may spring up among the friends of the other aspirants should the convention be compelled to choose between them. That may be true, but the question is would that bad feeling be fatal to the nominee and why should you have the bad feeling that might spring up against you in order to avert it from attaching to others? I have already remarked that I think the Whig nominee or the Whig cause in this State as well as in the Union is likely to be triumphant, and I have said I think you will be elected if you are nominated that there may be but the single drawback in your case, and that is that you may not have it in your power to canvass the State. The grounds for your decision I regard as chiefly concerning yourself. Is it best for you to run for Governor under the circumstances? That is a new position—Congress is an old one. Each may present, does present some advantages—Which presents the greatest to you? That is pretty much the question. I have said enough to show that I think Congress is the best position at least for the next Congress. But *you* must decide the matter and however you decide I beg to be considered your very sincere friend.

P. S. I know of nothing here that can interest you materially. You will have heard that Gentry was married to Caledonia Brown of Columbia the other day. Polk has purchased Grundy's old residence in this town and proposes to spend the remainder of his days in this city²². That is curious I think.

N. B. I had forgot to say that I have not thought myself at liberty to embrace the cause of either Gentry, Brown or Henry. I would support either one of them with zeal.

6. JOHN BELL, WASHINGTON, TO HON. W. B. CAMPBELL, CARTHAGE.
December 23, 1847.

I received your kind letter expressing your gratification at my election²³ on the eve of my departure from Nashville. I did not dream that I might not be able to answer it until now—but true it is my disease held on to me with such tenacity that I did not think it safe to attempt to write a letter until the 17th instant, when I ventured to write a few persons at Nashville on points I deemed indispensable to advise them on. Be assured that I felt and still feel deeply and sensibly the interest you took in my election. The fidelity and firmness with which Flippen[?] and Barrett[?] stuck to me I know to be but the response of your feelings and wishes. They acted most generously and nobly, as you saw. I am quite well advised of the feelings of the persons alluded to in your letter. Caruthers²⁴ was more opposed to me than he dared to avow except to those whom he knew to be as much opposed as himself, but Jones²⁵ spent 5 or 6 days at Nashville when he should have been either with his sick family or soliciting subscriptions for the railroad for which he is to be so richly paid, doing nothing on earth that any one of my friends could find out, except to condemn the idea of electing any or taking

²²Cp. M. M. Quaife, *The Diary of James K. Polk*, Vol. II, pp. 416, 422, 425 ff.

²³This letter presents an interesting commentary of the long and bitter struggle in the Tennessee Assembly which resulted in the election of John Bell to the Senate of the United States.

²⁴Robert L. Caruthers, Whig Representative in the Twenty-seventh Congress.

²⁵James C. Jones, ex-Governor, was now actively engaged in the promotion of railroads in Tennessee.

up any Middle Ten. man for Senator²⁶ Still there was no member of the Legislature to whom he thus addressed himself, or any one out of the Legislature, so stupid as not to see that he had a lurking desire in his heart to be taken up himself. In truth he calculated—as there was much seeming ground for the calculation—that I would become so *odious* to E. and W. Tenn. by having my name held up against their respective candidates and by my having to vote as a member in some 25 or 30 elections as I did, in which there were altogether about 300 candidates, that any other prominent man of Middle Ten. would have a better chance than myself to secure the prize of Senator. He as well as Foster²⁷ saw that the lot was likely to fall on a Middle Ten. man and both openly professed to be opposed to the election of a Middle Ten. man, thinking that that was the surest way of securing the place to themselves and of putting me down or making me obnoxious to the East and to the West. Well, do you or can you realize that I did escape absolute destruction considering the difficulties and the powerful foes with which I was surrounded. It looks to me now as one of the most singular results in the history of elections. If either you or G. A. Henry had been nominated with the sort of opposition or rather malignant hatred against me that actuated Jones and Foster I could not have been elected—but my good fortune was to have your friendship and as for Maj. Henry while he really desired that the Senator should be chosen from E. or W. Ten. that Middle Tenn including himself might have a chance for the vacancy 4 years hence, he was opposed or too much my friend to interfere against me. If you had wanted the place, you could have defeated me. I am not sure that Henry could, for Foster was as much opposed to him as to me. But the secret of my success was that you [were] out of the way and no prominent men but Jones and Foster out and out against me. I had as against them, all the Middle Ten. delegation except 3 who would have gone for Foster against me and possibly 2 who would have gone for Jones against me, leaving me against either of them some 22 Middle Ten. Whig votes. They could not overcome that phalanx and it was that, that by standing by me, elected me I ought to give credit also to five members of the Western District who were for me from the first: Marsh [?], Kyle, Rosier [?], McCalla, and []²⁸ you will see that these come near making a majority of all the Whigs in the Legislature. But enough of this. I shall always feel grateful to you for the position you assumed in the election. I know that you were looked upon as a *resort* by which I could at last be defeated if all other means had failed.

I have seen Col. Garland and several other regular officers from Mexico. I hope you will credit me when I say that I heard with pride the high terms in which they spoke of you and how clearly and strongly they *discriminated* between you and other volunteer officers, some of whom acquired distinction. They all seemed to look upon you as of a different order of officers—as belonging by your high bearing rather to the class of regular officers than to the volunteer class. I could tell you some things to flatter you, but I will not write them.

²⁶The physical structure of the state and the course of early settlement combined to develop in Tennessee an intense political sectionalism, which necessitated a rotation, in choosing Senators and important state officers, between East, Middle and West Tennessee.

²⁷Ephraim H. Foster.

²⁸The reading of these names is very uncertain.

Now as to things here. Clay²⁹ is not by far so strong as I expected he would be. He thinks they do not expect to take him up at the North. All the Whigs—I mean the politicians and practical men go upon the idea of availability more than personal performance. The Quakers and anti-war and anti-military chieftain men go for Clay or McClean³⁰. But they are in a minority. Scott would be preferred at the North to Taylor³¹ because Scott claims to reside North and his Whig principles and practices are or would be openly avowed. Still they see that Taylor is greatly preferred by the Whigs of the South and that with the people or masses at the North he is a greater favorite than Scott. Therefore if they can only get from Taylor an avowal [sic.] that he is a Whig or get him to take a nomination of a Whig National Convention they will run him of choice. Some think they will take him up and run him upon his own terms, but I fear Ohio, New York and New England will not do this. We must arrange it so that they can take him up however. Unless they do, we cannot elect him. Many think Penna. will go for Taylor. I mean that he can carry the State. The Whigs of that State are bent upon running him.—So are they of Va. except Botts³² and two or three other public men. Maryland will stick to Taylor, convention or no convention.

The Democrats [. . . on grounds of policy to keep . . .]³³ Cass, Woodbury, and Buchanan³⁴ equally. Some go for Dallas and some for Walker³⁵. Many knowing[?] Democrats[?] think Woodbury will be the man and some keen fellows say that Polk³⁶ expects the nomination on account of the great division among the democracy. Quitman and Davis³⁷ of Mississippi are both talked of as Vice Presidents to keep Miss. right etc., etc.

But I will write you soon again if [I] continue to improve in health. Please write me.

P. S. Jeff Campbell³⁸ was made cl[er]k by Brown³⁹ and Crozier⁴⁰

²⁹The references to Henry Clay and his desire for the Whig nomination for the Presidency in 1848 which fill this and the two succeeding letters are expressions of what was one of the characteristic features of Bell's position as a Whig leader. This was an attitude of doubt and jealousy towards the great Whig leader from Kentucky.

³⁰John McLean of Ohio, long a Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, and a Presidential aspirant.

³¹The two most prominent generals of the Mexican War, Winfield Scott and Zachary Taylor, were pressed upon their party by their Whig friends, as candidates for the Presidential nomination in 1848. The success of Harrison, as a "military hero" candidate, to say nothing of the example of General Jackson in the opposite party, affords a sufficient explanation.

³²John Minor Botts of Virginia, Representative in the Twenty-sixth, Twenty-seventh and Thirtieth Congresses.

³³The reading here is uncertain.

³⁴Lewis Cass of Michigan, Levi Woodbury of New Hampshire, James Buchanan of Pennsylvania.

³⁵G. M. Dallas of Pennsylvania and R. J. Walker of Mississippi, Vice-President and Secretary of the Treasury, respectively, in the administration of James K. Polk.

³⁶Polk had declared his intention to retire after one term. In his diary he uniformly repeats his intention to adhere to this resolution. It was often rumored, however, by those unfriendly to him, that he would seize the chance of the nomination if it appeared.

³⁷J. A. Quitman and Jefferson Davis.

³⁸Thomas Jefferson Campbell of Tennessee, Whig Representative in the Twenty-seventh Congress, Clerk of the House of Representatives in the Thirtieth and Thirty-first Congresses.

³⁹Washington Barrow.

⁴⁰John H. Crozier, Whig Representative in the Twenty-ninth and Thirtieth Congresses.

coming in and taking ground that they would not go to the Whig caucus for organizing the House and voting for Winthrop⁴¹ unless if he was elected Campbell should be elected clk. Say nothing about this, but Tenn. is not well thought of for this mode of proceeding.

7. JOHN BELL, WASHINGTON, TO W. B. CAMPBELL.

April 13, 1848.

Can you not go down to Gallatin and defeat or check the infatuation of our friends at Nashville and Lebanon and thus save the party, and may be the *Union*? Do you not see that Mr. Clay⁴² is prepared to cut loose from the South and rely upon the free states to elect him? I am astonished at the want of sagacity in our leading men who head the Clay movement in Ten. Not that I think we are ever likely hereafter to have a Southern President. If we can get Taylor he may be the last of the Mohicans, but if we can get him he may by his justice, moderation and firmness stay the tide of fanaticism at the North and leave all sections free and equal in the race [?] of ambition [?] and leave our institutions with a due share of protection and safety from Northern fanatics.

The Clay storm of the North was got up not so much to elect Clay as to break down Taylor—This our friends in Ten. do not appear to see. Much of the fervor in favor of Clay in the Eastern cities was intended to glorify him supposing that he would retire—he encouraged that expectation as you will see in the movement in the Ky. convention, but the storm once up, which perhaps Clay foresaw, the grand [?] movers [?] in it cannot control it. They or many of the leading ones of it, are now trying to get out of the trap they put themselves in. The popular feeling among the Whigs of the North is still for Taylor. But the fanatics [?] are united against him and the politicians while they all want a Northern man are many of them willing to take Taylor. New England I think after urging Webster⁴³ in the Convention will go for Taylor if the South sticks to him, otherwise they will go for Scott or McLean. N. York may go for Clay that is Eastern N. Y., while the western section of the State is strongly for Taylor.

But the great point is, that except about three of the Whig members of Congress I know of none who have any confidence that Clay can be elected even if he gets the nomination. But I have so many things to do, so many letters to write, that I cannot say more to you now. Pray take some active part in preventing the madness now afoot in our State. I ought to advise you that I have heard some hints from home that I am for Taylor because I expect a seat in the cabinet under him. I have advised the friends of Taylor here from the time of my arrival here that I prefer my seat in the Senate to any appointment [. . .]⁴⁴ can give and will accept none in any event.

⁴¹Robert C. Winthrop of Massachusetts, Whig Representative in the Twenty-sixth to the Thirty-first Congresses, inclusive, and Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Thirtieth and Thirty-first Congresses.

⁴²The national convention of the Whigs was to be held in Baltimore. This letter again illustrates Bell's opposition to Henry Clay.

⁴³It was the misfortune of Daniel Webster, the "favorite son" of the New England Whigs, that he could not command, in the country as a whole, sufficient strength to secure the nomination of the party.

⁴⁴The name is not clear.

8. JOHN BELL, WASHINGTON, TO W. B. CAMPBELL.

May 23, 1848.

I am obliged to you for your late letter. I see you comprehend fully the motives of the late Clay and *confusion* movement in our State. I am convinced that Jones, Foster and Milton Brown of the District, are all less concerned for the general interest than their own *prominence* and if they cannot secure that, they are content that the Whig party should go to the d—l. Is not this too bad?

The proceedings at Gallatin were all right, it seems. Were you there? I have no letter yet on the subject.

Taylor has still the best chance for the nomination, but the North are now bent on having a Northern man. They say they fear the *masses* will not agree to take Taylor and that they will be defeated in the election. Clay they would take, because they think him a Northern man on the subject of slavery. But they do not believe he can be elected President. They can give him the Whig States of the North, but they see he cannot get enough of the South to elect him, and therefore he will be dropped as a matter of course. I am not sure if they can not get Scott or McLean that they will not try to take up Crittenden.⁴⁵ They regard him as standing in the same category with Clay on the Slave question. But I doubt if Crittenden is in a position to consent to trip up the heels of old Zack⁴⁶ and besides I think he would be the most negative sort of a Whig President we could have. I find him to be in favor with Polk and the whole democratic party. Besides if Crittenden is taken up, I regard the Foster and McNary clique as his chosen friends in Ten. They could easily reconcile Jones to their interests—but that is a private ground of opposition and while it would have its due weight with me, I put my opposition on the ground that he is not with the South and for one I prefer a Northern man with Southern feelings to a Southern man with Northern feelings. I have seen enough of Crittenden this winter to satisfy me that he is playing this game.

Cass is still regarded as the most likely candidate of the Democratic party. You see the wrangling in their convention. I would not be surprised if Butler⁴⁷ of Ky is their nominee. Polk no doubt supposes that he may be taken up in the confusion that may ensue in the Convention. Still he stoutly denies that he either wishes or would accept. That is all fudge of course!

I have not time to write you more this morning.

9. JOHN BELL, WASHINGTON, TO W. B. CAMPRELL.

April 14, 1849.

I have not written you heretofore because I have been literally overwhelmed by letters requesting my interposition on behalf of friends who want office etc. I had 500 letters on hand unanswered at the adjournment of the Senate. I have been kept here until this time in attending as far as I can to these applications. Of course but few offices will come to Ten. and the mass of our friends must be disappointed. Still we may be able to get a few friends provided for as time goes on some few next winter etc. May be one or so in

⁴⁵John J. Crittenden of Kentucky. United States Senator. 1817-1819, 1835-1841, 1842-1848, and 1855-1861; Attorney General of the United States, 1841, and 1850-1853; Governor of Kentucky, 1848-1850; Representative from Kentucky, 1861-1863.

⁴⁶Taylor.

⁴⁷W. O. Butler, Representative in the Twenty-sixth and Twenty-seventh Congresses; candidate for Vice-President on the Democratic ticket in 1848.

the summer. I have done all I could to impress the Departments with the necessity of doing as much as possible for Ten. as she has been delt [*sic*] so liberally by, in the late adminn. To strip her down to a small allowance just now might injure us much. I get promises for the future, but not much in hand. Some few by coming on here get something they would not have obtained otherwise and what perhaps they did not altogether merit.

Our friend J. P. Thompson I am anxious to do something for, but cannot now. Laughlin's⁴⁸ place I fear we shall lose if he is removed as I suppose he will. The Secry. after hard arguing[?] said he did not think he could give to Ten. but would something in its place by J[u]ly. You know [how] much these promises are worth. I do not know yet what we can get for Bennett. I proposed him strongly for the Mail Agency, the P. M. General would not promise, but did not deny. I will see if he has, or is disposed to do anything today.

I have not time to write you on general subjects, that must be left until I get home. I believe Gen. Taylor is entirely sound on every point. Removals will be made in all cases of interfere[nce] in elections and not beyond that except incompetency or want of fidelity. If anything is done wrong by the Pres[iden]t it is the fault or error of his advisors.

Hall⁴⁹ is the happiest man I ever saw My respects to Mrs. C—

10. JOHN BELL, WASHINGTON, TO W. B. CAMPBELL.

January 25, 1851.

I dare say you think I have forgotten you. You have a right to think that I have neglected you, not having written you a word for so long a time, but that I must say is no true sign of my forgetfulness or of my declining friendship; for whom have I not neglected, whom have I not been compelled to neglect, except the 80 or 100 applicants for office from our State who have been pressing for some employment ever since Gen'l Taylor was elected? I could not answer all their letters or those of their friends. I have been overwhelmed, but you may say I have done but little for them at last, only a few have been provided for. That is true but then I have had to *miss fire* [?] again and again—be disappointed again and again and to write to the applicant again and again giving a history of what I was doing—what I had done and explain as I might the cause of defeat. This has been my avocation since the election of Gen. Taylor. Every old friend in the State, who wanted an office, actually believes that if I had so *willed* I had influence enough to get *him* an office. You may see how this idea has worried, nay, distracted me. But every good Whig in Mi[ssissippi], Texas, Arkansas and lately California who wanted office have written and pressed me, as the only Whig Senator from [the] Southwest to aid them. I have had to keep up a correspondence as well as I could with them. Many of them having gone from Ten. and feeling that they had claims on me. My time and my mind have been equally overwhelmed by this pressure. I can only expect to stand in the esteem of men who have the mind to perceive and appreciate these circumstances of embarrassment [*sic*].

⁴⁸As to S. H. Laughlin see TENNESSEE HISTORICAL MAGAZINE, Vol. 2, pp. 43-44. He was Recorder of the General Land Office in the administration of Polk.

⁴⁹Doubtless Allan A. Hall.

I write you now to say that I think you ought to run for Governor⁵⁰. I have not time to enter into all the whys and wherefores. Suffice it to say that I think you have too much force of character and influence to be wasted on a Circuit Court Bench⁵¹. You can not long be contented with such a situation. It is alike unjust to you and to the public. Again, I am not sure if you are not the only man who can beat Trousdale. I rather believe you are. You can beat him, I am sure. In that position you can look out for whatever else you desire. Think of these things I pray you.

The aspirants [?] here are *floundering* in search of ways to catch the popular gale and be drifted into power. Fillmore⁵² and Scott are the only Whigs who the judgment of sensible men are likely to be put up for the Presidency. Clay and Webster I think are out of the question.

You will soon see a paper signed by all the Southern Whigs, going against all men who favor agitation⁵³. I am so disposed too—but have not yet signed because I thought the movement was not quite such in point of support as to make it effective. Clay perhaps thinks it will help him. I think it more likely that it will help to make Fillmore the *candidate*—or one of the Whig candidates. Scott may run also and the election be brought into the Ho. Rep.

The Democrats are not fixed in their man either. No calculation can be made as between Cass and Buchanan, Butler, Dickinson⁵⁴, etc., etc.

I think Scott and Crittenden will be most likely to be the Whig ticket, but Fillmore I would prefer if we could see any chance to elect him.

11. JOHN BELL, WASHINGTON, TO W. B. CAMPBELL.

March 20, 1851.

I did think to have written you an original letter on the subject of the political aspect of the times as it presents itself to me, but I find I have so many letters to write before I leave—that I shall never get away unless I abbreviate whenever I can. I therefore content myself by sending you an *abstract* or rather an extract from a private letter which I wrote some time since to Col. J. H. McMahan of Memphis⁵⁵. I do not know that I could add much to what I said in that letter.

I know not whether you may not have very different views from

⁵⁰In the campaign of 1849 the Democrats had elected William Trousdale as Governor, *vice* the Whig Neil S. Brown, who had stood for re-election. The Democrats were now divided over the Compromise of 1850 and the Nashville Convention, and the Whigs were bent on redeeming the state before the national election of 1852. On the politics of these years in Tennessee, see two papers by the present writer: "Tennessee and National Political Parties, 1850-1860," in *Annual Report of the American Historical Association*, 1914, pp. 243 ff.; and "Tennessee, the Compromise of 1850, and the Nashville Convention," in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, Vol. 2, pp. 313 ff.

⁵¹W. B. Campbell was at this time Judge of the Fourth Circuit of Tennessee.

⁵²Millard Fillmore, Representative from New York in the Twenty-third, Twenty-fifth, Twenty-sixth and Twenty-seventh Congresses; defeated as the Whig candidate for Governor in 1844; State Comptroller in 1847.

⁵³Five Whigs, of whom one was Meredith P. Gentry of Tennessee, and two Democrats joined in initiating an address which declared the finality of the Compromise of 1850, and the resolution of the signers to oppose the candidacy of anyone who refused to accept that finality. The address received forty-four signatures.

⁵⁴Daniel S. Dickinson of New York, United States Senator, 1844-1851.

⁵⁵Sometime editor of one of the Memphis Whig newspapers.

those you will find expressed in the extract I send you—but that will make no difference between us. I know I am liable to mistakes as well as others, and I shall be glad to fall in with any sounder views on any question whatever.

I presume you will this day be nominated for Gov. I know you will consent to this with great reluctance and that it will give you some trouble, but still I think you will do right in accepting the nomination. You are the only man, I believe, who can beat Trousdale and I am confident you can. By doing so you will do great service to the Whig party in Ten. and will at the same time place yourself in a position to command whatever you may desire hereafter.

12. [JOHN BELL] TO [J. H. McMAHON].⁵⁶

Extract.

[1851.]

"I now wish to give you a bird's-eye view of the state of the political atmosphere as it presents itself to my vision and judgement.—You must decide whether it is worth any consideration.

"The Whig members of Congress from the South generally—or with few exceptions, regarding Mr Clay as out of the way from age, and Mr. Webster from the want of sufficient elements of popularity, prefer running Fillmore as the Whig candidate for the Presidency. He, as a northern man, has behaved so well on the Slave question, that they think it but his *due* to *re-elect* him if they can. He is believed to be *strong* with the Whigs in all the South. It is manifest, that, *at present*, he cannot get the North, or could not, if the election were to come off now; but his friends think that he will be much strengthened before the meeting of next Congress (or by this time next year, which will be time enough to settle the question of their candidacy), at the North, in consequence of the change of sentiment going on there in relation to the Slave issues.

"From this view of his prospects at the North, our Whig friends at the South regard it as the true policy of the Whig party of the South, to hold up Mr. Fillmore as their first choice, regarding both Mr. Clay and Mr. Webster as deserving of all the honors which could be heaped upon them—but still as out of the *lists*.—A better view of the subject may be, to hold up Clay, Webster and Fillmore, as each richly deserving to be nominated and elected,—but still speaking of Mr. Fillmore as the favorite, from his better prospect of success. Some few of our Southern Whigs think that it is the true interest of the South and of the Southern portion of the Whig party, to run up the banner of Mr. Fillmore, and nail it to the *mast*—though there may not be any reasonable *prospect* of his success. This they think, would be better than to take up Scott at any time;—better to be beaten with Fillmore than to triumph with Scott. I do not agree in this view, as things now present themselves North and South. It may be, that by, or before this time next year, developments may be made of Northern Whig policy,—or of Northern sentiments generally on questions touching Southern interests, that I would come into the policy of *sinking* or swimming with Fillmore, but I do not embrace it now.

⁵⁶The person to whom the communication is written, and the date, are not given in the manuscript, which seems to be a copy by a clerk; but are easily determined from the reference in the preceding letter, in which this was inclosed.

⁵⁷William H. Seward, Whig Governor of New York, 1838-1842; United States Senator, 1849-1861.

"Now, as to Genl Scott, the Whigs of Indiana, Ohio and Pennsylvania, are already moving in his behalf. New York, it is believed, will also make strong demonstrations soon in his favor, and his friends confidently claim that those States can be easily carried for him at the election. The Whigs of New England and New Jersey are also said to be decidedly in his favor.—Well, you may ask, what is the objection to him in the minds of Southern Whigs? It is this:—While Genl Scott is admitted to be sound on the Slavery question, and it is understood that he supports the *Compromise*, and will execute the fugitive slave law as it is, yet, if he is run, that all the late opponents of the *Compromise*, and the objectors to the fu[gi]tive slave law among the Whigs at the North will rally under his banner, and if he is elected, will come in for a share of his countenance and patronage.—I ought to have premised that, the particular friends of Fillmore and Webster in New York, are standing out against Scott, as it is their interest to elect Fillmore—or some other man who will feel no interest or inclination to give any of the patronage to the active followers of Seward.

"You will readily see how those interests clash in New York, and it is the same thing in Massachusetts and other states North.—But the question is, inasmuch as the mass of the Whigs in all the Northern States opposed the *Compromise* and the fugitive slave law, (and many of them still object to the fugitive slave law,) though they are now willing to acquiesce in the *Compromise*, and to execute the fugitive slave law while it stands on the Statute Book, and only claim the privilege of procuring a modification by future legislation,—is it wise to proscribe them and say, we will not even fight under the same banner with them, though the Standard-bearer be, in all respects, sound upon the slave issues?—Is it not—or will it not be the wisest course to let them have this means of *easing off*, and finally dropping altogether the questions which have given rise to the late agitations? By declining all sort of association with them, you drive them to the formation of a permanent Northern and Sectional organization:—one which may take up a man who represents their *past policy* in all things.—You will remember that, as to the Anti-slavery party—the fanatics and real Abolitionists, they will not unite with any other party in support of Scott, or any one else of his Kidney or principles. As to all further agitations on the Territorial or fugitive slave law issues, my opinion is, that if not provoked or unwisely treated, it will gradually die away among all parties at the North, except the genuine fanatics and Abolitionists. I believe that now, the mass of the Whigs,—or all the Whig leaders of the North would let those questions sleep, but for the pride of consistency: and for the further reason that, their followers among the people have not yet had time to be appealed to, and convinced that they had better retrace their steps. The Seward⁵⁷ party in the Legislature I think, gave strong evidence that they were willing to waive old issues, by agreeing to elect Fish⁵⁸ to the Senate. He is understood here, to be sound and conservative on the Slave question. It so happened that he had not been in any position which required him to commit himself by voting on those questions: and therefore his supporters in the Legislature could not be proved by the record, to be acting inconsistently with their former doctrines and policy on the slave question, by giving him their votes.—It is known that Mr. Fillmore advised his friends in the Legislature to vote for Mr. Fish, and all of them did so, except one man—Beekman.

⁵⁸Hamilton Fish, Whig Representative in the Twenty-eighth Congress; Governor of New York, 1848-1850; United States Senator, 1851-1857.

"You will observe that I present these views in favor of uniting upon Scott, upon the hypothesis that Fillmore cannot be made strong enough to run him with any prospect of success:—and upon the further hypothesis, that nothing transpires before this time next year, which shall require the South in necessary vindication of their interests and rights, to support no man who shall appear to be in association, to any extent, with the enemies of Southern interests and rights. If the views I have presented are correct, then it follows, that while the Southern Whigs hold up Clay, Webster and Fillmore, and more particularly *Fillmore*, as,—under all the circumstances, the man they prefer to run, it would be unwise to assail Scott, or indulge in any ill-natured flings at him,—but rather to give due support, and pay proper respect to the pretensions of all the "Jewels" of the Whig party.—The idea is, to let things drift along for the present, in regard to Scott, and wait for further developments to guide, as to who shall be finally resolved on.

"You will observe that in the preceding views, I have insisted that Webster shall be held up as worthy the support of the Whig party for the Presidency. This I think is justly due to him for the well-timed modification of his views on the subject of the Wilmot Proviso. By this course he hazarded his standing in all the North, and particularly in his own State. In this respect, in boldness he went beyond Mr. Clay, who, in his course, had no reason to apprehend any forfeiture of the confidence and support of his own State.—But the chief merit of Mr. Webster's great speech on the Compromise was, that in it, he grappled directly and powerfully with the morbid and mischievous anti-slavery feelings and prejudices of the whole North. For this service alone, considering his high character, and the weight his opinions are destined to have upon this subject,—still greater, as the present excitement wears off,—I consider that Mr. Webster deserves the lasting gratitude of the South, and the Presidency itself, if sufficient strength could be rallied to elect him."

13. JOHN BELL, NASHVILLE, TO W. B. CAMPBELL.

July 5, 1851.

