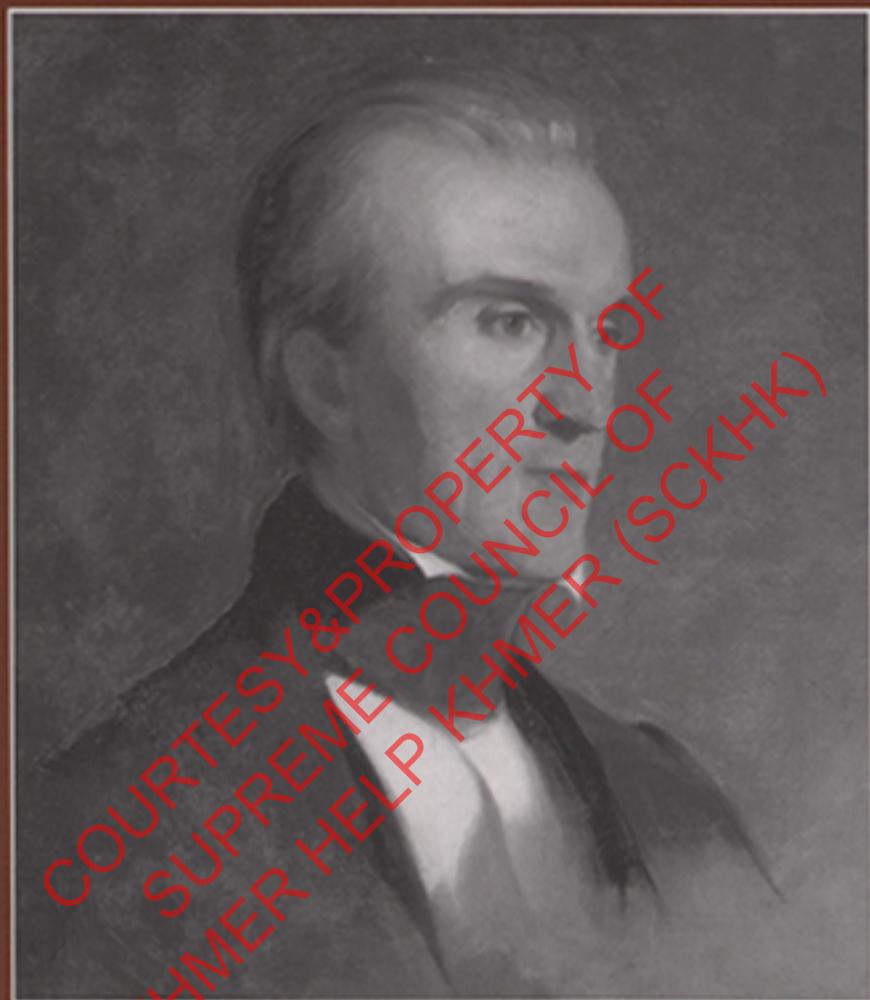


Correspondence of JAMES K. POLK



Volume X, July–December 1845

WAYNE CUTLER

Editor

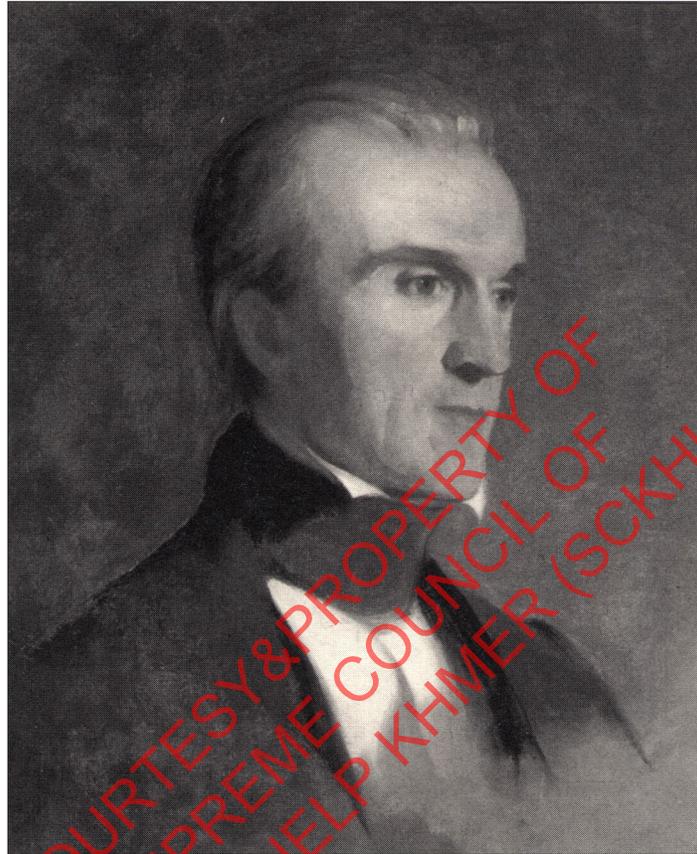
JAMES L. ROGERS II

Associate Editor

Correspondence of James K. Polk

VOLUME X, JULY – DECEMBER 1845

COURTESY & PROPERTY OF
SUPREME COUNCIL OF
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JAMES K. POLK

Oil on canvas by Thomas Sully, 1783–1872

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Correspondence of JAMES K. POLK

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Editor

JAMES L. ROGERS II
Associate Editor

Brian E. Crowson
Cynthia J. Rogers
Assistant Editors

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COURTESY & PROPERTY OF
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To
Robert V. Remini

COURTESY & PROPERTY OF
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COURTESY & PROPERTY OF
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PREFACE

In the second half of 1845 the focus of Polk's correspondence shifted from issues relating to the formation of his administration and distribution of party patronage to those issues that would give shape and consequence to his presidency: the admission of Texas, preparation for its defense, restoration of diplomatic relations with Mexico, and termination of joint occupancy of the Oregon Country. For the most part the incoming letters tended to urge rather more militancy on the Texas and Oregon questions than Polk would adopt, and notions of national destiny registered a singular theme of buoyant confidence in taking on both Mexico and Great Britain if military action should be required. President Polk and Secretary of State James Buchanan succeeded in both using and controlling the surge of nationalism that heightened expectations for expansion westward.

Polk and Buchanan agreed on the importance of reestablishing diplomatic relations with Mexico, but the President chose to take a personal hand in managing the selection and instruction of John Slidell, whose departure for Vera Cruz would not be made public until he had arrived in Mexico. Polk wanted to give the fledgling Mexican administration of José Joaquín Herrera a chance to compose Mexico's differences with Washington free of contrary pressures from Great Britain and France; and he fully understood the price that Herrera might pay for a peaceful settlement of the Texas question. If Mexico required more than \$6 million for the purchase of her two most northern provinces, as provided in his instructions, Slidell might agree to any reasonable additional sum.

The President hoped for a prompt and easy purchase of New Mexico and Upper California. Mexico might count the sale an indirect compensation for her loss of Texas; but Polk would not compromise the legitimacy of Texas' revolution or its right of self-determination by negotiating Texas "reparations" as required by Mexico for holding talks leading to the resumption of diplomatic relations. Nor would Polk accede to Mexico's dictation of who might be included in the diplomatic mission. He ignored the several Mexican stipulations and as a sign of good will ordered the United States naval squadron to retire from its station off the approaches to Vera Cruz. Slidell's mission probably never had much chance of success, for without control of its military the Herrera administration could neither give up its claim to Texas nor overcome British opposition to the sale of New Mexico and Upper California. Within but a few days of Slidell's arrival in the Mexican capital, Mariano Paredes y Arillaga organized a military coup, put the Herrera government to flight, and on January 2, 1846, declared himself interim president of Mexico. The annexation of Texas by the United States precipitated yet another suspension of constitutional government in Mexico, but the Texas question did not create Mexico's long-held tradition of authoritarian rule by its military.

The Texas and Oregon questions pressed hard upon the new president, for inherent in both issues loomed the possibility of military conflict. With the exception of a brief scare in late August of 1845, Polk remained confident that his sending ground forces to the village of Corpus Christi on the Nueces and building up the naval squadron on the Texas coast would signal with clarity his intention to defend the annexation arrangements and thus prevent Mexico from sending an army into her former province.

Polk assured his correspondents that if Mexican forces stayed on the west bank of the Rio Grande, there would be no war; and the President just as emphatically expressed his belief that Mexico would do so.

Polk left on the table his predecessor's initiative to divide the Oregon Country at the 49th parallel with all of Vancouver Island going to the British. The summary rejection of that offer by the British minister to Washington, Richard Packenham, so angered Polk that on August 30th he formally withdrew all prior offers to settle the dispute. The British foreign secretary, Lord Aberdeen, disavowed Packenham's action and assured the U.S. minister to Britain, Louis McLane, that no ultimatum had been sanctioned by his government. Buchanan tried in vain to soften Polk's decision not to initiate further negotiations, but he had determined to give the required one-year notice prior to abrogating the treaty of joint occupancy. Accordingly, in his First Annual

Message to Congress Polk asked for a joint resolution terminating the Oregon agreements with Great Britain. Polk received high praise for his Message and its hard line on Texas and Oregon.

Although urged by some of his close confidants to form a "Polk party" and in so doing force discordant elements to back his measures or leave the Democracy, Polk chose to maintain the larger tent and try to manage the factional divisions to his advantage. Turning to one of his more difficult tasks, he sought to improve relations with the radical wing of the New York Democracy, now headed by the new governor, Silas Wright, Jr. He and Wright enjoyed a good personal relationship going back to their days together in Congress, and Polk had first turned to Wright as his choice for his vice-presidential running mate. Wright had declined that honor in deference to his loyalty to Martin Van Buren and his late election to the New York governorship. Their exchange of confidences on the nature of the splits in New York brought the two in closer alignment, particularly in their strong opposition to creating state debts and granting limited liability to corporations.

Solicitations for public office and patronage filled Polk's day, so much so that he had almost no time for corresponding with his political friends. For every post that he filled he disappointed numerous other applicants, and in two notable instances he alienated members of his own family. He refused to accede to his Uncle William W. Polk's solicitations and for that supposed slight had to repay a rather substantial personal loan well in advance of its due date. Even closer to home, he declined to appoint the business partner of a favorite nephew, Samuel P. Walker, to a consular post; and Samuel's father James vented such anger as may seldom have been written to a sitting president. Polk had received criticism for appointing his younger brother, William, to the post of minister to Naples; and for that reason the President felt constrained to hold family appointments to a minimum. William wrote from Naples about political, diplomatic, and financial matters; and Polk looked forward to his brother's negotiating a satisfactory commercial treaty and returning home with such honors as would justify his "family" appointment.

In Tennessee the election of Aaron V. Brown to the governorship and a thin Democratic majority in both houses of the Assembly gave Polk a sense of vindication for his having lost his home state in the 1844 presidential contest. Polk's firing of William B. Lewis as second auditor of the Treasury and the disappearance of Andrew Jackson's last letter, which was addressed to Polk, played a unique part in the gubernatorial election in Tennessee and demonstrated again the power of the General's legacy in all things political. Numerous letters

filled the mails from Nashville and brought detailed information about the split in Democratic ranks over the United States senatorial election by the legislature. Democratic members felt deeply betrayed by Harvey M. Watterson's solicitation of Whig support and his subsequent election over the near unanimous caucus choice, A. O. P. Nicholson. Polk vigorously denied Watterson's accusation that he had handpicked Nicholson, but he gave no encouragement to suggestions that he treat the new senator as a traitor to the Democracy. Polk had not managed the election in Tennessee or elsewhere, for he did not see himself as the leader of a new or even revitalized political movement. He had agreed to seek and serve but a single term, and he would devote himself to the requirements of that service and little else.

This Volume

Always concerned that the reader's primary focus fall on the text of the document, the editors have limited their annotations to textual criticism and identifications. Persons, subjects, and oblique references have been noted on the occasion of their first mention in this volume; for the full name of persons mentioned subsequently in the text only by surname, the reader will want to consult the index. The editors have transcribed the text faithfully with a strict regard for original spellings, punctuation, and text placement, except for the following rules of normalization:

1. initial words of sentences have been capitalized and ending punctuation marks have been supplied when the syntax is clear (uncertain constructions are noted and rendered without normalization);
2. conventional spellings have been followed except when misspellings have been clearly written;
3. conventional upper and lower case usage has been followed when the writer employed multiple and/or irregular forms of the same character, thus indicating no discernible meaning behind the writer's use of capitals;
4. interlineations, cancellations, and unintentional word repetitions have been ignored unless something more than writing errors may have been indicated;
5. short dashes on the base of the line have been transcribed as commas or periods as the syntax may suggest;
6. redundant punctuation and random flourishes or ink marks have been ignored;

7. superscripts have been brought down to the line, and markings beneath or beside superscripts have been transcribed as single periods;

8. punctuation marks following the abbreviations *st*, *nd*, *rd*, and *th* have been deleted;

9. regardless of their position in the original manuscript, the salutation, place of composition, and date have been set on the line or lines immediately below the document's heading;

10. place of composition and full date, if omitted but known to the editors through content analysis, have been supplied in brackets and noted, and misstatements of place and date have been corrected and supplied in brackets with the misinformation noted;

11. the complimentary closing has been omitted, and the omission of same has been indicated by an ellipsis if the closing was written as part of the ending paragraph;

12. the author's signature has been rendered in capitals and small capitals at the end of the text (or supplied within brackets if unwritten or clipped);

13. the inside address has been omitted, but the information has been stated in the head note, along with the document's classification and repository location;

14. textual interventions (i.e., words supplied within brackets) have been made only to complete probable meanings (garbled texts have been transcribed without intervention and so noted); and

15. bracketed ellipses have been added to indicate that a portion of the text has been obliterated by ink blots, sealing wax, or some other kind of damage, and the nature and extent of same has been noted.

The editors' identification and explanatory annotations often have been assembled from standard reference and monographic sources that are so well known and reliable as to obviate the need for citation. These considerations, coupled with a desire to ensure that the endnotes do not overwhelm the presentation of the textual material, have persuaded the editors to forego the naming of sources in their endnotes.

Acknowledgments

This volume of the Correspondence Series bears the imprint of a truly collaborative effort, and I acknowledge with deep appreciation the able assistance of James L. Rogers II, Brian E. Crowson, and Cynthia J. Rogers, each of whom worked with me part-time for several years in the selection, transcription, research, and annotation

of the Correspondence. Dr. Crowson left the staff mid-way through the volume, and John Pinheiro served for one year as a post-doctoral research assistant. The National Historical Publications and Records Commission, together with the Tennessee Historical Commission, provided financial support for the Project's small editorial staff. In the summer of 2002 the National Endowment for the Humanities awarded a grant to the Project; and three new assistant editors, Arris Oakley, Ben Severance, and Scott Roney, joined the staff to replace Dr. and Ms. Rogers, who left the editing field in favor of college teaching. Drs. Oakley, Severance, and Roney helped with calendaring, proofing, and indexing the present volume.

All of the Polk editors owe a standing debt to those librarians who have assisted us in our research in the University of Tennessee Library, the Tennessee State Museum, the Tennessee State Library and Archives, the Library of Congress, and the National Archives. Special thanks go to the administrators of the University of Tennessee, the University of Tennessee Press, and the Tennessee Presidents Trust for their sustaining efforts in behalf of the long-term goals of the Polk Project.

No scholar of our times has written the stories of the Jacksonian era so fully and with such insight and color as the one to whom this volume is dedicated. He has taken a generous and salutary interest in the Polk Project, encouraged me and my associates to continue in our labors, corrected our mistakes on the quiet, and by example set the highest standards of historical scholarship. So it is with deep appreciation and great regard that I dedicate this tenth volume of the Correspondence to my guide and friend, Robert V. Remini.

Knoxville, Tennessee
April 2003

WAYNE CUTLER

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COURTESY & PROPERTY OF
SUPREME COUNCIL OF
KHMER HELP KHMER (SCKHK)

SYMBOLS

Document Classification

AC	Autograph Circular
ACI	Autograph Circular Initialed
ACS	Autograph Circular Signed
AD	Autograph Document
ADI	Autograph Document Initialed
ADS	Autograph Document Signed
AE	Autograph Endorsement
AEI	Autograph Endorsement Initialed
AES	Autograph Endorsement Signed
AL	Autograph Letter
AL, draft	Autograph Letter, drafted by writer
AL, fragment	Autograph Letter, fragment
ALI	Autograph Letter Initialed
ALI, draft	Autograph Letter Initialed, drafted by writer
ALS	Autograph Letter Signed
ALS, copy	Autograph Letter Signed, copied by writer
ALS, draft	Autograph Letter Signed, drafted by writer
ALS, press copy	Autograph Letter Signed, press copy
ALsS	Autograph Letters Signed
AN	Autograph Note
ANI	Autograph Note Initialed
ANS	Autograph Note Signed
C	Circular, authorship attributed
CI	Circular Initialed
CS	Circular Signed

D	Document, authorship attributed
DI	Document Initialed
DS	Document Signed
E	Endorsement, authorship attributed
EI	Endorsement Initialed
ES	Endorsement Signed
L	Letter, authorship attributed
L, fragment	Letter, fragment
LI	Letter Initialed
LS	Letter Signed
N	Note, authorship attributed
NI	Note Initialed
NS	Note Signed
NsS	Notes Signed
PC	Published Circular, authorship attributed
PD	Published Document, authorship attributed
PL	Published Letter, authorship attributed
PL, broadside	Published Letter, broadside
PN	Published Note, authorship attributed

Repository Designations

CSmH	Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino
CtY	Yale University, New Haven
DGU	Georgetown University, District of Columbia
DLC-AJ	Library of Congress, Andrew Jackson Papers
DLC-AJD	Library of Congress, Andrew Jackson Donelson Papers
DLC-FP	Library of Congress, Franklin Pierce Papers
DLC-GW	Library of Congress, Gideon Welles Papers
DLC-JKP	Library of Congress, James K. Polk Papers
DLC-LW	Library of Congress, Levi Woodbury Papers
DNA-RG 42	National Archives, Records of the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds
DNA-RG 45	National Archives, Naval Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library
DNA-RG 59	National Archives, General Records of the Department of State
DNA-RG 99	National Archives, Records of the Office of the Paymaster General
DNA-RG 156	National Archives, Records of the Office of the Chief of Ordnance
Ia-HA	Iowa State Department of History and

	Archives, Des Moines
ICU	University of Chicago, Chicago
IN	Newberry Library, Chicago
MH	Harvard University, Cambridge
MHi	Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston
MdHi	Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore
MiU	University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
NHi	New-York Historical Society, New York
NN	New York Public Library, New York
NN–Emmett	New York Public Library, New York
NN–Stauffer	New York Public Library, New York
NcU	University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
PHi	Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
PPAmP	American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia
ScU-SCL	University of South Carolina, South Caroliniana Library, Columbia
Tx	Texas State Library and Historical Commission, Austin
ViU	University of Virginia, Charlottesville

Published Sources

<i>NCHR</i>	<i>North Carolina Historical Review</i>
<i>THM</i>	<i>Tennessee Historical Magazine</i>
<i>THQ</i>	<i>Tennessee Historical Quarterly</i>
<i>TQ</i>	<i>Tyler's Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine</i>

CHRONOLOGY

- 1795 Nov. 2 Born in Mecklenburg County, N.C.
1806 Fall Moved to Maury County, Tenn.
1812 Fall Underwent major surgery by Dr. Ephraim
McDowell in Danville, Ky.
1813 July Began study under Robert Henderson at
Zion Church Academy
1816 Jan. Entered University of North Carolina as
sophomore
1818 June Graduated from University of North Carolina
Fall Began reading law in office of Felix Grundy
of Nashville
1819 Sept. Elected clerk of the Tennessee Senate
1820 June Admitted to the bar
1823 Aug. Elected to the Tennessee House
1824 Jan. 1 Married Sarah Childress of Murfreesboro
1825 Aug. Elected to the U.S. House
1827 Aug. Reelected to the U.S. House
Nov. 5 Death of his father, Samuel Polk
1829 Aug. Reelected to the U.S. House
1831 Jan. 21 Death of his brother Franklin, aged 28
April 12 Death of his brother Marshall, aged 26
Aug. Reelected to the U.S. House
Sept. 28 Death of his brother John, aged 24
1833 Aug. Reelected to the U.S. House
Dec. Chosen to chair the U.S. House Committee
on Ways and Means

1834	June	Defeated by John Bell for Speaker of the U.S. House
1835	Aug. Dec. 7	Reelected to the U.S. House Elected Speaker of the U.S. House
1836	Aug. 6	Death of his sister Naomi, wife of Adlai O. Harris
1837	Aug. Sept. 4	Reelected to the U.S. House Reelected Speaker of the U.S. House
1839	Feb. 24 Aug.	Death of his brother Samuel W., aged 21 Elected Governor of Tennessee over Newton Cannon
1840	May	Withdrew candidacy for the Democratic vice-presidential nomination
1841	Aug.	Defeated in gubernatorial election by James C. Jones
1843	Aug. Nov.	Defeated in gubernatorial election by James C. Jones Recommended by the Tennessee Democratic State Convention to be the party's 1844 vice-presidential nominee
1844	May Nov.	Nominated for the presidency by the Democratic National Convention Elected President of the United States over Henry Clay
1845	Mar. 4	Inaugurated President of the United States
1849	Mar. 4 June 15	Yielded office to his successor, Zachary Taylor Died in Nashville of cholera

Correspondence of James K. Polk

VOLUME X, JULY - DECEMBER 1845

COURTESY & PROPERTY OF
SUPREME COUNCIL OF
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COURTESY & PROPERTY OF
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KHMER HELP KHMER (SCKHK)

JULY 1845

TO A. O. P. NICHOLSON¹

My dear Sir

Washington City 1st July 1845

I wrote to you three or four days ago requesting you to have search made for Genl. Jackson's last letter,² addressed to me and which has not yet come to hand. From the enclosed paragraph,³ cut from the New York Herald of yesterday, you will see that the fact stated in the Nashville Union, that such a letter had been written, is attracting public attention and its publication is called for. I have been repeatedly called on within the last few days concerning the letter.

The public curiosity is becoming great to see the last letter of the greatest man of the age, written in his own hand writing. If it be not produced by me or the failure to produce it accounted for the inference may be that it contained matter, which I was unwilling should see the light. So far from this being true, I have no doubt, if the letter itself could be produced I might well be proud of its publication. Unless the letter be found among his papers, there is a mystery about its never having reached me, which ought to be and must be explained. I hope you will not fail to prosecute the enquiry concerning it as requested in my last letter. If the original cannot be found, its substance can be given by Andrew Jackson, Jr.⁴ I leave it to your judgement & discretion to make known to the public the fact that the original has never reached me. This fact had better appear at Nashville than here.

You will be on the spot, will know the fact *that the letter was written* or have its contents detailed by *Andrew Jackson Jr* & can state the fact that *it has never been received by me*. Its failure to reach me you can account for as the facts you may ascertain in your search for the letter may justify. I still hope it may be found among the General's papers. You see I attach great importance to the letter and I think none too great.

Though I have been during my whole life as you and all others know the ardent and constant friend personal & political of the venerable patriot, whose death the whole nation now mourns & whose confidence and friendship I possessed at every period of my life and never in a greater degree than in the closing days of his life, yet as you have seen insidious efforts have been made, by a few⁵ opposition presses to leave on the public mind the false impression that such may not have been the case. In this view the letter is important, not that it is necessary to disabuse the public mind of the false impression which the Nashville Whig and other papers of like character would attempt to make over it. These papers which calumniated and slandered him for years whilst living, now that he is dead, hypocritically assume to be his defenders and my assailants—by attempting to bring the weight of his great and deserved popularity to bear on me & my administration. Such hypocrisy & hollow heartedness, can no where be as well exposed as at Nashville. His last letter to me which I have received was written on the 26th of May and if necessary may yet see the light. It breathes as all his letters do (and I have received many since the 4th of March) the warmest friendship personal and political for me and what is of equal value his warm approval of the course of my administration as far as it has progressed.

JAMES K. POLK

L. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Nashville; marked "Copy" and "*Private & Confidential*."

1. A Democratic member of the Tennessee House from Maury County, -37, and of the Tennessee Senate, 1843-45, Nicholson served an interim appointment in the U.S. Senate from December 1840 until February 1842. He moved to Nashville in 1844 and edited the *Nashville Union* before becoming president of the Bank of Tennessee in 1846.

2. See Andrew Jackson to Polk, June 6, 1845.

3. Enclosure not found.

4. Andrew Jackson, Jr., the ex-president's adopted son, lived at the Hermitage with his wife, Sarah Yorke Jackson, and their three children, Rachel, Andrew III, and Samuel.

5. Here Polk cancelled the words "small men & Whig" and interlined the word "opposition."

TO ABRAHAM P. EYRE ET AL.¹

Gentlemen: Washington City 2nd July 1845

Your letter of the 27th ultimo, inviting me on behalf of my Democratic friends of the fourth Congressional District of Pennsylvania, to participate with them, in the festivities, at Fair Hill, near Philadelphia, on the approaching anniversary of American Independence, has been received. I regret indispensable public duties, connected with the high trust which my Fellow Citizens have confided to me, are such as to render it necessary and proper for me to decline your kind invitation.

I highly appreciate the confidence which you have been pleased to accord to me, in my responsible position, as the successor of the illustrious Statesmen and patriots, "Jefferson and Jackson," to whose political principles, and great public services you allude in your letter. Time and experience, the wearing tests of the truth and utility of their political principles, and general National policy, have more and more confirmed, and established my convictions of the purity of the patriotism and the profound wisdom and forecast by which those great men were guided in administering our National Government.