I see so many notices of your late attack of sickness,⁵⁹ expressing the hope that you would soon *be able to meet your opponent* that I have thought it might be proper for me to write you a few words on the subject. I fear you may be induced by what may appear the *wishes* of the *Whigs* to recommence the canvass before your health is entirely restored. I write to guard you against this course. Un[l]ess your strength shall have been fully restored I would do no such thing. I do not believe from all I can hear, and I have inquired diligently—that it is at all important that you should resume the canvass. I believe Gov. Trousdale will *lose* by his course in continuing to speak while you are *unable* to meet him. And again, I think your election is sure any how. Trousdale has defeated his prospects, if he ever had any, by his course on the Compromise. Sentiment is decidedly against him on that subject.

One thing I think you ought to do if you have strength enough to dictate your opinion on the subject of internal improvements and especially in relation to the projected railroads in East Ten, and have your views on these points fully circulated in that part of the State. This I hope you will be able to do. . . .⁶⁰

⁵⁹William B. Campbell was critically ill during his canvass for Governor.

⁶⁰An omitted paragraph deals with the health of Mrs. Bell and with wishes for the improvement of Campbell's health.

We have but little excitement here on the subject of the election. The railroad⁶¹ seems for the present to absorb most of the public interest and attention, but I really believe the Whigs of this District will give a united and full vote at the election. I can hear of no faltering especially in your case. Just before the election we must invent some plan of *rousing* the proper spirit and interest all over the State.

I have not made any speeches because tho I had some leisure, after you commenced the canvass—I feared that I might say something, that would tend to break the force of the position you had taken in your debate with Trousdale and which was a very effective and telling one—and secondly by making myself prominent I knew I would be rousing a spirit of jealousy in some other leading Whig—which would be, *perhaps* more detrimental to our success in the August elections than any good I could effect by my speeches. Still if Mrs. B. gets better and I find I can effect anything in the closing weeks of the canvass I propose to make a few speeches.

14. JOHN BELL, SENATE CHAMBER, TO W. B. CAMPBELL.

[1852.]⁶²

I enclose you a note from Mr. Charlton,⁶³ Senator from Ga. requesting the appointment of Edward G. Wilson [?] Commissioner for taking acknowledgement of deeds, etc., for *Savannah* in that State. I believe you have the power by law to make such appointments.

I am still in bad health tho' improved since I saw you. I have more than once since I came here been *privately* resolved to resign my seat in the Senate as I intimated to you I would probably do before I left Nashville. I have kept my wish to myself.

If I continue to improve during the Fall I may hold on—but should I grow worse—I will not return here again.

I have written to scarcely any one this year as writing is painful to me and besides injurious. You will see that I have taken no active part in the matter of selecting a candidate nor in supporting the nomination of the Scott ticket. I have avoid[ed] all such subjects of excitement not growing out of my official duties here that I could. And besides I saw so much of what I considered uncandid management on the part of some of the principal supporters of Genl. Scott's nomination that I had no heart in the business. I shall support the ticket, but do not suppose I shall be able to take any active part in the canvass. I see the Whigs generally go into the support of the Whig ticket. This I expected, but still see that there is a good deal of opposition in E. Tenn. Enough if not overcome probably to defeat the ticket in Tenn. In the Northern States Scott's prospects look rather flattering, especially if as they now indicate the German population go into his support he will probably carry all the Whig States of the North and some of the Democratic States of the Northwest.

15. JOHN BELL, WASHINGTON, TO W. B. CAMPBELL, NASHVILLE, TENN.
Sept. 3, 1852.

Your very friendly letter of the 25 ult. I received and read but a few moments ago and then destroyed it. It is not the only letter I

⁶¹The Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad.

⁶²The letter is without date, but must have been written in the summer of 1852.

⁶³Robert M. Charlton, Senator from Georgia, 1852-1853.

have received from Gentry's⁶⁴ old friends which I would not show to him. I tried my best to keep Gentry and Williams⁶⁵ from going to the extremes of their last speeches and afterward from repudiating the ticket, but in vain. I believe they thought I was in great error in not going with them.

I fear my health will not enable me to adopt your suggestion and make some speeches. I see the force of your reasoning and I only regret that the prospect of restored health is not such as to encourage the belief that I shall be able to make a respectable effort at speech making without serious injury. It hurts me to speak in the Senate even and what would be my condition in the open air? Still if the little rest I can have this month brings me up any I will make a few speeches in Octr or try.

As for Jones,⁶⁶ you may rely upon it, he is only regarded as a *stump* stereotyped speaker here, whatever he may be at home. Still he will be apt to command the patronage of Ten. if Scott is elected.

Gentry and myself arranged to see the President⁶⁷ tomorrow morning, when together yesterday, in relation to yourself,⁶⁸ but having heard this morning that the Pres[ident] proposed to leave the city today for the Springs in Va. and living near him I went over early to see him.

I adopted the line of policy Gentry and myself had agreed upon. I told the Pres[ident] that you were of so proud and independent a spirit that you would never sue for office, but that Gentry and myself had become satisfied from the tenor of your correspondence, that you were becoming quite restless and dissatisfied with your present position—and that indeed you could not look forward for the next few years to anything that [would be] agreeable to your feelings, that you felt it to be sort of degradation to be following in the lead of the men who were *conspicuous* in leading the Whig masses, etc., etc., and we thought it was due to you that you should be removed to some other sphere if in his power to do it. He said promptly that he knew you to be one of his best friends and he would gladly give you any place at his disposal. I told him a mission abroad would suit you best. He said there was now but one vacancy, the mission to Austria, that the present charge had requested *to come* home but as Congress had refused to grant an outfit, there would be no vacancy there. I replied to him that you would, I was sure, not accept any but a full mission, and I alluded to the rumors about Berlin, not knowing but that a vacancy might yet occur there. He then said he would tell me in *confidence* how the mission to Berlin came to be talked about. He had at one time thought of transferring Barnard⁶⁹ to London to supply Lawrence's⁷⁰ place, but he had abandoned the idea and sent

⁶⁴Meredith P. Gentry (see note 18) bitterly opposed the nomination of Scott. Cp. Sioussat, *Tennessee and National Political Parties, 1850-1860*, p. 254.

⁶⁵Christopher H. Williams, Whig Representative from Tennessee in the Twenty-fifth, Twenty-sixth, Twenty-seventh, Thirty-first and Thirty-second Congresses. He followed Gentry in the latter's breach with his party.

⁶⁶James C. Jones had been elected Senator from Tennessee in 1851. He was now Bell's rival for the leadership of the Tennessee Whigs, and there was bitter enmity between him and Meredith P. Gentry. Jones had ardently supported Scott for the nomination.

⁶⁷Millard Fillmore.

⁶⁸Campbell was approaching the end of his term as Governor, and was considering the acceptance of a diplomatic post as an alternative to running a second time. See below.

⁶⁹Daniel Dewey Barnard, Representative from New York in the Twentieth, Twenty-sixth, Twenty-seventh, and Twenty-eighth Congresses, Minister to Prussia, 1850 to 1853.

Ingersoll⁷¹ as Pa was without a full mission. He then inquired if I thought you would accept the place offered to Henry. I told him I thought not. He said if Henry⁷² declined he could give you that place. I did not encourage him to suppose that you would have it, but urged that he would hold that place up for some Tennessean. He said he would not promise me to do that, as he would doubtless be pressed soon by many applicants from other States.

The way Henry got that place was this—Genl Wilson⁷³ was rejected by the Senate the last night of the session unexpectedly. The Pres't sent for me to his room and asked me if Henry was lawyer enough for the place—as he had thought of sending his name into the Senate. I told him he was a very good lawyer, but I felt certain he would not accept it. He said he had no time to make any other selection and he would send in his name anyhow, and he did so. He did not even allow me to name any one else. I think it likely that Crittenden suggested Henry to the Pres[ident], as he knew that Henry wanted to be consul to Liverpool at the beginning of Taylor's admin[istra]tion and his son got the place. This however is only conjecture.

The only effect our application to the Pres[ident] will be, and I think it will have that effect, to keep you in line [?] should any full mission become vacant soon. The fact is Brown⁷⁴ ought to have come home when he had leave to do so. The Pres[ident] told me *in confidence* that he had seen or heard of no communication from Brown since he came into office and I assure you Tenn. stands low abased [?] in her [?] diplomatic circles. This of course is strictly private. I have written until my pulse is thirty degrees higher than is right, and I must stop.

16. JOHN BELL, SENATE CHAMBER, TO W. B. CAMPBELL.

Jan'y. 6, 1852 [1853].⁷⁵

. . . ⁷⁶I found Gentry very much disposed to quarrel with me. All I said to him at our meeting in Nashville did not allay his suspicions of my have [*sic*] leagued with others to destroy him or render him powerless in Ten. He seemed not to have attended to my explanations at Nashville, or allowed them to pass out of his memory and all his suspicions continued to fester in his mind.

After a steep [?] breeze, half amiable and half hostile, I succeeded in making him believe, or I hope, that I was incapable of a purpose of destroying him or of doing anything that would have that effect. He has been sick a good deal of his time this session, and unless he finished writing out his Franklin speech⁷⁷ in the last three

⁷⁰Abbott Lawrence, Whig Representative from Massachusetts in the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-sixth Congresses; Northeastern Boundary Commissioner in 1842; Minister to Great Britain, 1849-1852; founder of the Lawrence Scientific School at Cambridge.

⁷¹Joseph Reed Ingersoll, Whig Representative from Pennsylvania in the Twenty-fourth Congress, and in the Twenty-seventh to the Thirtieth Congresses, inclusive; Minister to Great Britain, 1852-1853.

⁷²Gustavus R. Henry.

⁷³Not identified.

⁷⁴Neil S. Brown, who had been defeated by Trousdale in 1849, in the election for Governor of Tennessee, had been appointed Minister to Russia.

⁷⁵The date is written 1852, but this is obviously a slip of the writer.

⁷⁶An omitted paragraph relates to Bell's health and personal matters.

⁷⁷This speech Gentry later published: *Speech of M. P. Gentry of Tennessee, vindicating his course in the late presidential election, delivered to his constituents at Franklin, Tenn., November 20, 1852.* Washington, 1853.

or four days in which I have not seen him, he has not finished it yet. He did not tell me the tenor of it. I renewed my former advice of moderation, etc., etc., and left him. His feelings are all kind towards you. He has not or says he has not determined yet what he will do when he goes home, as to running for any place—whether for Governor in the event you do not, or for Congress in his old district.

Williams seems to be quiescent but would not be surprised if he is again a candidate. He does not seem to be at all excited.

Now as to yourself. I have only to say what I said when I saw you last. If you are quite confident that you can make handsomely or largely by going into business in N. O.⁷⁸ I think you will act wisely in doing so, but then you must recollect that there cannot be any certain calculation of profits in business, and by giving up your present position of influence in the State, you will impair your future political prospects. And I think no man in the State may calculate with greater certainty than yourself upon your future success in that line, and my wishes are that you should run again for the place you now occupy and I hope you will.

As to what the state of things here under the new admin[ist]ration you [may] judge in part from the speeches of Mason [?]⁷⁹ [. . .]⁸⁰ and Cass in regard to Cuban affairs that is supposed to be the ground of the new [?] admin[ist]ration. Soule⁸¹ and perhaps some one or two others in the South will take somewhat different ground, but we shall see in a few days. That threatens to be a ground of discord in the new admin[ist]ration, but great efforts will be made to prevent [?] its results.

Nothing is known about the new Cabinet except that a pretty confident belief is expressed by some leading Democrats that Hunter of Va.⁸² will accept the State Department, as he is believed to have had an offer of it. Another pretty confident belief is that Nicholson⁸³ of our State will be in the Cabinet in some position, Interior or Atty. Genl. This I apprehend is the result of the influence of Gen. Cass and his friends. It is, I apprehend his requisition on Pierce⁸⁴ for his support.

I will write you as often as anything arises to interest you.

17. JOHN BELL, SENATE CHAMBER, TO W. B. CAMPBELL.

January 11, 1853.

I write you this short note to say that I misled you yesterday or some days since in writing to you that Hunter would go into the Cab-

⁷⁸This plan of entering into a commercial business in New Orleans William B. Campbell carried out on his retirement from the governorship.

⁷⁹James M. Mason, Democratic Representative from Virginia in the Twenty-fifth Congress, was a United States Senator from Virginia, 1847-1861; and was later Commissioner of the Confederate States of America to Europe.

⁸⁰The reading is uncertain.

⁸¹Pierre Soule, United States Senator from Louisiana, 1847, 1849-1853; Minister to Spain, 1853-1855.

⁸²Robert M. T. Hunter of Virginia, Democratic Representative in the Twenty-fifth, Twenty-sixth, Twenty-seventh, and Twenty-ninth Congresses; Speaker of the Twenty-seventh Congress; Secretary of State of the Confederate States of America.

⁸³Alfred O. P. Nicholson, Democratic United States Senator from Tennessee, 1841-1843, 1859-1861; editor of the *Nashville Union* and later of the *Washington Union*; a supporter in Tennessee of General Cass, who wrote to him the "Nicholson Letter" of "popular sovereignty" fame. See Sioussat, *Tennessee, the Compromise of 1850, and the Nashville Convention*.

⁸⁴Franklin Pierce, of New Hampshire, who had been elected President in November.

inet. He told me this morning he had decided not to accept any place in the Cabinet. I still think Mr. Nicholson will have a position in the Cabinet chiefly because I think Cass and his friends will insist upon it.

I hear of nothing else of interest for your ear today.

We are getting into a tedious debate on [the] subject of our foreign relations. If my health justifies me I may take some part in it. Have not seen Gentry since I wrote you.

P. S.—The debate to which I alluded above will develop whether the Democracy are likely to be harmonious or not.

Badger⁸⁵ may be made Sup. Judge but it will be a tight squeeze. The Democrats generally want to have the patronage for their party.

18. JOHN BELL, SENATE CHAMBER, TO W. B. CAMPBELL.

January 12, 1853.

There was a rumour sometime ago that Genl. Dix⁸⁶ one of the *Lieuts* of Van Buren in N. Y. and a leader of the Barnburner party⁸⁷ would have a place in the Cabinet appears to have grown into a confirmed belief in the minds of many of the Democratic party here and gives them great disquiet. It is said however that the *fire eaters* of the South or at least some of them will acquiesce. Others it is said will not; and it is further said that the union men generally of the South will rebel; but we shall only know these results when we see them. There are so many means in the hands of the executive to soothe and subdue such opponents.

I saw Gentry yesterday. He is [in] better humour and spirits than I have seen [him] in since the election. I suppose this arises from having finished his speech, and is pleased with it. He has not however told me the tenor or complexion of it—nor has he informed me what he proposes to do when he goes home; and I do not press him on these questions—supposing that he may still have some misgivings, as to what may be our future relations, growing out of the course he may think proper to pursue

19. JOHN BELL, WASHINGTON, TO W. B. CAMPBELL.

Feby. 5, 1853.

I have not written you for some time—because I could see nothing of interest to write about—nor is there much now—but you may be amused to hear that it is now thought and generally believed that Dix is thrown overboard. The fire against him was too hot and it was threatened that his nomination to the Cabinet would not be agreed to in the Senate. It is also now conjectured that Hunter will reconsider his rejection of a seat in the Cabinet. Some say who ought to know and I think that Pierce has not settled in his own mind yet who he will appoint. He thought he would appoint certain gentlemen and he thought he could not be removed from his purpose—but he has found himself *moved*—at all events that is the opinion here, and that he is now at a great loss what to do.

Gentry has not shown me his speech. Williams says it is as prudent as he could make it—having a due reference to his obligation to *write* in reasonable conformity with what he *spoke*. It is said that it will be out next week—so says Williams.

⁸⁵George E. Badger, United States Senator from North Carolina, 1846-1855.

⁸⁶John A. Dix, Democratic United States Senator from New York, 1845-1849.

⁸⁷The anti-slavery wing of the Democratic party in New York.

I am of opinion that Jones will see nothing so personal in it as to demand his notice.

I see much trouble in the State about a candidate for Gov. etc. I think I see signs of a more decisive breaking up of our party in Tenn. in the next election than I have seen at any time heretofore.⁸⁸

20. JOHN BELL, NASHVILLE, TO W. B. CAMPBELL.

August 14, 1853.

According to your suggestion on the day after you left I had full and frank conversation with Genl Zollicoffer.⁸⁹ If he is sincere and I think he is, he will not encourage Henry to run for the Senate.⁹⁰ He says, in his opinion he ought not—that having taken his scheme [?] to be Gov. he ought to abide by the result, and in the present condition of the party, [not?] to push his claims to the Senate and he would so advise him, if he could do so without wounding his, Henry's, sensibilities, which he would not do. He is of opinion, that Henry will not push his claims at this time—as far as he—Z—is advised, the Whigs generally wish me to be returned to the Senate, and that in his opinion to displace me would have an injurious effect upon the party. He thinks also that if I were to decline—under the pressure of Henry's friends to override [?] me there would be no certainty that Henry would be elected, as the Democrats would do all in their power to defeat him with Nelson⁹¹ or Gentry (as they will me) and as so many Whigs are elected from Democratic districts, he apprehends danger from that quarter—in my case also as such Whigs may desire to do something to gratify the Democratic majority in their counties or districts.⁹² If Zollicoffer is consulted by Henry as I think it likely he will, I feel sure now that he will advise him not to run, but if he does not—I also feel pretty [?] confident, that Zollicoffer's caution is so extreme (Montgomery living in his district)—that he will not interpose his advice against what he may ascertain to be Henry's wishes or inclinations.

I saw Hill of the Western District after you left whom you know. He says that except Thorpe of Henry County he does not know of any Whig member of the District that will be likely to go for Henry against me, that Thorpe from his associations possibly might. He also told me that Henry rather lost ground or reputation for talent in the District in the Canvass; that though he, himself, did not hear the candidates speak, yet that the sentiment of the discerning Whigs, so far as he has heard, throughout the District, is or was, that Henry was beaten by Johnson in debate. It was the same case when he went round with Nicholson.

I cannot find that in this county, Williamson, Rutherford, Wilson, Bedford or *Robertson* that except a few individuals there is any disposition to take up Henry and set me aside. Still we cannot foresee

⁸⁸The disastrous defeat of the Whigs in the country as a whole, and Campbell's refusal to be a candidate for a second term were highly discouraging to the Whigs of Tennessee.

⁸⁹Felix K. Zollicoffer, Whig Representative from Tennessee in the Thirty-third, Thirty-fourth, and Thirty-fifth Congresses.

⁹⁰Henry had just been defeated by Andrew Johnson in the election for Governor of Tennessee. Bell was a candidate for re-election at the approaching session of the Assembly, and Henry was mentioned as a possible rival.

⁹¹T. A. R. Nelson, of East Tennessee; a Whig elector in the campaign of 1848; appointed Commissioner to China, 1851, but resigned; later elected to the Thirty-sixth and Thirty-seventh Congresses.

⁹²Complaints of this kind of "swapping" were frequent in Tennessee politics.

what the cant about Henry's long and unrequited services may do before October. I say cant, not that I deny Henrys' long and valuable services.

I think upper E. Tenn will be most likely to move in favor of Henry unless they take up Nelson.

21. JOHN BELL, WASHINGTON, TO W. B. CAMPBELL.

December 16, 1853.

I have attended⁹³ to your wishes in regard to your young relative Mr. Kelley's passport, letters, etc. Mr. Lane⁹⁴ has always been a warm personal friend of my own and my [. . .]⁹⁵ to him will meet with prompt attention. I have written to him earnestly in behalf of young Kelley.

There is not much here, not to be found in the papers. I do not believe the war in the Democratic ranks will display itself openly in Congress—except in the rejection of Peter G. Washington if the Ho. agrees to the Senate Bill in regard to him. If Washington is thrown overboard some think Guthrie⁹⁶ will resign. I do not. Of the 9 Senators (democratic) who voted against Armstrong⁹⁷ I think not more than 3 or 4 will continue refractory and therefore I conclude Bedford [?]⁹⁸ will be confirmed.

Guthrie has now to sustain the fiercest fire. I scarcely know for what, but believe it is because he allows no surplus to remain in the hands of the disbursing Banks and agents.

But, there is I think so determined an opposition to the adminn to Pierce and his Cabinet, among portions of the Democracy, which will show itself, when they come to make a nomination for the succession and I do not see how they can ever harmonize.

The Whigs who are prudent will take no active part against the admin[istratio]n for the present, but let the elements of distraction accumulate before they make a combined attack.

I hope your business is about to realize your expectations fully. I do not see how you can fail to do a large and profitable business.

Let me hear from you when you have a spare moment if it is only to write a *line*.

P. S.—I saw Pierce yesterday. He looks wretchedly.

22. JOHN BELL, WASHINGTON, TO W. B. CAMPBELL.

August 10, 1854.

I have wanted to write to you for months past, but my indifferent health, the heat of the weather of late, and the constant pressure of one duty or another, together with the excitement in which my ene-

⁹³Bell had now been re-elected Senator.

⁹⁴Robert M. McLane, Democratic Representative from Maryland in the Thirtieth and Thirty-first Congresses; elector on the Pierce ticket; Commissioner to China. 1853.

⁹⁵Illegible.

⁹⁶James Guthrie of Kentucky, Secretary of the Treasury in the cabinet of Pierce. He had appointed Peter G. Washington Assistant Secretary. As to the bill to which Bell refers, see *Cong. Globe*, 33 Cong., 1 Sess., Pt. 1, pp. 40, 56ff.

⁹⁷Robert Armstrong of Nashville, an intimate friend of Jackson and Polk, was elected Public Printer in August, 1852. At the opening of the Thirty-third Congress he was re-elected by the House of Representatives, but the Senate chose Beverly Tucker.

⁹⁸Not identified.

mies have kept me since the Nebraska bill passed, have prevented me from writing at all except brief notes, to such as wanted information, etc. I did write to Battle [?] of Davidson and Richardson of Rutherford, pretty long letters in reply to theirs on politics—that is all that I now recollect, except again short letters to Lea and Hall in reply, etc.

I have had a hard time here, as you may have conjectured.⁹⁹ There was undoubtedly an ingeniously arranged plan to destroy me by some five or six Southern Whigs, of the Senate and some of the House. You may have seen how I defeated them. There were more concerned in the plot than showed their hand.

Toombs was put forward in the Senate as the bully. I could not see Jones' hand in it though he doubtless knew all about it.

I ran a great risk of losing standing in the South and at home in going against the Nebraska bill. I was fully aware of the peril of my course—but I only regret now—that I did not follow my own judgement and attack the bill in its incipiency. I was too *timid* and reluctant to separate myself from Southern Whigs—who I am now satisfied or I am satisfied that the most zealous of them, went for the bill, hoping that there would no longer be any Whig party. I think, except *Toombs*¹⁰⁰ and *Stephens*,¹⁰¹ they are all now beginning to think that they will not succeed in their policy to get up a new party, and are willing to be accounted Whigs, at least until they perceive that the party is more clearly doomed than it seems at present. The course of the Northern Whigs will decide whether we can unite with them or not. You see that the Whigs of Massetts have set the example of declining any party or other connection with the abolitionists and free soilers. This is noble conduct and I hope it will have a decided effect in moderating the violence of the Whigs in other States. There is no danger in Pa., and I think there will be moderation in Ohio. I only dread N. York. If these great States do not [play the fall]¹⁰² the lesser ones will be brought into moderate counsels. The worst we have to fear in any of the States North, whatever they may threaten now, is, that some of them may insist upon making an effort to *repeal* the *repealing* clause of the late act.¹⁰³ I fear too that the next House of Reps will have a larger addition of abolitionists and may bring mischief upon us.

Enough about myself. I was sorry to hear that you had a serious attack of some disease, I could not hear what, after you returned from N. O., but I have since heard that you were rapidly recovering. Cullom told me that you had lost one or two valuable servants by cholera. I have heard from W. E. Jones since that this was not so—that it was your brother who lost the servants.

I hope you did well in your business last season, yet from all I

⁹⁹Bell won the bitter criticism of the strong Southern men by his adverse vote on the Kansas-Nebraska bill.

¹⁰⁰Robert Toombs, Whig Representative from Georgia in the Twenty-ninth to the Thirty-second Congresses, inclusive; United States Senator from Georgia, 1853 to 1861.

¹⁰¹Alexander H. Stephens, Whig Representative from Georgia in the Twenty-eighth to the Thirty-fifth Congresses, inclusive; later Vice-President of the Confederate States; elected United States Senator in 1866, but not allowed to take his seat; Representative in the Forty-third to the Forty-seventh Congresses, inclusive. With Toombs, he endeavored, after the Whig break-up of 1852-1853, to form a new party in the South.

¹⁰²Probably "play the fool," but the reading of the phrase is doubtful.

¹⁰³The clause which embodied the repeal of the Missouri Compromise.

saw in the papers it was far from being a season favorable to business generally.

I shall be at home in two or three weeks and expecting to see you soon afterwards. I will delay until then going into the history of many things here, curious and interesting. Many things of a personal nature have turned up which will both amaze and interest you.

Excuse this hasty letter. I have a great deal to do before I get off and must necessarily write carelessly or not at all.

23. JOHN BELL, SENATE CHAMBER, TO W. B. CAMPBELL.

May 29, 1856.

I this morning received your note of the 24th instant appointing me a senatorial delegate from the State of Tennessee to represent [—]¹⁰⁴ the National Convention which assembles in New York on the 3d of next month.

I have consulted a leading American¹⁰⁵ of this city who has been appointed a delegate to the above convention to know whether there was any probability that any question would be presented for decision which would have any very material effect upon the prospects of [the] American party in the pending canvass for the Presidency or upon a state of things which may arise, different from the present phase of the contest. He said he could neither conceive of nor had he heard of any question likely to arise in the convention, which was of such importance as to require his attention, and therefore he was not going to New York.

I have not had time to consult any other member or friend of the order, but I will avail myself of the views and advice of as many other gentlemen of discretion as I can meet with in due time and if I find or learn that there is any prospect of my being able to be of any material service to the American cause in the present threatening aspect of public affairs, I will go to New York in time for the sitting of the convention, and as I perceived that you make an *earnest request* that I shall attend the convention, I am at present disposed to visit New York any how; and if after my arrival there I can be satisfied from any source that I can serve any useful or valuable purpose by appearing in the convention I will not fail to present myself as a delegate from Ten. etc. But should I find that nothing of importance is likely to be mooted—I may not take my seat—as I would not like for the first time to make my appearance in convention of the order without the hope of doing anything more than having my name enrolled as a delegate.

I hope you will approve the course which I have indicated. I have not time to write you on the state of public affairs further than to say that to my mind they [are] gloomy and threatening in the highest degree. We can calculate upon nothing with any confidence, which may bring back peace and harmony to the country. As things now stand it appears to me that we have no assurance of carrying Mr. Fillmore¹⁰⁶ although contingencies may arise to change his pros-

¹⁰⁴The words "Tennessee in" are doubtless inadvertently omitted.

¹⁰⁵The American party, or the "Know-Nothings," with the characteristics of a secret order, passing from the East westward, held together the former Whigs of Tennessee against the Democrats. The issue was foremost in the election of 1855, when Andrew Johnson defeated Meredith P. Gentry in the election for the governorship of Tennessee.

¹⁰⁶The American party nominated for President and Vice-President, respectively, Millard Fillmore of New York and Andrew J. Donelson of Tennessee.

pects. All that has recently occurred [both] here and in Kansas strengthens the Republicans and if they are patriotic and wise enough to nominate John McLean I am not sure that he will not carry every Northern State, but I fear they will not exhibit so much good sense, and in the event they take up Fremont¹⁰⁷ they may only be able to defeat the American ticket and elect a Democrat.

24. JOHN BELL, WASHINGTON, TO W. B. CAMPBELL.

September 10, 1856.

Fillmore¹⁰⁸ is gaining strength in the North undoubtedly, but I fear that all he can do will be to carry States enough to defeat Fremont and bring the election in the House. There he will have the best [least?] chance to be chosen. In fact I hear that should Buchanan be elected that he will not be able, considering the ultraism of the leading spirits of his party, to prevent civil war.

If Fremont should be elected as he may unless things take a more favorable turn in Kansas, it will bring on a fearful crisis, though I have no thought that his *election* by *itself* ought to draw off the South. We will wait to see what he and his party propose to do after they get the power should they unfortunately obtain it. . . .

25. JOHN BELL, WASHINGTON, TO W. B. CAMPBELL.

January 19, 1857.

. . . ¹⁰⁹I believe nothing is permanently arranged as to the Cabinet. Gov. Cass' friends expect that he will be offered the place of Sec[retar]y of State, but whether he will accept, should it be offered, is not known. No offer has yet been made. It is also thought that Cobb¹¹⁰ of Ga. will be offered a place—perhaps the Treasury.

The more difficult problem, what course the New admin[istratio]n will take on the Kansas or Negro question, is not definitely solved; but I believe the fire eaters will agree upon some half way course with their northern allies—being satisfied, as I think they will be, with the prospect of keeping the South united in the support of the Democratic party—thus holding out the hope of permanent power. The ultra Southern men are afraid to take *extreme ground* lest their northern allies may be overrun [?] by the Republicans. I say the *Southern* men, not meaning to include disunionists—who want to see the existing differences between the North and South increased.

I find the leading Republicans all waiting to see what the course of the Democratic party will be. If it is favorable to peace and harmony, they, the Republicans will look to some modification of their policy and a union with the Americans and old Whigs of the South. If the new admin[istratio]n persist in the course of Pres[iden]t Pierce or pursue a course in conformity with extreme Southern notions they will adhere to their present organization, and expect to carry a Northern candidate in 1860. This is about all I can discover in the under currents here. Many of the Republicans regret that they did not take

¹⁰⁷John C. Fremont, Senator from California, 1850-1851; Republican candidate for President, 1856.

¹⁰⁸Paragraphs at the beginning and end of this letter, which relate to merely personal matters, are omitted.

¹⁰⁹Two paragraphs of a personal character at the beginning, and one at the end of this letter, are omitted.

¹¹⁰Howell Cobb, Democratic Representative from Georgia in the Twenty-eighth to the Thirty-first Congresses, inclusive, and in the Thirty-fourth Congress; Speaker of the Thirty-first Congress; Governor of Georgia, 1851-1853; Secretary of the Treasury in the cabinet of Buchanan.

up McLean in the last election and all that I am in the habit of free conversational intercourse with say that if the Americans had taken a Southern man of moderate principles they, the Republicans would have put forward no candidate.

I will write you of any discoveries I may be able to make of things on hand as soon as I can see what is likely to come. . . .

26. JOHN BELL, NASHVILLE, TO W. B. CAMPBELL.
Confidential.

Nov. 13, 1857.

Will it be possible for you to go to Washington in the last week of this month, or rather within the first week of Decr there being six days in Decr before the meeting of Congress?

T—bs¹¹¹ of Ga. spoke in such terms of me in the late canvass in that state that I feel bound to call him to account and I think he cannot get out of a fight. I shall be at loss for a friend to stand by me. The Southern men with whom I am on friendly relations will not like to take part with me in opposition to a man who is ranked among the strong men in the South upon the slavery question; and it would not do for me to select a Northern man if I could get one of pluck. The officers of the army and navy among whom I have friends would not like to expose themselves to the hostility of the dominant party and besides it is against their regulations.

I know of no man in Ten. besides yourself that I would be willing to call upon in such a case and besides I know of none, that I would risk myself in so delicate an affair. Zollicoffer is not my friend.

I am fearful that you may not feel disposed to engage in an affair of this nature—but I shall not know where to look, if you cannot serve me. I shall leave for my mines in three or four days. I shall be pleased to hear from you before I go. I shall go from my mines to Washington in time to have a week to dispose of this business in before Congress meets. It may be that T—bs may not reach Washington before Congress meets. In that event it may be necessary that you should remain over a few days.

My dear sir, you may rely upon it, that I would not call upon you, to do me a favor of so serious a nature if I did not foresee that I should have great difficulty in procuring a suitable friend in Washington.

¹¹¹Robert Toombs, who, himself violently pro-Southern, resented Bell's apparent alignment with the North. The duel apparently was averted.



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THE SPANISH CONSPIRACY IN TENNESSEE.¹

The strange sham-battle before the house of Colonel John Tipton on Sinking Creek in Tennessee, staged like some scene from *opera bouffe* in the bleak snow-storm of February, 1788, is really the prelude to a remarkable drama of revolt, in which Sevier, Robertson, Bledsoe, and the Cumberland stalwarts play the leading roles. The State of Franklin was now tottering to its fall. Unwilling in the last ditch to precipitate a bloody conflict, Sevier and his men, on being attacked, quickly dispersed. Soon afterwards Sevier sent word to Colonel Tipton, Sheriff of Washington County, that on condition his life be spared, he would submit to North Carolina. On this note of tragi-comedy, the romantic State of Franklin appears quietly to expire. The sanguine Sevier, now thoroughly chastened, seeks shelter in the distant settlements—deeply despondent over the humiliating failure of his plans and the even more depressing defection of his erstwhile friends and supporters.²

Long ago the fame of Sevier's martial exploits and of his bold stroke for independence had gone abroad, astounded even such bold advocates of liberty as Patrick Henry, and won the sympathy of the Continental Congress. One of the most interested observers of the progress of affairs in the State of Franklin was Don Diego de Gardoqui, who had come to America in the spring of 1785, bearing a commission to the Amer-

¹Within recent years, the separatist tendencies in various localities and at different periods in American history have received special study. Kentucky, in particular, has attracted the attention of investigators; and the Spanish Conspiracy in Kentucky has been made the subject of careful research by Thomas Marshall Green, John Mason Brown, and Theodore Roosevelt. Another conspiracy of equal interest—the Spanish Conspiracy in Tennessee—has received comparatively little notice; and the printed materials on the subject are few and chaotic. The Gardoqui MSS. in the Durrett Collection, the Gayarré Transcripts in the Louisiana Historical Society, and scattered letters in the Archives of the Indies at Seville, I find, furnish material for a consecutive narrative; and enable us at last to gain a comprehensive view of the Spanish Conspiracy in Tennessee.

²*State Records of North Carolina*, xxii, 691-3.

ican Congress as Spanish chargé d'affaires [Encargados de Negocios] to the United States. In the course of his negotiations with Jay concerning the right of the navigation of the Mississippi River, which Spain denied to the Americans, Gardoqui was not long in discovering the violent feelings of the western frontiersmen, aroused by Jay's crass blunder in proposing that America, in return for reciprocal advantages acquired from Spain, waive for twenty-five years her right to navigate the Mississippi. The high-handed proceedings of the Spanish authorities in harassing the traders, arresting them in their passage down the river, and virtually stopping all traffic to the Gulf, had aroused the fighting spirit of the frontiersmen, and schemes were actually set on foot for the capture of New Orleans. Delegates had been sent from the State of Franklin to Kentucky, according to the *Maryland Journal*, "to meet a convention of all the western settlements for the purpose of consulting on proper measures respecting the navigation of the Mississippi." In 1787 John Sullivan's letter to a fellow soldier of the Revolution found its way into print and created a furore—pointing, as it did, to the existence of a movement in the State of Franklin to arouse the settlers on the Tennessee to attack the Spanish. After the cryptic assertion that there would soon be work cut out for the frontiersmen of Franklin, Sullivan significantly added: "I want you much—by God—take my word for it we will speedily be in possession of New Orleans." So serious was the importance attached to this letter—although governmental investigation somewhat later showed that Sullivan represented no considerable faction of the Franklin people—that the *Maryland Journal* gave circulation to the following news, reported as coming from the State of Franklin: that their

Assembly, as the Fathers of the people, thinking it their indispensable duty to put a stop to all further depredations, have passed a law which provides for a body of 1,500 men, to be immediately enlisted as regular troops for three years, to be embodied in one Legion and to be commanded by a General of experience. . . . They will be in readiness to march this month and mean to thrash (by the Divine Blessing) those perfidious Castilians into a better conduct towards the people of the United States.

While there was much sensational murmur abroad, the facts themselves fully explained the indignation of the westerners against the Spaniards for the closure of the Mississippi. The Cumberland traders had already felt the heavy hand of Spain, in the confiscation of their goods at Natchez. They slowly and almost reluctantly awoke to the realization that

the Spaniards were systematically inviting the Indians to attacks upon the white settlements.

The petition, presented to the General Assembly of North Carolina in the autumn of 1787 by James Robertson and David Hays, the representatives of Davidson County, a petition which William Blount assisted in framing, succinctly sets forth, in the following clause, the attitude of the western people toward the aggravating problems of their situation:

They and their constituents, they say, have cheerfully endured the most unconquerable difficulties in settling the Western country, in full confidence that they should be enabled to send their produce to market through the rivers which water the country; but they now have the mortification, not only to be excluded from that channel of commerce by a foreign nation, but the Indians are rendered more hostile through the influence of that very nation, probably with a view to drive them from the country, as they claim the whole of the soil.³

Despite the grave and rising dissatisfaction with these conditions, the leaders of the people wisely restrained the more turbulent spirits, fearing lest, once aroused, the spirit of retaliation might know no bounds. Throughout the entire region of the trans-Allegheny a feeling of discontent and unrest prevailed—as much the result of dissatisfaction with the central government which permitted the wholesale restraint of trade, as of resentment against the domination of Spain.

With watchful eye, the shrewd Gardoqui, who was eager to utilize the separatist sentiment of the western settlements in the interest of Spain, no sooner learned of Sevier's armed insurrection against North Carolina's authority than he dispatched an emissary to sound the leading men of Franklin and the Cumberland settlements in regard to an alliance. This secret emissary was Dr. James White, who had been appointed by the United States government as Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Southern Department on November 29, 1786. White was instructed by Gardoqui to make secret proposals on behalf of Spain to the leaders of the disaffected districts; and to act in concert with Don Estévan Miró, Governor of Louisiana, in the execution of his mission. In pursuance of this plan, White visited Tennessee, and interviewed a number of the representative men of both Franklin and the Cumberland settlements—among whom were doubtless included John Sevier, Joseph Martin, Anthony Bledsoe, and James Robertson. Concerning his secret and confidential mission, White reports to Miró (April 18, 1789):

³Ramsey: *Annals of Tennessee* (1853 ed'n.), 502-3.

With regard to Frankland, Don Diego Gardoqui gave me letters to the chief men of that district, with instructions to assure them that if they wished to put themselves under the protection of Spain and favor her interests, they should be protected in their civil and political government, in the form and manner most agreeable to them, on the following conditions: First—It should be absolutely necessary, not only in order to hold any office, but also any land, in Frankland, that an oath of allegiance be taken to his majesty, the object and purport of which should be to defend his government and faithful vassals on all occasions, and against all his enemies, whoever they might be. Second—That the inhabitants of that district should renounce all submission or allegiance whatever to any other sovereign or power. They have eagerly accepted these conditions, and the Spanish minister has referred me to your favor, patronage, and assistance, to facilitate my operations. With regard to Cumberland district, what I have said of Frankland applies to it with equal force and truth.⁴

According to secret advices, Gardoqui was persuaded that the Tennessee backwoodsmen, under diplomatic treatment, would readily throw in their lot with Spain; and this he communicated to the home authorities (Gardoqui to Florida-blanca, April 18, 1788). His prevision was amply justified in the case of Sevier, who now felt strong enough to move once more, this time secretly, towards the establishment of Franklin's independence. After the fiasco of his siege of Tipton's home, Sevier seized upon renewed hostilities by the Cherokee as a pretext to rally his old comrades, the Indian fighters, under his standard and to make another one of his meteoric whirlwind onslaughts upon the ancient foe. Sevier knew that the quickest way to win his way back into the hearts of his countrymen was to strike the Indians a swift, decisive blow; and his victory over the Indians at a town on the Hiwassee in July "so raised him in the esteem of the people on the frontier that the people began to flock to his standard" (Maxwell to Martin, July 9, 1788).⁵ Buoyant over this good turn in his fortunes, Sevier readily responded to Dr. White's overtures and in July wrote to Gardoqui, indicating his readiness to accede to the Spanish proposals.

The alarm felt in Franklin and at the Cumberland settlements over the unprovoked Indian depredations and murdering of the whites, in several Tennessee counties and on the Kentucky road, found expression in a vigorous letter of protest written by James Robertson and Anthony Bledsoe (Hillsborough, January 4, 1788) to Governor Samuel Johnston of North Carolina, in which they urge him to address the Minister of Spain and request him to exert his influence, to prevent further acts of savage barbarity, with the half-breed Creek, Alexander

⁴Gayarré Transcripts, Archives Louisiana Historical Society.

⁵*State Records of North Carolina*, xxii, 718.

McGillivray, intendant under the court of Spain—"a man of consequence with that Nation," with an "influence superior to any other person among them."⁶ Governor Johnston transmitted (March 5) this and other letters, including one of like tenor from John Sevier, to James White in New York, with the conciliatory comment: "It is not my opinion that the Court of Madrid or any other officers have the least share in abetting the grievances they (the Gentlemen beyond the Mountains) complain of." Dr. White at once "urged the subject to the minister of Spain";⁷ and Gardoqui wrote letters on the same day (April 18) to Governor Johnston, to Robertson, and to Sevier.⁸ While the letter to Governor Johnston was entirely conventional, the other two letters, read between the lines as suggestive reinforcements of White's secret proposals, possess real significance. In the letter to Sevier, Gardoqui thus dexterously expresses himself:

His Majesty is very favorably inclined to give the inhabitants of that region all the protection that they ask for and, on my part, I shall take very great pleasure in contributing to it on this occasion and other occasions.

With Robertson, he is somewhat more guarded in his expressions:

The news has caused me great sorrow, but I am extremely surprised to know that there is a suspicion that the good government of Spain is encouraging these acts of barbarity. Very different are the orders of His Majesty, to our way of thinking, and it may be asserted that, just as the King is a friend of the United States in general, so also he takes pleasure in giving every evidence of good will and generosity to the region of the West in particular, whenever occasion is offered. . . .⁹

This letter to Sevier, coupled with the confidential proposals of Dr. White, furnished a convenient opening for Sevier's letter to Gardoqui in July. By the following September, after secret conferences with men who had supported him throughout the vicissitudes of his ill-starred State, Sevier had matured his plans. The following remarkable letter, which has never hitherto been published, though its contents has been noted, shows the lengths to which Sevier and his adherents were willing to go, and presents, in vivid colors, the separatist sentiment of the day.

⁶*State Records of North Carolina*, xxi, 437-8; 454-5.

⁷*State Records of North Carolina*, xxi, 465-6.

⁸Gardoqui MSS. in Durrett Collection, University of Chicago. *State Records of North Carolina*, xxi, 464-5.

⁹This letter is addressed to "Colonel Elisha Robeson."

Franklin, September 12, 1788.

Sir :

Since my last, of the 18th of July, upon consulting with the principal men of this country, I have been particularly happy to find that they are as well disposed and willing as I am in respect to your proposals and guarantees. You may be sure that the favorable hopes and ideas that the people of this country maintain with respect to the future probability of an alliance and concession of commerce with you in the future are very ardent and that we are unanimously determined to that effect. The people of this country have come to realize truly upon what part of the world and upon which nation depend their future happiness and security, and they readily infer that the interest and prosperity of it depend entirely upon the protection and liberality of your government. We must expect it of our situation and circumstances that they will lead us on in the most effective manner to look for the long security and prosperity of your government in America and, being the first to resort in this way to your protection and liberality from this side of the Appalachian Mountains, we feel encouraged to maintain the greatest hope that we shall be granted all reasonable helps by him who is so amply able to do it and to give the protection and help that is asked in this our petition. You know our delicate situation and the difficulties in which we are in respect to our mother state, which makes use of all stratagems to impede the development and prosperity of this country. In spite of the fact that we possess some of the most fertile lands on this continent and easy means of exportation, yet we cannot dispose of a single article of its products (which would be almost innumerable) unless we have authority to make use of our rivers toward the ports below. Seeing us in these embarrassments, it is easy for you to realize the great scarcity of specie in this country, of which there is very little among us. Nothing else is lacking in order to assure our mutual interests but a small sum of this article (the quantity of which I leave to your prudent judgment) and such other, military, assistance as your understanding deems it necessary and convenient to supply us with. All that is needed to attain what we want will not be more than a few thousand pounds. We are further encouraged to make this application because of your knowledge that we can pay promptly for whatever you may be able to supply, by sending the products of this country to the ports below. I hope that the payment of them [*i. e.*, of the loans] will be made with all convenience and that the pledges and receipts of our friend James Sevier (who is our secretary) will obligate both myself and the State of Franklin until they are entirely repaid and satisfied. I do not doubt that the help which is asked will be considered a trifle that is taken out of your treasury, especially when it is compared with the important object to which it is directed, and when we can repay so soon the sum that is advanced and when it will leave us under the greatest obligation of gratitude and perpetual friendship. We are determined, in so far as it is possible for us, that you shall so regard us; and when you see the advantages that will regularly arise from this connection, you will consider that our interests, which run in the same channel, will last and be inseparable. It behooves us to make the most prompt and necessary preparations for defence. If any break should happen, we must be prepared in time—the reasons for

which will necessarily be very obvious to you. Therefore, it is not necessary for me to say anything else about the subject and I beg you to inform me from time to time, whenever opportunity offers and circumstances require it. I leave to you the choice of any other, more easy mode of communication than the present one, and for other matters I refer you to my son James, who is a competent person to give a perfect account of whatever concerns the western country. Before finishing, it may be necessary to inform you that there will be no more favorable occasion than the present one to put the plan into action. North Carolina has rejected the constitution, and at the least a considerable time will pass before it becomes a member of the Union, if this happens. I beg you to supply James with whatever you think will be useful to us. If perchance you could get a passport, it would be of great profit to this country, because it is probable that some of us will find it convenient to go down to the Spanish ports; and if we are allowed to ship products of this country it will be a matter of great importance for us. I have the honor to be, Sir, with great esteem and consideration, your most respectful servant, (Signed) John Sevier—To Senor Don Diego de Gardoqui, Minister of Spain—Gardoqui (Rubric).¹⁰

Through Miró, Gardoqui was simultaneously conducting a correspondence with General James Wilkinson, the object of which was to seduce Kentucky from her allegiance to the United States into the arms of Spain. The preceding April, Miró and Navarro, in a joint dispatch, had informed the Spanish cabinet of the progress of these negotiations, enclosing a communication from Wilkinson in which he says: "All my predictions are verifying themselves, and not a measure is taken on *both* sides of the mountains which does not conspire to favor ours." Yet it would be doing Sevier and his adherents a capital injustice to place them in the same category with the utterly corrupt Wilkinson, the malodorous Sebastian, or the embittered and disloyal George Rogers Clark, in the Spanish conspiracy of Kentucky. On August 1, preceding, North Carolina had rejected the Constitution of the United States; and the leaders of Franklin, who were sorely aggrieved by the alleged neglect and indifference of North Carolina, now felt themselves more than ever *out of the Union* and wholly repudiated by the mother State. Sevier himself was in desperate plight; for Governor Samuel Johnston, during the sitting of the convention which rejected the Constitution, wrote to Judge Campbell: "It has been represented to the Executive that John Sevier, who styles himself Captain

¹⁰A re-translation into English of a letter, originally translated from English into Spanish, from Governor John Sevier to Don Diego de Gardoqui. Gardoqui Manuscripts, Vol. I., pp. 311-315. See the Appendix to this paper for the Spanish text. This Spanish transcript in the Durrett Collection, University of Chicago, is shown in photographic facsimiles, accompanying the present paper.

General of the State of Franklin, has been guilty of high treason in levying troops to oppose the laws and government of the State, and has with an armed force put to death several good citizens. If these facts shall appear to you by the affidavit of credible persons, you will issue your warrant to apprehend him." Popular as Sevier—superb fighter, prince of hospitality, and ideal boon companion—had always been with the stalwart men of the "backwoods, it is doubtful if, even under more favorable circumstances, he could have "delivered" Franklin to Spain. But now, attainted of high treason, he felt his hold upon Franklin relax; and an atrocity committed in the recent Indian campaign, under his leadership—Kirk's brutal murder of Corn Tassel, a noble old Indian, and other chiefs, while under the protection of a flag of truce—had placed a bar sinister across Sevier's fair fame.

Gardoqui sent Dr. White and James Sevier to New Orleans, to lay their plans and proposals before Miró for his consideration. By a strange and sardonic coincidence, on the very day (October 10, 1788) when Gardoqui wrote to Miró, presenting the emissaries of Franklin to the attention of Spain, John Sevier was arrested at the widow Brown's in Washington County, handcuffed, and borne off, first to Jonesborough, and later to Morganton, on the charge of high treason. His friends and former comrades in arms, Charles and Joseph McDowell, gave bond for his appearance at court; and Morrison, the sheriff, who had also fought at King's Mountain, knocked the irons off his hands and released him on parole. Soon afterwards a number of his friends, indignant over his arrest, rode over the mountains to Morganton and silently bore him away, never to be arrested again. In November the act of pardon and oblivion was again passed by the North Carolina Assembly; and while Sevier was forbidden to hold office under the State, the passage of the act automatically operated to pardon him of the alleged offense of high treason. In these circumstances, it is little wonder that Gardoqui and Miró paid no further heed to Sevier's former proposals to accept the protection of Spain. With a hardihood almost incomprehensible, Sevier makes one last feeble effort for independence when, on January 12, 1789, twenty representative citizens of Green County meet in convention and resolve "to petition North Carolina to divide the State and cede the territory west of the mountains, and that John Sevier keep the command of the inhabitants." It was feared, as stated by Governor Johnston, that, despite North Carolina's leniency and moderate policy, Sevier would have to be "proceeded against to the last extremity"; but, his opposition finally subsiding, he was pardoned, given a seat in the North Carolina Assembly,

and with extraordinary consideration honored with his former rank of brigadier-general.

The little-understood relations of James Robertson and Anthony Bledsoe, the leaders of the Cumberland settlements, to the proposals of Gardoqui, as communicated by Dr. James White, follow quite a different course.¹¹ Their actions are conditioned, not only by the desire to secure for the Cumberland traders free passage to the Gulf, but also by the tragic difficulties of their settlements, exposed to the ravages of the Indians. As early as 1784 (James Robertson to Governor Alexander Martin, August 5), it was common knowledge on the Cumberland that Alexander McGillivray had put the Creeks under the protection of Spain (Pensacola, May 31-June 1, 1784), and somewhat later, that the Spanish authorities were regularly supplying the Creeks with ammunition. It was clearly the purpose of Spain to encourage secretly the Creeks to resist the encroachments of the Americans, while openly remaining herself on friendly terms with the United States; and even after giving the Creeks the strongest encouragement to defend their lands, the Spanish agent would use humorously significant phrases in writing to his superior (O'Neill to Galvez, May 30, 1786), such as that he had supplied the Indians with ammunition to "defend themselves against bears and other ferocious animals." Despite the fact that during the next year or so Miró endeavored to keep the Indians at peace with the United States, in order to pave the way, no doubt, for establishing friendly relations between Spain and the west, the Cumberland settlements were continually harassed by the

¹¹In the treatment of the relations of the Cumberland leaders with the Spaniards, the earlier Tennessee historians have represented Robertson as a wily diplomat, luring on the Spaniards to proposals and admissions and, through the knowledge thereby gained, enabling the Cumberland settlers to further their own interests as loyal Americans. Thus Haywood (reprint, 1891), 247: "Col. Robertson, seeing the union in disorder and at the point of dissolution from the imbecility of its own structure, and expecting no aid from that quarter or from North Carolina, which betrayed inability and disinclination, thought it most prudent to temporize and amuse awhile both the Spanish agents and the Creek chieftain; to dissemble the deep resentment he had at their conduct, and even to insinuate that he had come to a state of unconcernedness with respect to their main object; so true it is in nature that the strong and rich man speaketh surlily, but the weak one in the language of mildness." Ramsey likewise represents Robertson as intent upon exploiting the Spaniards, playing them with the bait of disloyalty as a fisherman plays a trout with a gaudy fly. The present research clearly shows that, once the Spanish proposals had been made to the Franklin and Cumberland settlers by Dr. White at the instance of Gardoqui, both Sevier and Robertson eagerly sought an alliance with Spain, while the Spanish officials as steadily temporized.

Creeks, whom Robertson found to be "totally averse to peace, notwithstanding they have had no cause of offense." Following Robertson's "Coldwater Expedition" (summer of 1787), in which he chastised the Indians for ravages at the Cumberland settlements, the Creeks began to prosecute their attacks with great violence, claiming that a number of their chiefs and warriors had been killed on this expedition by Robertson and his men.

When Robertson and Bledsoe were approached by Dr. White, they had but recently brought the influence of Governor Johnston to bear upon Gardoqui, for the purpose of pacifying McGillivray. Unprotected either by the mother State or by the national government, unable to secure free passage to the Gulf for their products, with their settlements seriously endangered by the persistent attacks of the Creeks, the Cumberland leaders decided to make secret overtures to McGillivray and to communicate to Miró, through Dr. White, their favorable inclination toward the proposals of the one country that promised them protection, *Spain*. Accordingly, Robertson and Bledsoe despatched two trusty messengers, Messrs. Hackett and Ewing, with a letter to McGillivray, urging that peace be established between the Creeks and the Cumberland settlers; and these same messengers, there is little reason to doubt, verbally conveyed to McGillivray, as the go-between for Miró, their designs to revolt from the United States and seek the protection of Spain. In a letter which McGillivray wrote to Miró (transmitted to Madrid, June 15, 1788), he reports that two delegates from the district of Cumberland had submitted to him proposals of peace, and further "had added that they would *throw themselves into the arms of His Majesty as subjects*, and that Kentucky and Cumberland are *determined* to free themselves from their dependence on Congress, because that body cannot protect either their property or favor their commerce, and they therefore believe that they no longer owe obedience to a power which is incapable of protecting them." This statement, on the unsupported testimony of that master of duplicity, McGillivray, would be valueless; but it is confirmed in substance by Dr. White's report to Miró on the disposition and attitude of the leading men of the Cumberland settlements. In commenting upon McGillivray's communication, in his report to Madrid (June 15, 1788) Miró observes: "I consider as extremely interesting the intelligence conveyed to McGillivray by the deputies on the fermentation existing in Kentucky, with regard to a separation from the Union. Concerning the proposition made to McGillivray by the inhabitants of Cumberland to become the

vassals of His Majesty, I have refrained from returning any precise answer."¹²

In his reply to the joint letter of Robertson and Bledsoe, McGillivray, the agent of Spain, asserts with calm effrontery (April, 1788): "Agreeably to your request, I will be Explicit and Candid in my answer to yours, and will not deny that my Nation had waged war against your Country for several years past, but that we had no motives of revenge, nor did it proceed from any sense of Injurys Sustained from your people, but being warmly attached to the British, and being under their Influence, our operations were directed by them against you in common with other Americans." This long letter, in which he agrees to make peace with the Cumberland settlers, greatly pleased them; and was given wide circulation throughout the West. Clearly desirous both of winning over McGillivray and of having his suggestion conveyed to Miró, Robertson, in a letter to McGillivray, after promising him a fine gun and a lot in Nashville, trenchantly observes (August 3, 1788):

I could say much to you respecting the same Country but am fully sensible you are better able to judge what may take place in a few years than myself. In all probability we cannot long remain in our present state, and if the British or any commercial nation who may be in possession of the mouth of the Mississippi would furnish us with trade, and receive our produce there cannot be a doubt but the people on the west side of the Appalachian mountains will open their eyes to their real interest. I should be very happy to hear your sentiment of this matter.¹³

It is a singular circumstance, of almost sinister significance, that when the Assembly of North Carolina, in November, 1788, passed the act erecting the counties of Davidson, Sumner and Tennessee into a new district, James Robertson, who was a delegate, arose and suggested "Miró" as the name of the new district, which, even more singular to relate, was forthwith adopted. This, too, at a time when the cry was loudest against the tyranny and injustice of Spain in closing the Mississippi. Late in April, 1789, Governor Miró received letters from Robertson (January 29) and Daniel Smith (March 4), written from the "District of Miró"—in itself a significant symbol of the desires of the leaders of that country; and he says in a letter (April 23): "The bearer, Fagot,¹⁴ a confidential agent of

¹²The above extracts are drawn from the Gayarré Transcripts, Archives Louisiana Historical Society.