Borrowing lessons of instruction from their examples and by constant recurrence to their writings in which they have recorded their principles and opinions for the benefit of posterity, I am free to say that "in following in their footsteps,"² I shall have the conscious satisfaction of believing that I am subserving the best interests of our beloved Country.

The principles which succeeded in the late election, to which you refer, were as I believe the principles of immutable truth in Republican Government. The result was the deliberate expression of the will and the judgment of a great and intelligent people. In that struggle of principle I was but the humble instrument in their hands. To no man, to no local association of men or names, can the triumph of Democratic principles, be ascribed. The termination of that contest was an event of vast importance and my constant aim shall be to promote the interests of our whole country in all her foreign and domestic policy. In the administration of the Government I have looked, and I shall continue steadily to look, to "measures & not men,"³ and I trust that the same spirit of Union, harmony and devotion to principles, which warmed the bosoms of our patriotic ancestors, in proclaiming to the world that Independence, the anniversary of which you are about to celebrate, may continue to animate our breasts, in our efforts to maintain and preserve, the rich legacy of public liberty which they have transmitted to us.

Be pleased Gentlemen, to convey my thanks to my Fellow Citizens whom you represent for this invitation, and to accept for yourselves, my grateful acknowledgements for the kind terms in which you have communicated it to me.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, draft. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Philadelphia and marked “Copy.”

1. Polk addressed this letter to Eyre, a Philadelphia wharf builder, and four other members of the arrangements committee.
2. Paraphrase from the invitation.
3. Paraphrase of “Measures not men.” Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, *Letters*, March 6, 1742.

FROM JAMES H. THOMAS¹

Dr. Sir.

Columbia, Tenn. July 2d 1845

Upon yesterday I paid Dr. McKissack² \$559.99 in full of the note inclosed.³

I have this day drawn upon you at sight (as you directed) in favor of J. W. & R. Leavitt of New York for \$550.⁴ If *convenient* pay \$5. to my subscription to the Washington Union. This with the exchange which I shall charge Messrs Leavitt will satisfy the whole note to me. If I had been authorized to draw upon Philadelphia or N. York the exchange would have been worth more. Your friends here are all well. We have no news worth your attention. We are in good spirits about our elections. Jerry Cherry has gone into office & I believe there is a little complaint as could be expected, but the Observer has not issued since—*let it blow*.⁵

JAMES H. THOMAS

ALS. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk’s AE on the cover states that he received this letter on July 10, 1845.

1. A Columbia lawyer and district attorney, 1836–42, Thomas became Polk’s law partner in 1843 and later won election as a Democrat to three terms in Congress, 1847–51 and 1859–61.
2. An early merchant in Maury County, Spivey McKissack served as the first mayor of Spring Hill.
3. James K. and William H. Polk had given their joint note, dated June 6, 1842, in the amount of \$494.12 to their brother-in-law, John B. Hays, in settlement of moneys due him from the late Samuel W. Polk’s estate. According to Polk’s endorsement of the returned note, Hays had sold it to McKissack; and on July 1, 1845, Thomas had paid McKissack \$559.99 to retire the debt.

4. John W. and Rufus Leavitt owned a wholesale drygoods store in New York City.

5. Jeremiah Cherry became Columbia's postmaster in 1845. The *Columbia Observer* championed the Whig party in Maury County.

FROM AARON V. BROWN¹

Dear Sir

Greeneville July 3rd 1845

I am here in my canvass having just passd through Blount Knox Sevier Jefferson and Cock. You know their inveteracy, but they gave me a good hearing and our friends claim a victory in every one of them. The *Whigs* concede a triumph in Knox & Jefferson & Cocke. I do not know what to say of E Tennessee. I doubt her on account of former disappointments but really it seems to me we are obliged to gain more than 500 on the vote of last fall. I keep in fine health & voice & feel conscious that I am making some favorable character for myself whether I am making votes or not.

Foster flags I think & brings up nothing new for the East Tennessee market.² He abhors *anecdotes* & has become quite a philosopher on the stump. I have twice driven him from his frolic & fun & made him to beg (privately) for a different mode of debating.

Many applicants will present themselves for Marshall of East Tennessee. One from Dandridge (Neff) requested me to write to you.³ But you know East Tennessee better than I do & you must judge for yourself.

I think we shall carry the Legislature by from five to Eight members & entertain but little doubt of it. I learn that the senatorial dispute in this district is to be settled to day.⁴ This leaves our party pretty free of difficulties & the election will come on under favorable circumstances—no excitement. I have sought to keep it down under the belief that it was best for us.

I close with the most sincere wish for your health & happiness & that of Mrs P.⁵

A. V. BROWN

ALS. Polk Memorial Association, Columbia. Addressed to Washington City.

1. Polk's former law partner and close friend from Pulaski, Brown served in the Tennessee Senate and House, 1821–33, in the U.S. House, 1839–45, and in the Tennessee governorship, 1845–47. From 1857 until his death in 1859, Brown held the post of postmaster general in the administration of James Buchanan.

2. Ephraim H. Foster, a Nashville lawyer and one of the early leaders of the Whig party in Tennessee, served three terms in the Tennessee House,

1827–31 and 1835–37. Appointed to the U.S. Senate following the resignation of Felix Grundy in 1838, Foster won election to a full six-year term beginning March 4, 1839, but resigned in November of that year, having pledged to leave office should a Democratic majority be elected to the next legislature. He later served an interim term in the Senate from October of 1843 until March 3, 1845.

3. David Neff is not identified further.

4. Brown refers to the contest between Alfred Martin and Crawford W. Hall to serve as the Democratic candidate for Tennessee's First Senatorial District. Martin, a Washington County physician, served two terms in the Tennessee House, 1837–41, and won election to a term in the state senate, 1845–47. Hall, a lawyer originally from Kentucky, served as U.S. attorney for East Tennessee, 1865–69.

5. Sarah Childress Polk.

FROM PAUL DILLINGHAM, JR.¹

Washington 3 July 1845

Dillingham states that he has supplied documents relating to the collectorship at Alburg, Vt., and acknowledges Polk's direction "to call at any time" to "talk over that subject." Notes that he called to urge removal of the incumbent, Archibald W. Hyde,² and waited as directed until informed that Polk had departed and "had left no message for me." Dillingham claims that "the great mass of the people" supports the appointment of Russell G. Hopkinson.³

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed locally and marked "*Private*."

1. A Democrat from Waterbury, Dillingham served in the Vermont House, 1833–35 and 1837–40, in the Vermont Senate, 1841–42 and 1861; and two terms in the U.S. House, 1843–47. He won election to the governorship in 1865 and served until 1866.

2. Archibald W. Hyde served as collector of customs at Alburg, Vt., from 1844 until 1845.

3. Russell G. Hopkinson received an appointment to the collectorship at Alburg, Vt., in 1845 and served until 1849.

TO EGBERT SOMENDIKE ET AL.¹

Gentlemen:

Washington City 3 July 1845

Your letter of the 28th ultimo inviting me on behalf of the Democratic citizens of the third Congressional District of Pennsylvania to join them in celebrating the approaching anniversary of National Independence, demands my warmest acknowledgements.²

I regret that indispensable public engagements will detain me at Washington & must prevent my acceptance. I share in the fullest

extent your confidence in the great mass of the people. None are more entitled to that confidence than the Democracy of the County of Philadelphia who hold fast to the Republican faith from the early days of Jefferson to the closing scenes of the patriotic administrations of Jackson and Van Buren. The people are the rightful source & safe depository of power. They are the truest preservers & interpreters of sound Republican principles: their influence in the management of public affairs is the purest & most disinterested. The preservation and advancement of their happiness & prosperity is the just & great duty of every American Statesman. Elected to the most responsible station by their suffrages I devote myself to the best of my ability to their interests, fearlessly entrusting my good name to their guardianship & my administration to their support. It is in this manner that I would express my deep-rooted gratitude to the Democracy of the County of Philadelphia and of the Keystone state, for the hearty & decisive energy with which they maintained their principles in the late political contest to which you refer in your letter.³ With many regrets that I cannot be with you on the glorious occasion to which you invite me

JAMES K. POLK

L, draft. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Philadelphia and marked “Copy.”

1. Polk addressed this letter to Egbert Somendike, William Hall, George C. Geyer, S. B. Kingston, John Johnson, and Benjamin E. Carpenter. Somendike is not identified further.

2. See Egbert Somendike et al. to Polk, June 28, 1845. DLC–JKP.

3. Polk refers to the 1844 presidential election.

FROM JOHN H. STECK¹

Dr Sir: Phila July 3, 1845

I am but an humble citizen, and withal a stranger to you personally; still I beg leave to call your attention to a matter of the deepest concern to myself, which I will endeavor to explain in a few words.

From the summer of 1840 to December 1844, I published a Democratic paper at Harrisburg, in this State. The paper would have been continued, but for the want of support. I retired from the concern poor. At the instance of some of my friends at Harrisburg, I made application to the late Collector of this Port (Judge Blythe) and early in March last, received an appointment from him at \$800 per annum.² When Mr. Horn was appointed to succeed him, I made application to be continued, accompanied with letters from Gov. Shunk, a majority of the Democratic members of the late Legislature, the two Senatorial Electors, Messrs. McCandless & Dimock, Col. Wright, Prest. of the Balti-

more Convention, &c &c.³ A few days since I also handed to Mr Horn a very strong letter from Col. Richard M. Johnson of Ky. on the same subject.⁴ Notwithstanding all this array of strength, I have every reason to believe, that the Collector intends to remove me for what cause I know not, except to make room for some personal friend. I have been a Democrat ever since I became a voter, and I am unconscious of having committed any political sins, either as the conductor of a public journal or in a more humble capacity. I know very well that Mr. Horn was a warm friend of Mr. Van Buren—that he desired his nomination &c. For my own part, I took a position as early as 1842, for a *new* man, and maintained it till the meeting of the Baltimore Convention. *Perhaps* I am to be sacrificed for having so widely differed from the views of Mr. Horn on a mere question of expediency. I hope, however, that no such retracted notions may be harbored.

A few words more and I shall close: I have been in office scarcely four months. I have a family dependent upon my exertions for support; and with the expectation of remaining here for a respectable length of time, I brought them with me from the interior. A removal now would place me in a truly awkward position.

I have written this letter to you with the advice of some of my friends in Phila. If you can in any way, consistent with your high station, aid me in the present crisis, I shall be under deep and abiding obligation.

I can refer you to Hon. Geo. M. Dallas and Hon. Chs. J. Ingersoll, of Phila, Gen Hays, Hon. Richard Brodhead, Gen. R. H. Hammond, Gen. J. B. Anthony, and Hon. Luther Reily, from the interior, as to my political standing, &c.⁵

JNO H. STECK

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City; marked "Private." Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on July 4, 1845.

1. Steck published the Harrisburg *National Enquirer* prior to his appointment as principal night inspector for the Delaware wharves.

2. Calvin Blythe served as customs collector at Philadelphia from 1843 until his removal in 1845.

3. Henry Horn, Francis R. Shunk, Wilson McCandless, Asa Dimock, and Hendrick B. Wright. A Jackson Democrat and Van Buren loyalist, Horn sat one term in the U.S. House, 1831–33; in 1845 and again in 1846 Polk nominated Horn to be collector at Philadelphia but failed to secure his confirmation. A lawyer from Pittsburgh, Shunk had served as clerk of the Pennsylvania House and as secretary of the commonwealth, 1839–42. Elected governor in 1844 and reelected in 1847, he served from 1845 until 1848, when ill health forced him to resign. McCandless, a Pittsburgh Democrat and attorney, served as president of the Pennsylvania electoral college in 1844. Dimock, a Susquehannah County Democrat, served the Pennsylvania House and Senate, 1836–37 and 1842–44.

Wright, who chaired the 1844 Democratic National Convention, won election to four terms in the U.S. House, 1853–55, 1861–63, and 1877–81.

4. Johnson, a Kentucky lawyer and hero of the War of 1812, served in both houses of Congress before election to the vice-presidency by the U.S. Senate in 1837.

5. George M. Dallas, Charles J. Ingersoll, Samuel Hays, Richard Brodhead, Robert H. Hammond, Joseph B. Anthony, and Luther Reily. Dallas, a prominent member of the “Family” party in Pennsylvania, counted himself for many years a staunch Van Burenite; his revival of the “Old Hickory Club” in 1843 helped remove James Buchanan’s name from the list of potential presidential nominees. Early in 1844 Dallas followed the lead of Robert J. Walker in advocating the annexation of Texas. Ingersoll, a Pennsylvania lawyer and Democrat, served as a member of the U.S. House, 1813–15 and 1841–49; as U.S. district attorney for Pennsylvania, 1815–29; and as state assemblyman in 1830. He went to Prussia in 1837 as secretary of legation and became U.S. district judge for Connecticut in 1853. A native of Ireland, Hays served as a Democrat in numerous elective local and state offices representing Venango County. He served one term in the U.S. House, 1843–45, and two years as U.S. marshal for the Western District of Pennsylvania, 1847–49. An Easton lawyer and Democrat, Brodhead served in the Pennsylvania House, 1837–39; the U.S. House, 1843–49; and the U.S. Senate, 1851–57. A two-term U.S. congressman from Pennsylvania, 1837–41, Hammond served as a lieutenant in the army from 1814 to 1820; he accepted a commission in 1846 as paymaster with the rank of major. Wounded in the Mexican War, Hammond died en route home on sick leave in 1847. Anthony served in the Pennsylvania Senate, 1830–33, and in the U.S. House, 1833–37, and he presided over Pennsylvania’s Eighth District Court from 1844 until his death in 1851. Reily, a Harrisburg physician and veteran of the War of 1812, served one term as a Democrat in the U.S. House, 1837–39.

FROM PETER BESANÇON, JR.¹

Dr. Sir New Orleans, July 4 [18]45

The Revenue Cutter Woodbury arrived at the S.W. Pass at 10 o’clock yesterday. Capt. Foster² came up with dispatches from Major Donelson.³ They were entrusted to Col. Saml. Marshall⁴ of Nashville, who died at Galveston from exposure to the sun in travelling from the seat of Government. Capt. Foster informs me that a report reached Galveston before he left that Maj. Donelson was seriously ill. I hope the report will prove unfounded. My Brother⁵ had reached Galveston, and would immediately proceed to the interior.

The Congress of Texas was to adjourn, by resolution, on 28th June. Com. Stockton⁶ sailed from Galveston on the 23d., with brig Porpoise in co’y Sloop of War, Saratoga, some say, for Pensacola, and Sloop St.

Mary left on 26th for same place. The departure of the squadron caused considerable regret at Galveston.

The troops from Fort Jessup will be there in a day or two for the place of destination.

PETER BESANÇON, JR.

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. Not identified further.
2. Reference is to Winslow Foster, captain of the revenue cutter *Woodbury*.
3. A nephew of Rachel Jackson's, Andrew Jackson Donelson served as private secretary to Andrew Jackson, 1829–37; accepted appointment as chargé d'affaires to Texas in the fall of 1844; and guided negotiations leading to its annexation in 1845. Donelson later served as U.S. minister to Prussia during the Polk administration.
4. Not identified further.
5. Reference probably is to Lorenzo A. Besançon. Born in New York, Besançon moved to Mississippi and founded the *Natchez Mississippi Free Trader* in 1835. Named president of the state bank commission in 1837, he moved to New Orleans in the early 1840's and later served as a captain in the Louisiana Mounted Volunteers during the Mexican War.
6. Robert F. Stockton received a midshipman's appointment in 1811; rose to the rank of commander while serving in the Mediterranean squadron, 1816–21; took an extended duty leave from 1828 until 1838; commanded the U.S.S. *Princeton* when in 1844 its gun, the Peacemaker, exploded and killed Secretary of State Abel P. Upshur and Secretary of the Navy Thomas W. Gilmer; directed sea and land operations in California 1846–47; resigned from the navy in 1850; and won election as a Democrat to the U.S. Senate in 1851.

FROM JOHN A. BRYAN¹

Dear Sir: Legation of the U. States
Lima, Peru, 4th July 1845

By the Packet which is expected to leave to day for Panama, I have taken the liberty of sending the message of the Prest. of this Republic to the Peruvian Congress.² It came to hand too late, or I should with much pleasure have made a translation to accompany it. I also send one of the public journals here, in which the message, and some of the proceedings of the congress here, will appear.³ The present is the only session of the national Legislature which has happened for many years. The country has been in such a constant state of Revolution as to have swallowed up every thing else. A fair prospect is now before this distracted land of a little respite from the desolations of war, and yet it is impossible to tell what a few months may produce. This is the 4th President elected in about 2 years.

Something of a sharp correspondence is now in progress between myself, on the part of the U. States, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs here,⁴ a full detail of which is with the Secretary of State.⁵ It certainly demands serious attention, as you will not fail to discover. I have asked the advice of my government, and will expect as early a reply as can be made to reach me; but the great uncertainty how that may be, is the cause of some uneasiness with me. As an evidence how very tardy is the receipt of all intelligence from the U. States at this point, I need only mention that our latest dates from Washington are to the 28th of January.

Of course, I am yet unappraised of my own fate before the Senate. I expected nothing better than *defeat* from a body thus constituted. I have probably been too zealous & ardent a politician to suit them. I shall certainly be disappointed to hear of my confirmation, for I have devoted a whole life in waging war against federalism.

We of course have heard nothing of the new cabinet, nor of the new order of things under your administration. A mail is daily and hourly looked for that will undoubtedly bring us this intelligence. I learned, incidentally, about ten days since, that the joint resolutions for the annexation of Texas had passed both Houses, & that hostile movements had followed in Mexico. If so, it is of very vital interest to all on this coast to learn the facts. The express mail will undoubtedly bring the particulars. I will try and hold this open to note its arrival.

You have no time for the perusal of *long letters*, altho *coming from a long distance*. Your entrance upon the duties of the high station you occupy was no doubt followed with all the labor and difficulty incident to such a situation, but you will allow me, Dr. Sir, altho in a distant clime, to drop a word of congratulation for the great triumph achieved by our party and friends. Tho "no Prophet, nor the Son of a Prophet,"⁶ I do allow myself a look back upon the canvass with some self satisfaction, that, at no period during the contest, did I indulge a *doubt* as to the final result. You may recollect my writing you from N. York, giving it as my opinion, amid the many dark clouds then hanging over our prospects, that we should carry that State, and at the same time *believing* that we would lose Ohio.⁷ But I forget, my dear Sir, that I am trespassing on your time and duties. In expressing my anxious prayers that you may enjoy every possible success in your administration of the government, and that it may be followed by an unexampled state of public prosperity, I conceive that I do but echo the sentiments of the great mass of the American people. I have the utmost confidence that my wishes in this particular will meet with no disappointments.

The expected mail is not yet at hand, and I am forced to close this letter. In case of my rejection, I shall of course be on my return soon, but it will, tho a looked for event, meet me with considerable regret, since I have scarcely had an opportunity to make a general acquaintance with the people of this country, or even to fully ascertain what would best promote the interests of my own. It will prove a *misfortune* should I be rejected, but it will be the *easier borne* when coming from my political adversaries.

JOHN A. BRYAN

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk’s AE on the cover states that he received this letter on October 1, 1845.

1. An Ohio Democrat, Bryan served as state auditor, 1833–39; as assistant postmaster general, 1842–44; and as chargé d’affaires to Peru, 1844–45.

2. Enclosures not found. Ramón Castilla, a veteran of the wars of independence, served twice as president of Peru, 1845–51 and 1855–62.

3. Enclosure not found.

4. José Gregorio Paz y Soldan served as the foreign minister of Peru during Bryan’s tenure. Bryan refers to his diplomatic despatch of the same day regarding two disputes between the United States and Peru. DNA–RG 59. The Peruvian government had refused to allow U.S. officials to recover deserting American sailors and had repudiated the Convention of 1841 providing for indemnity payments to U.S. citizens for property seized during Peru’s civil wars. The Peruvian government later ratified the treaty with revisions on October 21, 1845, and the treaty was proclaimed in Washington City on January 8, 1847. Hunter Miller, ed. *Treaties and Other International Acts of the United States of America* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1934), IV, pp. 329–48.

5. Bryan also wrote Secretary of State James Buchanan on July 4, 1845, but his despatch did not enlarge upon information previously supplied in his despatch of June 5, 1845. DNA–RG 59. Despatches from United States Ministers to Peru, 1826–1906 (Microfilm T-52, Roll 7).

6. Paraphrase of the quotation, Amos 8:14. “I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet’s son.”

7. Reference is to Bryan’s letter to Polk, September 7, 1844. DLC–JKP.

FROM JAMES CONNER¹

New York, N.Y. July 4, 1845

Upon learning of an attempt to remove Van Brugh Livingston² from the New York City Customs House, Conner writes to assure Polk that Livingston “has kept far aloof from all the intrigues connected with the New York Custom House establishment, and has cooperated with ‘the Party’ ever since I have had the honor of his acquaintance.” Conner compares Livingston’s efforts in “the

interests of the *true* Republican Party” with the “hostility to him exhibited by the class of *professed* Democracy.” Conner states that Livingston contributed to the electoral victory of 1844 by “recovering from the ranks of the ‘Nativeists’ the misled portion of our friends,” which resulted in a 2900 vote difference “between *our* majority on the Electoral ticket, (which was about 1900) and *their* majority on the State Assembly ticket, (which was about 1000).”³ Conner expresses his faith that Polk’s “well known sense of Justice, and views of right” will ensure the defeat of this “disgraceful attempt to destroy a gentleman of honor, and of moral and political rectitude.”

LS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. Conner, grand sachem of the Tammany Society, served as New York County clerk.
2. Livingston served as an appraiser in the New York City Customs House until his appointment as chargé d'affaires to Ecuador in 1848.
3. Native American candidates swept all thirteen New York City state assembly seats, while the Democratic presidential ticket carried the city by nearly 2,000 votes. New York City Whigs had agreed to vote for the American Party’s state assembly ticket in exchange for reciprocal support for their presidential ticket; the Whigs subsequently complained that the nativists did not keep their part of the arrangement.

FROM J. GEORGE HARRIS¹

My Dear Sir,

Nashville July 4, 1845

After the most minute inquiry,² it seems that on Friday the 6th ultimo Gen. Jackson’s boy *Tom*, brought to the Nashville Post Office *four* letters from the Hermitage: one from the Genl’s own hand directed and franked to the President, another from him to Gen Plauché of New Orleans, and two from his adopted son to his brothers (Donelson) under the Genl’s frank—all which departed in the next day morning’s mail.³ The chief clerk of the P. O. (who makes up the packages) is now satisfied of this fact.⁴ He at first thought there were only *three*—two of them being directed to the same family name—and his first impression was that the N. O. letter was to the General’s merchant to whom he often wrote,⁵ but he is now satisfied of the fact as above stated. The *number*, you know, also corresponds with the memory of a junior clerk.⁶ It would seem to be evident, therefore, that if the package of letters for Washington mailed here on the morn of the 7th arrived unbroken at the place of their destination, the fault must be at your city P. O. If otherwise it may be difficult to ascertain *where* it was broken on the way.

J. GEO. HARRIS

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on July 11, 1845.

1. A staunch New England Democrat, Harris had been associated with the New London *Political Observer* (Conn.), the *New Bedford Gazette* (Mass.), the Boston *Bay State Democrat*, and the Boston *Morning Post* before assuming the editorship of the *Nashville Union* on February 1, 1839. In March 1843 Harris received a commission from Secretary of State Daniel Webster to serve as special commercial agent of the United States for American tobacco sales in Europe.

2. Polk charged Harris with investigating the disappearance of Andrew Jackson's last letter. For the text of that letter, see Andrew Jackson to Polk, June 6, 1845.

3. Jean Baptiste Plauché and Andrew Jackson, Jr. A New Orleans merchant and cotton broker, Plauché commanded a battalion of city militia under Andrew Jackson's command during the Battle of New Orleans. He won election as lieutenant governor of Louisiana in 1850. Andrew Jackson, Jr. had four surviving brothers in 1845, John, Thomas J., Samuel R., and Alexander Donelson. Andrew Jackson's slave Tom is not identified further.

4. Reference is to P. M. Sands, who is not identified further.

5. An Irish-born sugar planter and cotton broker, Maunsel White came to New Orleans in 1801. He led a volunteer company at the Battle of New Orleans; marketed Jackson's cotton crops until 1845; and represented Plaquemines Parish in the Louisiana Senate from 1846 until 1850.

6. Reference is to John G. Wilson, who is not identified further.

FROM SACKFIELD MACLIN¹

Dear Sir,

Little Rock Ark's July 4th 1845

Gov Yell Col Sevier and the Hon Andrew Johnson of Ten (in a recent letter) informed me, that you said to them, while in a conversation in relation to your old friends, that you intended to confer upon me an appointment during the summer worthy my attention.² This information was gratifying to me on several accounts. 1st Because the office would proceed from an individual to whom I am personally attached, and whose prosperity I ardently desire. 2ly, Because my circumstances have become so reduced (owning to politics principlly) that I regard my future prospects eminently dependant upon it.

If an unwavering support of democratic men and measures, If a consumption of time and money for the support of the party gives claim to office, I have (as you know) the benefit of all. I know however, that *honesty* and *capability* are the grand considerations with you, in relation to which, I can only say, my friends claim both for me.

If those Hon Gentlemen have not deceivd me (which I do not believe) the sooner the appointment is made the better for me, as my

arrangements are in that condition that would enable me to enter upon the discharge of its duties immediately. If it is necessary for me to have reccomendations to satisfy the Senate, and I could have the least indication of it, I would procure them from public and private men, including our delegation in congress, that would be satisfactory no doubt.

You will allow me to say, that during last winter at Washington many members of congress voluntarily proposed to sign a reccomendation for me, but I declined it, because I knew you were much annoyed; and I was deeply disgusted at the maneuvering of office hunters, and could not consent to be considered one of them. Furthermore, I know you would have much difficulty in launching your administration so as to command the cordial support of all divisions of the democratic party. I am pleased however to see you have done so—at least you have not created any decided opposition from any division of the party—which I consider good evidence that your administration will be successful and popular.

Now that all the departments of the government are going so prosperously, and you have the support of all divisions of the party, I am unable to see why I should not write you this letter, particularly after what has been said to me by those distinguished men. *Tho, I have thought much about the propriety.* After all, allow me to assure you, there is no personal consideration could induce me to accept office if it would embarrass your administration in the least. For I have ever felt the liberties of the people mainly depended upon the success of those great principles which you have always supported, and upon which you will administer the government, no doubt. If however, I can occupy a position, which will enable me by the most vialent attention to advance anyone of those great principles, I shall be exceedingly gratified. In view of all the facts, will it be too much for me to expect an answer? If not, I shall consider what you write as *private* and *confiden[tial]*³ if *desirable*.

SACKFIELD MACLIN

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states, "A worthy man but I have no place in my gift, at present that will suit him. Recd, 20th July 1845. *Private*."

1. Maclin represented Fayette, Hardeman, and Shelby couties in the Tennessee Senate, 1841–43. After his legislative service, he moved to Texas.

2. Archibald Yell, Ambrose H. Sevier, and Andrew Johnson. A close personal and political friend of Polk, Yell practiced law in Fayetteville, Tenn., until his appointment as U.S. judge of the Arkansas Territory in 1832. He won election to several terms in the U.S. House, 1836–39 and 1845–46, and served as

governor of Arkansas from 1840 until 1844. In 1845 Polk sent Yell to Texas to assist Andrew J. Donelson in his negotiations with the Texas government. Yell died in the Mexican War at the Battle of Buena Vista in 1847. Sevier represented Arkansas Territory from 1828 to 1836 in the U.S. House and won election as a Democrat to two terms in the U.S. Senate, 1836–48.

3. Word partially obliterated by a tear in the manuscript.

FROM JOHN CATRON¹

My Dear sir.

Nashville, July 5, 1845

Mrs. Marshall has returned, and gives us rather unfavorable accounts of your health, about which great anxiety is felt by your friends, who hope you will *slack* your labours a little.² There is more solicitude felt on this subject than you can be aware of, originating in your known habits of excessive application.

Gnl. Houston³ is still here—his health improving some; it was very poor when he arrived. His wife⁴ is now unwell—in each case owing to the influence of a southern residence—in the damp woods & in sorry houses. Gnl. H. spoke two hours on Texas matters⁵ to a large crowd; explained his position generally, and his course in regard to annexation during his last Administration; his correspondence with Gnl. Jackson. Stated the annexation policy had been left to slumber during Mr LeMar's⁶ term, and been resuscitated by him. I know personally, that Gnl. H. acted as I then thought, and now think, with prudence, and a high degree of sagacity in his instructions to Mr. Vanzant,⁷ who was, so kind as to consult me much on the instructions desired fr Presdt. Houston to Mr. Vanzant—and it was through me, and founded on a letter by me to Gnl. Jackson, that he wrote to Prest. Houston urging him to make the Treaty, (that was rejected by the Senate U.S.) with Mr Tyler's administration. My information to Gnl. Jackson was, that very probably the Senate would be favourable in the end to the treaty. This was a great mistake, & which I attempted to correct in less than ten days after my first letter: But by the time my second letter to Gnl. Jackson reached him—to say the least, his founded on the first, was laid before Presdt. Houston—& he did give the instruction founded as my error. Gnl. Jackson replied to me to let it take its course; it would bring the matter before the people of the two Governments, and the People would correct the error of the Senate in due time. A Texas messenger was at Washington, & to leave in a day—Gnl. Jackson's letter was to meet him at N. Orleans—and it did so. Being in for the blunder, I have felt deeply on the subject, and now feel bound to support Gnl. Houston's course;

which was not only honest, but highly sagacious and Statesman like, & I am endeavouring in my quiet way, to place him in his proper position. Mark it my dear sir, I could not safely allege the mistake for Gnl. Jackson's sake. He thought & said the best way was to press onward—indeed his Cortez like character admitted of no different course consistently with his previous career: He could not turn back with honour.

A letter from Galveston published in the Washington Union does Gnl. Houston but bear Justice; and I hope that press, (now taking a very high stand), will do our friend the ample justice due to him; as all that may be said in local papers, will amount to little compared with the "Organ"—as Mr. Gales⁸ will have it—& which has done Mr. Ritchie,⁹ and the Union, great service.

I take and read the Intelligencer and Union down to the last page, and feel very sure nothing is to be feared at this day from the once potent Intelligencer—once strong as the Mississippi full to the top of its banks, but now sober as that great water winding its slow course through the sandbars in October. It can neither hurt, or help much.

The contest for Gov. in Ten. is progressing with a degree of quiet that is marvellous. I have not heard it named by a whig in a month, & rarely by the other side. A little temper is occasionally apparent by disappointed persons on their own account, (whigs) but no one else's griefs or prospects are included.

The cornerstone of the Capital was laid yesterday—a large concourse present—politics excluded of course. Ed. H. Ewing Esqr.¹⁰ made the speech, and eulogized very handsomely the memory of Gnl. Jackson, as by far the most distinguished citizen Tene. could boast of, and as an object of her highest pride, and to whom she owed deep gratitude; and whose history would be known 500 years hence, when the cornerstone was broke up and its contents exposed to the antiquaries of the 25th Century! My God, to think of 500 years hence! The depths of Eternity having no relief but the hope of Immortality. You too will make part of the History of the first Century of the Great Republic; the History of its Infancy, in the estimate of 500 years hence. This is some consolation, if we may not see its future destiny and splendor—great it is to be—and may God grant you life and health long to aid in its onward course.

J. CATRON

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on July 12th.

1. Appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court in the last days of the Jackson administration, Catron shared Polk's most sensitive political confidences; he helped the *Nashville Union* financially and occasionally wrote editorials for it.

2. Reference probably is to Jane Childress Marshall, wife of Samuel B.

Marshall and sister of Catron's wife, Matilda Childress Catron. According to the Washington *Union* of June 11th, Polk became "slightly indisposed" on June 9th, did not go to his room at the State Department, nor "see company at his quarters at Coleman's." On June 12th the President, though feeling better, had not recovered from his indisposition; on June 13th he rode out "for a short time"; and on June 14th he met his cabinet at the State Department and "attended to his usual duties with his usual spirit."

3. Sam Houston, a former governor of Tennessee, twice won election as president of Texas, 1836–38 and 1841–44. After Texas' annexation to the Union, he served the state as U.S. senator, 1846–59, and as governor, 1859–61.

4. Margaret Lea Houston.

5. On June 17, 1845, a group of Nashville citizens, representing both the Democratic and Whig parties, invited Sam Houston to attend a barbecue in his honor on June 28. The invitation, published in the *Nashville Union* on June 19, suggested that Houston would use the occasion to provide "an account of the past and present condition of Texas." Accepting the invitation, Houston attended the barbecue and addressed an enthusiastic crowd for two hours on the subject of Texas. He traced the course of Texas history, enumerated the advantages of annexation to the United States, and declared popular support in Texas for union to be a "fixed fact." *Nashville Union*, July 1, 1845.

6. Mirabeau B. Lamar, a native of Georgia, edited the *Columbus Enquirer*, 1826–35, and fought under Sam Houston in the Battle of San Jacinto; Lamar succeeded Houston as the second president of the Republic of Texas, 1838–41.

7. Born in Franklin County, Tenn., Isaac Van Zandt migrated first to Mississippi and then to Texas, where he practiced law. He represented Harrison County one term in the Texas House, 1840–42, and served as chargé d'affaires to the United States from 1842 until 1844.

8. Joseph Gales, Jr., and William W. Seaton published the Washington *National Intelligencer*, the *Register of Debates in Congress*, the *Annals of Congress*, and *American State Papers*. Gales served three terms as mayor of Washington City, 1827–30.

9. Editor of the *Richmond Enquirer* from 1804 until 1845, Thomas Ritchie served unofficially as political manager of the Virginia Democracy. Ritchie formed a partnership with John P. Heiss of Nashville and purchased the Washington *Globe* from Francis P. Blair and John C. Rives on April 12, 1845. Ritchie changed the newspaper's name to that of the Washington *Union* and issued his first number on April 14th.

10. A lawyer from Nashville, Edwin H. Ewing served as a Whig in the Tennessee House, 1841–43, and in the U.S. House, 1845–47.

FROM DAVID VANN ET AL.¹

Fullers Hotell Washington July 5th 1845

The undersigned a dellagation from their nation, the cherokees, now at the Seat of the General Government on, business of their nation,

are apprehensive that their present, able, efficient & impartial agent Govnor. P. M. Butler will not be continued after the expiration of the term for which he was appointed, near four years ago.² They therefore earnestly entreat your Excellency, to take into consideration the wishes of the whole nation, however much they may be divided in opinions upon other Subjects, and continue to us the Agent of our choice.³ Gov. Butler combines more of the requisite qualities to unite and produce harmony among our people than any other man liveing, as we believe and it would be a source of painful regret should we be deprived of his council and efficient Services.

We therefore must trust that no considerations of public duty may render it necessary for you to discontinue the Services of Govnor Butler.

DAVID VANN

LS. DLC–JKP. Addressed locally.

1. This letter was signed by Vann and five others representing the Cherokee Nation. The National Council appointed Vann treasurer in 1851.

2. Governor of South Carolina, 1836–38, and agent to the Cherokees, Pierce M. Butler formed a South Carolina volunteer regiment to fight in the Mexican War and died in battle in 1847.

3. Factional splits among the Cherokees included members of the Old Settlers, who removed west of the Mississippi River prior to 1835; the Treaty party, who relocated following the signing of the Treaty of New Echota in 1835; the John Ross party, who resisted until their forced removal in 1838–39; and the North Carolina Cherokees, who remained in the Appalachian Mountains. The Treaty party and Old Settlers had combined to ask that the U.S. government divide Cherokee land and remaining money payments between themselves and the Ross party on a per capita basis, thus effecting a political separation of the two factions. The Ross party opposed that course of action.

FROM A. O. P. NICHOLSON

Dear Sir:

Nashville July 6th/45

I recd yours of the 28th ult. last night and was much surprised to learn that Gen. Jackson's last letter has failed to reach its destination.¹ I called on Col. Cheatham this morning and one by one conversed with his clerks.² I found that Mr. Jackson had been down yesterday anxiously seeking some clue to the strange affair. I understand that he has searched thoroughly for the letter but has made no discoveries and that he is fully satisfied that it is not amongst his father's papers. I learn he has written to you on the subject.³ He is to be in town tomor-

row when I will have a thorough conversation with him. His belief is that the letter was handed to one of their servants to be deposited in the Post Office on Saturday (I believe) and he has interrogated the boy who affirms that he did so deposit it.⁴ Three of the clerks in the office recall letters with Gen. Jackson's frank which were mailed either on Friday or Saturday night—they do not agree entirely in their recollection as to the time, but I believe it may be set down as certain that the letters to which they refer being three in number—two south and one north—were mailed on Friday night—on this point Dibbrell is positive & he says one of the letters was to Gen. Plauché and one to Maj Donelson and the other to Col. Butler either of Ky or N.Y. he is not certain which.⁵ All three were directed by A. Jackson Jr. and franked by Gen. Jackson. No one in the office has any recollection of a letter to you except a young man named Wilson but he is so clearly mistaken that he must confuse it with a previous letter. He says the letter to you was directed by Gen. Jackson and was franked by him, but Andrew Jackson says it was directed by himself and was not franked at all. So it is clear Wilson is mistaken and there is no evidence that the letter did come into the office, at least none of the clerks have any recollection of such letter. The question then is whether the servant ever brought it to the office? From present appearances, I am of opinion the letter has never been deposited in the Post Office but must have been lost between the Hermitage and Nashville. The Washington Package of letters which arrived at Washington ought to show conclusively the truth of this matter. It was tied and sealed up here and directed to Washington City and if it arrived there without its seals broken and its contents corresponding with way-bill, and no such letter in the package, it is conclusive that it was never deposited in the office here, and that it must have been lost before it reached the office in Nashville. I conclude that the letter either never left the Hermitage or was lost on the way to Nashville. I have not yet learned who were at the Hermitage when the letter was written and when it was started, but on to-morrow I will know and by the next mail I will write you again. Andrew Jackson is much concerned about it and will be active in trying to ferret it out. I will give him all the help in my power, for besides the invaluable character of the document itself it may turn out to be [...] in other cases. I write you this hasty account of the matters, intending to-morrow to know more and write again.

Our friends here are in good spirits as to the election. Indeed I fear they are too confident. There is so little excitement that I know not how to count as to the result. Whatever zeal or animation there is is

all in our ranks and I fear no more can be created. We have information here that Sam Turney will be beaten; if so, we lose the Senate.⁷ Our chances are decidedly best for a majority on joint vote but amidst such a calm I fear to be too confident.

A. O. P. NICHOLSON

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked “Private.”

1. See Polk to A. O. P. Nicholson, June 28, 1845.

2. Leonard P. Cheatham, Edwin Dibrell, P. M. Sands, and John G. Wilson. A lawyer and leading Democrat, Cheatham replaced Robert Armstrong as post-master of Nashville in March of 1845. Dibrell served as recorder of Nashville from 1828 until 1838; he became a clerk in the Nashville Post Office in 1844.

3. See Andrew Jackson, Jr., to Polk, June 30, 1845.

4. Reference is to Jackson’s slave, Tom.

5. Jean Baptiste Plauché, Andrew J. Donelson, and either William O. Butler or Benjamin F. Butler. William O. Butler fought in the Battle of New Orleans; served as an aide to Andrew Jackson; and sat in the Kentucky House, 1817–18. He won election as a Democrat to two terms in the U.S. House, 1839–43, but lost his gubernatorial bid in 1844 to William Owsley, nominee of the Kentucky Whigs. He ran unsuccessfully for the U.S. vice-presidency on the Democratic ticket of 1848. A former law partner and close confidant of Martin Van Buren, Benjamin F. Butler served as U.S. attorney general, 1833–38, and twice as U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York, 1838–41 and 1845–48.

6. Word illegible.

7. A White County lawyer, Samuel Turney served as a Democrat in the Tennessee House, 1829–35; in the Tennessee Senate as a Democrat, 1839–47, and as a Native American, 1855–57, and in the Tennessee Confederate Senate, 1861–63.

TO GEORGE BANCROFT¹

Sir—

Washington 7th July 1845

This note will be handed to you by *Mr Lonergan*,² whom I knew as a contractor to build a Rail Road in Tennessee some years ago. He desires, to obtain a contract on the works shortly to be erected at Memphis. He is a man of energy and good character, and will faithfully execute any contract he may make. All he desires is to have his proposals, considered, and if they are lower than any others, to obtain the contract. I give him this note of introduction that he may have a conversation with you.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS. MHi. Addressed locally.

1. Historian and diplomat, Bancroft attended universities in Germany from 1818 to 1822. An ardent Jacksonian, he took an energetic part in securing Northern delegate support for Polk's presidential nomination at the 1844 Baltimore convention. Polk appointed him secretary of the navy in 1845 and eighteen months later named him minister to Great Britain. Acquainted with many English and French scholars, Bancroft pursued additional research on his ten-volume *History of the United States* (1834–74) before returning to the United States in 1849.

2. Kenedy Lonergan, a Cincinnati Democrat and construction contractor, reportedly suffered heavy financial losses in the Hiwassee Railroad project in 1839.

FROM J. GEORGE HARRIS

My Dear Sir,

Nashville July 7. 1845

I gave you the substance of Gen. J's last letter in the precise terms which his adopted son used in relating them to me, as nearly as I could.¹ He tells me to-day that he has given you its substance under his own hand.² He is therefore responsible for any discrepancy, if any exist.

Since your letter to Mr. Jackson of 28th ult.³ I am satisfied that *the* letter was *intercepted* either between the Hermitage and the Nash. P. O. or *at* some of the Post Offices. A re-examination of the case, with cross questions to witnesses, leads to the belief that the letter, although written on Friday was not mailed until Saturday morning (the 7th) and did not depart until the mail of Sunday morning (the 8th), if indeed, it was mailed or departed at all. If it had been *miscarried* to any extreme of the Union, it would have reached you before this, if not before the 28th.

Mr. Jackson *now* recollects distinctly that he gave the letter to his market-servant *Tom* on Saturday morning with others for the P. O. He says Mrs. J. also recollects it distinctly.⁴ *Tom* says he deposited the letters then given him in the P. O. letter-box for receiving letters from the outside between nine & ten o'clock same morning. The clerks in the P. O. are *now* not certain that amongst the letters from the Hermitage which were mailed on Friday night there was one directed to the President. Nor does the chief clerk⁵ remember whether there was a letter for the President in the package made up for Washn by the mail of the 8th (Sunday).

Mr. Jackson at first told me that the General's letter to the President was directed and franked by the Gen. himself. He says now, on reflection, that he recollects of directing it himself, and on asking the General for his frank the Genl replied, "there is no necessity of

my frank on letters to the President." The letter therefore could not have attracted any attention at the Post Office as coming from General Jackson for it bore no exterior marks of his hand.

Mr. J. says that *Tom* has never been detected in any misconduct with letters entrusted to him, but still thinks it *possible* that he might have lost it on the way without missing it from the little package which contained it with others.

I have endeavored to ascertain whether Tom did not stop somewhere on the way or at Nashville after his arrival here, but, as yet, have been unsuccessful.

Dr. Esselman tells me that when Maj. Lewis reached the Hermitage on Sunday afternoon (having been sent for at the Genl's request) he remarked "I intended to have come up yesterday or this morning, but I heard on yesterday morning that the General was better."⁶ Dr. E says he is strongly impressed with a recollection of an expression like this by Maj. Lewis, but cannot assert it positively.

The Maj. you know lives on the road-side (Fairfield) to the Hermitage. He had not been at the Hermitage for two or three days. It is not impossible that Tom might have stopped on his way to market to inform his "old master Lewis" how the General was, nor is it impossible that he might have mislaid the letter while there. But as yet we have no evidence that he stopped there, and you know how very delicate is the nature of that urging which must be made, lest some members of the Hermitage household would take umbrage at the mere suspicion.

After all the belief strengthens in my mind that the letter never left Nashville. The witnesses seem to have changed their opinions, of either their memory of incidents from day to day, until I think it may be safely concluded from the sum of their evidence that the letter was written as I have stated & sent from the Hermitage by Tom on Saturday morning. Whether it reached Nashville, was deposited in the office, or mailed for the evening of Sunday the 8th, is yet veiled in mystery. I hope, however, to learn something more certain of its fate in a few days.

J. GEORGE HARRIS

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on July 14, 1845.

1. See Andrew Jackson to Polk, June 6, 1845, and J. George Harris to Polk, June 28, 1845.

2. See Andrew Jackson, Jr., to Polk, June 30, 1845.

3. Letter not found.

4. Sarah Yorke Jackson.

5. P. M. Sands.

6. John N. Esselman and William B. Lewis. A well-known Nashville physician, Esselman was married to Anne Campbell, sister of George W. Campbell. A neighbor and longtime friend of Andrew Jackson, Lewis resided in the White House during Jackson's presidency and served as second auditor of the Treasury from 1829 until 1845.

FROM MATTHIAS MARTIN¹

Respected Sir:

Columbus O. July 7 1845

It is with some degree of embarrassment that I venture to address you on a subject which is of importance to you and to the democracy of the Union. Although you will not recognise me as a prominent democrat of our State; yet I am a democrat, and have been so all my life and one that can say, never voted for a Federalist in my life. The subject of appointments is one calculated to either strengthen or weaken a political party to a great degree and I am happy to bear witness, that so far as appointments have come from your hands they have been universally good, but there has been some appointments made by your secy's which have given *universal* dissatisfaction to the people of the west, which you are unjustly held responsible for. One I would mention is the appointment of J B Macey of Cincinnati as confidential agent for the Treasury department.² This Mr. Macey you are undoubtedly unacquainted with; therefore a few facts you must know. He is formerly a citizen of New York, known as one of the leaders of the Tallmadge faction of Conservatives³; in 1840 he was one of the most active electioneers for Harrison there was in the State of New York in opposition to Mr Van Buren; and if Mr Van Buren had been nominated again he would have went for Clay, and the reason of his opposition to Mr Van Buren was that Mr Van Buren *knew his* character so well that Macey knew he could secure no favor at his hands, and having no *principles* except *office* he went for Federalism. Some two years ago he emigrated to Ohio, became the confidential agent of the "Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Co." The democracy saw fit to take from the concern its banking powers a few years since, and since that time he has been a regular lobby for that concern every winter, to get its banking powers restored—his whole vocation was to follow members to there rooms and seats imploring them to become his tools, and grant this right to that concern which had been taken from them by Legislature.⁴ He has now effected an arrangement so that his favored institution will have all the deposits in this section of the state, and in his travels does nothing else but electioneer for Mr Walker for the succession in 1840.⁵ The democracy of Ohio have no confidence in him whatever and his removal

would give universal satisfaction. What I write you is true to the letter as I verily believe, and the democrats generally believe that he is agent for this Bank yet.

I have written thus frankly to you with a sincere desire that your administration may not be liable to be corrupted by such unprincipled renegades as he is. I have no personal acquaintance with you, though I saw you in Cincinnati in February when I was sent on a committee to solicit you to travel through our place. I have been a close observer of public men, and have marked your course with admiration since 1833. I was one who voted in our district convention on the 8th of Jan. 1844, for you for Vice President in place of Col Johnson. I was and am a devoted friend to Mr Van Buren, and was mortified that he was not nominated, but my mortification was turned to rejoicing when the mantle fell from him upon you my *first* choice for the Vice Presidency; your uniform opposition the corruptions of the United S. Bank, and support of our lamented *Jackson* and democratic principles gave me unalloyed satisfaction at the result. And hope and pray that your administration may prove, as I have no doubt it will beneficial to the whole people by the carrying out of democratic principles all their purity. And to that end it is necessary to have honest democrats in the subordinate places in the government.

I would say in conclusion that I am a democrat at heart have always been have lived in Columbus 26 years and am a Mechanic take a lively interest in the welfare of the Democratic party, and the success of your administration. For my character I would refer you to Col W. Medill Col W. Allen Hon B. Tappan Col S. Medary.⁶ Please accept the good wishes of your humble servt for your future prosperity and success.

MATTHIAS MARTIN

ALS. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. A Columbus painter, Martin is not identified further.

2. Not identified further.

3. A lawyer from Poughkeepsie, N.Y., Nathaniel P. Tallmadge served in the U.S. Senate from March 1833 until June 1844, when he resigned to become governor of the Wisconsin Territory. Polk removed Tallmadge from office on May 13, 1845. Martin refers to the division within the New York Democracy over the rechartering of state banks that issued paper or “soft” notes inconvertible into specie or “hard” currency.

4. Martin refers to the passage by “hard money” Democrats of the Latham Act of 1842 and the Bartley Act of 1843, which resulted in the closing of many Ohio banks. Ohio Whigs and “soft money” Democrats subsequently reversed this policy with the Bank of Wooster Act of 1844 and the Kelley Act of 1845.

5. Martin probably intended to write “1848.” Pennsylvania born, Robert J. Walker moved to Natchez, Miss., in 1826 and practiced law. He served in

the U.S. Senate from 1835 until 1845, when he became Polk's secretary of the Treasury. Subsequently, he served as governor of the Kansas Territory and as U.S. financial agent in Europe during the Civil War.

6. William Medill, William Allen, Benjamin Tappan, and Samuel Medary. An Ohio lawyer, Medill served as a member and Speaker of the Ohio House, 1835–38, before winning election in 1839 as a Democrat to the first of two terms in the U.S. House. A lawyer, farmer, and stockman from Chillicothe, Ohio, Allen won election as a Democrat to one term in U.S. House in 1833 and sat in the U.S. Senate from 1837 until 1849. A lawyer in Steubenville, Ohio, Tappan served as judge of the Fifth Ohio Circuit Court of Common Pleas in 1816 and as U.S. district judge of Ohio in 1833; he won election as a Democrat to one term in the U.S. Senate, 1839–45. A native of Pennsylvania and printer by trade, Medary edited the Columbus *Ohio Statesman* and in that position exercised great influence among the Ohio Democracy; he later served as governor of Minnesota Territory, 1857–58, and then of Kansas, 1859–60.

FROM A. O. P. NICHOLSON

Dear Sir:

Nashville July 7th 1845

According to promise I write to-day but am to regret that I have nothing of interest to add to my last.¹ Mr. Jackson was in Nashville to-day and I had a long conversation with him. He has examined the servant closely and he sticks to it that he delivered the letter at the Post Office between 9 and 10 O'clock on Saturday morning: but there were more letters than one and it is therefore probable that he lost it on his way to town. When he received the letter to bring to town there was no one at the Hermitage and it was handed to him by Andrew Jackson Jr. which is distinctly remembered by his wife. It is truly possible that the letter may have been sent in a wrong packet to some other point and that it may yet be recovered, but my impression now is that it never reached the office at Nashville but was lost *en route* from the Hermitage.