¹³Robertson MSS. in two volumes. Archives of the Tennessee Historical Society, Nashville.

¹⁴Presumably Andrews Fagot. Cp. *American Historical Magazine*, I., 395, and Gayarré, *Spanish Domination*, 262.

Gen. Smith, informed me that the inhabitants of Cumberland, or Miró, would ask North Carolina for an act of separation the following fall, and that as soon as this should be obtained other delegates would be sent from Cumberland to New Orleans, with the object of placing that territory under the domination of His Majesty. I replied to both in general terms." Robertson's desire to open negotiations is clearly shown in Miró's letter to James Robertson and Daniel Smith (April 24), in which he says:

The giving of my name to your district has caused me much satisfaction, and I feel myself highly honored by the compliment. It increases my desire to contribute to the development of the resources of that province and the prosperity of its inhabitants. I am extremely flattered at your proposition to enter into correspondence with me, and I hope it will afford me the opportunity to be agreeable to you.¹⁵

Miró is evidently willing to follow up the opening made by Robertson; for he says in another letter to Robertson at this time (April 20), in connection with Robertson's son-in-law: "I will be highly pleased with his coming down to settle in this Province, & much more if you and your family should come along with him, since I can assure you that you will find here your welfare, without being either molested in religious matters, or paying any duty, and with the circumstance of finding allwais market for your crops. . . . I wish to be useful to you."¹⁶ Ten days later, Miro writes to Valdez, in Spain, informing him of the proposals received through McGillivray and stating that he had returned conciliatory replies, but had refrained from committing the Spanish Government until the pleasure of the King should be known.

A short time before this, a great sensation had been created throughout the Old Southwest by the interception of a letter from Joseph Martin to McGillivray (of date November 8, 1788). In this letter, Martin, who at this time held under the national government the position of agent for the Cherokees and Chickasaws, uses the following significant language: "I must beg that you write me by the first opportunity in answer to what I am now going to say to you. . . . I hope to do honor to any part of the world I settle in, and am determined to leave the United States for reasons that I can assign you when we meet, but durst not trust it to paper."¹⁷ Before the intercepted letters, of which this was one, were brought

¹⁵Gayarré, *Spanish Domination*, 263.

¹⁶Archives of the Indies, Seville. Legajo 2685. This letter is written in English. Printed in *American Historical Magazine*, I., 88.

¹⁷*State Records of North Carolina*, xxii, 787-8.

to public attention, the General Assembly of Georgia referred the matter to the Governor of North Carolina (January 24, 1789), which precipitated a legislative investigation into Martin's conduct.¹⁸ The North Carolina Assembly finally exonerated Martin (December 15, 1789). In the intercepted letter, Martin had informed McGillivray that he was preparing to settle five hundred families on the Tombigbee; and the North Carolina Assembly accepted Martin's explanation that "the object of the said Martin in writing the third and last paragraph, was merely to gain the good will of the said McGillivray and obtain a restoration of his horses (recently stolen by the Creeks), and not to injure the United States, or any of them."¹⁹ It would appear, from the correspondence of Joseph Martin and Patrick Henry, that Martin, on Henry's advice, had acted as a spy upon the Spaniards, in order to discover the views of McGillivray, to protect the exposed white settlements from the Indians, and to fathom the designs of the Spaniards against the United States. "Your advice to me as Governor of Virginia," says Martin to Henry (January 18, 1790), "was a principal reason why I kept up a Communication with McGillivray, by which I obtained many points of Information & had the Spaniards made any attempt on the united states I am well assured I should have Got Information in time to give publick notice before any Blow Could be struck."²⁰ In a long letter to Richard Henry Lee (January 29, 1790,) anent the charges against Martin, Henry himself explicitly says: "I shall here relate the substance of his communication to me when I was last in the Executive, and while he acted as superintendent for this state of Indian affairs. He (General Martin) informed me McGillivray had several times sent him word to make him a visit and carry on a correspondence, and at length wrote him a letter, which he put into my hands, . . . He desired my opinion on the matter. I encouraged him so far to cultivate McGillivray as, if possible, to fathom his views and keep the Indians from our people; at the same time by means of the Indians or others to discover the extent and nature of McGillivray's connection with the Spaniards. I am satisfy'd Mr. Martin proceeded on this idea: for he quickly satisfied me of the Spanish policy respecting the Indians, sending me a commission given to a Creek Indian by a Spanish governor constituting him an officer. How necessary it must be to dis-

¹⁸*State Records of North Carolina*, xxii, 1006.

¹⁹*State Records of North Carolina*, xxi, 691.

²⁰W. W. Henry: *Life, Correspondence and Speeches of Patrick Henry*, iii, 409.

cover these and similar practises with the Indian tribes, it is easy to see; & that the interest of the U. States and of this state required, that McGilvray's ill designs, if he had any, should be turned against him. General Martin's conduct so far as I could discern in that affair was really praise-worthy. He frequently gave me intelligence of Creek Indian affairs, and of the intercourse between other Indians and the Spaniards that was interesting. I am satisfied the correspondence . . . took its origin as I have stated, and that General Martin in no respect turned it to the prejudice of any American state or citizen, on the contrary that he made it subservient to the purpose of gaining useful intelligence."²¹

The sensational disclosures of Joseph Martin's intercepted letter had no deterrent effect upon James Robertson in the attempted execution of his plan for withdrawing from North Carolina. History takes no account of the fact that James Robertson and the inhabitants of Cumberland proceeded forthwith in their efforts to secure, if possible, an act of separation from North Carolina. In the event of securing this act of separation, the next move planned by the Cumberland leaders, as we have already learned, was to send delegates to New Orleans, for the purpose of placing the Cumberland region under the domination of Spain. A hitherto unknown letter, from Robertson to Miró, dated Nashville, September 2, 1789, proves that a convention of the people was actually held—the first overt step looking to an alliance with Spain. In this letter, Robertson says:

I must beg your Excellency's permission to take this early opportunity of thanking you for the honor you did me in writing by Mr. White.

I still hope that your Government, and these Settlements, are destined to be mutually friendly and usefull, the people here are impressed with the necessity of it.

We have just held a Convention; which has agreed that our members shall insist on being Separated from North Carolina.

Unprotected, we are to be obedient to the new Congress of the United States: but we cannot but wish for a more interesting Connection.

The United States afford us no protection. The district of Miro is daily plundered and the inhabitants murdered by the Creeks, and Cherokees, unprovoked.

For my own part, I conceive highly of the advantages of your Government."²²

²¹W. W. Henry: *Life, Correspondence and Speeches of Patrick Henry*, iii, 412-415.

²²Archives of the Indies, Seville, Spain. For this and other letters in photographic facsimile from the Papeles de Cuba, from which quotations are made in the present paper, I am greatly indebted to Dr. J. F. Jameson and Professor Roscoe R. Hill.

A serious obstacle to the execution of the plans of Robertson and the other leaders of the Cumberland settlements was the prompt action of North Carolina. In actual conformity with the wishes of the western people, as set forth in the petition of Robertson and Hays, their representatives, made two years earlier, the Legislature of North Carolina in December passed the second act of cession, by which the Western territory of North Carolina was ceded to the United States. Instead of securing an act of separation from North Carolina as the preparatory step to forming what Robertson calls "a more interesting connection" with Spain, Robertson and his associates now found themselves and the transmontane region which they represented flung bodily into the arms of the United States. The deed of cession was accepted by the United States on April 2, 1790; and on May 26 the Southwest Territory was erected. Despite the unequivocal offer of the calculating and desperate Sevier to "deliver" Franklin to Spain, and the ingenious efforts of Robertson and his associates to place the Cumberland region under the domination of Spain, the Spanish court by its temporizing policy of evasion and indecision definitely relinquished the ready opportunities thereby afforded, of utilizing the powerful separatist tendencies of Tennessee for the purpose of adding this empire upon the Western waters to the Spanish domain in America.

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APPENDIX.

Gardoqui Manuscripts. Vol. 1, p. 311-315.

Traducción de las dos cartas del Gobernador el Señor Juan Sevier a Don Diego de Gardoqui—

Franklin, 12 de Septiembre de 1788—Señor—Desde mi ultima de 18 de Julio he sido particularmente feliz en hallar al consultar a los principales sugetos de este pais, de que estan igualmente dispuestos y gustosos como yo respecto a las proposiciones y seguridades de V. Puede V. asegurarse de que las lisongeras esperanzas y ideas que las gentes de este pais mantiene con respecto a la futura apariencia de alianza y concesion de comercio con V. son muy ardientes y que estamos unanimente determinados al efecto. La gente de este pais ha llegado verdaderamente a conocer de que parte del mundo y de que nacion depende su futura felicidad y seguridad y discurre pronto que el interes y prosperidad de el consiste enteramente en la proteccion y liberalidad de su gobierno de V. Debemos esperar por nuestra situacion y circunstancias que nos induciran del modo mas eficas a mirar por la larga seguridad y prosperidad de su gobierno de V. en America y siendo los primeros que recurrimos de este modo a la proteccion y liberalidad de V. de este lado de las montañas Apalaches nos anima a mantener la mayor esperanza de que se nos consideran todos los socorros razonables por aquel que tan ampliamente lo puede hacer y dar la proteccion y alivio que se pide en esta nuestra representacion. V. Conoce nuestra tierna situacion y los embarazos en que nos hallamos con respecto a nuestra Madre Estado que se vale de todas las estratagemas para impedir el aumento y prosperidad de este pais. No obstante de que poseemos algunas de las mas fertiles tierras del Continente y una facil exportacion, con todo no podemos disponer de un solo articulo del producto de el (que seria casi innumerable) a no ser que tuviesemos autoridad de hacer uso de nuestros rios acia los puertos de abajo. Viendonos con estos embarazos le es a V. facil el hacerse cargo de la grande escasez de especie que hay en este pais de la que se halla muy poca entre nosotros. Nada otra cosa falta para asegurar nuestro mutuo interes sino una corta suma de este articulo (cuya graduacion la dejo al juicio prudente de V.) y de otros socorros militares que su comprehension contemple por necesario y conveniente se nos abastezca de ellos. Todo lo que se necesita para lograr cuanto se desea no pasara de unos pocos de miles de libras. Nos anima mas a hacer este recurso el conecimiento que V. tiene de que podemos pagar prontamente lo que V. nos pudiese suplir con embiar los productos de este pais a los puertos de abajo. Espero que su pago se hara con toda comodidad y que los empeños y recibos de nuestro amigo Diego Sevier (que es secretario) obligaran a ambos asi a mi como al estado Franklin hasta que se paguan y satisfagan enteramente. No dudo que los socorros que se piden se reputaran como una friolera que sale de sus arcas de V. especialmente si se coteja con el importante objeto a que se dirijen y que podemos reembolsar tan pronto la suma adalantada y que nos dejara en la mayor obligacion de gratitud y perpetua amistad. Estamos determinados cuanto nos sea posible a que V. nos gradue de tales y cuando se sirviese V. ver las ventajas que regularmente se orijinaran de esta conecion considerara V. que nuestros intereses que corren por un mismo canal duraran y seran inseparables. Nos compite hacer los mas prontos y necesarios preparativos de defensa. Si aconteciese algun rom-

pimiento debemos prepararnos con tiempo—cuyas razones necesariamente le seran muy obvias. Por tanto no necesito decir mas sobre el asunto y suplico me informe de cuando en cuando siempre que se ofrezca ocasion y lo pidan las circunstancias. Dejo a la direccion de V. para otra mas facil comunicacion que presente y por los demas asuntos refiero a V. a mi hijo Diego, que es sugeto competente para dar una perfecta razon por lo que respecta al pais del Weste. Antes que concluya puede ser necesario el hacer presente que no habra ocasion mas favorable que la actual para poner en planta el plan. La Carolina del Norte ha rechazado la constitucion y a mas pasara considerable tiempo antes que llegue a ser miembro de la union, si acaso sucede. He de suplicar al favor de V. provea a Diego de cuanto considere nos sera util. Si acaso se pudiese conseguir un pasaporte seria de grande provecho para este pais, porque es probable que algunos de nosotros hallen por conveniente el bajar a los puertos Españoles; y si se nos permite el embiar frutos de este pais seria materia de grande importancia para nosotros. Tengo el honor de ser, Señor, con grande estimacion y consideracion su mas respetuoso servidor—firmado—Juan Sevier—Señor Don Diego de Gardoqui, Ministro de Espana—Gardoqui—Rubrica.

Fac-Simile of the Sevier Letter in the Gardoqui Manuscripts

B. J. M. à V. l. en mas reconocio y obediente ser-
vicio = Diego de Gardoqui = Pubrica = León.
Señor Conde de Florida Blanca

Traducción de las dos cartas del Gobernador de
N. J. Juan Sevier a Don Diego de Gardoqui =
Franklin 12 de Septiembre de 1788 = Señor. Deseo
mi sistema de 18 de Julio he sido particularmente
feliz en hallar al consultar à los principales sujetos
de este país, de que están igualmente dispuestos y que-
ren como yo respecto a las proposiciones y requeri-
mientos de V. = Puedo asegurarse de que las ideas
que esperamos y ideas que las gentes de este
país mantienen con respecto a la futura especia-
ción. Nacional y conceios de Comercio con U. son
siempre evidentes y que estamos sinceramente
determinados al efecto = La gente de este país
ha llegado verdaderamente à conocer de que partes
del mundo y de que estación depende su futura
felicidad y seguridad, y dicense pronto que el
interés y prosperidad de él consiste enteramente en
la protección y libertad de su gobierno de V. = Debe-
mos expresar por nuestra situación y circunstancias
que nos inducieran del modo mas eficaz a venir
por la larga seguridad y prosperidad de un go-
bierno de U. en Comercio y siendo lo primero que
ocurriera de este modo a la protección y libera-
dad de V. de este lado de las montañas Apala-

lo que U. no permitiera regular con rumbo los pa-
 sados de este país a los puertos de abajo =
 Expreso que en pago se haga en toda comodidad
 y que los empeños y recibos de nuestros amigos
 Diego Serran (que es secretario) obligaron a ambos
 así á mi amo al Estado Franklin hasta que se pa-
 gues y satisfagan enteramente. = No dudo que
 los recibos que se pisen se reputaran como un
 favor que vale a sus arcas de U. especialmente
 si se trata con el importante objeto a que se dirigen
 y que quisimos recomendar tan pronto la misma ade-
 lantase y que no dejara en la mayor obligación
 de gratitud y perpetua amistad = Estamos de
 admiración cuanto nos sea posible á que U. no gra-
 duen de tales y cuando se verán U. y el la san-
 tidad que regularmente se originaran de este con-
 siderara lo que nuestros intereses que
 corren por un mismo canal, duraran y sean
 inseparables. = son completos hacen los mas
 pronto y necesarios preparativos de defensa.
 Si a conciencia algún compromiso de deberes pre-
 parados en tiempo, cuyas razones necesariamente
 le serán muy obvias. Por tanto no necesito
 decir mas sobre el asunto y suplico me informe
 al cuando en cuando siempre que se ofrezca ocasión
 y lo juzgaré en circunstancias = Dijo á la disc.
 con U. para que sea mas fácil comunicacion que

juntamente y por los demas asuntos referidos a
 Nro. hijo Diego, que es sujeto competente
 para dar una perfecta razon por lo que respecta
 al pais del West. — Antes que concluya para
 a ser necesario el hacer presente que su habra
 razon mas favorable que la actual para por-
 ner en planta el plan: La Comandancia del Norte
 ha rechazado la Constitucion y a mas que antes
 como es de temer que lleguen otros mem-
 bros a la Union, y acaso suceda — No se supli-
 car al favor de el juera a Diego es casual, consi-
 derar un ser util: Si acaso se pudiese conseguir
 un parayote seria de grande provecho para el
 pais, por que es probable que algunos de sus
 miembros por consecuencia el viajar a los yemas
 de las montañas; y si se sus pudiese el cambiar que
 los de este pais seria materia de grande impor-
 tancia para nosotros — Aunque el honor de ser
 Teniente — Con grande estimacion y consideracion
 en una suplicacion, recivido — Firmado — Juan
 Luis — Teniente Don Diego de Gardoqui Ministro
 de Indias — Gardoqui — Oubree
 Traducción de carta escrita por el Teniente Juan Luis
 a Don Diego de Gardoqui — Franklin N. de Sep-
 tiembre del 1789. — Teniente — Oubree N. de Informacion
 la que ha en poco meses ha estado en guerra con
 el de este pais con la nacion Cherokee de Indias y los

ches nos amena a mantener la mayor vigilancia
 de que seamos con estos todos los exornos racionales
 por aquel que tan dignamente lo puede ha-
 er y dar la protección y apoyo que exige en es-
 ta nuestra representación = U conoce nuestra tier-
 ra de su calidad y los embarcos en que sus halla-
 mos con respecto a nuestra madre tierra que usa
 la de todas las estrategias para impedir el
 comercio y propiedad de este país no obstante
 de que poseemos algunas de las mas fertiles
 tierras del Continente y una facil exportacion con
 todo su producto disponer de un este artículo del
 producto de él (que es casi innumerable) a su vez que
 fuéramos autorizados de hacer uso de nuestros sup-
 lidos los puntos de abajo = U sabemos con es-
 tos embarcos lo es a U facil el hacer cargo
 de la grande escasez de azúcar que hay en este
 país de la que se habla muy poca entre nosotros
 nada otra cosa falta para asegurar nuestro mis-
 mo interes con una corta suma de este artículo
 (cuyo graduacion lo dejó al juicio presidente de U) y
 de otros recursos militares que su comprehension con-
 templa por necesario y conveniente se son bastante con
 ellos. Todo lo que se necesita para lograr cuanto se
 desea no pasara de unos pocos de miles de Libras =
 esto amma mas a hacer este negocio el comercio
 de que U tiene de que podemo pagar prontamente

OLD FORT LOUDON.

At the dedication of the monument upon the site of Fort Loudon on November 9, 1917, the following address was delivered by John H. DeWitt, president of the Tennessee Historical Society:

One hundred and fifty-seven years ago there was enacted upon this beautiful spot a tragic drama which terminated the first attempt at permanent occupation by white people in Tennessee.

The dramatic background may best be described by showing that here beside these beautiful streams and majestic mountains lived the Overhill Cherokees. One-half mile above the spot where we stand was the town of Toskegee. About two miles further on the same side was the Indian town of Tomatley, at the mouth of Ball Play Creek. About fifteen miles above was the town of Tennessee. About two miles above Tennessee was Chote. About two miles above Chote was Settacoo. About two miles above Settacoo was Halfway Town. About two miles above Halfway Town was Clalhowey. About five miles above Clalhowey, on both banks of the Little Tennessee, was the town of Tallasee.

Among these mountains, where the chain of the Alleghenies and Blue Ridge meet, the Cherokees, a brave, sturdy tribe of Indians, lived. Southeast of their villages were the headwaters of the Savannah River, and down those of the Little Tennessee was the Cherokee path leading southeastwardly to Charleston and the Atlantic Seaboard. They had two other highways, one down their river and up the Emory, then down the South Fork of the Cumberland into the "Bloody Ground"—the other leading from Chote into Virginia, passing some six miles to the south of Knoxville, crossing the Holston at the islands near Underdown's Ferry, and extending as far as Richmond, Va. These two were called war paths.

Southwesterly among the fastnesses around Lookout Mountain lived the Chickamaugas, and upon the streams and along the villages running from here to the great bend of the Tennessee River there was easy and frequent communication with these Indians. So they lived for more than a century in this condition of seclusion from the white man.

In the year 1748, when Quebec, Montreal, Detroit and Mackinaw were old French cities, the Anglo-Saxon settlements in America were confined to the plains along the Atlantic Seaboard. England claimed all the land running westerly to the Mississippi River and even beyond, but she actually held a thin shore line along the ocean. William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, was Prime Minister of Great Britain. With his sagacious foresight as a master builder of an empire, he realized the immense advantage of taking and holding all the western country for British colonization and ownership. At the same time the French under Louis XIV had courted various tribes of Indians into friendship, aided by the missionary propaganda of the Catholic priesthood. The French were building a chain of forts intended ultimately to extend from their St. Lawrence settlements to the mouth of the Mississippi.

It was thus the ambitious rivalry for a new France and new England in America, that brought on the conflict known in Europe as the "seven years' war," and in America as the "French and Indian war." William Pitt conceived the idea that the decisive battle be-

tween the old rivals, England and France, would be fought to the finish beyond the Atlantic waters.

The war of Austrian succession, brought to a close in 1748, had left unsettled the issue between France and England as to disputed boundaries in America. Pitt bent every personal and national effort to seize and hold this interior country, and active hostilities were the inevitable result. The expedition led by George Washington in 1754 into western Pennsylvania really began the great struggle. The chief strategic point for the French was Fort DuQuesne, at the confluence of the Allegheney and Monongahela rivers, where Pittsburgh now stands. After its capture by the English in 1758, the defeated and exasperated Frenchmen descended the Ohio, ascended the Tennessee, and began to exercise a pernicious influence among the Cherokee Indians.

The leaders of the Cherokees were the famous chiefs Oconostota, Willinaughwah, Atta-Kulla-Kulla, and other chiefs, some of whom had visited England as friendly allies and been presented to King George. The Cherokees had ever been friendly to the English, and in 1756, Governor Dobbs, of North Carolina, made a treaty offensive and defensive with them and with the Catawbas, who lived in the Carolinas, east of them. It was the aim of the English to hold firmly the favor of these Indians and thwart the machinations of the French emissaries, as the mighty struggle between France and England involved the whole of the country inhabited by them. There was continual fear lest these tribes might be incited by the French to fall upon and destroy the frontier settlements of Carolina. When this treaty was made the chief of each nation required that a fort be erected within their respective countries for the defense of their women and children, in case the warriors should be called away against the French and their Indian allies.

There was another vital reason for the construction of forts. Charleston, S. C., was the military and commercial center for the British and it was to this place that all efforts were made to divert the Indian trade. As Col. W. A. Henderson has said:

"This trade was sought from all regions within the French influences, and it became a consuming desire on the part of the colonists that they should destroy the French forts and erect a line of such of their own, with permanent military occupation. Nothing gave such respect to the Indians as the boom of a cannon, and walls that would resist their bullets and native weapons. . . . England was bled of men and money to carry on this colossal design, beginning at the mouth of the St. Lawrence and extending as far westward as the pathways of commerce wandered. . . . In accordance with this general design it was determined to erect, far back into the wilderness, three forts for the protection of Charleston and its trade, and seduce the Southern Indians from their loyalty to France, which was always their favorite. One of these forts was to be Fort Moore, on the Savannah River, just below and opposite the present city of Augusta, named for the former governor of the Province of South Carolina.

"Far up the headwaters of the Savannah River, on the Cherokee path, on the main branch called Keowee River, almost immediately opposite the Indian town Keowee, was to be a second fort, christened "Prince George," in honor of the grandson of George II, afterwards George III. The third was to be far away 'over twenty-four mountains,' in the center of the Overhill Indians, which was to be

called Fort Loudon, after John, Earl of London, at that time commander of the English forces in North America."

Besides this fort for the protection of this immediate section, three other forts were built among the Allegheny Mountains—Long Island fort, on the north bank of the Holston River, by Col. Bird of Virginia; Fort Dobbs, under the shadow of the Alleghenys, by North Carolina; and Fort Chissel, on New River in Virginia, by Virginians.

In 1756 Fort Prince George was built on the land of the Catawbas, near Keowee, by Governor Glen of South Carolina.

In that same year, after laborious preparations and in consequence of donations by Prince George himself and by the colonies of Virginia and South Carolina, Fort Loudon was erected here on the southern bank of the Tennessee River in what is now Monroe County, near the point where the Tellico River runs into the Little Tennessee, more than thirty miles southwest of Knoxville. It was built by Gen. Andrew Lewis, the chief engineer of the British troops, under the direction of the Earl of Loudon. This was the first Anglo-American settlement in Tennessee, and its romantic and melancholy story is an introduction to the history of Tennessee.

The expedition consisted of one hundred regular soldiers of the king and one hundred provincial troops, together with about forty artisans, mechanics and farmers, and they carried some two score horses and a number of hunting dogs. The commander of the expedition was the celebrated James Stuart, who had been foremost in defense of the colonies against Indian raids and negro uprisings; but on account of some differences with the civil authorities he was ranked by Capt. Demere, who, though he had a French name, was a sturdy Scotchman.

On this rocky ledge, jutting upon the river, overlooking these deep waters bending around it, Fort Loudon was erected. The ridge was cleared of heavy timber within the enclosure and as far away as a rifle shot beyond. A deep ditch was dug across the ridge, extending out across the plain and thence to the river, including about two and a half acres of ground. Within the enclosure a well was dug and walled up. The fort was securely built of heavy logs, square in shape, with block houses and bastions connected by palisades, which were trunks of trees imbedded in the earth touching each other, and sharpened at the top, with loopholes at the proper places. It was made so secure that with ample provisions any garrison could endure a long seige by many times their number. Ten cannon and two guns called coehorns, said to have been contributed as the result of a donation out of the private purse of Prince George, were mounted upon the ramparts, or platforms. These cannon were probably brought over the mountains on packhorses, as no wagon road had ever been cut through that wilderness. Here, five hundred miles from Charleston, in a place to which it was very difficult at all times, but in case of war with the Cherokees, utterly impracticable, to convey necessary supplies, the garrison was placed. The Indians invited to the fort artisans by donations of land, which they caused to be signed by their own chief, and in one instance by Governor Dobbs of North Carolina. A thriving settlement grew around the fort with the arrival of traders and hunters. They began to cultivate the land. This was the first cultivation of land in what is now in Tennessee, and the field around this spot is the oldest land in point of cultivation in our State.

Thus they lived and maintained this lone outpost until signs arose

of the terrible tragedy which in August, 1760, terminated this settlement.

From the very beginning circumstances conspired to render the Cherokees hostile to the little garrison and colony.