I rec'd a letter to-day from Mr. Wallace of Maryville E. Ten. who informs me that he is an applicant for a clerkship at Washington and desiring me to write to you in his behalf, which request of his you will please consider me as having complied with.²

I am afraid our friends at Washington are counting too confidently on success in Tennessee—there is really such a dead calm in the political elements here that I do not know how to make any calculations. I have caught the prevailing feeling of the democrats and am looking for a victory but it would be hard to give a good reason for my faith. If we carry the Legislature it is very uncertain who will be our Senator. I should not be surprised if the whigs make the election. If there is any

danger of such a result I shall not allow my name to be used at all. My private affairs are so much tangled that my political aspirations are materially cooled.

Gen. Houston is still with us and finds but little contenance from the whigs. He is a democrat and talks good annexation sentiments but is suspected by many democrats. He leaves for E. Tenn. in a few days to spend several weeks.

Brown writes very encouragingly from E. T. as to his prospects and so do our friends in that quarter, but Foster's friends seem more confident now than they did a few weeks ago. Hall has bragged them into better spirits.³

I do not think Maj. Lewis has excited the sympathy of any body here except Hall and Barrow.⁴ There are some democrats who think it would have been as well for you to have answered his impertinent notes; but no damage has been done.

It is understood here that several leading whigs have changed their views on a Bank and Tariff, viz. George W. Martin, Harry Hill, Dr. Gayle, Godfrey Fogg &c.⁵ How they will vote I cannot say but it shows that the current is inclined to set in right.

We calculate on gaining a Senator and floater in the Memphis district, and we have hopes in McNairy, Madison, Haywood and Perry. We will probably gain a member in Giles, one in Bedford, and one in DeKalb, with hopes of a Senator in Sumner and Smith, and a floater in White, Jackson, &c. But we are in danger of losing a Senator in the White district and we may lose a member in Lawrence. Some of our friends have hopes of electing Hickman in this county.⁶

E. Tenn. we will gain a Senator in Bledsoe, Marion &c, a member in Roane, one in Munroe, with hopes in Blount and hopes of Sevier (Maj. Thos. Brown's son-in-law) in Roane, Morgan and Anderson.⁷ He is whig but the Maj says will do. From this count you will see that we are counting on a close race.

A. O. P. NICHOLSON

ALS. DLC-JKP Addressed to Washington City and marked "Private." Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on July 15, 1845.

1. See Nicholson to Polk, July 6, 1845.

2. Reference probably is to Jesse G. Wallace, son of prominent Maryvillian, William Wallace.

3. A native of North Carolina and resident of Nashville, Allen A. Hall served as chargé d'affaires to Venezuela, 1841-45; as assistant secretary of the U.S. Treasury, 1849-50; and as U.S. minister to Bolivia, 1863-67. In addition to his diplomatic duties, Hall edited and published several Nashville newspapers including the *Republican Banner*, the *Nashville Whig*, and the *Nashville News*.

4. William B. Lewis, Allen A. Hall, and Washington Barrow. A lawyer from Tennessee and briefly a resident of Mississippi, Barrow served as U.S. chargé d'affaires to Portugal, 1841–44; edited the Nashville *Republican Banner*, 1845–47; and won election to one term in the U.S. House as a Whig, 1847–49.

5. George W. Martin, Harry R. W. Hill, and Godfrey M. Fogg. Hill, a wealthy Nashville commission merchant, was a prominent Methodist layman. Fogg practiced law in Nashville. Martin and Gayle are not identified further.

6. Edwin W. Hickman is not identified further.

7. Elbridge G. Sevier and Thomas Brown. A major in the Roane County militia, Sevier ran unsuccessfully for a seat in the Tennessee Senate in 1843 and 1845; served as clerk of the Roane County circuit court, 1833–36; and married Mary Caroline Brown in 1827. A pioneer settler of Roane County, Thomas Brown served two terms in the Tennessee House, 1817–19 and 1821–23, and fourteen years as clerk and master of Roane County Chancery Court, 1834–48.

FROM CHARLES FLETCHER¹

Mr President

Geneva July 8. 1845

I beg leave to congratulate your excellency upon the news which has just reached this place, that the Texan gov't has acceded to the propositions of congress & has united herself to this confederacy. I hope this union may go on prospering & and to prosper, strengthening & increasing in strength untill it is filled with the cities & towns from the Atlantic to the Pacific & from the 30th to the 49th degree of north latitude & that democratic liberty & free republican government may exist throughout the length & breadth of this space united under one Federal head. To accomplish this great object it will be necessary to open a road across the country to the Pacific on or near the line of the 42d degree of latitude as laid down in my pamphlet transmitted to you entitled a trip to Oregon.²

The object of this communication is to call the attention of your excellency to the plan of building a railroad the whole distance. If we wish to be able to bid defiance to the combined powers of Europe we must invite their armies to "come over & help us" to dig our canals & make our rail-roads. Thus a population will be among us to strengthen us & make us powerful against any foreign aggression. Let us take for our example the bright & shining lights that have gone before us.

That great mind who projected the New York & Erie canal DeWitt Clinton³—his projectte was thought as wild then as the plan of making a rail road to the Pacific is now. And here along the line of this

canal throughout the whole extent we see the thriving villages & hear the hum of busy industry. Valuable mill seats & valuable minerals have been discovered & the more valuable treasure the fertile soil, thus producing so much sustenance for man. All these great benefits have been thrown open to a wide spreading population by means of the Erie Canal.

If we turn back a few pages in history we shall find that large tracts of land through which this canal passes were actually sold for six cents an acre & now a thousand dollars an acre would not purchase many a spot. Such & so flourishing will be the towns & villages along the line of this rail road where now a barren wilderness prevails. Population will follow the course of this rail road & as fast as it is made so fast will be the Settlements.

For three hundred years the people of Europe have been seeking for a western passage to China. The principal governments of that quarter of the globe have at various times fitted out vessels at great expense to explore a passage through or around the continent of America to the land of the spices & silks but have never been able yet to find it. Now this passage is presented to the American people and by opening it we cut-off the China trade through the Mediteranean & the Red Sea & make all Europe tributary to ourselves. The ports of the Pacific will be equal to the ports of the Atlantic, & the City of West Boston or by whatever other name it may be called, will yet rise in glory & grandeur on the shores of the great Western Ocean.

That this work may be begun in your presidency will be glory enough to hand down your name to the later posterity but whether it will be expedient to grant the tract of land prayed for to one individual or to vest it in commissioners will be for your wisdom & the wisdom of Congress to determine. The land is of little value, now & the building of the rail road will make it valuable and instead of towns fifty miles apart as laid down in my plan we shall see towns five miles only from each other.

It is the building of a city that enables the people to live in it. Could the inhabitants have a city given to them already built they could not live in it. So the building of this rail road will give life & activity to thousands and will make the American name respected & feared through out the world & her navies will feel at home on the broad waters of the Pacific.

CHARLES FLETCHER

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. A native of Virginia and a clerk in the General Land Office, Fletcher wrote from Geneva, N.Y., while on a family visit.

2. See Fletcher to Polk, April 24, 1845.

3. A staunch proponent of the Erie Canal, Clinton served in many New York state elected offices, including mayor of New York City and two terms as governor, from 1817 until 1821 and from 1825 until his death in 1828.

FROM WILSON LUMPKIN¹

Dear Sir.

Athens Ga. July 8th 1845

I have recently received communications from some of the leading men of the *Ridge* or *Treaty* party of the Cherokee people, which makes it my duty to communicate to you, in order that I may retain that portion of your respect, to which I may be entitled. I learn from the communications referred to, that the Cherokees anticipate a change of their present Agent,² and they express a very strong desire that I would consent to fill that Agency, & further inform me, that they have been writing to Washington upon the subject. You may be assured Sir, the thought of being an Indian Agent, had never entered my mind, previous to these communications. And I should regret very much being considered in the light of an applicant, directly or indirectly for such an office at Washington.

Nothing short of a sense of duty, could make me desire any office.

The perplexed condition, of the present affairs of these people, & their knowledge of the deep concern which I have always felt, for their true interest, has no doubt led to this movement on their part. Allow me Sir, while on this subject to say, this portion of the Cherokee people, have been greatly wronged injured & oppressed, by the want of good faith on the part of the govt. of the U.S.

No man, now among the living, acted a more efficient part, than my humble self, in effecting the removal of these people from the States, to their present abode.

To effect this object, I cooperated faithfully with Genl. Jackson for many years, & was then occupying positions, which enabled me to act efficiently. The Treaty of 1835³ in its formation, & consumation in the removal of the Indians, would not have been effected, but for my Agency. And it will always be a sense of deep mortification to me, that the guarantees of the U.S. Govt. contained in that Treaty, have not been sustained with fidelity. After I left the Executive office of Ga. Genl. Jackson served upon me the office of Commr. under the Treaty, for settling up the claims of the Cherokees &c &c of endeavoring to influence them to remove peaceably under the

provisions of the Treaty. I spent about 18 months in this service, & believing as I then & still believe, consumated the most important part of my Commission.

I went into the Senate of the U.S. where it may be seen, that I did something, in aid of consumating this great measure. When I left the Senate in 1841, provision for the peaceable removal of the Indians, was not only consumated, but the prospect was fair, that the Cherokees would settle down in peace & prosperity in their new lands. The conflicting intercourse which I have had with these people, for a quarter of a century, & the frequent opportunities which I had enjoyed to prove to them, my sense of Justice, & true regard for their best interest, has changed a majority of these people from enemies to friends, and I was when they left (Ga. & the other states) able to counteract the harmful influence of the selfish policy of John Ross⁴ himself. In recollection of the events to which I allude, these Cherokees are induced to think I might still render them useful service—& hence their appeal to me.

Since Genl. Jackson left the Executive office of the Union, the tone of the Govt. has been too imbecile, to controul the conflicting elements of the Cherokee people. The expiration of his last Presidential Term, having expired before the Cherokee Treaty of 1835 was fully carried out, has been the great misfortune of the Cherokee people. His *imperative tone*, to execute Laws & Treaties, as they were found written, would long since, have settled all the present existing difficulties.

I will not assert, that the Indian policy of Genl. Jackson, has intentionally been abandoned by the succeeding administrations. But you are apprized that much depends upon doing a *right thing, in a right way*. To succeed in controuling our Indian population, we must be just, & fear not. Never deceive them, never coax or flatter them. Command their confidence & respect, by your justice & firmness.

The murder of the Ridges & Boudinot⁵ is not only unavenged, but their friends & followers are an oppressed & down trodden people. The officers & Agents of the gov't. of the U.S. have yielded quite too much to the assumptions of Ross. And if his life is spared, & his assumptions permitted to progress, we shall yet see trouble with our Indian population, who have emigrated to the west. The individual accounts of Ross, allowed at the War Dept. (I think in 1841) for any large amounts, will not bear the scrutiny of able investigation.

From my intimate knowledge of the provisions of the Cherokee Treaty of 1835, I am wholly unable to see, by what ingenuity, or artifice, so many open questions are still to be found, under the provisions of that Treaty. Commissions & Boards, always sitting, yet nothing finally

settled. This state of things has, & will consume, the last remaining substance, & best hopes of the Cherokee people. I write without reserve, (with an old worn out pen) & with that freedom of friendship which I feel for you, & your administration. Let my suggestions pass, for what they are worth. Think of them as you please, but believe me sincere, when I assure you, that I do not so far over estimate my ability, as to consider any thing I write, in the light of advice, to the chief magistrate of my country.

As far as I have the means of judging, you have taken a fair start, & right direction, in administering the great & complicated affairs of our beloved country. And as I consider our Indian affairs a subject of importance and claim to have some knowledge of the matters to which I have alluded, I trust you will not consider me as assuming too much in this communication.

WILSON LUMPKIN

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE reads: "Hon. Wilson Lumpkin of Georgia. Has been applied to by a portion of the Cherokees to become their agent: Does not seek the appointment, but would accept it, if tendered to him: Recd 12th July 1845."

1. A lawyer from Athens, Lumpkin served two terms in the Georgia House, 1808–12; sat for three terms in the U.S. House, 1815–17 and 1827–31; won election twice as governor of Georgia, 1831–35; and filled the unexpired U.S. Senate term of John P. King serving from November 1837 to March 1841.

2. Pierce M. Butler

3. Signed by the Treaty party on December 29, 1835, the Treaty of New Echota quieted all Cherokee claims to lands east of the Mississippi River; authorized U.S. citizenship for those choosing to leave the tribe; and provided 5 million dollars and 7 million acres of western land as compensation to the tribe for its relocation. Upon receipt of the draft treaty in Washington, the Jackson administration added five supplementary articles, one of which voided the option of taking U.S. citizenship and remaining in the East with preemption rights to 160 acres.

4. A Tennessean of Scot ancestry and an eighth-blood Cherokee, Ross headed the Cherokee National Council from 1819 until its dissolution in 1826; assisted in writing the constitutions of 1827 and 1839; led the eastern branch of the nation from 1829 until 1839; and following the removal westward served as chief of the united Cherokee nation until his death in 1866.

5. On June 22, 1839, John Ridge, Major Ridge, and Elias Boudinot, all three signatories to the Treaty of New Echota and leaders of the Treaty party, were murdered in separate acts of violence; the Treaty party claimed that the assassinations were part of a campaign of political intimidation by the Ross party.

FROM CHARLES MANLY¹

Sir Raleigh N.C. 8th July 1845

It becomes my duty as the Organ of the Board of Trustees of the University of North Carolina to make known to you that at the late Annual Commencement of that Institution the Senators Academicus by unanimous assent, conferred upon you the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws.

It is proper for me to add that no Diploma issues for this Degree, except where it is specially desired by the Recipient.

CHARLES MANLY

LS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE states that he answered this letter on July 22, 1845.

1. Manly, secretary-treasurer of the University of North Carolina Board of Trustees 1821-1848 and 1850-1869, served one term as governor of North Carolina, 1849-51.

FROM TECK-A-TO-KA¹

Sir, Dumfries 8th July 1845

Republican government cannot exist excepting after the form and manner of Copartneries. Compromise is the Keystone of all governments, but more especially between the Government, and the Governed. Compromise is the only *cement* to *join*, or lever to *disjoin* republican governments. When a compromise can be made to keep up the connexion, it is *better*, but when it is clear that a further community of interests is destructive to the happiness and prosperity of all; it is still *better* to dissolve the connexion. This truth history has made self evident, and with these premises, I venture to ask your friendship, and assistance, in the seperation of the Western Cherokees, and treaty party, from the Ross Party. Let the line of seperation be immediately surveyed, giving to Rogers² and his Western tribe as much land as will make their numbers to the square mile equal to the tribe of Ross his Eastern Indians. Enough has been said and written on the subject of this seperation to avoid detail; but one thing is stereotyped, it is beyond the power persuasion and negotiation, it is that which humanity demand, and friendship dictates, it is that the Western Cherokees will never consent to live under the government of Ross or his successors in peace; and the union of the Copartnerly, must be dissolved. I have been nearly a quarter of a Century acquainted with the Western Cherokees.

They exchanged their ancient possessions near Point remove low down the Arkansas for the Country they now occupy. The eastern Cherokees or Ross Party had no right or interest in the exchange. Yet with the consent of the Western Cherokees under the hypocritical canting phrase of a "Bond of Union" they removed not as guests, friends, and brothers, but as conquerors and masters. The old Cherokees were deprived of their authority, dispossessed of their improvements and property and finally driven for refuge among their neighbors the whites. I mean such as would not acknowledge Ross with his almost absolute power.

It is in your power Sir, with a single dash of your pen, to heal this feud, to correct this dreadful calamity and give peace to these poor people. Order an immediate separation—let it be done at the next session of Congress. The good that would result to our Western border by the measure, is clearly seen in the peace it would establish, and the security it would give, to the frontier settlers who at the present time are insecure. I am done.

TECK-A-TO KA—W. S. C.

ALS. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked "Dumfries Va Free." Polk's AE reads "Teck-a-to Ka. In favour of a separation of the Cherokees, so as to provide a separate country for the Treaty party, and another country to Ross & his party. Recd. 12th July 1845."

1. Commonly known by his English name, William S. Coodey removed to the West in 1834 and served in 1839 as president of the first National Committee organized under the new Cherokee Constitution, unsuccessful in his 1847 bid to unseat Ross as tribal chieftain. Coodey died two years later.

2. John Rogers, one of the principal chiefs of the Western Cherokees or Old Settlers faction, had opposed the Cherokee Act of Union of 1839 and had urged relocation of the Western Cherokees to Texas in 1845.

TO SILAS WRIGHT, JR.¹

My dear Sir.

Washington 8th July 1845

I have received several letters from you within the last two or three months, introducing friends &c to which I have not replied. I have been so constantly occupied with my daily duties that I have not had a moments time to devote to correspondence with my friends. The pressure upon me for office continues to be very great. Surely it could not have been so in the time of my predecessors, I mean of those who preceded the last administration. The truth is that my greatest labour & trouble consists in the dispensation of the public patronage and I sincerely wish I had no office to bestow. In reference to the policy & measures of the administration I shall have comparatively little

trouble. So far as principle & measures are concerned my path is plainly marked before me & I shall pursue it without turning to the right or to the left. My opinions & political doctrines are not of yesterday. They were re-iterated & mainly embodied in the creed laid down in the resolutions of the Baltimore Convention in May 1844. To that creed I shall undeniably adhere. I make these observations not because they are necessary to be made to *you* but because some members of our party in various quarters seem to have forgotten or overlooked the great Democratic principles we profess and from their course would seem to regard the bestowment of office, the chief duty & end of the administration. You know something of the perplexities of dispensing patronage & the impossibility of satisfying all. There is scarcely an office, worth having in any part of the Union, where there is not a contest & often a bitter one between different applicants² of the Democratic party. I can appoint but one to each office, and when I do this, with the best lights before me as has been the case in many instances, complaints come up from the dissatisfied applicants & their friends.

I regret to perceive that sectional jealousies prevail in some parts of the country which do me great injustice & tend to weaken the party itself. In my appointments to office I resolved from the beginning to recognize & to know no divisions of the democratic party as the only means of keeping it *united* & preserving its *strength*. I was chosen, by the *United party* & without such *Union*, we must have been defeated. It is not difficult to foresee that our party run great hazards of being overthrown at the close of any term, unless they heal their dissensions & continue united. There are in truth no material dissensions about principle as far as I know. They are all about subordinate matters. Having myself taken the ground to serve but a single term and not to be a candidate for re-election I resolve to which I shall sternly adhere, there is no future for me in public life. At the close of my term I shall retire forever to private life. This being the case I can have no personal ambition to gratify and will leave the selection of the candidate to succeed me to the free and unbiassed choice of the people. It is by this course alone in my judgment that my administration may be successful and that my party at the end of my term may be left in a majority in the country. Entertaining these views in which I am sure you will concur with me, is it not to be regretted that signs of opposition to my administration among some of our party (I hope & believe they are but few) have appeared not because of any differences of opinion so far as relates to principles or public policy but because of petty appointments to office involving no principle?

I hope a little time & reflection will correct this, but I have said enough of these matters and much more than I intended, when I commenced this letter.

My chief object in writing was to confer with you in reference to the appointment of a minister to Russia, which I shall deem it to be my duty shortly to make. I desire to make the selection from the northern section of the Union. There is no one in New England of whom I can think who would be in all respects suitable. My attention has been turned to New York and I desire to make the selection from that state, if I can find a suitable man. With your leading Democratic men except those with whom I served in Congress I have but little personal acquaintance. Your Lieut Governor Mr Gardner I do not know personally and am ignorant of his qualifications or fitness for such a station.³ The fact however that he was chosen to his present station on the same ticket with yourself is evidence that he possesses the confidence of the Democracy of New York, and gives him a prominence before the country which would justify his selection if there be no objections to him of which I am uninformed. I would be pleased to have your opinion which will be held in the strictest confidence of course. Not the slightest intimation has been given to him that he has been thought of and will not be until I hear from you.

It may be that it would be improper to take him from his present position in the State Government of which you are a better judge than I can be. I have kept and will continue to keep my own counsels about this matter, until I am ready to make the appointment. I ask your opinion *confidentially* in order to aid me in making up my judgment. If there be any other person that you may think would do better, I will thank you to suggest him, that I may have both before me before I decide. The only other person of whom I have thought is our old friend Vanderpool.⁴ I had thought however that the position at present occupied by the *Lieut Governor* & his location in the western part of the State might make his selection the preferable one. In thinking of the *Lieut Governor* I may have erred for want of information. If so you can correct such error. I intend this letter to be *strictly confidential* and shall so regard any answer I may receive from you. I desire to make the appointment at an early day and will be pleased to hear from you as early as your convenience may permit.

From what I have casually learned you have not been entirely free from some of the perplexing troubles in the bestowal of the patronage of the State Government which I have had to encounter on a larger scale.

JAMES K. POLK

L. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Albany, and marked “*Private & Confidential.*”

1. U.S. senator from New York since 1833, Wright backed Martin Van Buren for the 1844 presidential nomination; declined second place on Polk’s ticket; won election to the governorship of New York in 1844; and served in that post until 1846.

2. The copyist interlined the remainder of this sentence and all of the next.

3. Addison Gardiner served as lieutenant governor of New York, 1844–47, and as a judge of the New York Court of Appeals, 1847–55.

4. A lawyer, Aaron Vanderpoel served in the New York Assembly, 1826–30; in the U.S. House, 1833–37 and 1839–41; and on the Superior Court in New York City, 1842–50.

FROM JOHN S. BARBOUR¹

Dear Sir.

Catacha July 9th 1845

Blistered & parched by the excessive heat of Monday I reached home in the night of Monday. I prepared the enclosed for your nephew.² The whole of yesterday was employed in searching for Major Lewis’ letter covering that of Mr Rives giving me at large his views in December 1843 for splitting from me.³ In Octo. 1842 he had given me his opinions as hostile to Mr Clay in any & every possible contingency that futurity could bring forth. I visited Washington in Jan’y 1844 (late in the month) & his long letter in explanation of his course prepared for me was confided to Major Lewis & sent me to my home by Major Lewis before I set out. Altho’ I cannot put my hands upon that letter nor upon Major Lewis’ I have clipt from a letter of Mr Rives to me, a part of his letter acknowledging that he had committed that explanatory letter to Major Lewis’ care. I wrote Major Lewis to send it to me as I could not go on as early as I anticipated & was anxious to know Mr Rives’ views for his singular discrepancy from his position of hostility to Mr Clay. It was justice to himself & justice to me, to know it quickly that I might see his position before I made up my judgement or spoke of it, as to his course, & it was due to the cordial & ancient relations between us. It was material to the relations ’twixt Mr Calhoun & Mr Rives that I should see it before I wrote him Mr C. or saw him.⁴ Hence he wished me to get his letter with *certainty* before I went to Washington or instantly on my arrival. I wrote Major Lewis to send me the letter to this place as I could not go to Washington for some days. He did send it & some where among my disordered papers it can be found *if need be*. In May last my dwelling house was on fire & all the papers from my office were “huddled” together & “cast pell mell” into one of the rooms

of the laundry. The mass is very large & they have never been inspected & assorted. So when I need a paper "it is looking for a needle in a haystack."⁵

I send you here with two other letters picked up promiscuously from the *jumbled mass*, which will show you that the hand writing of the scrap is identical. I wd send the whole of that letter, but it contains a message from Mr Rives which can't be sent.⁶ These are committed to you in closest confidancy, for I have no right to divulge the letter of a friend, however sundered now by intervening & subsequent events. In the age of honour & *duty to it*, the split since occurring between us makes it more strongly obligatory on me to keep sacred that which he committed to me. I think that he has wronged himself & wronged me. Probably he thinks otherwise. I have no right to sit in judgement upon his fallability. There have been so many ties between us & for so long a time that the present alienation is painful to my anticipations. The debate at Orange C. H. the 26th Augt. last put us as he says "forever apart." Let no one see his letters. I confide them in that conscience which twenty years acquaintance justifies in me to you. We have differed in that time as to men, but in all that while, we have agreed as to principles, except for so much of principle as was embodied in the Bank measure and in that my views have undergone a change. In reference to Mr Rives no man has been more faithful to the duties of friendship than I, in my acts to him. He admitted that a sad necessity drove him to Clay in preference to Van Buren. When the morning of the 3rd day of the Convention at Balto last year arrived, & your nomination was known to be *probable if not certain*, I left Balto (being a spectator & not a member) hastened to Washington, persued Mr Rives to the Senate Chamber, & got him into the library and I there conjured & implored him to return to his former position. He was staggered & if it had been a new proposition he wd doubtless have gone with me. His heart was with me, & so was his better judgment. The true secret was divulged to me by Mr Chilton the member from his district & by Mr Forbes of Fredericksburg the nephew of Crittendens wife.⁷ He (Rives) had made his speech betraying all his old principles on the tariff the very day before, & he had previously by his intercourse with Mr Clay in Washington last spring committed himself beyond redemption or reclamation. Here was the secret whose spring from its elastic repulse & rebound to every struggle of his heart to fall back into his ancient faith, that faith which was his "*Urim & Thummin*" in the days of his pilgrimage to power & popularity, his "*Shibboleth*" in the battle.⁸

When I talked with him in the Library of Congress I heard nothing of his ignorance of you—nothing of the Duck River Colonel. These came

up as after thoughts. But my pen runs with the irregular velocity of my more irregular thoughts—and I must stop for my sheet is out.

I am with perfect Respect & true Regard . . .

J. S. BARBOUR

N.B. I wd enclose the whole letter from Mr R. which this slip is cut from, but it contains a message from Mrs Rives, a written message for my defence in the Richmond Enqr of her sons selection for the office of Secty to the Legation to London, which selection was bitterly attacked in the Richmond Whig & the vindication setting forth the facts written by me at Mr Rives' instance.⁹ Mrs R. sent it to London & probably after hearing from her son then copied from his letter to her himself and into this from Mr Rives to me. J.S.B.