A baleful influence was Oconostota, the great Indian orator and chief, whose home was at Chestoe, beyond the mountains, who always resisted the advance of the white man. The Overhill chief, "The Cloud," was even a more bitter and malignant foe. The presence of so many whites was the basis of agitation of these chiefs which caused so much dissatisfaction among the Indians. A spirit of deep resentment began to exist. The Indians could not understand how a fort which was built for their protection should rapidly become a means for their oppression and subjugation. Among them were some French emissaries, who began insidiously to disaffect them from their loyalty to the British.

Louis Latinac, a French officer, was living in this town with an Indian wife. Priber, a learned French trader, was there fomenting disaffection. He brought his goods up from New Orleans, in batteaux, to that locality.

Another French emissary was one "Baron Des Johnnes," a French Canadian, who spoke seven of the Indian languages. He was afterwards captured by Colonel Sumpter of South Carolina and sent to England.

While these intriguing agents and hostile chiefs were weaving a net of emnity around the settlement, an unfortunate quarrel between the Virginians and the Cherokees precipitated the aggression which led to tragedy.

Agreeably to the treaty with Governor Dobbs, a body of Cherokees had assisted in the reduction of Fort Duquesne. Returning home through the back parts of Virginia, some of them, who had lost their horses on the expedition, appropriated some horses found running at large, which belonged to the frontier settlers of Virginia. This the Virginians resented by killing twelve or fourteen of the Indians and taking some prisoners. This ungrateful conduct aroused a deadly resentment. Bancroft says: "The wailing of the women for their deceased relatives, at the dawn of each day and at the gray of the evening, provoked the nation to retaliate." The hostile spirit soon spread through all the towns.

It was no wonder that Fort Loudon, this far-projected spur of civilization, was the first to notice and suffer from the disaffection of the Indians. The soldiers, making incursions into the woods to procure fresh provisions, were attacked by them and some of them were killed. Constant danger threatened the garrison. The settlers were drawn into the fort. Communication with the settlements across the mountains, from which they derived their supplies, was cut off. Parties of the young warriors rushed down upon the frontier settlements and the work of massacre became general along the borders of the Carolinas.

Governor Littleton of South Carolina made preparations to force the Indians into repentance for their desertion. He summoned the militia of the province to assemble at Congaree. He prepared for an extensive expedition to punish the Cherokees. In November, 1758, six chieftains went down to Charleston to reconcile differences, but were treated with little kindness by the governor. He ordered them to the rear of his army under the pretense of safeguard, and then shut them up together in a hut. It seems that the chiefs exercised great forbearance, for they laid their just grievances before the English

and avowed their friendship. They finally agreed that twenty-two chieftains should be confined as hostages in Fort Prince George until an equal number of those who had slain the inhabitants on the frontiers should be given up in exchange for them, and that the Cherokees should kill or take prisoner every Frenchman that should presume to come into the nation.

But the Cherokees would not ratify this treaty. Hostages were unknown in the forest, where prisoners were slaves. Littleton had violated his word in retaining in prison the ambassadors of peace. It is hardly to be doubted that the Cherokees really longed for peace, but their proud spirit resented bitterly the incarceration of their honored young braves in a British fort. Oconostota resolved to rescue the hostages. Capt. Coytmore, the commandant at Fort Prince George, was lured into ambush and killed. Oconostota then surprised the fort and killed some of its officers. Then the garrison, in their rage, fell upon the hostages and butchered them to a man. Haywood says that this was because the hostages refused to be shackled. In the night the fort was attacked, but without effect. A bottle of poison was found with one of the Indians, probably intended to be dropped into the well.

The butchery of the hostages was followed by a general invasion of the frontier and an indiscriminate slaughter of men, women and children. A general Indian war was imminent. The neighboring provinces of Virginia and North Carolina were called on for assistance. Col. Montgomery landed from New York with some regular troops and was joined at Congaree, in South Carolina, by a good force of militia. Their march was spirited and expeditious. They destroyed all the lower Indian towns. Little Keowee, Estatoe, Sugaw Town and every other settlement in the lower nation were reduced to ashes, and many warriors were slain. But the Cherokees met them near the village of Etchoe, at the headwaters of the Little Tennessee, and inflicted such a heavy loss that the force retreated, and Fort Loudon, which it was endeavoring to relieve, was left defenseless, isolated, famishing and in despair.

All this time the garrison of Fort Loudon had been besieged, so that now they were reduced to the dreadful alternative of perishing by hunger or submitting to the mercy of the enraged Cherokees. The 200 miles between it and Fort Prince George were so beset with dangers and so difficult was it to march an army through the barren wilderness, that no further attempt at relief was made. The garrison was near starvation. For a month they lived on the flesh of lean horses and dogs and a small supply of Indian beans, procured stealthily from them by some friendly Cherokee women. Blockaded and beleaguered night and day by the enemy, with starvation in the face, they threatened to leave the fort and die, if necessary, by the hands of the savages. Then Capt. Stuart, resourceful and brave, summoned a council of war. They agreed to ask for the best terms possible and leave the fort. Stuart slipped down to the consecrated city of Chote, where no Indian dared molest him. He obtained terms of capitulation, which were: "That the garrison of Fort Loudon march out with their arms and drums, each soldier having as much powder and ball as the officer shall think necessary for the march, and all the baggage they choose to carry; that the garrison be permitted to march to Virginia or to Fort Prince George, as the commanding officer shall think proper, unmolested; that a number of Indians be appointed to escort them, and aid them in hunting for provisions during the march; that such soldiers as were lame or disabled by sickness from marching be received into the Indian towns

and kindly used until they recover, and then be allowed to return to Fort Prince George; that the Indians are to provide for the garrison as many horses as they conveniently can for their march, agreeing with the officers and soldiers for payment; that the fort, great guns (cannon), powder, ball and spare arms, be delivered to the Indians without fraud or further delay, on the day appointed for the marching of the troops."

In pursuance of these stipulations, on August 7, 1760, the white people, after throwing their cannon into the river, with their small arms and ammunition, except what was necessary for hunting, broke up the fort and commenced their march into the settlements in South Carolina. That day they marched fifteen miles toward Fort Prince George. At night they encamped near Taligua, an Indian town, where their Indian attendants all suspiciously deserted them. A guard was placed around the camp. At break of day the treachery was revealed. A soldier came running in and told them that he saw a vast number of Indians, armed and painted, creeping toward them. They had hardly time to form to meet the attack before the savages poured in among them a heavy fire, accompanied with hideous yells. The thousands of savages were too many for the two scant companies of half-starved regulars and a motley following of settlers with wives and children.

Captain Demere was among the first to be killed. A curious reference to his death is found in one of Bossu's letters, entitled "Travels in Louisiana," published in 1771. In this letter, written in 1760, he says:

"We have just received advice that a party of warriors of the nation of Cherokees, commanded by their chief of war called Wolf, have taken the Fort Loudon, belonging to Great Britain, and that the English governor of it, M. Damery, has been killed by the Indians, who put earth in his mouth, saying, 'You dog, since you are so greedy of earth, be satisfied and gorged with it.' They have done the same to others."

Haywood and Ramsey are in conflict as to the actual loss. Ramsey, quoting from Hewitt's "History of South Carolina," says that Captain Demere, with three other officers and twenty-six privates, fell at the first fire. Haywood says that all were killed but three men—Jack, Thomas and Stuart—who were saved by Atta-Kulla-Kulla, and six men in the vanguard, who escaped to the white settlements. At any rate Stuart, with his companions, was brought to the fort. Atta-Kulla-Kulla, or the Little Carpenter, who was Stuart's true friend, purchased him from the Indian who took him, giving him his rifle, clothes and all he could command by way of ransom. Taking possession of Demere's house he kept Stuart as one of his family and freely shared with him his provisions until a fair chance offered for rescuing him from the savages, but, according to Hewitt, the poor soldiers were kept long in miserable captivity and finally redeemed by the provinces at great expense.

Oconostota now determined to attack Fort Prince George. He was prompted, it is said, by the fact that he had the twelve cannon of the fort and also by some French officers who appeared on the scene. By accident a discovery was made of ten bags of powder and a large quantity of ball that had been secretly buried in the fort. This discovery almost resulted in the death of Stuart, but his interpreter assured the enraged savages that these stores were concealed without Stuart's knowledge. At Chote a council was held.

Stuart was told that he must accompany the expedition against

Fort Prince George, manage the artillery and write such letters to the commandant as they should dictate to him. They told him further that if the commandant should refuse to surrender they would burn the prisoners one by one before his face. Stuart resolved to make his escape or perish in the attempt. He told Atta-Kulla-Kulla that to bear arms against his countrymen was abhorrent, and invoked his assistance to accomplish his release. The old warrior and friend claimed Stuart as his prisoner, and together they set forth on a pretended hunting expedition. Ten days afterward they arrived at the banks of the Holston River, where they fortunately fell in with a party of 300 men sent out by Colonel Bird for the relief of Fort Loudon. Atta-Kulla-Kulla, loaded with presents and provisions, was then sent back to protect the hapless prisoners till they should be ransomed, and to exert his influence over the Cherokees to restore peace. Stuart lost no time, but sent word to the governor of South Carolina to inform him of the disaster at Fort Loudon and the danger imminent to Fort Prince George. Those prisoners that had survived at Loudon were ransomed and delivered up to the commanding officer at Fort Prince George. The British, victorious in the French and Indian war, received from the French a surrender of all claim to the disputed territory by the treaty of 1763.

The story of old Fort Loudon has naturally been invested with romantic and melancholy interest. It was the first and last instance of a capture and surrender of a fort and massacre of the garrison within the limits of Tennessee. For eight years after this destruction there was no settlement attempted within this territory. But in 1768, when William Bean built his cabin near Boone's Creek, he began the continuous occupation by the white man which developed finally into our great commonwealth. It was, after all, the settlement by a few from Virginia and North Carolina along the Watauga, who thought they were in Virginia, that constituted the foundation of our present civilization. A long line of heroes, statesmen and sturdy citizens has come from the people of those days.

The enmities and rivalries which caused the erection and then the destruction of Fort Loudon have long since disappeared, and today the glorious descendants of those Frenchman and British are fighting together, shoulder to shoulder and heart to heart, for the sake of democracy, in Belgium and France.

DOCUMENTS

Selected Letters, 1846-1856, from the Donelson Papers.

INTRODUCTION.

The letters which we print in this issue of the *TENNESSEE HISTORICAL MAGAZINE* constitute a third selection from the rich collection of the Donelson Papers, now in the Division of Manuscripts of the Library of Congress. The first selection was composed of *Letters of James K. Polk to Andrew J. Donelson, 1843-1848*¹; the second of *Selected Letters, 1844-1845, from the Donelson Papers*.² This third selection covers, in point of time, the years 1846-1849, when Andrew J. Donelson, by appointment of President Polk, was minister of the United States, first to the court of Prussia and then to the German Confederation; the year 1850, in which Donelson took a prominent part in connection with the Nashville Convention; the years 1851-1852, during which Donelson was in charge of the Washington Union, the central "organ" of the Democratic Party; and the year 1856, in which he was the nominee of the American Party for Vice-President, upon the ticket with Millard Fillmore of New York. Two of the letters were written by Donelson: one (January 22, 1846) to Andrew Jackson, Jr., the adopted son of General Jackson; the other, (September 27, 1856) to his son, Lieutenant Andrew J. Donelson, Jr. One (June 9, 1856) printed in a footnote, was written by T. A. R. Nelson to W. G. Brownlow. All the others are letters to Donelson. These include twelve letters of James Buchanan (January 29, May 13, 22, 1847; January 8, February 18, June 29, 1849; March 20, April 21, June 16, October 8, 15, 1851; January 31, 1852): five from Lewis Cass (May 16, October 31, 1851; March 16, June 19, July 19, 1852): four from William G. Brownlow (March 18, April 18, May 24, June 12, 1856): two from Francis P. Blair (May 6, 1846; October 28, 1856): two from John C. Calhoun (May 23, 1848; March 23, 1849): two from Millard Fillmore (July 10, October 9, 1856): and one from each of the following: Cave Johnson (May 10, 1850); Robert Tyler (May 4, 1851); James B. Bowlin (May 5, 1851); W. L. Marcy (May 7, 1851); R. K. Meade (May 7, 1851); A. Stevenson (October 25, 1851); A Balch (December 28, 1851);

¹TENNESSEE HISTORICAL MAGAZINE, Vol. III, pp. 51-73; hereafter cited as *Polk-Donelson Letters*.

²*Ib.*, pp. 134-136; hereafter cited as *Donelson Papers, 1844-1845*.

Horatio Seymour (February 28, 1856); Meredith P. Gentry (June 12, 1856).

The letters are selected for their general political interest, or their relation to Andrew J. Donelson's career. No attempt has been made to include the diplomatic correspondence of Donelson as minister. Most of the letters selected are now printed, it is believed, for the first time. Those of Buchanan are not found in the *Works of James Buchanan*,³ edited by John Bassett Moore; nor those of John C. Calhoun in the *Correspondence of John C. Calhoun*,⁴ edited by J. Franklin Jameson. Both of these works contain, however, material of great interest and importance in connection with the documents now printed.

Unless otherwise noted, the letters are autograph letters, signed. They are printed as written, except for the expansion of a few abbreviations and the correction of a few misspellings that are obvious slips of the pen. The name "Donelson" sometimes misspelled by the correspondents, has been kept uniformly in the correct spelling. The formal phrases of address and valedictory are uniformly omitted. As before, for the use of this material the editor of the MAGAZINE must express his grateful acknowledgments to Mrs. Bettie M. Donelson, of Nashville, and to Dr. Gaillard Hunt, of the Division of Manuscripts of the Library of Congress.

ST. GEORGE L. SIOUSSAT.

1. A. J. DONELSON TO ANDREW JACKSON, JR., HERMITAGE, NASHVILLE TENNESSEE.

January 22, 1846.

I have with the assistance of Mrs. Donelson assorted, or rather separated the General's papers from mine.⁵ It would have taken more time than I can spare to class them according to their subject and date; and they are accordingly thrown back into the same box in which they were sent to me, and in the same irregular and confused state. Most of the letters were once properly filed and were marked for reference to the particular Department that had cognizance of their subject, but were doubtless put up by mistake with the General's private letters.

There are numerous rough drafts and memoranda in the General's own handwriting, often without date, addressed to me. These I have not sent with the others, because they would be often unintelligible to any one but myself, and refer generally to some action of which

³Philadelphia and London, 1908; hereafter cited as *Works of James Buchanan*.

⁴*Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1899*; hereafter cited as *Calhoun Correspondence*.

⁵The adopted son of General Jackson.

⁶This and the following letter throw an interesting light on the relation of the Donelson Papers to the "Montgomery Blair Collection" in the Division of Manuscripts in the Library of Congress. See J. S. Bassett, *The Life of Andrew Jackson*, Preface, pp. viii-x. A. J. Donelson, it will be remembered, had been private and confidential secretary to President Jackson.

there was afterwards a more formal record. If however I should ever find amongst them any thing that may be useful or interesting, as illustrating the character or conduct of the General, it shall be at the service of Mr. Blair,⁷ or of the individual that may be designated by him as the depository of the papers.

Should Mr. Blair⁸ arrive during my absence let him know that the papers referred to are in a box at my house subject to his or your order.

2. F. P. BLAIR, SILVER SPRING, [MARYLAND,] TO A. J. DONELSON, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA.⁹

May 6, 1846.

I expected to have seen you before you left. But I would have had little to say beyond a request that you furnish me an authority to obtain through Andrew¹⁰ *all* the papers of the General which may be at your house. You said you had not time to look over them. I know there are some very important memoranda in regard to his early public service as well as his administration, among the mass huddled together and sent to Tennessee on his leaving Washington. A mere scrap may be of importance and therefore I must have *all*, if I am to carry out the injunctions contained in his letters to me.¹¹ Andrew wrote me that he could not get access to them after your return from Washington altho you said you would put him in possession of them. I sent my son Montgomery as well as my son James a long journey to get them. I expect you to put it in my power to get them before you leave the U. S. This is due to the General and to me for he devolves upon me alone the trust of publishing them or such of them as are proper for the public.

3. JAMES BUCHANAN, WASHINGTON, [D. C.,] TO [A. J.] DONELSON. January 29, 1847.

Enclosed I send you a letter from Mr. Graves¹² of Kentucky, at his request. It relates to his son who is now a student at the University of Berlin. I should be gratified if you would comply with his request. I have always found Graves to be a good fellow and in the affair of the duel he was not altogether to blame.

The Hibernia had such a long passage that I have not time to write you a long letter as I desire to do. I received your interesting favor of the 22d ultimo but the day before yesterday; and the last hour for my return dispatches by the Hibernia has now come.

The administration do not extend their views of annexation beyond New Mexico and the Californias: and for the cession of these they would be willing to pay liberally and assume the debts due to the Mexican claimants and bear the expenses of the war.

Congress have so long delayed to pass the Bill for raising ten Regiments of regular troops to serve during the war; that we cannot now get them into the field until the commencement of the vomito

⁷Francis P. Blair. See the next letter.

⁸James Blair or Montgomery Blair. See the next letter.

⁹A. J. Donelson was just leaving on his mission to Prussia.

¹⁰Andrew Jackson, Jr.

¹¹See Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, Preface, p. vii.

¹²William J. Graves, Whig Representative from Kentucky in the Twenty-fourth to the Twenty-sixth Congresses, inclusive, had killed Jonathan Cilley, Democratic Representative from Maine in the Twenty-fifth Congress, in a famous duel.

This letter of Buchanan to Donelson, and those which follow, were personal letters, sometimes accompanying the formal dispatches which Buchanan sent as Secretary of State in the cabinet of President Polk.

Season at Vera Cruz. This Bill will become a law during the present week.

The Treasury note and Loan Bill for \$23,000,000 has become a law and we apprehend no difficulty in obtaining the money.

The President's Message in relation to the Mexican War has had a most favorable effect upon the Country. The Tariff of '46 has not as yet injuriously affected our prosperity; and the opposition to it is not near so great as I had anticipated. Indeed we never enjoyed greater prosperity.

Although appearances are against us, I am not without hopes of obtaining a favorable and honorable peace with Mexico before the meeting of the next Congress.

The dispute with Brazil was substantially settled between Mr. Lisboa¹³ and myself this morning in an honorable and acceptable manner. The notes have not yet been exchanged in pursuance of our agreement.

The President informs me that he wrote to you¹⁴ fully by the last steamer in relation to your Congé.

Please give my *love* to Mary and inform her that I shall be delighted to receive a letter from her written in German or any other language which she may choose. It shall certainly be answered.

The Prussian government have abandoned as I infer from Baron Gerolt's¹⁵ conversation all idea of a Treaty on the principles of that of Mr. Wheaton¹⁶ with the Zollverein and I am glad of it. I do not perceive how it is possible that we should accede to any such arrangement.

I have thus huddled several incongruous matters together at the last moment and must now conclude. . . .

4. JAMES BUCHANAN, WASHINGTON, TO A. J. DONELSON.

May 13, 1847.

I send you a sort of *Omnium Gatherum Dispatch*¹⁷ to day for I have time to write no other before the closing of the last mail for the Steamer. You should make yourself thoroughly acquainted with our commercial policy; and what I send you may at least put you in the way. The mutual interests of the German States and this country, —our Steamers to Bremen and our Treaty with Hanover all conspiring may I trust induce Prussia to open her eyes to the importance of free commercial intercourse with the United States. I have reason to believe that some of the Zollverein States are prepared for as liberal terms as are contained in our Treaty with Hanover. A reduction of duty on tobacco even to one half of its present rate would open a fine market throughout Germany for that article.

Examine the Acts of Congress of March 3d 1815, January 7th 1824 and May 24th 1828.¹⁸ If I had my way, I should make short work with the last Act; and leave the indirect trade to treaty stipula-

¹³The Chevalier Gaspar Jose de Lisboa, minister of the Brazilian Government to the United States. The dispute to which the letter refers concerned the arrest of Lieutenant Davis and three sailors of the U. S. ship *Saratoga* by the city authorities of Rio de Janeiro. See *Works of James Buchanan*, Vol. VII, p. 209.

¹⁴Cp. a letter of Polk to Donelson, *Polk-Donelson Letters*, p. 72.

¹⁵Fr. v. Gerolt, Minister of Prussia to the United States. See *Works of James Buchanan*, Index, s. v. Gerolt.

¹⁶Henry Wheaton, Donelson's predecessor as minister to Prussia.

¹⁷The dispatch to which Buchanan refers is printed in *Works of James Buchanan*, Vol. VII, pp. 302-303.

¹⁸*U. S. Statutes at Large*, Vol. III, p. 224; IV, pp. 2, 304.

tions. It is a good consideration to enable us to make advantageous bargains.

Many of the most rabid Whigs,—those most violently opposed to the war have seized upon General Taylor and seem determined to make him President *nonens volens*. Since the capture of Vera Cruz and the victory [of] Cerro Gordo many of them now begin to retrace their steps and look to Scott. What this may end in it is impossible to conjecture; but, in my opinion, Taylor will always be stronger than Scott. If the war were over and Taylor nominated by the Whigs, he would be a hard horse to beat. On the side of the democrats we are all mum,—cheerfully, however, according to our Generals the glory so justly their due.

We are as yet quite uncertain when the Mexican war will close: though we live in hope.

Mr. Walker¹⁹ is far from being well. He now cannot speak above his breath: and even this is prohibited to him. His general health is not bad, though this is an ugly symptom. I do not believe his condition is at all dangerous, though it may be premonitory of something worse. His place in the Treasury could not be supplied: He still performs its duties with diligence.

I am sorry I can write no more as the Foreign Mail is about closing.

5. JAMES BUCHANAN, WASHINGTON, TO A. J. DONELSON.

May 22, 1848.

At this moment I have not time to write you a Dispatch. The Baltimore Convention²⁰ meets to day: and I presume they will receive the name of the nominee at New York before the departure of the Steamer. The time for speculation is, therefore, over.

We were very much astonished [*sic*] to learn that Baron Gerolt was to be superseded in this Mission. Whilst he has performed his duties to his own country with ability, fidelity and zeal, he has rendered himself highly acceptable to the President as well as every member of the Cabinet. His sympathies are altogether with the Government and the people of this country,—which can scarcely be said of any other European foreign minister in this City. Having been long the Prussian minister in Mexico and being much respected there, he has been highly useful to us by his correspondence with his friends in that Republic.²¹ Although we have no objection to the gentleman who has been nominated as his successor we should greatly have preferred the continuance of Baron Gerolt. As Prussia is at present in an uncertain condition it may be that Baron Roenne²² will not come: and in that event, indeed in any event, it is proper that this should be known and *that the King should be informed*, how

¹⁹Robert J. Walker, Secretary of the Treasury. See W. E. Dodd, "Robert J. Walker, Imperialist" (Chicago, 1914; reprinted in Randolph Macon Woman's College *Bulletin*, January, 1915).

²⁰The Democratic National Convention.

²¹Cp. a letter of George Bancroft to Buchanan, *Works of James Buchanan*, Vol. VI, pp. 224-225. In this letter, dated August 7, 1845, Bancroft states that Gerolt, in a conversation, had told him of threatening movements on the part of the Mexican Government.

The recall of Gerolt was delayed several weeks, *Works of James Buchanan*, Vol. VIII, p. 254.

²²The successor of Gerolt. As a result of the establishment of the German Confederation, with a central Government at Frankfort, Baron Roenne was accredited as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of that Government. *Works of James Buchanan*, Vol. VIII; pp. 295-296.

very acceptable Baron Gerolt is to the President and how useful he might be to both countries.

6. J. C. CALHOUN, WASHINGTON, TO A. J. DONELSON.²³

May 23, 1848.

I am much obliged to you for enclosing me the note of Lord Westmoreland.²⁴ I highly appreciate the good opinion of the intelligent and disinterested.

The views you take, and the opinion you express in reference to the present state of Europe, accord very much with my own. The moderation with which the revolution in France²⁵ is thus far marked, and the non-interference of the other powers of Europe with her affairs, contrasted with what occurred in the first, afford conclusive proof, that the lesson taught by the latter has not been lost, and gives hope, that the present may go through with far less sacrifice and misery, [*sic*] and be terminated much more beneficially. But, we must not be too confident and sanguine. There is much to do, and many difficulties in the way to be removed before Europe can settle down, in a new and stable state, better than that, which has been overthrown. Among the difficulties is that, to which you refer; I mean the financial. So long as the present revolutionary governments shall continue the heavy burthens imposed by those they have overthrown—so long, as they shall collect the present amount of revenue and continue extravagant disbursements, they will be exposed not only to reaction, but convulsive movements, one after another, to be terminated in purely military governments. But great and difficult is the task of reducing taxes and disbursements. In old governments they cannot be reduced, to any great extent, without disturbing dangerously existing interests; and where there exist heavy debts and larger military establishments, as is the case all over Europe, without coming into conflict with the two most powerful interests, the stockholders and the army.

But as great as this difficulty is, it is by no means the most formidable. There are great political errors to correct, errors going to the fundamental principles of governments and the object for which they are instituted. Without going into them, which would carry me beyond the limit properly belonging to a letter, it is sufficient to say, that the prevailing opinion of the popular party, both in our country and Europe; that the *mere numerical* majority is the people, and have, as such, the indefeasible right to govern, is a great and radical error—so much so, that no government based on it can long endure. Such a government would be, but the absolute form of popular government and not the constitutional form of such government;²⁶ and must, of necessity, soon degenerate, where the revenue and disbursements are great, into absolute government of the monarchical form. Indeed, of all governments that of a popular constitutional constitutional government, is the most difficult by far

²³This letter is endorsed. "Rec'd. June 19, 1848."

²⁴John Fane, eleventh Earl of Westmoreland (1784-1859), Resident Minister of Great Britain at Berlin, 1841-1851. Until the death of his father, the tenth earl, he was known as Lord Burghersh. A sketch is in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

²⁵The *Calhoun Correspondence*, pp. 746ff, contains several letters of Calhoun with expressions of opinion upon the February Revolution in France and the spread of the revolutionary movement in Europe.

²⁶This distinction was fundamental to Calhoun's political philosophy. See his "A Disquisition on Government," in R. K. Cralle, ed., *Works of John C. Calhoun*, Vol. I.

to constitute and maintain, in populous and wealthy communities, as the experiment now going on in France will in the end prove. Although it is making under the most favourable circumstances, I have little or no faith in its success.

Even we, I fear, with our happy start, and the most fortunate combination of circumstances, are destined to encounter great difficulty in maintaining and preserving ours. It has, in my opinion, long been working in the wrong direction, and with an increased force, I am sorry to state, under the present administration, which, while it has aimed in a right direction in reference to the internal concerns of the Union, has more than counteracted, whatever beneficial effects that might [have] resulted therefrom, by the wrong direction given in reference to our exterior relations. The war with Mexico has reacted most unfortunately on our interior relations. It has added a heavy debt and prevented thereby the reduction of duties and disbursements, and greatly increased the patronage of the government. I had hoped, the war was coming to a close, but fear from the last intelligence, that the prospect is against the ratification of the treaty. If it should not be ratified, it is to be feared, that a violent and successful effort will be made to conquer and hold in subjection the whole country.

In the meantime, another and dangerous question has sprung up in reference to Yucatan, more complicated, even than that of Mexico. I enclose you a copy of my remarks on it,²⁷ as printed in the *Intelligencer*, which will give you my views in reference to it. It does not do me full justice. I simply corrected the reporter's notes, without writing out what I said from them. The speech has not been printed in pamphlet, or I could send it in that form to you.

28th May. The Baltimore Convention has nominated Cass for Prest. and Genl. Butler for V. Pt. The success of the ticket is very doubtful.

7. JAMES BUCHANAN, WASHINGTON, TO A. J. DONELSON.²⁸

January 8, 1849.