[P.S.] Mr J. K. Walker will remember this letter in some of its facts by its connexion with my conversation to him. J.S.B.¹⁰

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City; marked “Confidential.”

1. A veteran of the War of 1812, Barbour served a number of terms in the Virginia legislature; sat in the state constitutional convention, 1829–30; and won election to five terms in the U.S. House as a States' Rights Democrat, 1823–32.

2. Enclosures not found. Joseph Knox Walker served as a private secretary to Polk during his presidency. He subsequently practiced law in Memphis and represented Shelby and Fayette counties as a Democrat in the Tennessee Senate from 1857 until 1859.

3. William B. Lewis and William C. Rives. A Virginia lawyer and planter, Rives served several terms in the U.S. House and Senate, first as a Democrat and then as a Whig. He twice served as U.S. minister to France, 1829–32 and 1849–53.

4. John C. Calhoun

5. Paraphrase of Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, part 2, book 3, chapter 10, page 502: “As well as look for a needle in a bottle of hay.”

6. This sentence was written in the left-hand margin of the page.

7. Samuel Chilton, John J. Crittenden, and probably Maria K. Todd Crittenden. A lawyer from Warrenton, Va., Chilton served one term in the U.S. House as a Whig, 1843–45, and sat in the state constitutional conventions of 1850 and 1851. A Kentucky lawyer and prominent Whig politician, Crittenden's public career spanned five decades. He served in the U.S. Senate, 1817–19, 1835–41, 1842–48, and 1855–63; the U.S. attorney generalship, 1841 and 1850–53; and the Kentucky governorship, 1848–50. Crittenden remarried in 1826 following the death of his first wife Sarah O. Lee Crittenden. Forbes is not identified further.

8. Paraphrases from Exodus 28:30 and Judges 12:6 respectively.

9. Judith Page Walker Rives and Francis R. Rives. Judith Rives authored several travel memoirs; and her son, Francis, had served as secretary to the

U.S. legation to the Court of St. James during the Tyler administration.

10. Barbour wrote his postscript on the reverse of his last page.

FROM J. GEORGE HARRIS

My Dear Sir

Nashville July 9, 1845

Altho' we may not be able to prove that the last letter of Andrew Jackson to yourself was lost or intercepted between the Hermitage and the Nashville mail bag, still until it shall be shown to the contrary I shall ever believe that such was the fact.¹

I perceive that the northern papers are calling for its publication. Who prompts the call? Maj. Lewis has occupied a public position too long to be without personal friends in all quarters of the Union. And why the call without foreknowledge that it cannot be denied. Those letters appear in this morning's Banner in favor of Lewis, concluding with *another* letter from Mr. Jackson to him dated 8 April, the *object* of which is in showing that Gen. J. had lost confidence in your judgment with reference to the *running* of the party.² Why this, after it has been publicly asserted throughout the country that his last letter to you was full of confidence, unless they are aware of the fact that it cannot be shown? The evidence of inference is to me almost conclusive that Lewis or his friends know something more about that letter than we wot of.

And this last letter which he has published in the Banner of to-day wrote the most suspicious reflections upon two persons whom the General had supposed might possibly be connected with, the new official press—one designated by seven stars (*****) the other by six stars (*****). The last corresponding to the letters of my own name, I called on Lewis this morning and asked him if my name was in the letter and he solemnly assured me that *it was not*, that neither of the persons named resided in Davidson County, but would not tell me *whose* name the stars *did* represent. Had he not been so solemn in these assurances, I would have demanded the letter itself before being satisfied. But his declarations were most positive as relieving me from the imputation of being "broke" in Gen Jackson's opinion. No great issue, if true, but thank Heaven I have thus far been able either to pay my debts, or to arrange them fairly & satisfactorily with my creditors from time to time. You *know* that my relations with Gen Jackson were of the most intimate character up to the day of his death—enjoying his full confidence—and most freely & openly did he converse with me upon *all* public subjects, always exhibiting to me his private letters when I visited him, and it is a *shame* that Lewis should so prepare his letters for the press as to give the impression in this community that Gen

Jackson was so much *opposed* to my connexion with the Washington press, that he give forth an impression that I was “insolvent” while the community here well know that I have not quite arrived to that hopeless condition.

I begin to think I have more than my fair share of misfortune—and if this letter which Lewis has last published should be reproduced at the North, Mr. Ritchie may do me a signal favor by answering the imputation in a proper manner. In New England where I received my military commissions I was long known as “Major Harris,” and there the letter from the designation would be construed into meaning me, unless accompanied by explanation.

What can be thought of a man who like Lewis publishes the private correspondence of a friend *after his death*, and when he is not present to make his own defence. A friend too who so far from offending against *him*, adhered to all his private interests up to his last hour?

We have not yet been able to get any more information here concerning the letter Nicholson, Jackson & myself are at work upon diligent and prudent inquiry.

I think Nicholson will publish its substance, as advised, but then it would seem that he should be very careful to write there nothing of it which reflects with so much severity upon the conduct of the late Sec. of the Treasury and upon the possibility of the present Secretary’s culpability of badly managing the office affairs and the affairs connected with Indian scrip under the Treaty (I think) of Dancing Rabbit Creek.³ Those parts were *intended* to be private and could not well be made public without your permission. The balance of the letter should appear as nearly as young Jackson as I can recollect it. And I do not doubt it will appear at an early day.

I am more and more convinced that if the truth were known it would be found that Gen. Jackson’s last letter to President Polk although sent from the Hermitage by the old servant never reached the corporation limits of Nashville, or if it did that it never found its way to the mail-bag. If it *was* duly mailed here, the fault must be in your own city P.O.

J. GEORGE HARRIS

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked “Private.” Polk’s AE on the cover erroneously states that he received this letter on “16th March 1845.”

1. See Andrew Jackson to Polk, June 6, 1845.

2. Jackson had expressed concern over the replacement of the Washington *Globe* and its editor, Francis P. Blair, but also had recommended that Blair sell the *Globe*. See Andrew Jackson to Polk, April 7, 1845.

3. In his last letter Jackson had alledged fraud on the part of a former secretary of the Treasury department, George M. Bibb, and had expressed great concern about the harmful influence of Choctaw land speculators on the current secretary, Robert J. Walker. The Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek (1830) extinguished Choctaw claims to some 7.8 million acres of land in Mississippi and provided for the removal of the Choctaw Nation west of the Mississippi River.

FROM ALBERT FITZ¹

Sir,

Boston 10 July 1845

I had the honor, on 12 March last, to address your Excellency with a humble Memorial for compensation for important services rendered to the country.² The present administration enjoys the full benefit of those services, & I, although promised the pay usually accorded for such perilous service, was only paid the rate allowed to a mere *Bearer of Despatches*. I am also the victim of a broken promise of the Government for future employment. I had hoped, ere this, to have received some intimation of your Excellency's opinion on said Memorial.

The object of this, is to inform you, that I have received a communication from the highest Foreign Functionary at Washington, relative to the nature & object of my secret mission! Is the Government willing that I should receive from the generosity of a jealous foreign power, that Bread of Life, of which the injustice of my own country deprives me?

A revelation of the secret acts & intentions of this Republic, as they were made known to me, during 300 days of *special, secret, service*, will be most acceptable to England, & will excite jealousy & distrust without bounds. It will enable her to take good care, that we get no more plans of her cherished strongholds, by means of adroit spies.

She is now eager for information, which I, best may give. Texas & Oregon, & California, have aroused the distrust of far seeing British Statesmen. My children cry for bread; & respectfully, yet most earnestly, I leave with your Excellency the responsibility, whether I shall become a naturalised subject & liberally pensioned beneficiary, of the most powerful realm on the globe; or whether by a costless & simple set of justice, I shall be confirmed in my fealty.

Your Excellency's reply shall regulate my future course.

ALBERT FITZ

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked "Private" and "Important & Confidential." Polk's AE on the cover reads as follows: "Albert Fitz Mass. Intimates that he has important information, which he

will communicate to the British Minister for pay, unless he can be better paid by the U.S. to withhold it. Recd 15th July 1845.”

1. Fitz served as a special agent of the State Department to the West Indies from October 1, 1841, until August 1, 1842.
2. Memorial not found.

FROM HENRY HORN

My Dear Sir

Philadelphia 10 July 1845

The general impression here is that there will be a change in the incumbency of the office of first Comptroller of the Treasury¹ and this impression is probably derived from the belief that such change is necessary.

Upon the prompt and efficient execution of the duties of that office essentially depends upon the uniformity and harmony of the operation of our revenue laws. Unreasonable delays in making decisions and in transmitting information from the Comptrollers office to districts requiring the action of that department are calculated to impede the progress of trade and business and to create discontents with the administration under which they occur—and from whatever cause they arise should be remedied.

The office of first Comptroller requires an incumbent of great practical Knowledge and experience in all the ramifications of our revenue laws. And should you determine upon a change you have near you in the person of Major Barker one preeminently qualified for the duties of the station.² I really believe his appointment while it would reward a meritorious individual would essentially subserve the public interest.

HENRY HORN

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked “*Private*.” Polk’s AE on the cover states that he received this letter on July 11, 1845.

1. James W. McCulloh became first comptroller of the Treasury in 1842; prior to that appointment he had served as head cashier of the Baltimore branch of the Bank of the United States in 1819, won election to one term in the state House of Delegates from Baltimore County in 1825, and served as an Adams presidential elector in 1829.

2. James N. Barker, a native of Philadelphia, Penn., served in the War of 1812 and during the 1820’s won election to several terms as alderman and mayor of Philadelphia. In 1829 he accepted appointment as collector of customs in Philadelphia and served in that post until 1838, when he became first comptroller of the Treasury. From 1842 until his death in 1858, Barker served as a clerk in the chief clerk’s office of the Treasury.

FROM RICHARD M. JOHNSON

My dear Sir,

White Sulpher, July 11 1845

I have just red yours respecting the appointment of Col Butler as gov. of Iowa.¹ I will go to Frankfort in the morning, will proceed to see Col Butler which is 60 miles distant, or will write him by a friend who is influential with him. I think Col Butler will reciprocate & properly appreciate your friendship by the acceptance of the place which I think decidedly preferable to a foreign appointment taking all things into view, his qualifications, his prospects in Iowa &c. The patronage of the President is limited, & a good friend will not [...] if he preferred another situation. The President can not satisfy the just claims of his friends, much less can he satisfy their wishes, in all respects, & magnanimity must govern all who wish you prosperity & happiness.

I congratulate you & our country upon the annexation of Texas. It is a singular instance of the sagacity of the people & inspires the patriot with increased confidence in their capacity for self government. Your friendly & generous conduct towards me has made an impression upon my mind which I shall not forget. I am very much pleased & satisfied with the persons, who compose your cabinet—and in Thomas Richie you are blessed with one of the best men & one of the most discreet & talented men that ever Edited a public journal. I feel an interest for him which I cannot express.

I arrived at home in less than 4 days in prime health & find all things in good condition. Friends are coming in to enquire into what I have seen & what I think of the President, &c &c. I was happy to give a favorable account in perfect sincerity.

You will be pleased to present to Mrs Polk my best & sincere wishes for her health & happiness. She is already a favourite with the people.

I learn from my Brother Henry that he has his son Claudius before you for the consulate of Havana Cuba.³ If you vacate that office, he has set his heart upon it very much, as it is about the first application of any of the family for office. I know the difficulty by which you are surrounded & difficulty of gratifying friends. I told him you would do any thing in your power for him, but did not know what you could do. Claudius Johnson is a talented young man with a liberal education, & altho I could not conceive of any event that would give me so much real happiness I am not the friend to urge any thing to annoy or to complain if it cannot be done.

RH. M. JOHNSON

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk’s AE on the cover reads, “A valuable letter & to be preserved. Recd 17th July 1845.”

1. William O. Butler. Polk’s letter to Johnson has not been found.
2. Word or words illegible.
3. A resident of Lexington, Ky., Henry Johnson was a Kentucky delegate to the Democratic National Convention of 1844. Claudius M. Johnson is not identified further.

FROM AARON V. BROWN

Dear Sir

Cleon Moore’s¹ July 12. 1845

Here I am at your old friends—sitting in the same room & at the same table, where you used to sit, after having harranged some 7 or 800 persons at Rogersville. The Whigs retired rather in sorrow whilst the Democrats crowed loud & long. But will all this change *their votes*? I doubt it although droves of them declared off from Foster. I gave him some hard hits that he will remember as long as he lives. We are on the last stretch home & I mean to apply the whip & spurs freely. I met the Union today containing my Athens speech, which Nicholson published one week too soon as it may induce F to do something to counteract it.² It was mainly intended for those counties in which we did not speak. They will be largely circulated in such & I hope may do as much good as a speech deliverd in proper person. If you take the time to read it will give you some notion of our discussions. The Athens papers & the Standard & Sentinel,³ all puff freely³—but notwithstanding they do *puff*, still it is evident that the Democracy of E. Tennessee is very well pleased with me. Genl Carter came out for the senate of the State Legislature the other day & Bob Powell instantly took the field for the lower house in Johnson & Carter to counteract the movement.⁴

As to the final result I do not speculate much, as they would not elect *you* I am thereby induced allways to doubt whether they will elect me.

A. V. BROWN

ALS. Polk Memorial Association, Columbia. Addressed to Washington City.

1. A Hawkins County farmer, Moore served two terms in the Tennessee House, 1821–23 and 1829–31.
2. A. O. P. Nicholson published extracts from Brown’s June 21 speech in the *Nashville Union* of July 8, 1845.
3. The *Athens Courier*, *Knoxville Standard*, and *Jonesboro Tennessee Sentinel* were prominent East Tennessee Democratic newspapers.
4. James T. Carter and Robert W. Powell. A lawyer from Elizabethton, Carter represented Carter and Johnson Counties in the Tennessee House as a member of the American Party from 1857 until 1859. A native of Maryland,

Powell practiced law in Elizabethton and for two terms, 1841–45, represented the four eastern counties of Carter, Johnson, Sullivan, and Washington in the Tennessee Senate.

FROM PHILIP B. GLENN¹

Sir

Covington July 12 1845

Knowing, as I do that you feel a deep interest, in the struggle in Tenne, I give you the views that I entertain, about the canvass and the result. I am *confident* we shall carry the state; Brown, and the Legislature, Stanton's election I consider *beyond all doubt*.² Our majority will be small, yet sure and certain and sufficient, for all practical purposes. This opinion is entertained throughout our ranks and it animates them to action; and I have no doubt from all the "lights"³ before me that it is the best opinion in the Whig party, that such will be the result. There is no excitement in the State generally, more I expect in this congressional district than elsewhere. Brown I believe to be in all respects and in every particular the best man we could have selected in the state to run the race for Gov, I have known him several years yet never heard him speak before. I knew him to be a man of talents, yet was not aware of the peculiar qualifications, he has for the present crisis. I have no doubt there will be a full Democratic vote, as they have an abiding faith in the result: not so with the Whigs it is evident that they believe, they travel again the broad road to death.

In this County and Lauderdale as we had three Democratic Candidates out I took the field again to settle the matter,⁴ our majority will be about 100 from 60 in the Pres election, the race in Fayette Haywood and McNary is close and doubtful, for the Legislature, though I have no *reliable* information from those counties for two weeks. Senator and Floater are certain.⁵

We are conducting the canvass upon mild and pacific principles as far as we can; such we find to be decidedly to our interest at this time.

As to yourself the General opinion among the people of both parties is that you are doing well, and will do so. And Politicians now agree that you are *not John Doe* in the action, as they *charged last year*; but that you are *the real Plaintiff himself*. There is not a word of abuse of you from the stump, and the tongue of slander is palsied since the death of the old General.⁶ This sketch will I hope furnish you data sufficient to form your own conclusions, god bless you and yours.

P. B. GLENN

N.B. My respects to Laughlin say to him his relations here are all well.⁷

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. A Covington lawyer, Glenn served in the Tennessee House as a Democrat, 1837–41 and 1843–47.

2. Aaron V. Brown and Frederick P. Stanton. A Memphis lawyer, Stanton served as a Democrat in the U.S. House, 1845–55, and as governor of the Kansas Territory, 1858–61.

3. Paraphrase of “Lights of the world, and stars of human race.” William Cowper, *The Progress of Error* [1782].

4. The three other Democratic candidates for the Tennessee House seat representing Tipton and Lauderdale counties are not identified further.

5. Glenn’s references are to the respective middle Tennessee House seats from Fayette, Hardeman, and McNairy counties; the Senate district was composed of Fayette, Hardeman, and Shelby counties; and the “floating” House seat included Fayette, Hardeman, and Shelby counties.

6. Andrew Jackson.

7. A lawyer from McMinnville and founding editor of the *Nashville Union*, Samuel H. Laughlin served three terms as a Democrat in the Tennessee Senate, 1839–45. Polk appointed him to the post of recorder in the General Land Office, and the Senate gave its approval on March 16, 1845.

FROM J. GEORGE HARRIS

My Dear Sir

Nashville, July 12, 1845

The servant by whom Mr. J. says the General’s last letter¹ to the President was sent to the Nash. P. O. declares over and over that he did not stop on the road, but brought the package directly to the P.O. on Saturday morning, and deposited it in the box in which letters are dropped through the outer wall. I understand Mrs. J.² to concur with her husband in the belief that the letter as well as that to Gen. Plauché was sent down on Saturday morning by Tom. The New Orleans papers say that the letter to Gen. P. was postmarked at Nashville on the 7th. If so it *must* have been deposited in the Nash. P. O. on the 6th—Friday—and yet the Hermitage folks think that Gen. P’s letter and yours were sent in the same bundle at the same time on Saturday the 7th, and *must*, therefore have bore the postmark of the 8th, according to P. O. usage. You will recollect that my first information was that these two letters were sent to the P. O. at the same time, and on Friday, that they were sent together is still the opinion of Mr. J, and if the postmark on Gen. P’s letter be of the 7th, I shall still be convinced that they were sent down on Friday and probably by some person who came down from the Hermitage that night. Thus it might have been—

and the letters of Saturday might have been *other* letters. Born down by affliction at the time, the family cannot recollect all these incidents exactly as they occurred.

I have just had another long and varied conversation with Mr Jackson. He tells me he has produced a reply to your late letter.³ I have pressed on him the importance of giving to the editor of Nash. Union the substance of that last letter for publication, or as much of it as referred to matters of a public nature, especially its tone of unabated confidence in your determination and ability to maintain an administration well calculated to promote the harmony of the democracy and the general welfare of the country. I have urged that as forcibly as prudence would dictate. He thinks favorably of it, but hesitates lest he should say something which might be erroneously construed and be the subject of endless newspaper remarks. Himself and family appear to be on terms of the greatest intimacy with Maj. Lewis, and yet they are very much displeased with his last publication containing extracts from one of the Genl's most confidential letters. I urged Mr. J. to converse with him with great freedom on this impropriety of publishing the confidential letters of a *dec'd friend*—he did so—and now informs me that the Major will cease to use such weapons.

I am well satisfied and *certain* that Gen. Jackson never used *my* name in the letter of which Maj. L. published an extract. *I have now ascertained it to a certainty*—all are satisfied, that it should not be noticed as referring to me in any of the papers. Over-sensitiveness it was that induced me to ask for a defence from Mr. R—please let it all pass.⁴ The man referred to is one who I did not suspect of having been desirous of an association with the official press.

The news from Texas was gladly received here on yesterday, *via*. the Princeton.⁵ The cannon roared from Capitol Hill, and the welkin rang with popular hurrahs. We are to have a grand meeting of congratulation on Tuesday.

Gen. Houston leaves for East Tennessee next Monday, on a visit to his family friends. He evidently indulges in the loftiest aspirations of our most distinguished American statesmen, though with great apparent modesty.

I am afraid that last letter of the General will never be seen by the public eye. There has been criminal conduct somewhere, unless it were *lost* by the servant on the Hermitage road.

Our faith in a complete triumph in the August Elections increases daily, from the representations of friends in the Eastern & Western Divisions of the State.

J. GEO. HARRIS

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. Reference is to Tom, a trusted servant of Andrew Jackson, Jr. See Andrew Jackson to Polk, June 6, 1845.

2. Sarah Yorke Jackson.

3. See Andrew Jackson, Jr., to Polk, July 12, 1845. Polk's letter has not been found.

4. See J. George Harris to Polk, July 9, 1845.

5. Pursuant to an act of the Texas Congress, citizens elected delegates to a constitutional convention in June 1845; on July 4th the convention passed an ordinance accepting the United States Congress' proffer of annexation and proceeded to write a new constitution to be submitted to the citizenry as required for their admission as the State of Texas to the Union.

FROM ANDREW JACKSON, JR.

Dear Sir,

Hermitage July 12th 1845

I thank you kindly for your letter of date the 28th ult.¹ The Honors paid to the memory of our deceased Father is certainly very grateful to us, and we again thank you Sir, for the interest you have taken in it. The whole country seems anxious to do his memory honor. Party feeling is hushed it seems in the general manifestations of the people every where. We regret extremely that the last letter ever written by him to you should have miscarried.² There is something strange in it. The facts about it are substantially these.

On Thursday evening before his death he commenced writing a few lines to his old friend Genl J B Plauche of New Orleans, but resumed it on Friday morning the 6th day of June—finished it by about 10 o'clock A M. He then told me he was going to write you a few lines, which he did, and finished it early in the same evening. I folded and directed Genl J B Plauche letter for him—he had commenced writing yours. I left the room & went off about the farm on business. When I returned late, he had finished yours, & directed me to look over it attentively, then fold it for him. I did so & am pretty certain I backed it for him. The contents I have already written you & also I have given them substantially & correctly to our friend J Geo Harris & I presume he has written them to you.³ Early the next morning, Saturday the 7th of June, by sun rise I put them yours & Plauche letter into the hands of our old & we have always supposed faithful boy Tom, to take to Nashville and then put them into the Post Office. Your letter & Genl Plauche's was folded in a piece of old newspaper. The boy tells me he put them in the office at Nashville at about 9 to ten o'clock on Saturday the 7th June. I asked him if he stopped or went any where before going to the office, or did any one meet him on the road or in Town & look at

the letters. He said not—that he went directly to the office & put them in. And I see & know that Genl Plauche has received his, post marked the 7th of June at Nashville. He also (the boy) brought us up a mail the same evening from Nashville.

So your letter not reaching you is really unaccountable to me. Some villains either at Nashville or in the office at Washington, or the boy has deceived us which was never the case before. He is our old marketeer, and has generally been trusted with all our letters & this is all I know about it or can find out about it. I trust & hope it may soon or some day come out how it has been purloined. I do assure you sir it was as kind & affectionate a letter to you as I ever read from Father. It loss is deeply to be regretted.

With our kind regards to you & Mrs Polk please accept our best wishes for good health, welfare & happiness.

A. JACKSON JUNR

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover erroneously states that he received this letter on "19th June 1845."

1. Letter not found.
2. See Andrew Jackson to Polk, June 6, 1845.
3. See Andrew Jackson, Jr., to Polk, June 30, 1845, and J. George Harris to Polk, June 28, 1845.

FROM ANSON JONES¹

Executive Department
Washington-on-the-Brazos July 12th 1845

Sir,

I avail myself with much pleasure of the opportunity afforded me by the return of Gen. Besancon² to address your Excellency this letter, and to communicate to you the gratifying intelligence that the Deputies of the people of Texas assembled in Convention at the City of Austin on the 4th Inst. and adopted on that day an Ordinance expressing the acceptance and assent of the people to the proposal made by the government of the United States on the subject of the Annexation of Texas to the American Union. This assent given with promptness and much unanimity affords the assurance that this great measure, to the success of which your Excellency is so sincerely attached, will be consummated without farther difficulty, and, as I ardently hope in peace.

I shall have the satisfaction to transmit you very soon by request of the Convention a copy of the Ordinance I have now referred to, which will be placed in your hands by Mr. D. S. Kaufman³ who I have caused to be accredited as Chargé d'Affaires of Texas near your government;

and I beg you to accept, in the mean time assurances of the high regard with which I am

ANSON JONES

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. Anson Jones, a physician, served Texas as a member of Congress; as secretary of state, 1841–44; and as its last president, 1844–45.

2. Lorenzo A. Besançon.

3. A native of Pennsylvania, David S. Kaufman moved to Texas in 1837 and won election to several terms in the Texas House and Senate. He represented Texas as chargé d'affaires to the United States in 1845, and served in the U.S. House from 1846 until his death in 1851.

FROM CHARLES S. JONES¹

Mr President

Washington July 12th 1845

Enjoying as I have every reason to believe the confidence of the Democracy of this District, and being as all who know me can testify an ardent, and attached friend of the Administration, I am earnestly desirous that peace, and success should be secured to the latter, and political justice done to the former. That there is some little estrangement of feeling on the part of the District Democracy to the Administration cannot be denied. But it is attributable in a great measure to the testimonials and rash course of *rival* friends in regard to appointments as well as to the slanderous attacks of *professed* friends in the Democratic Association in presence of your Excellency. To these two causes; rather than to any acts, or words of your Excellency may be attributed in a great measure the estrangement of feeling now existing between the Administration and the Democracy of this City.

This feeling may be entirely removed by the proper selection of a person as Com of Pub Buildings. Considering as we now do, Mr Sengstack² as out of the question, yet we cannot but hope, and beg, and pray that you will not appoint Dr Gunnell³ to the situation. Almost every member of the Democratic party is bitterly opposed to his appointment. Let me then in the name of the hard-minded, warm hearted Democracy of this City whose motives have been impugned, whose acts have been perverted, and whose characters have been murderously assailed by men from whom better things might have been expected—let me I say beg of you in their name not to appoint Dr Gunnell to this situation. Give us Wm J Brown,⁴ or Geo Plitt Esq⁵ ten thousand times in preference to Dr Gunnell.

By so doing you will satisfy, and gratify the mass of the District Democracy—you will pour oil on the troubled waters—you will secure

peace to the Administration, and a continuance of love, respect, and confidence to yourself.

CHARLES S. JONES

[P.S.] I have a few words to say in regard to my application for the Wardenship of the Penitentiary in this City. A report is current that Mr R Coltman⁶ is appointed. I hope this is not so, as Mr. Coltman is a man of fortune, and there are several applicants (myself among them) who are in very needy circumstances. In addition as I have before stated to your Excellency I have a young, and increasing family, dependent on me for support, and am physically incapable of working at my trade to support them. And further more the action of your Excellency in regard to Mr Towles⁷ deprived me of the appointment of Inspector for this Port which Mr White⁸ intended giving me, as I will prove by written evidence from him if you require it. These are matters which it appears to me ought to be considered in disposing of the Wardenship.
C S Jones

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed locally and marked "Confidential."

1. An ardent Democrat and son of Richard Jones, an inspector of the penitentiary in Washington City, Charles S. Jones applied to Polk for a position at the Capitol but did not receive the appointment.

2. Secretary of the local Democratic Association, Charles P. Sengstack received an appointment as warden of the U.S. penitentiary at Washington City in 1848.

3. An applicant for the office of Commissioner of Public Buildings, J. J. Gunnell later applied unsuccessfully for appointment as U.S. marshal for Washington City.

4. An Indianapolis lawyer, William J. Brown served as a member of the Indiana House, 1829-32 and 1841-43; as state prosecuting attorney, 1831-35; and as Indiana's secretary of state, 1836-40; he won election to two terms in the U.S. House, 1843-45 and 1849-51, and held the post of second assistant postmaster general during the Polk administration.

5. George Plitt, an unsuccessful applicant for the office of Commissioner of Public Buildings, is not identified further.

6. Robert Coltman served as warden of the U.S. penitentiary in Washington City from 1846 until 1847.

7. A Washington City carpenter and builder, James Towles chaired the Democratic Association of Washington during the presidential campaign of 1844. An applicant for the offices of Commissioner of Public Buildings and warden of the U.S. Penitentiary, Towles served as inspector of customs at Georgetown, D.C.

8. Appointed collector of customs at Georgetown, D.C., in 1845, Robert White served until 1849.

FROM WILLIAM TYACK¹

Dear Sir

New York July 12, 1845

During my late farewell visit to the Hermitage to see the Aged Soldier, Statesman & Christian Patriot Andrew Jackson, in conversation he said, my kind friend Capt Tyack should your life be spared to reach home and I pray earnestly to God it may, that you will stop at Washington and will express to President Polk & Lady, say sir that I earnestly express a sincere anxiety for the future Enjoyment and Hapiness of President Polk as also of Mrs Polk & the Family not only in this Life but that they may enjoy Eternal Hapiness in the world to come, which shall be my present prayer to a Mercifull God. Say sir that I would write if I could but I cannot write any more. Mrs Jackson² & Mrs Adams,³ also joined the Genel in the most Affectionate Expressions for the success of your administration & Hapiness.

WILLIAM TYACK

[P.S.] I regret extremely I could not have seen you during the three Days I was in Washington, as an humble individual I did not expect it on account of your great Presure of Business, but as A Special Messenger from that great & good man Andrew Jackson, who was then in the Arms of Death it caused me A grief which is Hard to bear, but I will submit, Sincerely wishing you great success in the very great & responsible Duties of which you are Daily called to Discharge & that you may be guided by a Mercifull God in all your ways, that will permate & Sustain your Country, the constitution & the rights of the people, all of which I have not the least Doubt but will be strictly fullfiled & Discharged on your part according to the full confidence & Expressions of our Late Beloved Jackson. Please accept sir for yourself & Mrs J Polk my sincere regard for the future Hapiness in this Life and that which is to come.
William Tyack

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. William Tyack, associated with the "Hunker" faction of the New York Democracy, resigned his post as master warden for the Port of New York to campaign for Polk in 1844; he served as president of the Polk and Dallas Association of New York City and spoke at the Democratic mass meeting in Nashville of August 15, 1844.

2. Sarah Yorke Jackson.

3. Reference is to Marion Yorke Adams, sister of Sarah Yorke Jackson.

FROM RICHARD M. JOHNSON

Dear Sir,

Frankfort. July 13th 1845

According to promise I proceeded to the residence of Col Butler¹ & found that he had rcd. the letter of Genl McCalla² one evening & had answered next morning that he declined the office of governor of Iowa—notwithstanding I gave him my view in full—the opportunity he would have had to promote friends by his recommendation, to land offices, post offices, indian agencies, &c; that he would have remained with any honors the *State* could confer upon him &c or he could have returned home, after the territory had become a state with honors popularity &c&c. I spoke of your kind feelings, your embarisments, with 26 states, & some teritories, claiming office & friends in those states &c and your limitted patronage. I felt it my duty also to read your kind letter to me that he might see your friendship for him, your embarisments & your desire to gratify him. He spoke kindly & acted kindly towards you, as a gentleman & friend—& said he would write you himself which I encouraged him to do. Yet my interview did not change his determination, but produced kind feelings &c. I regret I did not see him before he answered; but I live 70 miles from him & he got Genl McCalla's letter as soon as I got yours.

RH. M. JOHNSON

ALS. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. William O. Butler.
2. John M. McCalla served as U.S. marshal for Kentucky during the Jackson and Van Buren administrations; in 1844 he ran on the Democratic electoral ticket in Kentucky; and in 1845 Polk appointed him second auditor of the U.S. Treasury.

FROM A. O. P. NICHOLSON

Dear Sir,

Nashville July 13. 1845

I have again seen Mr. Jackson to-day and will give you some further details about that mysterious affair of the lost letter. But before I do this I must refer to a publication of a letter of Gen. Jackson by Maj. Lewis which he has just made.¹ You have no doubt seen the letter. I assure you its publication has produced a degree of indignation amongst Gen Jackson's friends which makes Maj Lewis' situation exceedingly unacceptable. Andrew Jackson and his wife are indignant and to-day the former called on Maj. Lewis and I learn made him promise to

be guilty of no other such violations of confidence. This matter is destroying and sinking Lewis faster than any thing which could have happened. You will have seen that two names are suppressed in Gen. Jackson's letter—the first is that of Gen Cameron and the other that of James Walker Esq.² This Lewis disclosed to-day to Jackson and he has communicated it to two or three friends. I thought it right that you should know the facts. In reference to the lost letter Jackson tells me that the servant sticks to it that he deposited it in the office on Saturday morning & that he stopped no where and saw nobody on the road to town. But Dr. Esselman and Jackson both have an impression that on Sunday when Lewis came up to the Hermitage he said in conversation that he would have come up the day before but he learned from a boy of Gen. Jackson that his master was better. You see the importance of this at once—it was brought to Jackson's mind to-day for the first time and he will now investigate the matter with the boy. I am now strongly in hopes that this may serve as a clue or an explanation of the mystery. As soon as Andrew Jackson gets home the matter can be prosecuted with new vigor. Jackson tells me that he sent you the substance of the letter some days ago and will furnish it to me in a day or two.³ From the character of it its publication will be a delicate matter and I shall therefore await your advice about the matter, which I trust you will give as soon as you get Jackson's letter.

A. O. P. NICHOLSON

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked "Private." Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on July 20, 1845.

1. Nicholson's reference is to an extract of a letter from Andrew Jackson to William B. Lewis dated April 8, 1845, and published in the *Nashville Republican Banner* of July 9, 1845.

2. A Pennsylvania banker and businessman, Simon Cameron won election as a Democrat to fill the U.S. Senate seat of James Buchanan, who resigned to become Polk's secretary of state. Cameron, who served from 1845 until 1849, subsequently won election as a Republican to the U.S. Senate, 1857–61 and 1867–77. A prosperous Columbia businessman, James Walker married Polk's sister Jane Maria in 1813.

3. See Andrew Jackson, Jr., to Polk, June 30, 1845.

FROM THOMAS W. DORR¹

Sir,

Providence, R.I. July 14th, 1845

To the list of candidates for the place of Naval Officer at this port allow me to add the name of Col. Silas A. Comstock,² of Burrillville in this State. Col. Comstock was commander, at Chepachet, in June,

1842, of what should have been a regiment; but those who were most interested declined to furnish their aid to the People's Constitution, and to the offices elected under it.³

Col. Comstock possesses strong natural abilities, which the labors of the farm and of the workshop have brought into action. He is a man of affairs, and stands in the front line of the real men of the State. When honor and duty & freedom called upon the outraged masses of this State to rally around the standard of the Constitution, he was ready to offer his life in its defense. For its fall, and the subsequent & prudent degradation of the State, under a military domination, to which the People too easily surrendered themselves, and a righteous cause, he is in no degree responsible.

He has been overlooked in the recent distribution of offices here; I suppose, from not placing himself in the way, and not urging a claim on the appointing power. In the course of an interview with him, last week, I discovered that his feelings were touched at the neglect, by our friends here, of the military men of 1842. He did not however ask me to make any recommendations or use any exertion in his behalf for any office. But I have sufficient reason to believe that, if appointed to the office above named, he will be pleased with the notice thus taken of him as a representative of the military class, and reason to know that he will discharge his duties with vigilance & fidelity.

It is but faintly denied by the Algerines of Rhode Island,⁴ and freely admitted by all true democrats, that to the gathering of some 225 men in arms at Chapachet, in June, 1842, is the State indebted for all the freedom that it now possesses, under the Old Charter Constitution; the call of the Convention to frame which was extorted from the fears of the Algerine Legislature.

The other candidates for the place of Naval Officer (at the head of whom is our worthy Secretary of State in 1842, William H. Smith⁵) are confident & worthy; and I regret that there are not now four places to be bestowed instead of one. High as these gentlemen stand or in the order of civil merit, and entertaining much regard for them, yet, for the reasons given, I feel it my duty especially, to commend, and I would very earnestly commend, to your attention the individual whom I have named. Should your preference be directed to another, Col. Comstock will be able to subsist, as now, upon a small farm, adding to his other labor the work of a carpenter. Should he receive the appointment, I shall be highly gratified, and rejoice at a mark of merited respect shown to a friend, and the companion of a dark day in our affairs, who was true when so many others fattored & fell away.

THOS W. DORR

[P.S.] Col. Comstock is now a representative from Burrillville in the General Assembly; and his constituents would, doubtless, be glad to join in a recommendation similar to this, if they were aware of his being named as a candidate.

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. Popular dissatisfaction with suffrage restrictions led to Rhode Island's "Dorr Rebellion" of 1841–42. In late 1841 a popular but extralegal convention framed and ratified a "People's Constitution," which provided for white manhood suffrage and new elections; Thomas W. Dorr won the new constitution's gubernatorial election. The Rhode Island legislature, however, declared the new constitution illegal and sponsored a regularly scheduled spring election under authority of the colonial charter of 1663. Incumbent governor, Samuel W. King, gained reelection under the old charter. Both Dorr and King applied to John Tyler for military aid. Tyler backed King, but urged him to exercise conciliation and restraint. On May 18, 1842, the Dorrites attempted and failed to seize the state's militia arsenal. As a result of the "Dorr Rebellion," Rhode Island's Whigs and some Democrats united against the more radical "Dorrite" Democrats in the 1844 campaign. Dorr received a sentence of life imprisonment, but won release in 1845.

2. Not identified further.

3. Dorr's reference is to the village of Chepachet in northwest Rhode Island which Dorrite forces used briefly as a base of military operations. Opposed by a force of three thousand men assembling in Providence, Dorr and his supporters abandoned the site on June 28, 1842.

4. Reference is to the Rhode Island General Assembly's passage of a measure in April 1842—dubbed the "Algerine Law"—declaring the criminality of elections under the People's Constitution. Criticizing the harsh character of the law, the pro-Dorrite *Providence Express* observed, "The *Dey* of Algiers has had his *day*; and Rhode Island is the last place in which the arbitrary doctrines of this ex-potentate can be revived with success or impunity." The law provided fines and jail terms for those who participated in meetings for the election of state officers and declared candidates and persons accepting office under such elections guilty of treason and subject to life imprisonment.

5. Long a proponent of constitutional reform in Rhode Island and secretary of the Dorrite constitutional convention in 1841, William H. Smith won election as secretary of state under the People's Constitution in 1842.

FROM J. GEORGE HARRIS

My Dear Sir—

Nashville July 15. 1845

Never in my life have I been so much perplexed as in making search for the causes of the non-arrival of Gen. Jackson's last letter to you. Every expedient except punishment has been resorted to in the hope of ascertaining from *Tom* how the letter failed to reach the Nash.

P. O.—the promise of protection, the offer of money, &c such and all have failed.

Since your letters to Nicholson & Jackson we have had frequent conferences.¹ Mr. J. has written a letter to Mr. N. as editor of the Union stating that it contained private matters which he ought not to advert to, but asserting and reasserting that it was written in a spirit of the utmost kindness with repeated assurances of his highest consideration, which letter I understand will appear with comments in the Union of Saturday, together with statements by the P. M. & his clerks that it is not probable the letter was ever deposited in the office.²

As you will have seen the Nash. Whig papers are *calling* for the letter—the whole letter—the Whig asserting that “the substance” alone will not suffice.³ All this goes to convince me that they or their *prompters* know something of its fate.

It may be that Lewis knew something of its character before it was sealed, and knows that it cast severe reflections on some of the late officers of government, but I know not how that can be for Mr. J. informs me that he was not at the Hermitage from the time that the Genl commenced writing it to the time that he sent it to the P. O. If then he did not know its contents before it was sent to the office, and the boy was faithful, how are we to account for this call from a whig source for the *whole* letter? I am sure that it is yet a *secret here* that it is lost—save our own little circle of confidence.

I was not at the Hermitage for ten days previous to the General's funeral, and know nothing of the persons who were there about the time of the writing of this letter, except Dr. Esselman who says he recollects all the facts as given by Mr. Jackson concerning the letter. Therefore all the information that I have been enabled to gather is upon the statements of others, and this has varied a little from time to time by the same witnesses. I have however given you *all*, that you might form your own judgment.

They (whigs) will attempt in the pending election to make capital out of it. They will call for the letter, and will have the hardihood to tell the people from “the stump” that it cannot be shown, intimating that it was never written—but I trust that they will be met by all the facts by our presses and speakers, leaving a fair and reasonable influence that a man who would publish *the private letter of a true friend after his death* which publication may injure his fame is not too good to connive at the offense which has arrested the letter referred to.⁴

We believe we shall carry both Governor and Legislature. The rumor here that the Government will accept of the 49th parallel as the

northern boundary of Oregon, is producing a good [...] ⁵ of sensation. Our people understand this [...] as involving an indisputable title to 54° 40', [...] do not believe the rumor to be true. They cannot be expected, however, to understand all the bearings of the question as well as our statesmen on the spot where the negotiation is going on.

I believe I have given you all the facts and reasonable inferences from them which have transpired since your letter of 28th ulto. ⁶ desiring me to make inquiries concerning the General's last letter; and if they have been of any service I am amply repaid.

J. GEO. HARRIS

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked private. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on July 22, 1845.

1. See Polk to A. O. P. Nicholson, June 28, 1845. Polk's letter to Andrew Jackson, Jr., of the same date has not been found.

2. The *Nashville Union* did not publish commentary by Andrew Jackson, Jr., or employees in the Nashville Post Office. A. O. P. Nicholson postponed and then abandoned intentions to publish such commentary. See A. O. P. Nicholson to Polk, July 13, 1845, and Polk to Nicholson, July 28, 1845. Leonard P. Cheatham served as postmaster of Nashville at the time.

3. Harris refers to a *Nashville Whig* editorial of July 15, 1845.

4. Harris' reference is to Lewis.

5. Words here and below obliterated by sealing wax oil.

6. Letter not found.

FROM CHARLES H. NELSON¹

Sir

New Echota Cass County Geo July 15, 1845

My location being remote from the sources of correct information in regard to our Foreign Relations, I have deemed it not improper to say to you, that I have looked on with the most intense interest, with the lights before me, to discover if I could what the result might be. The crisis is certainly at hand. If Texas adopts Annexation war may not issue, but if under the improper influences which are so publicly employed by two of the most powerful Foreign Powers operating alike upon their avarice and fears,² I doubt not but that they are alike appointed to stop & prevent what should be the course adopted by the government of the U.S. This grave question must present its self to your comprehensive mind. I of course expect no reply, only in your acts, but will say to you give us all the ills that flesh is heir to³ rather than yield one *hair of right* or one *scruple of Honor* gaining Texas & oragon or let it be said that the U.S. of America was. This expression is not founded in idle thought. You are aware that our Government has made many

severe Lurches since its existence but none so great as the one that brought you to the Chief Majesty, friends & foe view it is a miracle while the Balance of mankind sit in mute astonishment. The hand of Destiny is in this and points with unerring finger the path to pursue; our Destiny may be delayed but not stayed. All our habits are that of peace and in these pursuits we have made such rapid Strides to Greatness that other people view our success more as a dream than reality. Our Strides to greatness Exist but is not fully Comprehended by others, and I have to say wo, to the priviledged few who have so long fattened upon the wants of the many, wo, wo be that day when they force the Energys of our people from peace to war, Armed as we will be with our native resources and energys offering to the oppressed of other nations the common Gift of natures God and all the blessings we enjoy share & share alike. What patriotic heart that beats but what must throb for our Success, then with our hardy Legions armed with Justice we can rock a world to its center, if a world is combined against us.

As an earnest of what I say, I will add that on a thirty (30) days notice I can raise and have ready for Field Service from three (3) to (5) thousand mounted men and if I could be Equiped with one hundred (100) guns, say 4, 6, 9 & 12 pounders in proper proportions with Ammunition adding Small Arms we could find ready Transportation for our Guns Ammunition Bagage &c &c and be a formidable force for Good or Evil ready to *march to any point upon this Continent.*

References Major Genls Scott Jesup Wool & Armisted U S A.⁴ all the Ex Governors of Georgia but most expecially C. J. McDonald⁵ who I served last as well as all the Democratic Delegates in Congress from Georgia. These references are made without authority but with confidence.

C. H. NELSON

ALS. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on July 29, 1845.

1. Nelson served as a colonel in the Georgia militia during the Cherokee removal, and as a major general in Florida during the Seminole War.

2. Nelson probably refers to Great Britain and France's opposition to the United States' annexation of Texas.

3. Paraphrase of "The heartache and the thousand natural shocks That flesh is heir to." William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, act 3, scene 1, line 63.

4. Winfield Scott, Thomas S. Jesup, John E. Wool, and Walter K. Armistead. A Virginia native, Scott practiced law in Petersburg before his commission as a captain in the artillery in 1808. A decorated major general and popular hero at the conclusion of the War of 1812, Scott later supervised the removal of the Cherokees in 1838, encouraged arbitration to settle the Maine boundary

dispute of the same year, and commanded operations in the southern theater of the Mexican War, 1847–48. Nominated for president by the Whig party in 1852, he won promotion to lieutenant general in 1855 and retired six years later. A Virginia native, Jesup received commission as a lieutenant in the infantry in 1808; was wounded and decorated in the War of 1812; served as quartermaster general of the army from 1818 until his death in 1860; and was promoted to major general in 1828. A New York native, Wool received commission as a captain of the infantry in 1812; was wounded and decorated in the War of 1812; served as inspector general of the army from 1816 until his retirement; was promoted to brigadier general in 1841; was decorated for his service in the Mexican War, especially at the Battle of Buena Vista, where he was brevetted major general; and was promoted to major general in 1862. A Virginia native, Armistead graduated from West Point in 1803; served as a lieutenant colonel of the engineers in the War of 1812; became chief engineer of the army in 1818; and was brevetted brigadier general in 1828.

5. A Milledgeville lawyer, Charles J. McDonald held a number of state positions before serving one term as governor, 1839–43, and sitting as a justice on the state's highest court, 1855–59. A strict constructionist, he participated as delegate, vice-president, and president at the Nashville Convention of 1850.

FROM SHADRACH PENN, JR.¹

Dear Sir

St. Louis, July 15, 1845

My friends in this State feel greatly disappointed. They expected time to present their claims for the Post Office here, and other offices, but it has not been allowed, and they now regard themselves as repudiated by the Administration. This assertion has been made as to myself in the *Missourian*,² now under the control of J. B. Bowlin,³ over whom I have just obtained a signal victory with the Democratic party here. For sinister and vindictive purposes he took ground against running any of my friends for members of the Convention; and caused the *Missourian* to occupy the same position; but the ticket, as formed on Saturday night, embraces three of my ardent friends, and three other gentlemen, personally my friends, and opposed to the exclusive hard notions of Col. Benton.⁴ The *Missourian* said to-day that it thought the six candidates were *all* Liberal Democrats—and so they really are, as none of them will display any thing like *ultraism* in their course. My triumph over the Bowlin and Blair⁵ clique here is complete, and Bentonism is nearly extinct. Bowlin can never be re-elected to Congress, and Montgomery Blair could not be elected Constable in any ward in the city—yet they both pass for popular men in Washington! The appointment of Post Master here has weakened Bowlin, who was previously too feeble to maintain his position; and when the fact shall be announced to the

public that Bowlin has boasted of making Wimer⁶ Post Master, and induced him to turn out the son⁷ of Mrs. Linn⁸ who was acting as first clerk, the effect will be strong on the public mind. The general opinion is that Mrs. Linn should have received the appointment—and, so soon as it shall be known that her son, who, from a salary of \$1200, was partly supporting his mother and family, could not be permitted to retain a clerkship, indignation will run high against Wimer—and Bowlin, too, who has a brother now in the office—and may soon have a brother-in-law there. By and by, you will learn who those men are and how they stand. I think—indeed I know—you are striving in vain to satisfy the Benton Van Buren clique. They are strengthening themselves through appointments, whilst they are preparing for an assault upon your administration. Thus far they have obtained nearly all in many of the States, and the more they receive the better prepared they will be in their own estimation, for battle. They will recur to your appointments and offers as so many endorsements of their orthodoxy and how will it be practicable to combat such an argument? I said to you that you could not safely make Blair⁹ your organ, when we were on our way from Nashville to Louisville—and you found that remark true. I also remarked that nothing short of the control of the Administration would satisfy the Clique to which Blair belongs, and you will yet find that true. Indeed, I now doubt whether the direction of all appointments would make them your friends. They denounced your nomination, predicted a failure of your Administration, and said the members of the Baltimore Convention would be consigned to oblivion—and their pride of opinion and vindictiveness would prompt them to assail you, were you to concede hereafter all they might choose to ask. Do you not see the movements in progress for a revival of the *Globe*,¹⁰ and to obtain the public printing again for Rives¹¹ &c.—the building of Jackson Hall, Rives' speech embracing the letter of Gen Jackson, the laudation of Blair & Rives by the Ohio State Convention, at which Tappan¹² presided with other manifestations of the same sort? By continuing to feed such men, you are only pampering them for the fight for which they are openly preparing—and, in the time, those who zealously sustained your nomination and advocated annexation, are chilled and mortified by the preference shown for those who denounced both.

I learn from N. York that the Bentonian doctrines are, with the approbation of Van Buren to be made the party test. In Ohio that test has been made by the resolution of the State Convention, though the party there has been twice defeated, in consequence of contending for the prohibition of all banking—and defeat in both States may be

anticipated. I refer to this movement in connexion with that in favor of the Globe, as proof that the ultra Clique mean to force their views upon the party—that it is only scotched, not killed, and will try to rule or ruin the party. At Columbus, on the 4th, it was intended to obtain an expression in favor of Silas Wright for the succession, but it was successfully opposed on the ground that it would weaken the party at this October election. This I have from a reliable source in Ohio; and from the fact you can draw the proper inference upon the manner in which Blair & Rives were bedaubed on that occasion.

I wrote you from the Relay House on my return home, that none of your Secretaries would hold back, and fail to give me the advertising of their Departments, in compliance with your wishes, as expressed to them—and I was not in error on that point. The Secretary of the Navy¹³ has since been advertising in the *Missourian*, for beef & pork, &c. I now expect the same course will be pursued by the Treasury and Post Office Departments and the General Land Office.

I was) sincere in the views I expressed to you at Washington. I saw that you were in a crisis—that storm was gathering, and endeavored to point out the path of safety. It is now obvious that difficulties are thickening around you, that you are menaced from every quarter, and will probably be most fiercely assailed by that branch of the party for the conciliation of which you have made so many sacrifices. Do not think that this is the language of reproach or of anger. It is neither. I write in sorrow, not in anger. You have confided too much in that spirit of compromise and forbearance which should activate all good Democrats—you have been deceived as to men, and hence your appointments have been made, so as to exclude those who were most zealous and efficient in your support and place them in the position of a proscribed class. All this you will learn before the termination of the next session of Congress. I asked so little that I can very well afford to hear disappointment; but the effect of apparently casting off the great body of Annexationists, in a large portion of the States, cannot fail to be felt; and a fierce conflict is now inevitable in the next Congress. The men who set aside Van Buren will crush the Clique of Hunkers of which he is one, at all hazards, and the re-establishment of the Globe will not arrest their progress for an instant. This I know from public feeling in the West, and the information I have received from the East, North & South. If Blair & Rives are believed to be potent in Washington, rest assured that a very different opinion prevails throughout the Union. They had waxed fat upon the bounty of the party, and hung like an incubus upon the party until you threw them off. Then

they should have been treated as cast-offs, and they would have been powerless—but now they are strengthened and endorsed and by the aid of the Whigs may again obtain the printing of Congress; and to effect such an arrangement Col. Benton is probably prolonging his stay at his farm near Ashland, where he has been more than two months. He is not idle there—nor is he exclusively employed in regulating his farm. He is seen by nobody but Whigs, and a man is known by the company he keeps.