I have consulted the President on the subject of an outfit for you as minister to the Central Government of Germany,²⁹ and, he does not believe that it would be expedient, at the present moment, either in regard to yourself or the administration, that this question should be brought before the present Congress.

Your appointment was made to secure you the place at Frankfort, in case our Diplomatic relations with Prussia should cease: and it was a pretty general impression in the Senate that this ap-

²⁷Delivered May 15, 1848.

²⁸Upon this letter is the endorsement: "In this letter Mr. Buchanan admits that my expenses to Frankfort must be paid." A draft of the letter is in the Buchanan Papers in the possession of the Pennsylvania Historical Society.

²⁹The German National Assembly or Parliament had opened its sessions at Frankfort May 18, 1848, and June 29 of the same year had chosen the Archduke John of Austria as Federal Administrator. The Proposed Constitution was still in the process of formation, and was not to be completed for many weeks. August 5, 1848, President Polk nominated Donelson as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the German Confederation. (M. M. Quaife, ed., *The Diary of James K. Polk*, Vol. IV, p. 56.) August 15, 1848 (*Works of James Buchanan*, Vol. VIII, pp. 167-169), Buchanan informed Donelson of his appointment as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the new Federal Government of Germany. This office he was to exercise in addition to that which he held at the Court of Prussia.

As to the appointment of a diplomatic representative to the United States on the part of the German Confederation there was considerable delay, though the Prussian minister, Baron Gerolt, was recalled. (See above, notes 21 and 22.) In January,

pointment would not produce an additional expenditure beyond the expenses which you might incur in visiting Frankfort when necessary. The President believes that after your return, you may be able to obtain this outfit from Congress.

It is impossible to say whether you will be recalled by General Taylor.³⁰ The general impression would seem to be that he is committed not to make removals from office except for cause; but yet I think he will be forced to abandon this position, even if it be his intention to assume it. I should hope, however, that he might make your case an exception, even if he should remove our foreign Ministers generally.

He has certainly kept his own counsel well as to what he intends to do. Beyond Crittenden³¹ he has not disclosed his purposes; and I understand he has determined not to select any other member of his Cabinet until after he shall have arrived in this City and consulted with his friends. It is believed either that Crittenden will not accept a place in the Cabinet, or if he should, it will be that of Attorney General. In either event, Clayton³² has been designated by Whig public opinion as my successor.

Clay, it is understood, will return to the Senate if he can. In that event, he will enact the part of the dying gladiator.

8. JAMES BUCHANAN, WASHINGTON, TO A. J. DONELSON.

February 18, 1849.

I learned last night, from several Whig and Democratic Senators, that John M. Clayton had yesterday received a Telegraphic Dispatch from General Taylor informing him that he would be appointed Secretary of State. This removes the doubt which has existed for some time as to whether he or Mr. Rives³³ would be selected. I know not that I shall have any influence in preventing your removal; but such as I may possess with Mr. Clayton shall be exerted in your favor. The circumstances in which you are now placed towards the Central Government of Germany,—your knowledge and your experience would enable you far better than any stranger to conclude a Treaty with that Power, at the earliest proper moment. I trust that this may speedily arrive. I shall present this view of the subject to Mr. Clayton.

It has been authoritatively announced in the National Intelligencer that Mr. Crittenden will not accept a seat in the Cabinet; but con-

1849, as already indicated (note 22), Baron Roenne was at last received. It was the impression of the Department of State that he represented only the German Confederation, and not the kingdom of Prussia. (*Works of James Buchanan*, Vol. VIII, p. 342.) The question was therefore bound to arise whether our relations with the German states were to be conducted through the minister to the Confederation, or whether they would continue also to be carried on with the individual states, especially with Prussia. The immediate problem, as it affected Donelson personally, was that of expense; and it is to this that the suggested "outfit" refers. Meanwhile, under a pressure very characteristic of American politics, Polk had appointed, and the Senate had confirmed, Edward A. Hannegan, of Indiana, as Minister to Prussia. Therefore, when the end of the German Confederation was at hand, Donelson was left in a situation where there would be nothing to do,—indeed, in one that could hardly be said to exist; and he was recalled by President Taylor. This matter is touched upon in several of the letters that follow. See note 38, above.

³⁰Zachary Taylor had been elected President of the United States in November.

³¹John J. Crittenden of Kentucky.

³²John M. Clayton, U. S. Senator from Delaware, appointed Secretary of State in the Cabinet of President Taylor.

³³William C. Rives of Virginia. He was appointed by Taylor Minister to France, in which capacity he had previously served in 1829-1832.

cerning this I still entertain some doubt. He might have had any station he pleased; but it is understood he would prefer his old place of Attorney General. Should he persist in his refusal, it is my impression our old friend Letcher³⁴ will come into the Cabinet.

From present appearances, the rush for office, high and low, will be greater than it has ever been at any former period.³⁵

In the Senate, they are getting up an appropriation for out fit and salary for a minister to Prussia with a view to provide a place for Mr. Hannegan,³⁶ though the President has given no assurance that he would be selected. The Whig Senators say that if he should be appointed they would take care of him under General Taylor. All this I learn from others having had no conversation with any Senator upon the subject.

Under these circumstances, a favorable opportunity was presented of urging your claim for an outfit: and this has been done, I think, with effect, in case there should be an appropriation for an outfit and salary for a minister to Prussia.

The President believed that you would be more secure as Minister to Frankfort than to Berlin and that this would be more in accordance with your wishes. I presume that one or the other mission will be abolished before the end of another year.

In about two weeks, I shall cease to be Secretary of State with my own hearty approbation. I have certainly had enough of it; and had informed General Cass, when I believed he would be elected, that under no circumstances should I continue. I am sorry, however, that I shall surrender my place to a Whig.

9. JOHN C. CALHOUN, WASHINGTON, TO A. J. DONELSON.

March 23, 1849.

The Senate unexpectedly adjourned to day; and I have overstayed my time all ready [*sic*]. I am busy preparing to get off tonight. Under such circumstances you must excuse the brevity of my letter.

I have seen both the President and Secretary of State in reference to the contents of your letter. They are both very kindly disposed towards you, and you may calculate [*sic*], I think, with certainty on being continued in your Mission to Frankfort. You are, I supposed [*sic*], already informed, that the Mission to Berlin was filled by the late administration by the appointed of Mr. Hannegan.

I fear the slavery question has gone so far, that it will be very difficult, if not impossible to adjust it. General Taylor I doubt not, is well disposed to settle it. I shall be well disposed to aid him in any feasible plan for accomplishing it. Nothing short of the greatest skill, prudence, and firmness can succeed, if even, that can.

I enclose a copy of the Southern Address³⁷ in pamphlet form. It has made a strong impression on the South, and does much to unite the two great parties there in opposition to the aggression of the North. Nor has it been without salutary effects on the North.

³⁴Robert P. Letcher of Kentucky; appointed Minister to Mexico by President Taylor.

³⁵The incessant demands for office had wearied Polk throughout the last months of his presidential term. *Diary of James K. Polk*, Vol. IV, *passim*.

³⁶Hannegan had been defeated for re-election as Senator from Indiana. Polk's willingness to nominate him for this mission was a matter of some magnanimity, for he had been bitter in his criticism of the President in the matter of the Oregon Treaty.

³⁷The address is in R. K. Cralle, ed., *Works of John C. Calhoun*, Vol. VI, pp. 285-312. See also *Diary of James K. Polk*, Vol. IV, pp. 284-292.

Nothing yet has occurred to indicate the line of policy the administration intends to pursue. My impression is, that they have fixed on none, and that their course will be determined by circumstances. I wish them well, and shall give them my support, whenever I can consistently with my principles and views of policy.

The Democratic Party is divided and distracted by the slave question. It will weaken them much, as an opposition party. Indeed, I do not see how they can regain power as a party, without a firm and united return to the principles and policy that brought Mr. Jefferson into power and adopting the principles of an entire non interference, as far as the federal government is concerned, in reference to the slave question.

10. JAMES BUCHANAN, WHEATLAND, NEAR LANCASTER, [PENNSYLVANIA,] TO A. J. DONELSON.

June 29, 1849.

I learned from a friend a few days ago, that you had expressed dissatisfaction with my conduct in regard to your removal from Berlin to Frankfort. You may rest assured that whatever may be the result, neither the late lamented President nor myself is to blame. He was sincerely and devotedly your friend and chose Frankfort for you; because he believed this choice would best promote your interest. It is true, that I was of a different opinion because I believed that the mission to Berlin would be more permanent. Besides, it was morally certain you could not at the last session have obtained an outfit for Frankfort, if there had not been a vacancy created in the Prussian Mission. You might have got it after your return.

Your own dispatches had induced the President to consider it probable that the Prussian Mission would be swallowed up in that to Frankfort.³⁸

It is true it might have been better for you if an appropriation for a second Mission had not been made; but the President was urged to consent to this course by a pressure almost irresistible. The deepest interest was felt by Senators of all parties for Hannegan and they were determined, if possible, to provide a place for him. He is a whole souled clever fellow. I shall tell you all about these matters when I enjoy the pleasure of meeting you. Of one thing you may rest assured;—that you had not two better friends in the United States than the late President and myself.

General Taylor's administration is not popular. It has lost much ground since the commencement. The Democrats who voted for him, on account of his military exploits and under the belief from his pledges that he would be a no party President, have been sadly disappointed. They are now his decided opponents. In this State, where he received many Democratic votes, from present appearances, we shall, in October next, elect a Democratic Canal Commissioner by a de-

³⁸See note 29, above. In the Donelson Papers there is a letter from Baron Gerolt to Donelson, dated at Berlin, July 24, 1849, in which the writer seems to indicate his belief that a minister would be appointed on the part of Prussia and that this would not interfere with the new federal government in contemplation. Donelson wrote to Clayton March 29, 1849, saying it had not been his intention to convey the idea that both missions would be preserved. (Draft in Donelson Papers.) Later Clayton wrote that Donelson's position at Frankfort would be for the present only that of a silent and vigilant sentinel, and that if no further advances were made in the formation of the Confederation Donelson would be recalled. "In such a case," continued Clayton, "we shall probably not renew the experiment of sending a minister to another government before it shall be organized, and capable of treating with us."

cided majority. His election was a severe and mortifying lesson for us, and no person felt it more than myself; and yet I believe it will turn out to be a blessing in disguise in more respects than one. I was in Washington, on private business for a few days last week; and I found whilst there that the dissatisfaction was by no means confined to the Democratic party.

I am now delightfully situated. My place is beautiful and healthy and I certainly enjoy the otium, whether cum dignitate or not is more questionable. I am contented and happy, and do not suffer myself to be disturbed by ambitious longings. I hope yet to enjoy the pleasure of welcoming Mrs. Donelson, yourself and family to my bachelors abode.

How hard was the fate of poor Mr. Polk!³⁹ His administration will be one of the most glorious and successful in our annals. His name is inseparably connected with some of the greatest events in our history; and the great and essential features of his policy cannot be disturbed by his successors. I regret, deeply regret that he could not have lived a few years to witness its triumph. But we must submit to the inscrutable decrees of an all wise Providence. He died with the firmness of a Christian Philosopher.

He was the most laborious man I have ever known; and in the brief period of four years had assumed the appearance of an old man.

11. C. JOHNSON,⁴⁰ CLARKSVILLE, [TENNESSEE,] TO A. J. DONELSON.
May 10, 1850.

. . . "Unless your convention at Nashville⁴² acts with the utmost caution, we shall be defeated in our next election. The Whigs wish to make an issue with us on that question and they evade the issues that we ought to make upon the folly and dishonesty of the present administration. Several democrats attempted a meeting here; it was turned into a farce and made contemptible—none of our leading men had any hand in it. The meeting adjourned until next Monday and I suppose will thus pass off. I have myself declined having any connection with it. I can see no good that can arise from it. Congress will probably pass measures that will be satisfactory to the South but if they do not, it is certain that no offensive measures can pass—and a convention will be useless. I think we should have delayed any movement of the sort until *oppressive measures* had been *actually passed* we could then have better decided upon the remedy. We should not look for remedies out of or beyond the constitution until oppression became so great that the people would heartily cooperate without distinction of party. The last speech of Mr. Calhoun, the correspondence of the Florida delegation with their governor and several speeches made in Congress by *extreme* Southern men, have erected apprehensions among us, that they would not be satisfied with anything short of a dissolution of the Union. *That* our people will not submit to under *any circumstances* likely to occur in our time. The character of the convention and those attending it in the estimation of the people will hereafter be judged of as much by the tone of the debates as by its action—we have much to fear from the Hotspurs of the South and still more from the indiscretion of our

³⁹James K. Polk died June 15, 1849.

⁴⁰Cave Johnson, of Tennessee, Postmaster General under Polk.

⁴¹A paragraph relating to the request of a constituent is omitted.

⁴²As to the Nashville Convention of 1850, see an article by the present editor, "Tennessee, The Compromise of 1850, and the Nashville Convention," in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, Vol. II, pp. 313ff.

organ at Nashville. Use your influence, which I know is great with the *excitable* men that will be there to keep them cool and prevent as far as possible any harsh expressions, which may serve the Whigs for food in our next campaign.

12. JAMES BUCHANAN, WHEATLAND, NEAR LANCASTER, TO A. J. DONELSON.

March 20, 1851.

Since I received your favor of the 15th Instant my house has been full of company and I now snatch a few moments from them to write you a hurried letter. I am rejoiced that you have become the proprietor of the *Washington Union*;⁴³ and trust it may prove a source of profit to yourself as well as the means of restoring harmony and strength to the great Democratic party of the country. In regard to your prospectus I would say, first, that I would advise you to adopt the Virginia Resolutions⁴⁴ on the subject of Slavery and to consider the question settled by the Compromise rather than to extol that system of measures. The success of the Democratic party at the next Presidential election depends upon the re-union at the South of the State Rights and the Union men.⁴⁵ Without this it would be vain to hope for victory. No Democratic candidate can be elected whose name will not produce this result. The compromise, beyond all question, was a hard measure for the South. Without therefore expressing any decided opinion for or against it, I would say that in whatever light it may be viewed, it is the part of patriotism to acquiesce in its provisions, and that the Democrats both of the North and the South should yield it a generous support, upon the principles that however it may be regarded in either quarter, it would be suicidal to jeopard our blessed Union for such a cause and for measures, in their nature, irrevocable. I would insist upon its faithful execution as necessary to preserve the Union. You will of course not omit strong expressions on the Fugitive Slave law.

The days of a protective Tariff have passed away. The Democratic party are pledged to sustain a revenue Tariff and they must stand or fall by this principle. But holding this principle, in good faith, strictly in view, it would be folly to assert that the Tariff of 1846 is perfect. In the nature of things, Tariff laws, based upon the prin-

⁴³The story of the establishment, in 1845, of the *Washington Union*, under the editorship of Thomas Ritchie and the management of John P. Heiss of Tennessee is to be found in the work of C. H. Ambler, *Thomas Ritchie, A Study in Virginia Politics*, pp. 246-259; and, with additional details, in the *Papers of Major John P. Heiss of Nashville*, MAGAZINE, Vol. II, pp. 208-215, hereafter cited as *Heiss Papers*. At this time A. J. Donelson had been approached by Simon Cameron of Pennsylvania with reference to the founding of a newspaper as the government organ at Washington, but the offer was not accepted. (Donelson to Jackson, *Donelson Papers*, 1844-1845, pp. 152-153.) Professor Ambler (*op. cit.*, pp. 284-288) recounts also the circumstances which led to Ritchie's retirement from the editorship of the *Union*, in April, 1851. His successor was A. J. Donelson, who was to have the assistance of General Robert Armstrong, likewise of Nashville. With this assumption of control by Donelson the following letters have to do. They show Donelson in consultation with the leaders of the Democratic Party, North and South, as to the position which the paper, under its new leader, should maintain. It was a most difficult situation, as the threatened breach of 1849-1851 had been narrowly averted, and the sectional and factional differences of the party were still bitter. Donelson's effort, pressed with devotion and energy, to bring the party back to the ideas of Jackson, with devotion to the Union of the States, met with results that discouraged him, and he also retired after a year of service.

⁴⁴In this same month the Assembly of Virginia had adopted moderated resolutions accepting the Compromise and urging South Carolina to desist from her threatened secession. *Acts of Virginia, 1850-1851*, p. 201. (March 29, 1851.) Cp. A. C. Cole, *The Whig Party in the South*, pp. 192-193.

⁴⁵Cole, *op. cit.*, chaps. V and VI; U. B. Phillips, *Life of Robert Toombs*, chap. V.

principle of revenue, must undergo changes even to adapt them to this principle. Mr. Walker's report of 1847, in favor of increasing the duty on iron and coal for purposes of revenue, to forty per cent would increase our revenue and make Pennsylvania as strong a Democratic State as she was twenty years ago. Indeed, such a measure would detach her from the Eastern States and make her Union with the Southern Democracy indissoluble. Whilst, therefore, I should strongly assert the principle of a revenue Tariff, I would carefully avoid the declaration that our present revenue Tariff is the perfection of human reason and incapable of improvement.

A system of internal improvements by the General Government, would bankrupt the Treasury, corrupt the people and destroy the Democratic party. How to draw the line was a question which could not be resolved even in General Jackson's time. There is one species of improvements of which it would be difficult to deny the constitutionality. Under the war making power, can you not, in case of necessity, construct a harbor as a place of shelter and security for our vessels of war? But this would not embrace the Mississippi etc. etc. The question is involved in great difficulty; and in your prospectus I should think it would be wise to go strongly against a general system of internal Improvements, without committing yourself against any improvement whatever under any circumstances. The late river and harbor Bill was so bad and dangerous a measure, that those who opposed it can be sustained by invincible arguments.

But I must stop here. In my opinion you ought first carefully to prepare your own prospectus; and then submit it to some person or persons in whose judgment and discretion you repose implicit confidence. Should you think proper to honor me with such a trust, I shall most freely suggest such alterations and additions to it as may strike my mind. This, however, cannot be done advantageously without a personal interview; and how to hold this without exciting unfounded suspicions, it would be difficult to devise. If you were to come to Philadelphia we might meet accidentally there at Martins without even his knowledge, or we might both stop at the Merchants Hotel which is the Democratic Head Quarters where you would be expected to stop.

You know both Cass and Woodbury as well as any man and you know that they are both deficient in moral firmness and in other qualities necessary to constitute great *practical* Statesmen; I think it would have been better not to have called upon any of us for advice in regard to your prospectus. The Union will of course take no part in favor of either of the candidates; and if our views should happen to differ you might excite the jealousy of the one whose opinions were disregarded. Cass will be in favor of lauding the compromise to the skies; and if you should do this, you will inevitably prevent the reunion of the party in the South. (This subject must be managed with the greatest discretion.) He will probably from the force of circumstances go strongly for rivers and harbors. You will not be able to extract much from Woodbury. It is probable, therefore, you had better pursue your own independent course. If however, you think differently you may rely upon it, that I shall advise you as a warm personal and political friend anxious for your success and determined to make no suggestion which I shall not honestly believe to be for your own advantage as well as that of the great party with which we are both identified.

13. JAMES BUCHANAN, WHEATLAND, NEAR LANCASTER, TO A. J. DONELSON.

April 21, 1851.

I returned home on Saturday evening, quite impatient to see your prospectus; but when I arrived, I found the Union containing it missing: I have yet seen it in no other papers; and I write to request that you would send me a copy. Neither the Union nor the Intelligencer of the 16th and 17th has yet come to hand.

In February 1847, Mr. Walker reported that the duty on iron might be increased ten per cent and produce an increase of revenue. He did not recommend this increase of duty; but stated the fact in compliance with a call from the Senate.

You say that Tennessee will take Governor Cass or myself according to the decision of the National Convention. A number of persons write to me from that State; and from their information I have been induced to believe⁴⁶ that the Governor's prospects are not much better in Tennessee than in the other Southern and South Western States, Kentucky excepted. But you may know best.

Ardently wishing that the Union in your hands may be a source of profit to yourself and the means of reuniting and strengthening the Democratic party, I remain as ever, sincerely your friend,

14. ROBERT TYLER,⁴⁷ 186 RONALDSON ROW, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA, TO A. J. DONELSON.

May 4, 1851.

I have received a copy of the "Union" and a prospectus signed by yourself accompanying it. In the course of a week I shall send a subscription for your paper, which we all here wish to regard as the National organ of our party.

I extremely regret to see that you have condescended to notice an article in a vile and contemptible penny-a-line sheet called the Philadelphia "Statesman." It is really farcical to see anything from so degraded a source gravely published and noticed in the "Union." The paper was formerly the "Spirit of the Times" and at one time a very flourishing Journal representing the foreign interest in this State to a certain extent. It was abandoned about two years ago by Colonel Du-Salle and since then has been falling in public favour and respectability, until quite recently it has fallen into the hands of Alexander Cummings, Benj. Brewster and a set of men hanging on the outskirts of the Democratic party without character or influence. It ventured about two months ago, to make a violent attack on Judge Campbell and myself, when it lost, as I was informed, sixteen hundred subscribers in one week, and was compelled to cast off its old title and to assume its present name. The men who control its columns are the greatest vagabonds and rascals in the community; and noted for their double-dealing, selfishness and scoundrelism are solely actuated by a desire to disorganize the Democratic Party. They profess to be friends of General Cass, or Houston, but really are for anyone in whose name they may injure Mr. Buchanan, who evidently is the favourite of a very large majority of the Democratic Party in the State, and with whom we can beat Scott in Pennsylvania while we have no chance with *any one else out of the State*. These

⁴⁶The source of Buchanan's belief was no doubt Cave Johnson, his faithful supporter in Tennessee, whose letters to Buchanan, in the possession of the Pennsylvania Historical Society, afford a wealth of information as to Tennessee politics.

⁴⁷Son of John Tyler, of Virginia, former President of the United States.

men attempted first, to make Pennsylvania a Free-Soil State. Next attempted to break up the Caucus nomination for Senator at Harrisburg, and now are bent on designs of the most deplorable mischief, and the mass of the pure Democracy scorn and despise them.

Permit me to say one word further. It is perfectly ridiculous to suppose that any pure Democrat viz:—any Democrat sound on the Slave question now and prospectively—can carry the States of New York and Ohio, or either of them, against Scott. There is no earthly chance for Ohio, and the little glimmering of hope there may be in reference to New-York arises in the expectation that the *Constitutional Whigs* (not the Free-soil Democrats) may vote a pure Democratic ticket. Pennsylvania is the battle ground! We can carry in the State for a *Pennsylvanian* by appealing to the pride of the old State. If Buchanan cannot carry this State no man can be named who will do so. I told Mr. Ritchie (and at the time he laughed at me) that General Taylor would beat General Cass 10,000 votes majority in the State. Our only but certain hope in the coming Presidential conflict, is to arouse the State pride into a high pitch of enthusiasm. Pennsylvania has never had a citizen elected, or even nominated for the Presidency by either of the two great parties. With Pennsylvania, ten Southern States, Illinois, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey and Indiana we have votes enough and a few to spare. This is our card, and James Buchanan (who never did me a favour in his life, while I have done for him a score, and therefore I speak disinterestedly) is our man. The next President should be a Northern man elected principally by Southern votes. Any faltering or hesitation, or any tampering [*sic*] with Traitors, Schemers, or men of doubtful politics and the cause of the Party is first lost, and that of the Union shortly after, inevitably.

Look to the Pennsylvania [*sic*] Democracy my dear sir, for Gods Sake! They have been the true friends of the South. Their late conduct in my opinion saved the Union. If instead of opposing they had joined the free soil agitation, your imagination can easily picture the result. It was Buchanan chiefly, and the "Pensylvanian" newspapers that prevented this.

15. JAMES B. BOWLIN,⁴⁸ ST. LOUIS, [MISSOURI,] TO A. J. DONELSON.
May 5, 1851.

I have just rec[eive]d a number of your Prospectuses, and shall with pleasure do all in my power to enlarge the circulation of your paper. The few numbers we have received here since you have taken charge of the Editorial Department seems to have given general, I might say, universal satisfaction to the democracy of the Old Jackson Guard; the Union democracy, without any taint, of nulification [*sic*] or free soilism. The same men, who gave Mr. Polks administration an honest and hearty support, and supported the Union under your predecessor are delighted with it now; not from any want of confidence before, but from a conviction that its general course will be the same, and that it may become more useful in your hands. This will no doubt, be the case in our State, where Benton had long since taught his followers to openly repudiate the name of Mr. Ritchie, whilst they still claimed to be called democrats and many of them would be glad to return to the fold, by any door that might be opened to receive them. They can do so now, and assume however false,

⁴⁸Democratic Representative from Missouri in the Twenty-eighth to the Thirty-first Congresses, inclusive.

that Mr. Ritchie was the Cerberus, that guarded the portals to keep them out—and as he is out of the way they can come in.

It may be important to you in your new situation, to know something of the condition of the party here, which is deplorable enough God knows. Nulifiers [*sic*] we have none I believe in the State, that is Southern Nulifiers. I wish it was in my power to say as much for the other factious spirit in this country, founded upon free soilism and terminating in Northern Nulification. But I can-not. Under the influence of a name that was once all potent in this state, and yet has influence over those who do not think for themselves, the latter faction has grown up particularly in our towns; to an extent, that must for some time jeopardize the success of the party, in such localities yet the State will be true to the democracy upon General politics.

This free soil party was started here by the Blairs in 1848 on Cass' nomination who succeeded in drawing about 130 into their fold including about one half Whigs; and started and maintained a paper called the Barn burner to support the Buffalo ticket. They claimed Benton as their leader, which the party denied, and they effected a very small division, during the election—The next year 1849 Benton openly headed them, and about divided the party. The democratic presses that went off with him on the free soil hunt were about equal in number to those, which stood firm upon their principles. And they maintained this position through that year. But the people were continually arraying themselves against this new doctrine as they comprehended it, and the Benton press, blotted out one by one until they have fallen from thirteen to three—whilst the democratic has not only maintained its own, but is on the increase. The old democratic press stands now about as follows:

Freesoil	Benton	These are for Benton
The Union	St. Louis	to promote free soilism
Jefferson Inquirer	Jefferson City	and not from any particular
The Western Flag	Springfield	attachment to the man.

Democratic—upon the old principles, against Benton and Free-soilism:

The Times	St. Louis	
Metropolitan	Jeff[erson] City	
Courier	Hannibal	
Democratic	Louisiana	
North East Reporter		
Glasgow Banner		
The Constitution	Lexington	
Platte Argus	Weston	
St. Joseph Gazette	St. Joseph	Lately quit him
Southern Democrat	Jackson	
Advertiser	Springfield	
Grand River Chronical		
Warsaw Review	Neutral vs Benton and Freesoil	

The whole Whig Press of the State is against him because he is against the compromise to which they have fully committed themselves under the banner of Clay and Filmore. The three papers still clinging to him calling themselves democratic, are sailing under false colors. All have quit him save these three—and they stick to him

because by doing so, they promote their own freesoil views—They are against the Compromise they are against the fugitive slave law and take the position on it and change it just as the abolitionists do—. The Union, the leader of the little squad, denounced the Compromise and spoke of the Southern States as “five Hundred thousand traffickers [*sic*] in human flesh and blood assuming to rule the nation.” After they passed, it denounced the Fugitive Slave Law in language as coarse as Hale or Sceward [*sic*]. When the abolitionists changed their ground and were willing to amend it, the Union did the same and now their issue is to amend it. The Union is Benton’s leading organ, and what it does the other two endorse and the faction follows.

Last summer the Benton faction under his lead had extra candidates brought out in every District except one (which was represented by a Connecticut man who stuck to him, and opposed the Compromise) solely with a view to beat us for supporting the compromise and succeeded in securing the election of Whigs in three out of four Districts and came very near carrying the fourth for a Whig. His men never were for an election, they merely run to defeat the democratic ticket.

In this city he and his freesoil doctrine is strong, or I should more properly say he is strong, through his freesoil doctrines with our foreign population. Out of 80,000 in the city 39,000 are foreigners—nearly all Germans and Irish—They are good democrats in the general. Their instincts are all that way and when not misled by miserable demagogues pandering to their prejudices against an institution of which they know nothing they vote right. They are however strongly against the institution of slavery—and can be easily led astray on that point. To secure this vote as their stronghold the Benton faction openly preach freesoilism here, whilst they struggle to conceal their true position to the country where it is not so palatable.

They started a candidate this spring for Mayor, and made him come out with a letter claiming amendments to the Fugitive Slave Law *a la* Hale.⁴⁹ Benton came all the way from Washington to engage in the fight and laboured assiduously, on the outskirts of the city for the Free Soil candidate pandering to the foreign prejudice against slavery and got himself and candidate beautifully defeated.

Pending this canvas there were four papers run in the German language daily and their discussions and views were really laughable—if the subject was not too serious to laugh at. They were all for abolition and from their tone one might believe they thought[t] that their mayors election, disposed of the question of slavery, and set all the negroes free. When they got to that point, a portion of them thinking that, that would be too great a revolution in the institution of the country at once, changed their position to the milder one of requiring the masters to educate them and make a kind of fancy Gentlemen of them. So they got by the ears. These are the people who constitute the Benton faction here. I do not believe he has two hundred Americans in his ranks here and they are generally from the free states excepting the Blairs.

From here Benton went up to the Capitol and induced the Governor who is his tool, to issue a mandatory order to remove the deposits from the Bank, some \$60,000 to the hands of a private individual merely for agitation [*sic*] but it was so poor an imitation of the great

⁴⁹John P. Hale of New Hampshire, U. S. Senator, 1847-1853; Free-soil candidate for the Presidency in 1852.

struggle, and the design stuck out so bold, that both papers and people received the news with a broad laugh and that effort fell dead. He then wrote a long [. . .]⁵⁰ of slander about a letter of his colleague Atchison and published it in the Inquirer, to get up a quarrel with him. It was copied into the Free Soil Union and no other paper in the State taking the slightest notice of it it fell dead. So he failed again. He returned to the city. His arrival was not noticed by a paper save his own Free Soil Union—and after wandering about the streets here several days he left for Washington threatening to bring out his family and enter upon a general crusade of agitation through out the State. He may do it, but my faith is not strong, at all events he is done—he can do no harm. His late conduct in heading the foreigners in a crusade against the institutions of his state has settled him—and forever.

I have noticed within a few days that the Union the Free Soil concern here is quoting from the Union there, since you took charge of it—to induce its blind followers here to believe—it was not the Union democracy it was fighting but Ritchie—and probably [*sic*] to deceive you into some notice of the rotten concern. All such pretensions are hypocritical—Its an ingrained abolition sheet, hating Benton personally, but sticking to him as a kind of shield, whilst they fight the Abolition battles. It is going down rapidly and any notice from a democratic quarter would help to deceive yet a few blind followers.

Your address was well received here by the Democrats and its bold and open avowal of principles buried the hopes of the Benton free soilers of meeting any encouragement in that quarter in their factious fight.

They dread the approach of the Presidential nomination and the Union here has frequently taken grounds against a National Convention because they know the line will then be drawn and all true hearted Democrats will rally for the nominee—and drive them with Benton over to the Whigs. They see it and they dread it and are constantly clamoring for a pell mell run. In that issue Missouri will be found where she has ever been, but with a diminished majority.

I was glad to see [you]⁵¹ take a proper notice of the Times. It merits it. It has had a hard battle to fight in this place, where the majority of the democrats are foreigners and against the Compromise. But it has faced the music boldly and deserves credit for it. It is now permanently established and will do good service.

This is PRIVATE and written to give you an insight into the condition of things here such as you can hardly attain through the Press.

16. W. L. MARCY,⁵² ALBANY, NEW YORK, TO A. J. DONELSON.

May 7, 1851.

I did not receive your letter of the 28th ult until after I had passed thro the city of N. Y., but since my arrival here I have opened a correspondence with some friends there and from the information I have received I feel warranted in saying that the prospects of carrying out the project indicated in Harris' Letter is encouraging. Our friends have written to Stiers⁵³ [?] to come on and there appears to be a strong feeling in the right class of Democrats to co-

⁵⁰A word illegible.

⁵¹A word apparently omitted.

⁵²Late Secretary of War in the Cabinet of Polk.

⁵³The name cannot be clearly read; it is possibly Heiss, as below.

operate in the enterprise. I return herewith Mr. Heiss⁵⁴ letter to Harris which you sent me. Our friends everywhere speak in decided terms on the improvement of the *Union* (the paper) but this you need not mention to the "Napoleon of the Press."⁵⁵

I have only been home long enough to take a birds eye view of political affairs in this State. The new issue has changed the aspect of things here very much. In some respects it is improved and in others it is *weakened*, and to my mind it is somewhat problematical whether on the whole we as a party are to lose or gain by it. The nine million bill⁵⁶ is in my opinion unconstitutional but yet not so clearly unconstitutional as to be obvious to all grades of intellect. Plausible arguments are presented in its favor. It addresses itself to large interests in the state. There are a large body of contractors who expect and will reap a rich harvest, if it is passed. The certificates to be issued are to be received as the basis of bank circulation. This feature commends it to another large class of our citizens. The people in the counties on the borders of the canals favor it. On the other hand there is a more general objection pervading the whole state against so large and sudden increase of debt.

The fund and the disposal of it will be under the direction of the Whigs—and what is worse the Seward Whigs—to this there is a very general objection among democrats of all phases. Its political bearing is to verun [*sic*]⁵⁷ old political lines—to fuse into a homogenous [*sic*] mass the fragments into which both parties were previously broken. I fear we shall lose more by this operation than we shall gain. The democrats had passed the difficult crisis and were gradually getting together but the Whigs were approaching such a crisis and their condition growing worse. The union Whigs⁵⁸ follow the lead of the freesoil Whigs and are lost in the superior mass and before this matter is over will, I fear, think themselves of too little account to adhere to and carry out their distinct organization. The democratic *reunion* will be considerably advanced by this new issue but whether so much is as to give us the ascendancy in this State in the Presidential election if the Whigs should be also firmly reunited is questionable. But for this measure the Whigs in this State would have been much distracted and divided, but it is now not so certain that they will be. If they carry three of the twelve districts vacated by the resignation of the Senators they will have a triumph over us and I fear they will be able to carry that number. They are concentrating their whole *money power* which is large upon three or four districts.—Such a triumph in their present condition will do

⁵⁴John P. Heiss, former business manager of the *Washington Union*. See *Heiss Papers*, MAGAZINE, Vol. II, pp. 137ff, and pp. 208ff.

⁵⁵Thomas Ritchie.

⁵⁶A full account of this issue of stock certificates to promote the enlargement of the Erie and the completion of other canals, and of the political turmoil thereby engendered appears in N. E. Whitford, *History of the Canal System of the State of New York* . . . Vol. I, pp. 192-194.

⁵⁷Probably the word intended was "overrun."

⁵⁸To the questions of Anti-Masonry, canals, and banks, which had long divided parties, and especially the Democratic party, in New York State, the slavery problem had succeeded as a cause of disruption, with disastrous results in the campaign of 1848. The difficulties of the situation in New York had vexed Polk, who was led to complain that neither faction was concerned about anything but the offices. See *Diary of James K. Polk*, *passim*, and, for a summary, G. P. Garrison, *Westward Extension*, pp. 271-274. As a part of the development of the slavery controversy, especially in connection with the agitation of 1849-1850, a similar division began to appear in the Whig party in New York, with the followers of Senator Seward on the one hand, and the "Silver Gray" Whigs, led by Fillmore, on the other.

them much good by arresting the progress of discord and bringing them into harmony.

The direct interests to which I have alluded will on the particular question detach some democrats from our standard and a less number of Whigs will join it.

If the measure is ultimately carried, as there is danger that it will be, our opponents will have the use of a very large corruption fund and will unscrupulously turn it to a good account for themselves. Looking at the matter in all its aspects I should have preferred that the issue had not been made if it could have been avoided. If the passage of the bill is not prevented, and I fear it will not be, we should have occupied a better position if the democratic senators had not resigned. An issue before the whole people by way of condemning the act after it was done, would be better than the one now made. As it is the Whigs play game for democratic senate districts while we are shut out from playing a game for any one Whig district. They have five or six tricks secured and we must win all the rest or nearly all or lose in the game. As it is we shall do the best we can and if we lose make up for it in the next hand—I presume your education will enable you to understand this technical language.

17. R. K. MEADE,⁵⁹ PETERSBURG, [VIRGINIA,] TO A. J. DONELSON.
May 7, 1851.

I cannot withhold from you, how highly I admire and approve, the prudence, tact, and ability, which you display in the management of the columns of the Union.

I am the more rejoiced to see it, as I have for some time been convinced, that the success of the democratic party in 1852 depends, in its present distracted and alienated condition, more upon those qualities in its central organ than upon any other agency whatever.

When the execution of the fugitive Slave feature of it, becomes as fixed a fact, as the other portions of the compromise, we may hope that parties will again arraign themselves under the old ensigns which have heretofore distinguished them. Ours will at least, and if our adversaries should again betake themselves to the hitherto twice successful game of *hide and go seek*, we may console ourselves with the conviction, that the most they can accomplish will be, to throw the election where our party must certainly triumph—No Whig candidate other than a free-soiler, or an ally of that sect can carry the North. If he be either, every Southern Whig State will be lost to him. They must either support the democratic candidate, or an independent candidate. Suppose there should be three candidates, including a freesoilier proper. The Whig will suffer most by defection. The democrats will in that event, either carry the popular vote, or be returned to the House of Representatives where we shall be in strength. If there should be two, and the Whig should coquette with the freesoiliers, he will lose at the South as much as he will gain at the North. If the antifugitives should in the course of the next twelve months be put down as a party (which is not likely however) and there should be but two candidates, both equally opposed to the freesoiliers, then as heretofore we shall triumph through the strength of the principles of our party. In the event of a fair race between Whig and democrat as in 1844, more will depend (I must

⁵⁹Democratic Representative from Virginia in the Thirtieth to the Thirty-second Congresses, inclusive.

be permitted to repeat) on the prudence and tact of the Editor of the central democratic organ, than on any one man or set of men in the Union. The most delicate and skillful management is required to keep in line the two wings of the democratic party at the South. The anticompromise democrats of the South, of whom I am one (let me deal frankly with you) must be persuaded, not dragooned; They look with distrust on the compromisers as too facile on the subject of Southern rights. They feel as if their rights had been sacrificed, from indifference [*sic*] in some and for the want of a little firmness in others. I never doubted our ability to obtain from the last Congress a recognition of the rights of Texas, and a repeal of Mexican laws or a fair partition of the territory. There were but two obstacles, and both could have been controlled. Henry Clay who has a free soil heart was one, and timidity and lack of Union in the South was the other. The feelings and opinions here expressed were felt by all the Southern representatives who voted against the compromise. My object was not to break up the Union, but to protect my people; and to protect them at all hazards. I stated the question to my own mind thus—If the North hated Slavery less than she loved the Union, the South would get her rights; If she hated the South more than she loved the Union then separation would only be anticipated by a few years, unless prevented by a worse calamity, to wit, subjugation. With these views I laboured zealously to defeat the compromise.⁶⁰ When it passed, and some of its main features that were objectionable, were voted for by a majority of the South, the subject then assumed another aspect; Resistance became altogether impossible and even absurd. It was the act of the South, and whether right or wrong, a majority had voted for its worst feature,—The Texas boundary—And though we had in my opinion paid \$10,000,000 to convert into freesoil a large territory unquestionably the property of Texas (and here I do not embrace the portion really in dispute) Yet it was the act of Slave holders; and acquiescence became the true policy if not the duty of the Southern minority. The South must be as one man when it attempts resistance in any form—The action of one or two States in opposition to the wishes of the rest will be fatal to all.—For my own part I was for falling back upon old organizations; trusting that no further aggressions would be made, and if they were, a closer union of the South would follow. But a disquisition was not my aim in addressing you; it was to fortify you with at least our opinion in the course you seem to have marked out.—An abuse of, or a severance from the ultras, (as they are termed) of the South, would result in nothing but division and defeat—They have the destiny of the party in their hands. Your sagacity has already perceived that this party in the South has the entire confidence of the Slave holder. The compromise democrat himself, will tell you he cannot quarrel with one who was only too zealous in his cause and a little too stout in his defence. No Southern representative has brought himself into trouble with his party by voting against the compromise, while those who voted for it, have been thrown on their defence. Especially is this the case in the Strong Slaveholding sections. Witness the unanimity with which Mr. Seddon⁶¹ was importuned to accept a renomination. His is more infected with freesoilism than any district in Eastern Virginia. *He* may carry his district. No compromise democrat could possibly do it.—

⁶⁰A very interesting summary of the policy of the radical pro-Southern men.

⁶¹James A. Seddon, Democratic Representative from Virginia in the Twentieth to the Thirty-first Congresses, inclusive, when he declined re-election.

The two wings of the democratic party South must reunite, and work harmoniously together or defeat must be the consequence. Political necessity must often control the practical Statesman. Not to the extent of losing sight of a principle, but of adopting fair means to ensure its triumph: and those which he would prefer are not always those he should use. In cooperating heartily with the party, I am influenced by the most obvious considerations. What is lost cannot be recovered. If the majority have failed at the pinch, yet in future contingencies they are more to be relied on, than their adversaries and leaving out of view the great national principles common to the democracy on both sides of the lines, our friends at the North are for the most part doing all they can to infuse into the people a just appreciation of the rights of the South and of their own constitutional obligations.

Views similar to those I have expressed must ultimately control the action of those with whom I am identified, unless indeed, the breach now rapidly closing, should be kept open by some indiscretion on the part of political leaders.

Conscious of having performed their duty to the South, and of having its entire confidence and warmest sympathies, and consequently, possessed of a power fully adequate to the purposes of self protection, the anticompromisers must have a full communion with their party or none. A mutual distrust or jealousy would be as fatal as separation for no party under such circumstances can act energetically. There must be not only Union but cordiality as of old. If it cannot be effected, the party is, for all practical purposes destroyed.—

I thought I discovered in your editorials a conviction of these truths, and hence I thought a few friendly lines to the purpose I have written, would not be an unacceptable accompaniment to a segar after dinner; for if the one should fail, the other certainly will secure a short forgetfulness of the new troubles you have brought upon yourself.

I cannot close, without commending the fine spirit in which are conceived your appeals to S. Carolina. I trust they will be productive of good, if the Rubicon is not already passed. Certain it is, she will not be *forced* to recross it. Should she *ever* do so it must be with no consciousness of humility. Persuasion is the Word—And the man who could devise the means of placing her where she was, with undiminished respect, would deserve the highest civic honors—May those be yours.

18. LEWIS CASS, DETROIT, [MICHIGAN,] TO A. J. DONELSON.

May 16,⁶² 1851.

I have rec[eive]d your letter, and write you to encourage you on in your good work, but not to give you advice, for I have none, that would be useful to you. Your paper is managed with great tact and judgement, [*sic*] and ought to give satisfaction to every true Democrat. I have seen nothing I do not cordially approve. As to the Presidential question, you are right to keep out of it. What ever you find it for the good of the party to do, be not apprehensive [?]⁶³ that you will not have my cordial support. As to the Presidency, thank God my heart is not set upon it. I do not care one straw about [it].⁶⁴

⁶²The reading is uncertain. The date may be May 10.

⁶³The reading is uncertain.

⁶⁴The word is supplied.

There is not that man living, who can say, that I ever first introduced [it?]⁶⁵ to him either verbally or in writing. I should be a happy man, if I never heard the subject mentioned again. I see the divisions in our party, both local and ——, and I am in bad spirits for the future. It is the . . .⁶⁶ and if the Union is not sacrificed to them, it will be more owing to the mercy of God, than to the wisdom of man. Do your best, and put me wholly out of the question, except as a Democrat, without a feeling but for the good of the party and of the country.

19. JAMES BUCHANAN, WHEATLAND, NEAR LANCASTER, TO A. J. DONELSON.

June 16, 1851.

I have not written to you sooner, because I had nothing to write. I heartily approve the general course of the Union and think it is conducted with much ability. If I had any remark to make, it would be that the editorials are too long for Northern taste, though they are shorter than father Ritchie's and may be too short, for aught I know, for the Southern market. It is not quite correct to write me down as approving the compromise as strongly as Clay and Webster. In common with President Polk, I was in favor of the Missouri Compromise and am still convinced that this would have been the best and most satisfactory mode of adjusting the vexed question. Had I been in Congress I should have sustained the Missouri Compromise with all my power; but failing in this attempt, I should then have supported the existing measures as the best which could be obtained. I have always considered the bargain a hard one for the South. Indeed they have obtained nothing by it but the Fugitive Slave Law which is no more than to give practical effect to the Constitution. As a Northern man I have sustained the Compromise with what ability I possess against the abolitionists and free soilers; but I make great allowance for the feelings of Southern men on the subject. To acquiesce is their duty; because it affords no ground whatever for the dreadful alternative of secession. Still I think they ought to be treated in a very different manner from the abolitionists and free soilers of the North.

I have a considerable correspondence with the South and I trust that after the pending State elections shall have passed away they may be induced to look more at their common enemy in the North and less at their own divisions. The Democratic party is the true Union party of the country; and every effort ought to be made to restore the old party organization in those Southern States now divided between Union and Southern Rights men.

Webster is now doing good service;⁶⁷ but he contributed as much as any other man to raise the Devil which I fear he will not be able to lay. In April 1836 I presented a memorial from a society of friends in this State asking that Slavery might be abolished in the District of Columbia. After consultation with our friends, I moved that the prayer of the memorial be rejected. We hoped to obtain a unanimous vote in the Senate in favor of the Motion and supposed that this might assist in allaying the agitation. Mr. Webster, however, was one of six who voted against this motion. His five companions were Davis of Miss. Hendricks, Knight, Prentiss and Swift. His

⁶⁵The reading is uncertain.

⁶⁶Three words are illegible.

⁶⁷In his support of the "finality" of the Compromise measures of 1850, and particularly in urging the North to sustain the Fugitive Slave Law.

course was even violent against the Bill, recommended by General Jackson for preventing the circulation of inflammatory pictures and publications through the mail. In a public speech he claimed for himself substantially the glory of the Wilmot proviso. He has at length changed his course and is endeavoring to counteract the mischief he has done; and I commend him for his efforts. May they be successful!

I view with deep anxiety the condition of South Carolina; and I trust in Heaven, she may be induced to delay her attempt to go out of the Union by herself. Such a delay will remove the danger. Should one link in the chain be broken, Heaven alone can predict the consequences. Many of the Southern Democratic politicians in other States have always maintained the right of secession and contended that as they came into the Union voluntarily as sovereign States, so they could go out of it in their discretion. Among this class of politicians there will be a strong sympathy for South Carolina, should co-ercive measures be resorted to by the General Government. Indeed the question is involved in inextricable difficulties. You have an important part to act requiring great firmness and great prudence: and I am happy to believe you possess both qualities.

General Scott is beyond all question the candidate of the Whigs in this State and he will prove by far the most formidable candidate among our people. The feeling in favor of a protective Tariff, combined with his military glory will give him great strength. Should General Cass be our candidate, which I do not anticipate, his identification in public opinion with Cameron⁶⁸ and our guerilla politicians, would most probably seriously endanger the vote of the State. If the State pride should not be aroused by selecting the candidate from among our own citizens, it will then become indispensable to select some new man against whom no prejudice exists. Without the vote of Pennsylvania combined with that of nearly all the Slave States, no Democrat can be elected. Our candidate must, if possible, be able to command this united vote.

I have now written you a long letter which upon perusal contains but little matter; but it shows at least that I am willing to write. I should like very much to see you for a few hours; but know not how to accomplish this.

P. S. Please to remember me kindly and respectfully to General Armstrong.

20. JAMES BUCHANAN, WHEATLAND, NEAR LANCASTER, TO A. J. DON-ELSON.

October 8, 1851.

I very [much] regret that I have never had an opportunity of seeing you since you became the Editor of the Union. I should have written you at length long ere this; but had expected to visit Washington. This I found almost impossible on account of our State election.

I am led to infer from what I have heard that you never could have read my letter of the 19th November last to the Union meeting at Philadelphia.⁶⁹ I now send you a copy of it and request that, at some leisure moment, you will give it a careful perusal. That it did some good in the South at the time of its publication I know from

⁶⁸Simon Cameron, Senator from Pennsylvania, 1845-1849.

⁶⁹Printed in *Works of James Buchanan*, Vol. VIII, pp. 390ff.

evidence within my own possession. *The Union men of Georgia at least were highly gratified with it.*

Every Democrat in the land must ardently desire to re-unite the party throughout the country in such a manner as to present an undivided front at the next Presidential election. How is this to be done? Will the Union party of the South comprised as it is of Whigs and Democrats consent to send Delegates to a Democratic National Convention? Will the State Rights party composed as it is of Democrats and Whigs consent to do the same? My constant advice to both has been, after the present State elections shall have been decided to look to their common enemy in the North and to unite upon the Democratic platform of Jefferson and Jackson. We must carry the Southern States for the Democratic candidate whoever he may be, or we shall probably lose the election. In this State, General Scott will be a formidable candidate.

I entertain scarcely a doubt of the success of Col. Bigler,⁷⁰ though his majority will not be so large as many had anticipated. He will receive the united vote of the Democratic party, including the free-soil Democrats of Wilmot's district; and this without having truckled to them in the slightest degree. He has every where boldly avowed the principles set forth in my letter. The Whigs who at the first proclaimed their opposition to Johnston have been gradually falling away as they have done heretofore on similar occasions; and I fear that but few of them will remain with us on the day of the election, unless in the City of Philadelphia where their personal interests may prevail. But it is vain to speculate on an event so near at hand.—I am just about to set out for Philadelphia and "old Berks.[""]—Please to present me kindly to Mr. Eames and believe me as ever

21. JAMES BUCHANAN, WHEATLAND, NEAR LANCASTER, TO A. J. DONELSON.

October 15, 1851.

I observe that in the Union of yesterday you state that Senator Cooper⁷¹ did not vote against the Fugitive Slave Law. In this you have committed a mistake as you will perceive from the ayes and noes. Vide Congressional Globe for 1850—page 1647. Sturgeon,⁷² our own true and firm old Democratic Senator, to his immortal honor, stand[s] alone recorded in favor of the Bill, of all the Senators Whig and Democratic from the non-Slaveholding States, except Dodge⁷³ and Jones⁷⁴ of distant Iowa. Other Democratic senators from the North and West doubtless were friendly to the Bill; but it is unfortunate that they all happened to be absent. But I write merely to point out your mistake in regard to Cooper.

22. A. STEVENSON,⁷⁵ TO A. J. DONELSON, WASHINGTON.

October 25, 1851.

I have just arrived on my way to Harrisburg not very well, and have no time to call and see you—That I regret. I'll do it on my return. Will be off tomorrow, or as soon as I can do a little matter

⁷⁰William Bigler, elected Governor in this year.

⁷¹James Cooper, Whig Senator from Pennsylvania, 1849-1855.

⁷²Daniel Sturgeon, Senator from Pennsylvania, 1839-1851.

⁷³Augustus C. Dodge.

⁷⁴George W. Jones.

⁷⁵Andrew Stevenson, Speaker of the House of Representatives, 1827-1834, Minister to Great Britain, 1836-1841.

of business here—Sick or well, I suppose I must go, after the glorious triumph of the 'Old Keystone' How it will astonish the Hotspurs of the South! Its moral effect, will be tremendous—The old dominion, will come out I hope well—Botts⁷⁶ defeated by Caskie;⁷⁷ and I hope Goggin⁷⁸ by Powell.⁷⁹ But the result of the election, doubtful. I think Powell, will get in by the skin of his teeth. I am going to talk to the farmers, about mending their ways, but I shall look about and see how the land lies in another direction, but not a word about Politics, save a glance at the "Union"!! I had rather blow off a little steam, about Pennsylvania and Virginia democracy, instead of talking about farming. I will try tho' and say something to keep her in good humor with old Virginia—They have always stood nobly together, and I hope will continue to do so. Pray say in the Union that I have passed, on my way to Harrisburg, so as to let them know that I am coming. By the bye, if I had known when I accepted six weeks ago, that Webster, and Cass, and Douglas, were to make agricultural speeches, I would have backed out. I see they say at the North, that I am electioneering! not for myself, I assure you.

The Union floats its Flag, boldly; never better and with more effect—It is on the right track—Keep it so, and God speed its success!

23. LEWIS CASS TO A. J. DONELSON.

October 31, 1851.⁸⁰

Many thanks for your kindness. I am quiet here, doing nothing, but looking at the movement of the political waters. You and I are equally disliked by the Southern Secessionists, and for the same reason, we have both opposed their mad and ruinous schemes, and have done battle for the Union and the Constitution. You have been in a difficult position, and nobly have you conducted yourself. Ever[y] lover of our country should thank you for the firmness and ability, with which you have come to the good work. Still neither of us will be forgiven by the Northern and Southern extremists. When men begin to feel the error of a false position, they must find somebody besides themselves to blame, and you and [I]⁸¹ have been so decided, that we are very convenient for that purpose.

I can not think that it is best for me to be in Washington much before the opening of the session. But I shall write to the members, who are far more efficient, than I can be, and who will be there in time and prepared to prevent improper movements.

As to Mr. Buchanan, I never refer to him, but with respect. But I am told he is resorting to strange means such as little become the high prize he has in view. But to me, his most objectionable step was the encouragement he gave to the South to hold out for 36 30. A line he must have known could never have been obtained, and especially at the time when the whole South was contending that Congress had no right to legislate on the subject at all. The best friends

⁷⁶John Minor Botts, Whig Representative from Virginia in the Twenty-sixth, Twenty-seventh and Thirtieth Congresses.

⁷⁷John S. Caskie, Democratic Representative from Virginia in the Thirty-second to the Thirty-fifth Congresses, inclusive.

⁷⁸William L. Goggin, Whig Representative from Virginia in the Twenty-sixth and Twenty-seventh Congresses, and (on the resignation of T. W. Gilmer) in the Twenty-eighth Congress; also in the Thirtieth Congress.

⁷⁹Paulus Powell, Democratic Representative from Virginia in the Thirty-first to the Thirty-fifth Congresses, inclusive.

⁸⁰The reading of the date is not certain.

⁸¹The word is supplied.

of the Compromise in the Senate thought that this course of Mr. B's did us more injury, than all the other causes put together.

As for Douglas he is a good fellow. I am confident he feels friendly to me, and I do not believe he ever did or will do the least improper thing to attain the Presidency. But it would be to ask too much of human nature, to ask him to stand out of the way, and to say, I will not suffer my name to be used [?].⁸² For myself I am not so unreasonable, but perhaps I am to some extent [?]⁸³ influenced by the utter indifference I feel for the result. I wont undertake to explain to you my views, lest you might not give me credit for sincerity. But I am a bad candidate for any party, for I can do nothing for myself, and I look upon the result as philosophically as any man in the Union [?].⁸⁴ The matter may go to its consumation, [*sic*] but I should pass four years at the decline of life far more happily without the Presidency than with it. I have burned your letter.