Texas is safe. Many of the Whigs will now yield on that question—and the disaffection of a few professed Democratic Senators would produce no result, other than is really desirable. But caution is necessary on the Oregon question. In the West, East, North & South the mass of the people will be satisfied with nothing short of the whole territory to the Russian line. They are for the policy avowed in your Inaugural, and the Monroe declaration of 1823 and trust that no compromise will be thought of.¹⁴ Should one be made, depend upon it, it will be attacked from every quarter. It will be better to hold back and submit the question to Congress, than to hazard the consequences of proposing or agreeing to any compromise whatever.

In reference to western feeling you probably place confidence in some men near you, and if so you will be misled. We are all for Oregon, and *all* Oregon in the West, *as well as in the South*, and Benton will go that figure.

I write you in haste, in unmeasured language, and do not copy my letter. I still desire the success of your Administration, and know its failure will certainly be followed by a desperate fight between the Hunkers and the Young Democracy, and the defeat of the party for many years. But, come what may, the proscriptive Hunkers will be vanquished. The bold men who achieved the late victory, will not be proscribed and trampled on by those who were crying “intrigue,” and “disloyalty to the Union” throughout the late momentous contest.

S. PENN, JR.

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked “*Private*.”

1. A newspaper editor and publisher, Penn began his career with the *Lexington American Statesman* and then published the *Louisville Public Advertiser* from 1818 until 1841. At the request of Thomas H. Benton in 1841 he moved to St. Louis, where he edited the *Missouri Reporter* until his death in 1846. Penn broke with Benton politically in November 1842. The *St. Louis Missourian* became Benton’s newspaper.

2. *St. Louis Missourian*.

3. A lawyer and resident of St. Louis, Mo., Bowlin served as a Democrat in the U.S. House from 1843 to 1851.

4. A strong supporter of Jackson and hard money, Thomas H. Benton represented Missouri in the U.S. Senate for thirty years.
5. Montgomery Blair, eldest son of Francis P. Blair, argued the Dred Scott case before the U.S. Supreme Court and later served as postmaster general under Abraham Lincoln.
6. John M. Wimer served as postmaster at St. Louis, Mo., from 1845 until 1850.
7. Not identified further.
8. Elizabeth Relfe Linn.
9. Founder and editor of the *Washington Globe* from 1830 until 1845, Francis P. Blair was one of the leading spokesman of the Jacksonian Democracy; his grudging support of the presidential ticket in 1844 led to his loss of political influence with the new administration and thus to his sale of the *Globe*.
10. *Washington Globe*.
11. John C. Rives shared the ownership of the *Washington Globe* with Francis P. Blair from 1833 until 1845. Rives reported congressional debates in the *Congressional Globe* for the period 1833 to 1864.
12. Penn's reference is to Benjamin Tappan.
13. George Bancroft.
14. Reference is to the Monroe Doctrine, first set forth in James Monroe's Annual Message to Congress of December 2, 1823.

FROM JOHN M. McCALLA

Sir.

2nd aud. office [July 16, 1845]

I have this moment received Col. Butlers reply to my letter, which I now enclose for your inspection, as I see nothing of a confidential character in it.¹ Please to let me have it again when you are done with it.

If I might be permitted to suggest one opinion, it would be the propriety and policy of promptly offering Col Butler a full mission. His weight in the democratic party is very great, and it would greatly strengthen your administration, to have the zealous support of his friends.

This however I submit to your better judgment.

JNO M. McCALLA

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed locally. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on July 16, 1845.

1. William O. Butler declined Polk's offer of the governorship of the Iowa Territory. Butler to McCalla, [July 10], 1845. DLC-JKP. Butler misdated his letter "June 11, 1845"; cancellation reads "July 10, 1845."

TO FRANKLIN H. ELMORE¹

My dear Sir.

Washington City July 17. 1845

Col De Treville² called on me a few days ago bearing a letter from yourself, several letters from distinguished citizens of South Carolina and a memorial numerously signed on the subject of the appointment of Collector of the Customs at Charleston.³

I was much pleased with Col De Treville whom I found to be a gentleman of intelligence, and liberal in his views. I had a long conversation with him on the subject of the collectorship, the substance of which he may have communicated to you. In the conversation I informed him that I would probably write to you and advise further with you before I made the appointment. I certainly can have no other desire, but to do what is proper in itself, and at the same time to satisfy my friends, *if* I can. At this distance and judging from the papers before me, there is great embarrassment in selecting either of the gentlemen named.⁴ Indeed I think it will be impossible to do so, without giving dissatisfaction to the friends of the other.

Immediately after the 4th March, a memorial from citizens of Charleston was presented to me which I showed to *Col De Treville*, urging the re-appointment of *Mr Pinckney* as an act of justice to him & to the Democracy of the City. Learning at that time that it was the wish of *Judge Huger*,⁵ and the other gentlemen of Congress from S.C. that *Mr Grayson* should not be removed I frankly informed one of them as I did *Mr Pinckney* himself that I would not remove *Mr Grayson* but would suffer him to serve out his time and at that time would decide upon the appointment I would make to fill the vacancy created by the expiration of the time. The time will expire on the 6th of August next, and at that time, the office will be vacant by operation of law, and must be filled either by the re-appointment of *Mr Grayson* for another term or of some other citizen. It will at that time be open alike to every citizen and I do not regard it as proscription of the present incumbent, nor any reflection upon him, if he should not be re-appointed. There is a wide difference between a *removal* & a failure to *re-appoint*. The law itself has limited the term & makes the distinction. I am not proscriptive in my feelings & because I am not regarded to be sufficiently so some complaints have been made in some parts of the Union.

And now my dear Sir: I desire to confer with you freely in regard to what is proper to be done, in the matter before me. *Mr Grayson* I know well and esteem him highly as a gentleman. With *Mr Pinckney* my personal relations were always good, during the time I was with

him in Congress. It is proper that I should state to you the facts as they have been presented to me since the 4th of March.

In the memorial in Mr Pinckneys behalf, it is stated among other things that "his (Mr Pinckneys) removal was one of the sacrifices made by Genl Harrison to the Whig party during his short term" x x x "And that when such men fell beneath the exercise of that political surgeon which seemed one of the attributes of Whig supremacy it seemed to us but justice, even handed justice, that when the cause for which they suffered is again triumphant, we should not in the hour of victory forget those who suffered when the battle was raging most wildly." A letter from a person in Charleston whom I do not know personally among other things states that "He was hardly seated in his office, when the Whig administration came into power and Mr Pinckney was without warning displaced because he was a Democrat and Mr Grayson superseded him because he was a Whig. Things are now changed & retributive justice demands that Mr Pinckney should be restored. Mr Grayson is a gentleman of capacity and character, but so is Mr Pinckney. Mr Grayson was appointed & Mr Pinckney displaced solely on political grounds. x x x It will not be removing a Whig from office, because he is a Whig but it will be restoring to office one who was displaced solely because he was a democrat."

These are a part of the representations which are made to me on paper. On the other hand it is represented to me from sources entitled to the highest credit that Mr Pinckney was not removed solely on political grounds. One of the letters now before me states that "When the present applicant Mr Pinckney was turned out of office it was not done entirely without cause. He was disaggreable in his official intercourse to the merchants and was thought by many to be deficient in those high moral qualities, which alone can secure the confidence of the public." I might add many other extracts from the papers before me, of like import. A second memorial in favor of Mr Pinckney was forwarded to me in June, exhibiting great feeling & showing that the memorialists were excited. Col De Treville laid before me a second memorial in favor of the re-appointment of Mr Grayson, signed by many of the leading men of [....]

[JAMES K. POLK]

L, fragment. DLC—JKP. Letter marked "*Private & Confidential.*"

1. Correspondent identified through content analysis; see Elmore to Polk, July 24, 1845. A South Carolina lawyer and Calhoun supporter, Elmore sat in the U.S. House, 1836–39; presided over the Bank of the State of South Carolina, 1839–50; and served briefly in the U.S. Senate in 1850.

2. A graduate of West Point and Charleston lawyer, Richard De Treville

served as a colonel in the state militia during the Mexican and Civil wars; sat two terms in the South Carolina lower house, 1830–32; served in the state senate from 1835 until 1854; represented his state as a Democratic presidential elector in 1844; and served as lieutenant governor, 1854–56.

3. Probably Polk refers to a letter from Francis W. Pickens to Richard De Treville, June 27, 1845. ALS. DLC–JKP. Polk's AE on the cover states that De Treville delivered this letter to him on July 14, 1845. No other letters or recommendations have been identified.

4. Henry L. Pinckney and William J. Grayson. Founder and one-time editor of the *Charleston Mercury*, Pinckney won election to several terms in the South Carolina legislature, 1816–32; sat for two terms in the U.S. House, 1833–37; served twice as mayor of Charleston, 1837–40; and headed the customs house in Charleston from 1840 until his removal in 1841. A Beaufort native and lawyer, Grayson served in the South Carolina House, 1813–15 and 1822–26, and Senate, 1826–31; sat two terms as a Whig in the U.S. House, 1833–37; and headed the customs house in Charleston from 1841 until 1853.

5. Daniel E. Huger, a Charleston lawyer, sat in the South Carolina House, 1804–19 and 1830, and served as a circuit court judge, 1819–30; in 1842 the state legislature chose him to complete the unexpired portion of John C. Calhoun's U.S. Senate term.

FROM ELIJAH F. PURDY¹

Respected Sir,

New York July 17th 1845

Just previous to the departure of General Armstrong² he suggested to me the name of A. Morrison Esquire³ recently of Nashville Tenn. as a suitable person to be appointed to office in the New York Custom House—the General adds in a note to me, that "*Mr. Morrison is well known to President Polk and has his confidence, has been true and zealous in the cause and is always reliable.*" Your Excellency may not be aware that the patronage under my immediate control is limited to five Clerkships and all of these places in the surveyors office are *now* filled by persons *now* claiming to be friends of the Administration and who were appointed under the Administration of Mr Tyler; under this state of things I have thought it advisable to allow matters to remain pretty much as I found them in regard to appointments to office, until all the principal officers of the Government in this City had been selected, that having been completed it is my wish & intention to act in accordance with the views of the President, and if it is not inconsistent with your judgement you would confer a favour by intimating to me your feelings as to the propriety of changing persons holding office under the Government. Our friends here are expecting that a very general change will take place. My connection with the Republican

party, has been, and is now, of such a nature that my office is much resorted to by our friends to obtain information on the point above referred to. *The object of this note is purely one of enquiring and is of the most confidential character.* The case of Mr Morrison is a strong one, and I shall take great pleasure in aiding him, if President Polk will intimate his pleasure, it *shall* be attended to *promptly*. The pressure for office is immense and from what I know of the Collector,⁴ I have reason to believe that it is his intention to act in harmony with the other heads of departments here, with whom, so far as I am aware, there is the best feeling. That we should all know the feelings and views of our distinguished head, you will not fail to perceive is highly desirable to the end that union of action may characterise all the movements of the Administration in the great City of New York. My friendship for you personally and the interest I feel for the honor of your administration & the prosperity of the Country prompts me to address you in a spirit of freedom and candor, *promising the most rigid secrecy.*

ELIJAH F. PURDY

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City, marked “*Confidential.*” Polk’s AE on the cover reads “Elijah F. Purdy Surveyor of the Port of N. York asks my advice in regard to removals from office. *Private* J. Knox Walker will answer this letter Rec’d 18th July 1845.” Subsequently endorsed in another hand, “Answered 19 July 1845. (See copy answer herewith.)”

1. A wealthy New York banker and powerful figure in Tammany Hall, Purdy served as acting mayor of New York in 1841 and later sat for three terms as president of the Board of Supervisors; Polk appointed him surveyor of revenue for the port of New York in 1845.

2. Robert Armstrong served as Nashville’s postmaster from 1829 until March 1845, when he was appointed U.S. consul at Liverpool. One of Polk’s closest political friends, he managed Polk’s three gubernatorial campaigns and coordinated his presidential bid in Tennessee.

3. Andrew Morrison secured appointment as a measurer in the New York City Customs House.

4. Purdy’s reference is to Cornelius W. Lawrence. Formerly a member of the U.S. House, 1833–34, and mayor of New York City, 1834–37, Lawrence served as collector of customs at New York from 1845 until 1849.

TO ROMULUS M. SAUNDERS¹

My Dear Sir:

Washington City July 17th 1845

In a conversation which I held with you shortly after the adjournment of Congress, I intimated my intention to invite you as soon as the state of the public service would make it proper to accept a Foreign Mission. This was done voluntarily on my part and without solicitation

from yourself. As some delay has taken place, it is proper for me to say that it is still my intention as soon as I can do so with propriety, to tender to you either the mission to Spain or some other of equal grade. I desire to make other appointments in our diplomatic service at the same time. I may do so soon or I may postpone it until about the meeting of Congress, so that the Ministers appointed may go abroad having first obtained the confirmation of the Senate. It is unnecessary that I should explain the causes of the delay, which has taken place in making the changes which I contemplate.

My object in writing now is simply to state to you my intentions in reference to yourself & to learn from you whether such a service would be agreeable to you.

JAMES K. POLK

P.S. In the event of your appointment & acceptance I take occasion to say that I would be pleased to appoint Mr Washington Greenhow² of Richmond, Secretary of legation, if he will be acceptable to you. He is a Gentleman, highly recommended by Mr Mason³ & others as being eminently qualified for such a post. He understands the French & Spanish languages and as I am informed possesses general information in relation to our Foreign affairs. Some assurances have been given to Mr Greenhow that he would be appointed if agreeable to the Minister. J.K.P.

L. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Raleigh.

1. A lawyer active in North Carolina politics since 1815, Saunders lost his bid for the governorship in 1840; having previously served three terms in the U.S. House, 1821–27, he returned to that body and served two more terms, 1841–45. On February 24, 1846, Polk nominated Saunders to be minister to Spain; confirmed the following day, he served in that post through the remainder of Polk's term.

2. Appointed by Polk to the consulship at Buenos Aires in March 1847, Washington Greenhow declined the office.

3. John Y. Mason served as a member of the U.S. House, 1831–37; U.S. district judge for the Eastern District of Virginia, 1837–44; secretary of the navy, 1844–45 and 1846–49; and U.S. attorney general, 1845–46.

TO SILAS WRIGHT, JR.

My dear Sir.

Washington City July 17. 1845

I received on yesterday your letter of the 12th inst. in answer to mine of the 8th inst. In view of the information which you give me and the difficulties in my own mind in making a proper selection to

the important post at St Petersburg, I now incline to the opinion that I may postpone the appointment for some time, perhaps until near the meeting of Congress.

I thought it proper when I wrote to you to make the appointment immediately: it is however not indispensable and it is at all events proper to postpone it until my mind is fully satisfied. In the meantime should any further suggestions occur to you I shall be pleased to receive them.

I hope to have the pleasure soon to receive your promised letter on other matters. The thousand rumors which float about the streets of Washington and to which you allude I assure you make not the slightest impression on my mind. The experience of the last four months, if nothing else had done so, has taught me to place no reliance upon any thing I hear unless it comes well authenticated. The swarm of interested office seekers who have visited the Capitol since the 4th of March are the very worst sources from which to derive true information. Many of them of course fail to get office, become dissatisfied and then show their selfishness and want of patriotism by unfounded complaints. Some of them go further and indulge in open abuse of the President, giving out false rumors as to his motives and conduct. These rumors soon find their way through the tribe of Pensioned letter writers stationed here in the Northern and other papers.

These things I cannot fail to see: though I preserve my equanimity and treat them with the indifference which they deserve. I wish I could have a full & frank conversation with you. I am sure it would be as satisfactory to both as were the many interviews which we had in former times on public affairs. I shall preserve the even tenor of my way, always remembering the favorite maxim of the great & good *Jackson*, which he often repeated, with his peculiar emphasis in the latter part of his life viz "Take principle for your guide & the public good your aim, and leave the rest to God, and to the country."¹ If the democratic party can remain united they constitute the majority in the country, and their principles & policy, will continue in the ascendant, at least during our day. That Union can only be preserved upon our principles. It shall be my purpose, by every proper means to preserve it during my administration and I shall be fully rewarded, if at the same time that the public interests are protected, I can hand over the Government to a successor of my own political creed. Compared with a great object like this, how insignificant & unimportant are the squabbles, between excited aspirants for the offices within the gift of the Executive. I am sure that you will concur with me in these

views & that I shall be sustained by the sober & patriotic sense of the country.

JAMES K. POLK

L. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Albany, N.Y., and marked as “*Private and confidential.*”

1. Quotation not identified.

FROM GEORGE J. ABBOT¹

Sir:

Washington July 18th 1845

I have the honor to transmit a report of the Studies of Master M. T. Polk,² and his progress in them, during the four and half months that he has been under my care.

He has had daily Exercises in Writing, History, Arithmetic, Latin and recently a daily lesson in Greek, Recitations three times a week in French to M. Charbon,³ and frequent Exercises in Reading, Spelling, Declaration, Geography, Written lessons from Latin into English and recently from English into Latin, averaging in all about forty Exercises each week.

At the Recitations in Arithmetic, much use is made of the Black board as a means of testing the power of the pupil to perform and explain his work. In Geography, in addition to the use of the Text book & Atlas, the pupils are required to point out on outline maps, prepared for the purpose, the situation of all places mentioned in the Lesson.

With their Classical Studies I endeavour as far as possible to connect the History and Antiquities of the Ancients.

Master Marshall has devoted nearly two hours each day to Arithmetic, as he was somewhat backward in that branch.

In Latin he has made good progress. During the last four and half months he has read Jacob's Latin Reader and five books of Caesar, which is about twice as much as boys usually read in the same time. His lessons in Latin are accompanied by a lesson in Grammar, and a short written Translation.

His Deportment has been uniformly correct, his Application to his Studies and progress therein highly creditable.

If he continues to have good health, and gives the same attention to his studies as heretofore, should he still be continued under my care, I hope, in a year from the present time, to have him well prepared for the Collegiate Institution for which he is intended.⁴

GEORGE J. ABBOT

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed locally.

1. A teacher at the Western Academy in Washington City, Abbot is not identified further.
2. Reference is to Polk's nephew and ward, Marshall Tate Polk, Jr., who was appointed to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1848 and was graduated in 1852 with the rank of second lieutenant.
3. Not identified further.
4. Georgetown College. See Marshall Tate Polk, Jr., to Polk, June 21, 1845.

FROM CHARLES A. DAVIS¹

London July 18, 1845

Writing from London, Davis provides lengthy commentary on the "orderly" character of English society and emphasizes the "abundant Evidence of accumulated power and Wealth." He discusses reaction to Polk's assertion that the United States' claim to Oregon is "clear and unquestionable," and notes that he finds many English citizens, including members of Parliament, "lamentably uninformed" about the full context of Polk's remarks. Davis asserts that he has attempted to explain the administration's commitment to the nation's treaty obligations in Oregon.² In addition, he lauds Polk's support for repayment of state debts owed to British investors.³

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. A New York City merchant and a director of the Bank of the State of New York, Davis is not identified further.
2. Polk notes in his inaugural address that "every obligation imposed by treaty or conventional stipulations should be sacredly respected." James D. Richardson, ed., *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1902* (10 vols.; Washington, D.C.: Bureau of National Literature and Art, 1903), IV, p. 381.
3. Polk's inaugural address included the following passage on the question of defalcation of state debts: "Although the Government of the Union is neither in a legal nor a moral sense bound for the debts of the States, and it would be a violation of our compact of union to assume them, yet we can not but feel a deep interest in seeing all the States meet their public liabilities and pay off their just debts at the earliest practicable period." Richardson, ed., *Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1902*, IV, p. 378.

FROM DANIEL GRAHAM¹

Dear Sir,

Near Nashville 18 July 1845

The Texas matter seems to be moving on rapidly and successfully, but there is still much cause for vigilance. Houston² has been with us for a month and left here last monday to visit his friends in East Tennessee, thence to Texas by way of South Alabama. He seemed

more rational in all his movements than formerly, but was evidently less at ease that might be expected of a man in the position which he ought to occupy. My own unaided inferences were that he was labouring under an apprehension, that his *coquetting* with Victoria,³ as he termed it, had perhaps been carried farther than he would now wish and having become satisfied of the public feeling on annexation in Texas, he had no desire to be there during the agitation of the question there this summer. In his private conversations with me he did not voluntarily give such explicit declarations of his individual predilections as might have been expected, and in his Barbecue speech he was unusually cautious in putting forward what he alleged to be the public sentiment there rather than an unequivocal committal of himself. Since he left there he had been elected a member of their convention but he told me that he did not intend to serve. He apprehends that the question will be embarrassed at Washington next winter by British influence which he believes will be put forth with earnestness & power. Our democratic candidates are endeavouring to make strength out of the necessity of electing men who will elect a successor to Foster friendly to the admission of the Texas Senators & Representative and who will instruct Jarnagin⁴ to do so.

Our old acquaintance Wm. B. Lewis has taken his own case to heart more dolorously than I expected, and in his continued publication of Genl Jackson's private letters, has "run the thing into the ground" worse & worse. The publication of the one in which the Gen speaks feelingly of the transfer of the Globe,⁵ cannot be excused on any ground of propriety and has met with universal reprehension by the democratic party, whilst it affords much gratification to the Generals' un-friends. I have had no interview with Lewis myself but I have learned that he said a few days ago, that a large number of the Gens' letters would be published by Blair. Doubtless something on the subject was spoken of between them before Lewis left Washington, but I deem it to be impossible that Blair can be so lost to all sense of common decency as to avail himself of the control which he has over the paper in such way as to authorise the publication of any letter of the character of that published by Lewis in the Whig.⁶ I understand that Andrew & Mrs Jackson⁷ are exceedingly hurt at Lewis' conduct and at an interview between Andrew & Lewis, the latter had declared that he would abstain from like conduct in future. I had thought that Blair had finally gone into the transfer of the Globe, if not cordially, yet with decent acquiescence, and on that account I regretted to see our Union⁸ here associating him & Lewis as co-workers, but an opinion

prevails amongst many of our friends here that they had jointly embarked in a scheme of employing their talents, time, & means towards the embarrassment & injury of the administration. The object of the last letter was to show that the Gen was putting the cold shoulder to you, and almost censuring you for desiring another organ than the *Globe* or *Blair*. My present impression is that Lewis is repenting of his course and will abandon it, and I cannot entertain the belief that Blair is such a fool as to think that he can effect any thing to his own advantage or to the prejudice of others. It is unfortunate that the Gens last letter to you has not been received, yet I doubt whether you could have published much of it: for altho, as I understand, it was chiefly upon public matters yet it gave the names of individuals as connected with foul transactions. It is freely stated here that Senator Cameron of Penna. & Secretary Walker of Mississippi are the persons whose names are suppressed in Lewis letter for [...] ⁹ as objectionable purchasers of the *Globe*.

This leaves us in usual health, my own has been very good all summer, my wife ¹⁰ seems sometimes to be better than when in town, but at other times complaining. Our corn crop is very fine—the cotton patch indifferent. I commenced making a turnpike road through my land last week (part of the Penetentiary turnpike) and broke stone on a pile today until I made my hand sore & stiff. I hear from your part of Mississippi that the cotton is not so large as it was at the same period last year, but that the crop promises to be good.

DANIEL GRAHAM

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked “Private.”

1. A resident of Murfreesboro, Daniel Graham became Tennessee’s secretary of state in 1818 and served until 1830; in 1836 he moved to the post of state comptroller and served seven years.

2. Sam Houston.

3. On June 28, 1845, Houston spoke at a barbecue given in his honor at the Nashville Race Course. Press accounts recorded his having replied to criticism of his “coquetry” in courting Great Britain in order to make the United States jealous enough to annex Texas. *Nashville Union*, July 12, 1845.

4. Spencer Jarnagin studied law under Hugh L. White and practiced in Knoxville from 1817 to 1837, when he moved to Athens, McMinn County. A Whig presidential elector in 1840, he failed to win election to the U.S. Senate in 1841 but two years later achieved his goal and served in that body from 1843 until defeated for reelection in 1847.

5. *Washington Globe*.

6. *Nashville Whig*.

7. Reference is to Andrew Jackson, Jr., and his wife, Sarah Yorke Jackson.

8. *Nashville Union*.

9. Word or words obliterated by a tear in the manuscript.
10. Maria Graham is not identified further.

FROM ARNOLD S. HARRIS¹

Dr Sir

Liverpool July 18th 1845

Thinking it would not be uninteresting to you to hear how your old friend the Genl.² was and how we were all getting along I will trespass on your time a few moments.

We arrived safe after a very pleasant and agreeable passage in the Great Western. The Genl. was greeted here in the handsomest manner imaginable by all the leading men. The *American* Chamber of commerce waited upon him in a body—a very flattering speech was made to him by their President to which he for himself and for his Government made a suitable reply. In all respects his reception has been most gratifying and complimentary and I think you may safely rest assured that *every body* here is not only pleased but delighted with the appointment.

As to the Genl.—if you could see him it would remind you of the Post Office at Nashville. The duties are plain and simple, and he seemed to settle down to them as if he had allways been a consul. I think he will be well pleased with the situation—the only drawback is the enormous expense of living here—to live here in any kind of style costs about three times as much as the same style would in our country, and these fellows here—the princely merchants live like eastern Nabobs. It will require good management to get along—avoid their great extravagances and at the same time be perfectly respectable.