24. ALFRED BALCH,⁸⁵ NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE, TO A. J. DONELSON, WASHINGTON.

December 28, 1851.

I doubt exceedingly whether you have time to read a political letter, still I shall make the experiment and if the worst happens you can only throw this one behind the fire. The course which you are now taking in the Union is conciliatory towards all our ancient friends and therefore wise. I read, reflect upon, and criticise all your editorials and do you justice because I sincerely wish to do so.

We have had a little political excitement here during the last month arising out of the meeting of our State convention on the 8th Proximo. Pillow⁸⁶ has been here electioneering for the Vice Presidency and Aaron V. Brown⁸⁷ has been trying to help him. It was and is desired to send delegates to Baltimore who will vote for the nominations of Douglass all the way from Vermont and Pillow! [*sic*] The friends of old Buchanan have taken matters coolly but they have been wide awake and duly sober. In all the preparations for the demonstrations to be made on the 8th I have felt profound but quiet interest. I have worked incessantly and of course have done all that I possible could that was honorable. If I am not more mistaken than I ever was in all my life, I think we will shew you a delegation that will listen to the claims of no man but the old Conestoga⁸⁸ of Pennsylvania. Cass will not be able to muster a corporal's guard in our convention and Douglass we shall order down to Jerico there to wait till his beard grows!

⁸²The reading is not certain.

⁸³The reading is not certain.

⁸⁴The reading is not certain.

⁸⁵A Nashville lawyer, one of the older generation of the friends of Jackson and Polk.

⁸⁶Gideon J. Pillow, of Tennessee. On his place in Tennessee politics, see papers by the present writer, "Tennessee and National Political Parties, 1850-1860," *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for 1914*, pp. 248-9, 254; and "Tennessee, The Compromise of 1850, and the Nashville Convention," in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, Vol. II, pp. 313ff, *passim*. A. O. P. Nicholson, in a letter to John P. Heiss (*Heiss Papers*, Vol. II, p. 227), explains that the movement in favor of Pillow's candidacy for the Vice-Presidency arose when Scott was prominently mentioned as the Whig candidate for President. In the Mexican War Scott and Pillow had bitterly quarreled, and, apparently, state pride demanded this form of vindication for Pillow.

⁸⁷One of Polk's trusted friends, long a Democratic Representative from Tennessee, later Postmaster General in the cabinet of Buchanan. See the articles cited in the previous note.

⁸⁸James Buchanan.

Trousdale⁸⁰ cares not a straw about a nomination. It was I who first nominated him and told him that I intended to do so for Buchanans benefit by killing off Pillow who wanted to unite with Douglass and create strife in Tennessee. You will see in the proceedings of the approaching 8th what effect this line of policy has had. Only have a little patience and every thing will be seen in the effulgent light of midday! The moral effect of an early nomination of Buchanan in Jackson's State will be considerable and is therefore essential in the present condition of affairs. Altho I see and have long seen as I think that Buchanan *must* be the nominee and must be our next President. God grant that I may not be mistaken because I sincerely beleive [*sic*] this his election is essential to our national prosperity and to the harmony of our Union. You may take it for granted I beleive [*sic*] as a truism that the *heart* of no Yankee born man is with us on the great slavery question. Buch. is sincerely with us and will dispose of this question rightly during his administration, hence the only source of my zeal for his success. I reckon Buchanan will visit the metropolis after a while.

25. JAMES BUCHANAN TO A. J. DONELSON, January 31, 1852.

In publishing my brief letter to Col. Fall⁸⁰ of Mississippi, by the change of the word "even" for "never" you have changed my meaning materially. The letter was correctly published in the Mississippian of January the 9th, in the same paper with the proceedings of the Convention.

P. S.—In the *Union* it reads, "The Federal Government "*never*" confined within its strict Constitutional limits ; whereas it ought to read, "The Federal Government "*even*" confined and so forth.

26. LEWIS CASS, WASHINGTON, TO A. J. DONELSON,
March 16, 1852.

I enclose a dispatch I have just rec[eive]d. Will you insert it, placing it in the third person, as thus,

General Cass⁸¹ was nominated by the Convention. Delegates instructed to vote for him. Vote 101 for Cass, 72 for Douglas.

27. LEWIS CASS, WASHINGTON, TO A. J. DONELSON, June 19, 1852.

I received a very satisfactory letter from Gen. Pierce⁸² yesterday. The *Union* is safe.

28. LEWIS CASS, SENATE CHAMBER, WASHINGTON, TO A. J. DONELSON,
July 19, 1852.

I requested Mr. Holland to ask you to say a few words on the

⁸⁰William Trousdale, elected governor of Tennessee in 1849 and defeated for reelection. A sketch of his life by his son, J. A. Trousdale, is in the *MAGAZINE*, Vol. II, pp. 119-136.

⁸⁰George R. Fall. The letter is printed in *Works of James Buchanan*, Vol. VIII, pp. 431-432.

⁸¹Cass divided with Douglas the Western Democratic preference for the nomination for the Presidency.

⁸²Franklin Pierce, who had just received the nomination of the Democratic National Convention for the Presidency. See "Some Papers of Franklin Pierce, 1852-1862," *American Historical Review*, Vol. X, pp. 110ff. Pierce, also, had written to Donelson, May 30, 1851, to express satisfaction at the assumption of control of the *Union* by the latter. *The American Banner*, Nashville, April 19, 1856.

subject of the Republics⁹³ charge of inconsistency against me in the Kossuth matter.

1st. To ask it to point out one hairs breadth of difference in all I have said upon the subject from beginning to end. Challenge it not to generalities or to false assertions [but?]⁹⁴ to put a finger on the place.

2nd. Compare my consistency with that of Mr. Fillmore and then talk of inconsistency.

Mr. Fillmore brought the matter before Congress in his annual message, which there was not the slightest necessity of his doing, if he had then wished, that Congress should take up and discuss the whole matter . . .

. . .⁹⁵ there was political capital to be made out of the election.

And Mr. Webster was so anxious, that we should do honor to Kossuth and his cause, that he sent for Gen. Foote⁹⁶ and got him to introduce as strong a resolution upon the subject as could be got up. Such [. . .]⁹⁷

29. HORATIO SEYMOUR, JR.,⁹⁸ BUFFALO, NEW YORK, TO A. J. DONELSON. February 28, 1856.

Allow me to congratulate you upon the propitious termination of the Philadelphia Convention.⁹⁹ I trust the ticket there nominated will ensure us a triumphant result. As a member of the former Democratic party—while entirely satisfied with the election of *Mr. Fillmore* as an able conservative Statesman—I am especially gratified by *your* nomination the worthy representative of a true Democracy, which once gloried in the Hero of the Hermitage, as its noble standard bearer.

⁹³A newspaper published in Washington. As to the visit of Kossuth, and its political significance, see H. von Holst, *The Constitutional and Political History of the United States*, Vol. IV (1850-1854), pp. 65ff; and J. B. McMaster, *History of the People of the United States*, Vol. VIII, pp. 143-157.

⁹⁴The omitted word is supplied.

⁹⁵Several words are quite illegible, rendering uncertain the sense of the whole passage.

⁹⁶H. S. Foote, United States Senator from Mississippi, 1847-1852. He resigned to canvass the State of Mississippi against Jefferson Davis in the election for Governor. As to his position in the Kossuth matter see the references in note 93, above.

⁹⁷The remainder of the letter unfortunately is missing.

⁹⁸In 1862 elected governor of New York on the Democratic ticket; in 1868 Democratic nominee for the Presidency, defeated by General Grant.

⁹⁹After a phenomenal rise to importance in 1854 and 1855, the American or Know Nothing party began, in the latter year, to break to pieces on the slavery question. In June the session of the National Council in Philadelphia resulted in a split, after the majority had succeeded in passing resolutions to the effect that Congress had no right to legislate on slavery in the states, and that, waiving the question of the *right* to deal with this subject in the territories, Congress should not so legislate. The minority withdrew and issued a protest; the majority called a National Nominating Convention to meet in Philadelphia February 22, 1856. Here the struggle was repeated, and the party split into two sections, one of which was nicknamed "North Americans", and the other "South Americans." The latter wing nominated Millard Fillmore for President and Andrew J. Donelson for Vice-President. The former held a convention in New York on June 12, and nominated N. P. Banks of Massachusetts and William F. Johnston of North Carolina. Here also a session took place, due to the belief that the majority had sold out to the Republicans. The seceders nominated Commodore R. F. Stockton of New Jersey and Kenneth Rayner of North Carolina. After the Republican National Convention, which met at Philadelphia, June 17, had nominated J. C. Fremont and William L. Dayton, the North Americans, in another convention at New York, withdrew the name of Banks and supported Fremont, with Johnston.

From every direction we learn that the American party are delighted. The "Negro Worshippers" alone are disconsolate. Let time determine whether there are throughout the land resolute, unflinching Union Men in sufficient numbers to ensure success to as able a ticket as ever was brought into the field.

With proper efforts *all will be well*.

But my real object in writing partakes rather of a business character.

A very worthy and skilful Artist Mr. R. J. Compton—is desirous of getting out a correct Lithograph, as well of yourself, as of Mr. Fillmore.

With this purpose he called upon me—having learned in some manner that I had had the pleasure of a brief personal acquaintance—expressing a wish that I would address—and request that you *would have taken a Daguerotype* of as large a size as convenient—and when done have the same by express forwarded to this place.

All expenses of having this accomplished will be most cheerfully borne.

I hope this may reach you before you shall have left the City, and trust you will do the favor of complying with this request.

Should your leisure permit, I should be pleased to hear from you as the campaign progresses—and will take pleasure in freely commenting from time to time our political prospects.

Please pay my respects to any of your Delegation who may recollect me at our last previous National Council.

30. W. G. BROWNLOW,¹⁰⁰ KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE, TO A. J. DONELSON. March 18, 1856.

It affords me pleasure to say to you that our nominations take admirably, and give perfect satisfaction to the American party and all who sympathise with them. We shall have a warm contest in East Tennessee, and I pledge myself that our gains will be 2,000 in East Tennessee, over Gentry's vote.

But my object in writing to you is, to say that we have a Political Hall here, 60 by 40 feet which is our great rallying point, for speeches, and political meetings. We have various Portrait Paintings and Steel plate engraving[s] in it. We have Washington, Jackson, Scott, Clay, etc., and will soon have a Portrait Painting of Fillmore. If you have a Portrait of yourself, and can box it up and send it to us, it will be a great matter for us this summer and fall.

Our papers are doing execution here, and have a large circulation, increasing every day.

31. W. G. BROWNLOW, KNOXVILLE, TO A. J. DONELSON, April 18, 1856.

Your letter came safe to hand, and the likeness also, and I have the latter in a gault [*sic*] frame in our hall—it is a very correct likeness.

The contest is becoming *furious*, even at this early day, in por-

¹⁰⁰The eccentric "Parson" Brownlow of Knoxville, Tennessee, editor of the Knoxville *Whig*, and an aggressive leader of the American party in Tennessee. A large number of Brownlow's characteristic fulminations were collected in a book, *Americanism Contrasted with Foreignism, Romanism, etc.* (Nashville, 1856.) An extended sketch of Brownlow, favorable in view, is in O. P. Temple, *Notable Men of Tennessee, from 1833 to 1875*, pp. 271ff.

tions of East Tennessee, and will become general by the middle of June. I spoke two hours last Saturday, to a large and attentive audience in Loudon—tomorrow I speak in Philadelphia, in Monroe County. I tell you now, that we will gain *two* or *three* thousand in East Tennessee, even over Gentry's¹⁰¹ vote. In East Tennessee, we have everything to gain by excitement.

The increased bitterness of the party in this end of the State, against me, seems to arise from the immensely increased circulation of my paper. We issue this coming in week, the first No. of our campaigner,¹⁰² and it will have a very large circulation. We will send it to you, and it shall cost you nothing but the postage, as the other papers we send you.

We had a fight on the street last Monday, between John M. Fleming,¹⁰³ editor of the Register, one of our American papers, and M. L. Patterson, editor of the Kingston Gazette, a Sag Nicht¹⁰⁴ organ. P. had denounced F. as "a liar and dirty hirling [*sic*] tool," whereupon F. knocked him down and kicked him off the pavement. Thus we have opened the Campaign!

In this end of the State, as yet, they have had but little to say against Fillmore, but they are very abusive of *you*.

32. W. G. BROWNLOW, KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE, TO [A. J. DONELSON],
May 24, 1856.

I have your letter, and I have just written a letter to Mr. Nelson¹⁰⁵ urging him to go, but I fear it will not be in his power for two reasons; He has a heavy practice—is in the midst of his courts—and the notice is short. Next, he is making his arrangements to canvass the State on the Electoral ticket, and is therefore much confined at business.

I am at a great loss to know what we ought to do in the case of the New York meeting.¹⁰⁵ To be feebly represented, would put us in for it, and not enable us to overpower them. The notice is short—the South will not be there in any strength, and the Northern Black Republicans will pour in upon the Railroads!

Had not our papers and the South, better take the ground in advance of their action, that they have no authority to meet to ratify or undo the action of the Philadelphia Convention? Ought we not to say that the National Council of June last delegated its authority to the Nominating Convention of February—that that meeting was full, legal, and constitutional, and its action authoritative and final?

I have no faith in being able to do much with them [*sic*] "Bolters," if the whole South were represented there. Under our laws it requires *three* men to get up a *riot*, but *one* Black Republican can do it any time!

The signs are all right in East Tennessee. The people are with us.

¹⁰¹Meredith P. Gentry of Tennessee. See letter 34, below, and notes thereto.

¹⁰²It was the practice of the Tennessee newspapers to issue a special weekly or fortnightly edition during political campaigns of importance.

¹⁰³A sketch is to be found in O. P. Temple, *op. cit.*, pp. 118ff.

¹⁰⁴"Sag Nicht" was a piece of political slang applied to the Democrats. The epithet was an obvious retort to the name "Know-Nothing," with the implication that if the Americans knew nothing the Democrats would say nothing. The use of the German is expressive of the hostility to the foreign element which was an original characteristic of the Americans.

¹⁰⁵T. A. R. Nelson, of Jonesboro, Tennessee. An interesting sketch will be found in Temple, *op. cit.*, pp. 166ff.

¹⁰⁶See note 99, above.

We have a decided advantage over them in the selection of Electoral candidates. We have all the papers. The Foreign Anti papers off [*sic*] all East Tennessee,, are making no fight at all. Indeed they have but *two* one at Knoxville and one at Chattanooga. The little sheet at Kingston has died out.

33. W. G. BROWNLOW, KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE, TO [A. J. DONELSON],¹⁰⁷ June 12, 1856.

Inclosed I send you a private letter I have received from our friend Nelson, which you can show to some of our particular friends. The truth is, I am afraid that he is going off with *Consumption*. He is now unable to speak even in Court. He is sensitive, and does not wish his sickness named in the paper. He was anxious to canvass the state, and had made large preparations.

Tell the Committee to appoint *Horace Maynard*,¹⁰⁸ of Knoxville. We are not afraid of "Old Buck" in Tennessee, when once we show up his *Federal Tencent anti-Slavery Record*.¹⁰⁹

34. M. P. GENTRY,¹¹⁰ HILLSIDE, TO A. J. DONELSON, June 12, 1856.

Your letter written from Nashville did not come to hand so promptly as it ought to have done. There is a Triweekly mail to Richmond but owing to the over[s]light of the P Master (who keeps the office in a very confused and careless manner) it was not forwarded on the day that it ought to have been forwarded and remained over until the next regular mail day. Governor Campbell's¹¹¹ letter informing me that I had been regularly appointed a Delegate to the American National Council came to hand at a still later period. It would have been barely possible for me to have reached New York in time had I

¹⁰⁷This note of Brownlow is written on the inside sheet of a letter from Nelson to Brownlow, which is as follows:

June 9, 1856.

I reached home, late Saturday evening, from Rogersville, where I was at Court two weeks, and found yours of the 24th May, which reached here during my absence. As the New York Council meets today, you will see that I can do nothing in the matter of causing delegates to be sent there.

I presume you received the letter of declension which I sent you last Monday from Rogersville and hope it reached you in time for last week's paper, but, as your paper *never* reaches us until the *Wednesday* after its publication, I cannot know, certainly, until then.

I feel slightly better than when I left Rogersville and will not go to Greenville Court this week, as I wish to remain at home and conquer this distressing cough (which has now continued two months), if possible, by medicine. It is now almost as bad as it was in 1843 and, thus far, no medicine has cured it. I sent for Doctor Sevier yesterday and will try the *regular bred* practice.

If my health is restored, I shall occasionally *volunteer* between this and November, as I have been looking thro' *bushels* of old papers and documents and feel pretty well posted as to the topics of the Canvass.

Say nothing about my sickness, as an excuse, in your paper, as the Democrats would be heartless enough to ridicule it. If they will only abuse me well (as I think it likely they will do) for my letter—then, the letter will be read and, as I hope, may do good.

¹⁰⁸As candidate for elector for the Presidential election. For a sketch of the career of Horace Maynard, see Temple, *op. cit.*, pp. 137ff.

¹⁰⁹Brownlow, it will be remembered, was an outspoken advocate of slavery.

¹¹⁰Meredith P. Gentry, one of the most prominent Whigs of Tennessee and indeed of the South as a whole. For an extensive sketch of his life see Temple *op. cit.*, pp. 233ff. As to his bitter opposition to the nomination of Scott, and his breach with his party, see Sioussat, *Tennessee and National Political Parties*, p. 254. In 1855 he had canvassed the state a candidate for the governorship, and had been defeated by Andrew Johnson, whom the Democrats reelected.

¹¹¹William B. Campbell, Governor of Tennessee, 1851-1853. In connection with the subject matter of this letter see *Letters of John Bell to William B. Campbell*, 1839-1857, pp. 225-226, in the MAGAZINE, Vol. III, pp. 201ff.

set out instanter. I had been so engaged in endeavouring to repair the great injury inflicted on me by the great Rain, which fell in May that I had forgotten that the Council would meet again at the time mentioned by you. I was compelled after remaking a long line of fence to plough up my whole corn land and plant again— To have gone to New York at that time would have amounted to an entire surrender of what little prospect remains to me of making any thing this year. My overseer is of but little value to me—deficient in judgment and destitute of energy. But nevertheless I would make almost any sacrifice, could I believe that by doing so, I could to any valuable extent contribute to the success of Mr. Fillmore and yourself. From the peculiarity of my position, better understood by myself than by others, I consider myself less competent than any other person to be of service in the Council refer[r]ed to. My Collission [*sic*] with the North was so protracted and violent on the Scott question, that my very presence in that Council would tend to arouse an uncompromising and unyielding sectional spirit.

But my object is merely to assure you that my personal feelings towards yourself unite with my political opinion in making me sincerely anxious for your success. I wish I could assure you that I feel sanguine of your success—if you can give me information to inspire me with confidence please do so. I would be glad to receive a visit from you. If you cannot favour me with one see me in Nashville on Tuesday next, wither [*sic*] I go on a flying visit, which will not admit of my visiting you.

35. MILLARD FILLMORE, BUFFALO, TO A. J. DONELSON,

July 10, 1856.

I reached here on the 28th ult. in good health but exhausted by the fatigue of a long journey, and especially by the excitement from N. York here.

Not knowing your address I have been hoping to hear from you, but as I have not I will venture to send this to the Hermitage. Our friends have seen fit to place our names upon the same ticket and I desire to say that the association is a very gratifying one to me. I am happy also to add that our prospect of success are good in this State.

So far as I can judge the battle here and at the North generally is to be between the Americans and Republicans. The Democracy are deserting Mr. Buchanan by scores and hundreds every where, and joining the other two parties. I am anxious to hear from the South and especially from your State.

I will write more fully when I know you will receive it.

36. A. J. DONELSON, TULIP GROVE, TO LIEUTENANT A. J. DONELSON,
[JR.], September 27, 1856.

Your letter has been received. What you say about Robert J. Walker¹² is what I expected. He cannot desire to see Buchanan made President, and I suppose is setting his trigger for Fremont.

Fillmore I think will get New York. We are very confident of carrying Kentucky, Tennessee, Louisiana, Maryland and California. Should the Oct[ober] elections in Penn[sylvani]a shew that Buchanan

¹²In 1857 Walker was appointed Governor of Kansas by Buchanan. See also note 19, above.

is in a minority in that state, it then becomes probable that the South will go in a body for Fillmore.

I consider Buchanan worse than Pierce, because he has more talents and less principle. All the enemies of General Jackson have rallied upon him. If the agreement by which the South hopes to elect him is worth any thing, it secures the election of Fremont. But it is fallacious, and means nothing but a combination of a few disunionists to keep up the slavery agitation in order that they may ride into power and distribute the spoils.

Andrew Jackson¹¹⁴ has disgraced himself by his statement to help Buchanan at the expense of General Jackson's reputation and so has Judge Catron¹¹⁵ who has come out with a certificate that General Jackson was in favor of Buchanan for the Presidency in 1844. Catron has been a wirepuller for many years for Buchanan but is the victim at last of his own contrivances. He has lost the confidence of all intelligent and honest men in this community.

37. MILLARD FILLMORE, BUFFALO, TO A. J. DONELSON,
October 9, 1856.

I owe you many letters and more apologies for my apparent neglect, but I have really been overwhelmed with calls and correspondents, and I am compelled to favor my eyes, so that I can neither read nor write by candlelight.

Since I wrote you I have received yours of Augt. 25th Sept. 3d-9th-27th and 30th for all of which I am greatly obliged.

Every thing looks encouraging in this State. The Americans and Whigs unite cordially and even enthusiastically in support of our tickets, all of which thus far have been quite satisfactory.

I enclose you my last letters from Mr. Sammons, [*sic*] (Sept. 6.) who is President of the American State Council at Albany with the American Executive Committee. You will see by that something of the details of labor, and his view of our prospects. Please to return it.

We are looking anxiously for the result of the State election in Pennsylvania. Should that go against Buchanan, it will produce a great effect, here and probably South.

I fear we have nothing to hope from New England.

The result of the election in Maine has satisfied many of the leading Democrats here that Buchanan has nothing to hope for in this State, and they say it must not go for Fremont, and that they will not leave [it] in uncertainty.

You see therefore that unless Pa. revives their hopes, this State will be made certain beyond a contingency for us.

Our news to day is good from Baltimore, and the first gun from Florida is favorable.¹¹⁶

¹¹³Some paragraphs of a merely personal nature are omitted.

¹¹⁴See note 5, above.

¹¹⁵John Catron of Tennessee, one of the justices of the Supreme Court of the United States.

¹¹⁶The hopes of Fillmore and Donelson were dashed by the election, in which they carried only the state of Maryland.

38. FRANCIS P. BLAIR, SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND, TO A. J. DONELSON,
October 26, 1856.

I transmitted to Major Lewis¹¹⁷ a reply to Catron's letter [. . .]¹¹⁸ to prove that General Jackson was guilty of falsehood in saying he believed Buchanan capable of "deep corruption" and that he was ready to commit to him the government in preference to all his friends notwithstanding he had accused him of [. . .]¹¹⁹ a crime. It is singular that Catron does not see how inconsistent his imputations on General Jackson's memory are with his great professions of friendship for him.

The extracts sent by me from the General's correspondence proves the falsity of Catron's statement.¹²⁰ I only fear tha[t] the Postoffice has been faithless and that Lewis has not received my package as I have heard nothing from him although sent (3 weeks) ago. Your letter mailed 19 October is just at hand.

I am gratified to feel that we are to stand in the same line in defence of the Union. That is really the question which lies at the bottom of our politics now. This Kansas question was breached by Calhoun's rump, in the Senate with a view to it; and you see from the Nullifying organ in the South that whatever comes of Kansas Secession is resolved on. I always thought that your leanings toward Calhoun was unfortunate for yourself and for the administration, and although I never believed you to be committed to his conspiracy I yet apprehended your countenance was calculated to encourage it. Your counteraction of the Nullifiers in the Nashville Convention did much to remove my misgivings; and your present attitude in reference to the subject removes them altogether. If the presidential struggle has its solution in the House and I cannot carry my candidate I will be inclined to give my support to yours for I believe Fillmore a friend of the Union and I am sure your party in the South will become the nucleus of the Union party there. Should fortune favor Fremont he will with all the prudence and courage [?] and [?] with the power of the old hero devote himself to the preservation of the Union and with all regard to the rights of the South. In such case I am confident your party will become his chief reliance in the slaveholding states and when the Union becomes the sole issue upon which parties divide (as it soon will) then I fondly cherish the hope that our course will be in the same direction, guided by the patriotism and wisdom of the great man to whom we both owe whatever of influence we may be able to command in the country.

In such a state of things I have no fear but that minor questions which have produced momentary alienations between us will be whistled down the wind and that we shall cordially cooperate in the effort to put down the treason which threatens the destruction of the government.

¹¹⁷General Jackson's friend of "Kitchen cabinet" fame.

¹¹⁸The word is illegible.

¹¹⁹The word is illegible.

¹²⁰On September 8, 1856, Buchanan wrote to his friend, William B. Reed, "Blair's expose has fallen dead, so far as I can learn." *Works of James Buchanan*, Vol. X, p. 91.

HISTORICAL NOTES AND NEWS.

On November 9, 1917, the Tennessee Society of Colonial Dames of America held its exercises of dedication of a monument erected by it to mark the site of Old Fort Loudon, near the town of Vonore, in Monroe County, Tennessee. A large number of visitors were present from places in Tennessee and elsewhere, and the scenery at that romantic spot overlooking the Little Tennessee River, in the glorious sunshine, was surely never more beautiful.

The marker is a massive rough stone six feet high and bears the following inscription: "Fort Loudon, Constructed by the English, 1756, to Help Win the Valley of the Mississippi Captured by the Indians under French Influence, 1760. Marked by the Tennessee Society of Colonial Dames of America."

The program, which was presided over by Mrs. Kirkland, of Nashville, President of the State organization of the Society of Colonial Dames, was opened with an address telling of the nature of the occasion by Mrs. Kirkland, to which Mrs. J. H. Lowry, President of the Monroe County Historical Society, responded. Short addresses were made by Miss Rebecca Jones of Nashville on historical research; Mrs. A. S. Buchanan of Memphis, Chairman of Colonial Dames Committee on War Work; Miss Mary Boyce Temple of Knoxville, Regent of Bonny Kate Chapter, D. A. R., who spoke of the marking of the trail of Daniel Boone. Short addresses were also made by Maj. T. E. H. McCroskey and Dr. Hutchison of Monroe County, both speaking on the history of that county.

Of a more elaborate nature was the historical address made by John H. DeWitt of Nashville, President of the Tennessee Historical Society. (This address appears elsewhere in this magazine.)

An interesting address on army Y. M. C. A. work was made by Rev. Dr. O. E. Brown, Professor in Vanderbilt University and Religious Director at Fort Oglethorpe. Patriotic airs were rendered by the Vonore band. The dedicatory prayer was offered by Dr. Walter C. Whitaker, rector of St. Joseph's Episcopal Church at Knoxville.

The monument is the result of long, devoted effort by the patriotic ladies of the Society of Colonial Dames, under the leadership of their President, Mrs. J. H. Kirkland, of Nashville. Her father, Col. W. A. Henderson, contributed substantially to the movement. His research into the history of Fort Loudon, embodied in an interesting lecture, had for years helped to keep alive the story of the first settlement by white people in Tennessee.

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