The Genl. and myself went to London for a couple of days—saw Mr. Everett³ visited the House of Lords and Commons—our Congress and Senate is superior—certainly as a body though they have a few great men among them. Mr. McLanes appt.⁴ is hailed with great satisfaction here and I doubt not he will be able to do as much as any man that could be sent. He left an excellent reputation in this country—decidedly the appointment was *the best* you could have made.

I expect to return as soon as September hoping before that time to complete some arrangements for an extensive business between New Orleans and Liverpool. James⁵ will return with me or perhaps before.

I enclose to you a circular⁶ which the Genl. issued on the receipt of the sad news of the Old Heros⁷ death. He sent one to Mr. Everett who highly approved of it and issued one similar to all consuls in the Kingdom. The request was complied with here by every vessel in Port.

The Gen—Miss Bettie⁸ & James beg to be kindly remembered to you & Mrs. Polk.

A. HARRIS

ALS. DLC—JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City.

1. Arnold S. Harris, a resident of Arkansas, was Robert Armstrong's son-in-law.

2. Robert Armstrong.

3. A Unitarian clergyman, Edward Everett served five terms as an Independent in the U.S. House, 1825–35; won election as governor of Massachusetts in 1835 with the backing of Whigs and Anti-Masons; went to the Court of St. James in 1841 as U.S. minister and remained in that post until 1845; returned to the United States and was chosen president of Harvard College in 1846; served as secretary of state under Millard Fillmore, 1852–53; won a seat in the U.S. Senate in 1853; and ran as the vice-presidential candidate with John Bell on the Constitutional-Union ticket in 1860.

4. A lawyer and Democrat, Louis McLane served five terms in the U.S. House, 1817–27, before winning election to the U.S. Senate in 1827. He served twice as minister to Great Britain, 1829–31 and 1845–46; as secretary of the Treasury, 1831–33; and as secretary of state, 1833–34. After his resignation from the Cabinet, McLane became president of the Morris Canal and Banking Company in New York; in 1837, he moved to Baltimore to become president of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company.

5. Harris' reference is to James T. Armstrong, nephew of Robert Armstrong.

6. Enclosure not found.

7. Andrew Jackson.

8. Reference is to Elizabeth Armstrong, Robert Armstrong's daughter.

FROM J. GEORGE HARRIS

My Dear Sir, Nashville Te July 19. 1845

One thing I forgot to mention. You know that from the time you left Nashville up to the middle of April you were too much employed to write to Gen. Jackson, and that his principal Wash. correspondents during that time were W. B. Lewis and Mr. Blair.

Not hearing to the contrary the General very naturally believed all that was told him by Lewis, receiving erroneous impressions from those in whom he had reposed confidence—Lewis especially, somewhat calculated to affect his judgment. Attempts were made to create in his mind a prejudice against you if possible, as I am induced to believe and thus may we account for the impulsive & unguarded letter from the General to Lewis referring to your private letter to Armstrong.¹

I am satisfied of this, from conversations held with young Jackson.²

J. GEO. HARRIS

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. Polk's letter has not been found.
2. Andrew Jackson, Jr.

FROM WILLIAM R. RUCKER¹

Dear Colo.

Murfreesboro. 20th July 1845

I received your favor of the 27th ultimo² and have delayed answering it because I have not yet made arrangements for the proposed visit of my Daughter Johanna to Washington. I have not been able to sell my cotton crop without making as I conceive so great a sacrifice. If we can raise the funds & find suitable company we will send her to your & Sarah's³ kindly proffered care in a few weeks. It is probable some of our Merchants will visit the East for goods with their ladies before long and will afford a suitable opportunity for Johanna to accompany them.

You have no doubt seen the Wars between Governor Jones & Gentry⁴ in the news papers. Gentry drove Jones from the field but Jones & his friends have brought out a young man of our County by the name of Nelson⁵ quite a "Score Expecter"⁶ in Public Speaking and in political information. The Candidates spoke here on last Monday when Gentry gave the Governor a heavy flagelation for the part he has taken against him. Gentry I have no doubt will be elected by a large majority. I hope we have some chance for the election of Avent⁷ and Smith⁸ to the Legislature in this County, but of this there is considerable doubt. Brown⁹ will get the full democratic strength of the County and there are some Whigs, who will not vote for Foster. It is generally believed here that Brown will be elected but I have some doubts my self about it. There appears to be too much apathy among the Democrats and the Whigs are still well organized.

We are all in usual health.

Give my best respects, to Sarah.

W. R. RUCKER

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. A Murfreesboro physician, Rucker married Susan Childress, sister of Sarah Childress Polk.
2. Polk's letter has not been found.
3. Sarah Childress Polk.
4. James C. Jones and Meredith P. Gentry. A Wilson County farmer and one-term member of the Tennessee House, 1839–41, Jones defeated Polk in the Tennessee gubernatorial elections of 1841 and 1843. In 1850, Jones moved to Shelby County and became president of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad.

He won election as a Whig to one term in the U.S. Senate, 1851–57; following the collapse of the Whig party in 1854, he joined the Democrats and supported James Buchanan for the presidency in 1856. A member of the Williamson County bar, Gentry served as a Whig in the Tennessee House, 1835–39, and won election to several terms in the U.S. House, 1839–43 and 1845–53. He ran unsuccessfully for governor in 1853 on the American party ticket.

5. A Rutherford County Whig, Charles L. Nelson ran unsuccessfully for the U.S. House in 1845.

6. Quotation not identified.

7. Reference is probably to James M. Avent, a Murfreesboro attorney and unsuccessful Democratic candidate for the Tennessee House in 1845.

8. Not identified further.

9. Aaron V. Brown.

FROM JOHN B. CONNOR¹

My dear Sir

Albany July 21st 1845

Strongly attached & devoted as I been to the success of the Democratic Party & the permanent establishment of its principles, I feel an interest in every thing which can in the least reflect our position or show the tendency of official influence upon our countrys welfare.

We went into power by the mighty effort & energies of the young men of New York: thro them, the fatal incubus then hanging over our party was dissipated, your nomination was relieved from the efforts made here, by those who aspired to a leadership among us, to fasten upon it the fortunes of broken down political hacks, those who in 1837, arrayed themselves against the Prest & the People & were overthrown & discarded.

One of that number has ever since been the cain with the brand upon his forehead—so great has been the repugnance of the masses to him that even last autumn, when we were to assemble in this city to ratify our county & state nominations, he prevailed upon some inexperienced young men who had the matter in charge to have his name inserted as the presiding officer of that meeting; within six hours from the time this fact was made public, a committee had to be deputed to inform him that the masses would never consent to the arrangement & that the harmony of the party required that his name should be erased & it was accordingly done.

That man has been selected from the entire democracy of this great state to represent them in your cabinet, William L. Marcy,² a kind neighbor & worthy citizen, but an unfortunate, indiscreet broken down politician.

He came here a few weeks since & an effort was made to procure

signers to a letter tendering him a dinner, a letter signed by some 25 names in & about the city & country in the neighborhood after a constant unremitting effort of eleven days & then several had their names withdrawn when it was understood that object was to indorse a political character.

You Sir have been solicited to requite an Irishman born, with an office, in consideration of the immense political service he rendered during the campaign—his application was responded to by many of both sections of our party, what said your Secy of War to some of our Citizens, why, that the Prest had determined to appoint no foreigner to a consulship—that he (Gov Marcy) despised the efforts of the young & radical democrats—he wanted none of their aid or favor.

Sir take a tithe of the Irish vote from our majority in this state & you had been defeated—had not Gov Marcy been prevented from getting in to our State Gubernatorial Convention, his counsels might have prevailed with some & you had been defeated. No sir it was the young men, the enemies of unworthy money making politicians who saved you, these very young radicals.

The times are changing to a fearful extent & those removed from a constant communion with & among the masses, *the voters!* Know not where they stand.

A fearful overwhelming outbreak may be expected as soon as the convention question is disposed of—& we entreat you Sir not to permit your favor & popularity to be engulfed in the ruins which must surround us, if the efforts of our most active men are despised—if the signal services & devotion of our Irish vote are treated with contempt—if the young growing democracy, who do the work are insulted, by any who can pretend to reflect your views. I repeat Sir under this aspect of things you must not & will not be astonished to find a large portion of the Democracy “starting business on their own hooks”³—unwilling [to] bear the spanish character.

JOHN B. CONNOR

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. Not identified further.
2. A lawyer and New York politician, Marcy served as state comptroller, 1823–29; associate justice of the New York Supreme Court, 1829–31; U.S. senator, 1831–32; Democratic governor of New York for three terms, 1833–39; secretary of war in the Polk administration, 1845–49; and secretary of state, 1853–57.
3. Quotation not identified further.

FROM AMOS KENDALL¹

Dear Sir, Washington July 21st 1845

Some time since, I expressed to you the opinion that Mr. C. P. Sengstack of this city ought, in case of a change, to be appointed Commissioner of Public Buildings. That opinion was based as well upon what I believed to be the general wish of the *working* Democracy of this District, as upon my own knowledge of his private integrity, competent talents, requisite qualifications and unbending Democracy. What may have occurred to make his appointment improper or inexpedient, I know not, but a general impression is abroad that he will not receive it. If the appointment cannot be given to him or any other Mechanic of respectable standing in the District, I do not know of any one I should prefer to George Plitt Esq. who tells me he is a candidate provided Mr. Sengstack is out of the question. For several years I was essentially aided in the administration of the Post Office Department by his skill, fidelity and industry as Special Agent. Grateful for the services rendered by him to the country and to me, and knowing his capacity to discharge the duties of commissioner in the most respectable manner to the government and the public, I should be much gratified to see him placed in a situation of so much honor and trust, the profits of which are not undesirable, as he has heretofore accumulated nothing in the public service.

For further evidence in relation to the character and talents of Mr. Plitt, I take the liberty of referring you to the Secretary of State² who is well acquainted with him.

AMOS KENDALL

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed locally and marked as "Present By Geo. Plitt Esq."

1. A newspaperman and member of Andrew Jackson's "Kitchen Cabinet," Kendall served as postmaster general from 1833 until 1840. In 1842 he edited a Washington biweekly, *Kendall's Expositor*. The following year, he issued a prospectus for a biography of Andrew Jackson, but never finished it. In 1844 Polk engaged Kendall to draft his inaugural address.

2. James Buchanan.

FROM JAMES WALKER

Dear Sir, Nashville, July 21. 1845

I have been here a week, waiting the return of Mathew Watson¹ from the Mammoth Cave with whom I wish to make an arrangement

to extinguish my debt to the Planters Bank, which is all the debt of consequence that I owe. He returned on yesterday and I have some slight prospect of accomplishing what I wish.

Wm B. Lewis's conduct in publishing the confidential letters of Genl Jackson has incurred the displeasure of all honorable men here. I had an interview with him, in which he plainly showed regret—said he had done what he had done under excited feelings and supposed wrongs. Spoke of the letter written to the McMinnville Gazette, charged that Laughlin was the writer & that if so he had shewn it to you. I told him that there was no evidence that Laughlin was the writer and even if he was, it was not at all probable he would show you or that you would take time to read such a letter. He then complained of the injury done to his character in the letter you wrote to Genl Armstrong² and that was shewn to Genl Jackson. I replied to this that it depended entirely what expressions were used whether he had a right to complain of that letter & what you were reported to have said on that subject. Not having seen the letter nor heard the precise language used I could form no judgement on that subject. I presumed you simply said & meant that his near relationship to a Foreign minister,³ might endanger government secrets—and that this you might have said without making any charge against his character. That it might well happen that with the best intentions of fidelity to the government of his own country any man might unintentionally say things in the presence of the husband of his only & beloved child, that ought not to be communicated. As a Father I could appreciate the danger of such positions &c. He looks haggard & dispirited. He is the only person injured by his publication. A Jackson Jr. called to see me on the day I had the interview with Lewis. He condemns Lewis's conduct decidedly—said he ought to have shewn me the letter—he said he knew who were the persons mentioned (Lewis had told him). I understood him to inform me that the first was Cameron, the second myself. He expressed regret and mortification, and said that he was sure Genl Jackson had been deceived by false statements—that about that time he had received many letters, with a request to burn, when he had read them. That he was under the impression that you were about to sign paper, as principal or security for \$100,000 for the Globe establishment, from which he wished you dissuaded. It is manifest that his mind was diseased with his body and that his old attachment to Blair, prevented him from judging correctly of the existing state of things and caused him to do injustice to others, as long-time & true friends. Lewis admits that my name never was mentioned in connection with the purchase of the Globe office, or with the

administration organ in any way. This being so, he has been guilty of an outrage in publishing a letter in which it was used in an unkind manner, and as he knew upon false information. But the only sensible course I can pursue is to let this thing pass for what it is worth. Mortifying as it is, I can do myself no good by further stirring it. If Cameron is let alone, he will be a firm supporter of your administration. The manner of his election is to be regretted but why throw him into the oppositions when a majority in the Senate is so important. But I suppose Lewis's object in this breach of confidence was to sour Cameron & John Bell⁴—like to reach you through me. *It is himself that has received the blow.* I wrote to Knox⁵ a few days ago giving particulars of my interview with him which you can see if you wish.

Mr. Pickett⁶ has been up from New Orleans about 10 days. He is very restless. Knox wrote to him just before you were indisposed, that you would write to him in two days. He anxiously expected a letter from you, but received none & does not know exactly what to be at. He has in a small, safe way done a successful years business—and given the House much reputation & what they have made is clear & without loss or draw backs.

Knox informed Mr. Pickett & myself that you would forward his commission immediately after the August election, and he has accordingly arranged his business & business of the House to go abroad without much delay. In this matter every thing is complete, except an agreement to take in Henry C Walker⁷ as a third partner in case Pickett goes abroad. Walker is only thought of as a partner in the New Orleans house. In case Mr. Pickett goes abroad, it is a matter of much importance to take in Henry C Walker. In the first place he is a first rate book keeper & accountant—cautious with some capital. By taking him in the agency of the Union Bank & Insurance office worth some \$1500 or 2000 can be certainly retained. Walker is aware, and all parties concerned are aware, that if Pickett does not go abroad, he would be a surplus partner—his qualifications & Pickett's being precisely of the same character. Sam,⁸ being far the best salesman & out door partner of the concern. Taking this view of the matter, Walker wishes Pickett's position to be positively fixed before he actually enters into the partnership—and declines the arrangement until it is so. Sam & Pickett would be willing to go into it in full confidence of the appointment being made but, it would not be prudent to give Walker all the reasons for this confidence. So the matter now stands, and you will see the importance to Sam & Pickett of doing whatever you intend to do for them without delay. If you make the appointment immediately

(as I hope you will) it cannot reach here before the Tennessee election is over.

I do not believe that this thing would have affected your popularity at any time—but surely there is no longer reason for delay especially when delay is so injurious to those whose interests you wish to promote, as far as is proper. They would prefer the Marsailles agency, and seem to understand that that is the position settled upon. It seems to me that according to Republican & *rotation* principles Beasley⁹ has had the consulship at Havre long enough. I understand he has been consul at Havre 28 years & was consul elsewhere 10 years previously—has married a French wife & must have lost his American feelings, at least the Democratic character of them. If he was actually removed & his place filled, there could be no question *as to him* with his friends in the Senate. He would be out any how, and the cut would be defended upon the doctrine of rotation, and the only question would be as to the fitness of his successor. I mention these things because it is possible you may not like to remove Denby¹⁰ from the Naval agency at Marsailles without giving him something else. How would it do to make him Consul at Havre, if he is a man of the right stripe? But of these things you know best. The newspapers say that the Consulship at Rio has been given to Gorham Parks¹¹—if this is so, I supposed you had made up your mind to give Mr. Pickett the Marsailles agency.

I think our prospect is best to carry the Tennessee election. But the people remain calm & unexcited which renders it difficult to form correct opinions. Our chances are better for the Legislature than for Governor—they have good hopes here of electing Hickman to the House. A great many Whigs swear they will vote for him, if he is a Democrat. The matter will now soon be determined.

JAMES WALKER

ALS. Polk Memorial Association, Columbia. Addressed to Washington City.

1. An officer of the Planters Bank of Nashville, Mathew Watson is not identified further.

2. Polk's letter to Robert Armstrong has not been found. See Armstrong to Polk, April 7, 1845.

3. Walker's reference is to the marriage of Lewis' daughter, Mary Ann Lewis to Alphonse Joseph Yves Pageot, the French Minister to the United States.

4. A lawyer from Franklin, John Bell served a partial terms as Speaker of the U.S. House, 1834–35, but lost his bid for reelection as Speaker to Polk in the next Congress; in 1836 he headed Hugh Lawson White's presidential campaign in Tennessee and subsequently became one of the state's most powerful Whigs. He served in the U.S. House from 1827 until 1841 and in the U.S. Senate from 1847 until 1859. In 1860 he ran unsuccessfully for president at the head of the Constitutional Union ticket.

5. Joseph Knox Walker.
6. William S. Pickett and Samuel P. Walker operated a cotton brokerage firm in New Orleans and Memphis; Pickett married James Walker's daughter, Mary Eliza, in 1842.
7. Not identified further.
8. A lawyer and businessman from Memphis, Samuel P. Walker was Polk's nephew and eldest son of James and Jane Maria Polk Walker.
9. Reuben G. Beasley served in the consulship at Le Havre, France, from 1816 until his death in 1847.
10. A Richmond merchant, Nathaniel Denby served as temporary navy agent at Marseilles, 1844–45.
11. A lawyer from Bangor, Maine, Parks won election to two terms in the U.S. House, 1833–37; served three years as U.S. marshal for the Maine district, 1838–41, and two years as U.S. attorney, 1843–45. Polk appointed Parks U.S. consul at Rio de Janeiro in 1845, and he served in that post for four years.

FROM SILAS WRIGHT, JR.

My Dear Sir

Albany 21 July 1845

Having a few moments, this evening, and being on a start to the Country, in the morning, I improve them to acknowledge your acceptable favor of the 17th and to redeem very briefly the promise made to you in my last.¹

The democratic party of this state is not united, as you have had too much occasion to learn, before this day. It is not, however, so much divided as appearances, at a distance, may indicate, although the division between those who have held prominent places in the party is extensive. It is rather a difference among the officers than the men, the leaders than the members of the party. And yet no division in a political party was ever less about men, or more exclusively about principles and measures. There is, as you and I have had the strongest occasion to know, a pervading thirst for office among our population. It prevails alike with each political party, and is constantly increasing. It has, within your time and mine, extended to very large and quite numerous classes, who never thought of living by office, in the early days of the Republic. This, to much the greatest extent, is a mere passion for office, and a wish to live out of public patronage, very much regardless of principles or measures. The men who make up their minds to join this class, very soon make office seeking a business, and enter into it very much with the same spirit with which the broker commences to gamble in stocks. They become the "bulls and bears" of the political parties, and care not who loses, if they win. Of course they are the

men who make the most noise; who assume to lead, and to hold influence; who praise the most freely, or condemn the most positively; and who change men, and parties, and measures, according to the prospects of the political stock market. These men are injurious to all parties, to all administrations, and to all magistrates charged with the dispensation of public patronage. We have our full share of them in this state, and yet my experience and observation, for the last twelve years, has pretty well satisfied me that we have but about our share and that our sister states, upon the average, are about as well stocked as ourselves with this class of politician.

The power and influence of these men vary materially, at different periods, and under different circumstances. When there are no great national questions, or questions of deep principle, to awaken and interest the whole public mind, they often become almost, or altogether, Comptrolling. When, however, principles and measures occupy the public mind of a state, or of the Country, they govern the movements of the masses, and not the clamors or the intrigues of the office seeking class.

This last is rapidly coming to be, or rather, in my judgment, has come to be, the condition of the people and of political affairs, in this state, and I do not think I have ever seen a time, when there was less anxiety as to the men who shall hold office, merely for the sake of the man, while there is a keen sensitiveness about appointments as they affect measures and principles, and the influences which are to act upon the progress of these measures and principles.

Two great points of principle now occupy the commanding positions in the eyes and the minds of the freemen of this state. The first in importance and interest is the question of our public debt. Its final payment at the earliest practicable period, and a constitutional limitation upon the power of the legislature to contract public debt, for the future, effective and stringent in its provisions, are the objects sought by the agitation upon this point. The second is a more effectual organization of our system of corporate credits, and here I think one great and simple principle will alone satisfy the feeling already awakened and rousing itself to action. That principle is unlimited individual liability upon all corporators, as it now rests upon natural persons. Many minor points, especially in reference to incorporations for banking, will of course be suggested and discussed, but this is the great step demanded, and which, I have not a single doubt, must and will be fully taken, before any party can retain power in this State. Equally certain is it, in my judgement, that the limitation of the legislative power to contract public debts, and the policy of paying, within the shortest

period, the debt which exists, must be, the one perfectly secured, and the other unresistingly yielded to, equally as a condition of holding power in the hands of any party.

These are the points upon which our division line in the democratic party in this state is run, and it is not influenced at all by men, but by these questions of principle. Years have been expended already, in endeavors to accomplish these great objects through legislative action, preparing the way for the action of the people. The differences of opinion in our own party upon the questions has prevented the accomplishment of these efforts, and, at last, a convention is to be called. I was one among the number, who hoped, to the last, that this necessity would be avoided. Others in whom, and in whose judgements, I possessed every confidence, had surrendered hope, and been openly for a convention for years. They had been more immediately connected with the affairs of the State than I had, and were better qualified to judge than I was. Still I thought them mistaken. I am now, and was before the adjournment of our Legislature, well satisfied that the mistake was mine and not theirs. They had constantly contended that there was a portion of our party, not formidable in numbers, but truly powerful in wealth, experience, and active energy, determinately and unyieldingly opposed to these reforms, and who would sooner leave our party, or break it down, than surrender these points. To a general remark, our bankers are the strength of this interest, both as to its wealth, its influence and its energy, but they have auxiliaries in the most of them whose business it is to make profit from the meriade of public debt.

Our more recent banking system, called our free banks, have almost necessarily connected these two questions, because it requires public stock to constitute Bank Capital, and now admits none but the stocks of this state.² If we pay our debt, this system of banking must substantially cease in the state, unless, as we have done heretofore, while we pay one dollar upon our existing debt, we contract a debt of two dollars upon 4 new ones.

The Bankers too will loose their business, if public debt gets out of fashion and banking will cease to be the attractive business it is, when every stockholder, director, and officer of a bank shall be made liable as joint partners for all the notes and liabilities of the Bank. When their business shall cease to be carried on, and its mad hazzards taken, at the risk of the whole public, and shall be at the risk of those who engage in it, and at their risk alone, as much as trade in merchandize is, the public and private losses resulting from it will cease, because those gambling hazzards will not be taken. All the charm

which formerly surrounded banking, and induced the belief that it was a business of that patriotic character, which made it just that the public should take all the risks, and that the bankers should derive all the profits, is forever broken, in this state,³ and I am as certain that these reforms will be effected, before the public mind surrenders them as the leading questions of our politics, as that our institutions will continue.

As I have before said, these questions absorb the ordinary interest as to men, and there is much less than usual care as to what man, if he be sound upon these points, holds any given place. If he be not sound upon these points, and the place be one, which may and probably will exact an influence upon these questions, the appointment cannot be made acceptable, come from what source it may, and be the man's other qualifications ever so perfect. This I have had occasion to learn from my own short experience, and to observe from your acts. I have fallen under censure, because I have selected men not believed to be sound upon these questions, though unexceptionable otherwise, and even when the place could add little, if any thing, to the influence of the Citizen. It was not this which constituted the ground of the complaint, but it was the doubtful light in which such selections placed my fidelity.

So with yourself. I will mention a single case. The Collectorship of the port of New York. The removal of Mr. Van Ness⁴ was demanded by a feeling like that which demands political changes, as he was not considered as placed in that office by the democracy of the state, or to serve them, or he having served them, but because he had used his best efforts to thwart their wishes. Mr Coddington⁵ was recommended because he had been a sound democrat, and because he was believed to be sound upon the great questions of principle of which I have spoken, and not because he was Mr. Coddington. There were scores of men in the City, who, so far as political feeling was involved, would have been equally acceptable. There were however few men thought to be so well qualified as Mr. Coddington to manage that difficult and complicated department. When you passed by him and took Mr. Lawrence,⁶ you took a man identified with the bank interest, and not considered sound upon these great questions, and therefore your selection was not popular, although Mr. Lawrence is a worthy, honest, clever man, and personally, I doubt not, has as many friends as Mr. Coddington. This appointment has had another and worse affect upon yourself. It is considered as indicating your preference upon these great questions, and as ranging you on the side of the Bank interest.

This point would not assume the importance it does, as you are not in or of the State, were it not that this policy with us at home, and the

policy of the Independent Treasury with the Federal Government, are, in the minds of the mass of our democracy, held to be identical; and the hearts of our people are no more set upon these reforms at home, than they are upon that reform in the affairs of our National finances.

I have not more time, or I should go farther. Yet I am sure your time will not allow you to read a longer letter than this is, and as I hope I have presented the questions which control our affairs here, and which color the medium through which your acts are seen, so that you will clearly see what it is that makes our division, so far as we have one, and what it is that raises up distrust towards you, so far as you hear of it, I will close, at least for the present.

I have written for your own eye alone, and without any wish other than to give you information which I hope may be useful, and which cannot fail, I think, to help you to understand us, and our affairs, and our opinions and feelings better than you could without it, and which I hope will exempt us from the suspicion that a mere scramble about offices and men govern us. If I shall, undesignedly, in saying what I have, [have] made use of any remark not entirely friendly, I beg you to be assured that it is the remark of haste and not of intention.

I do not desire, by this long letter, to impose upon you the labour of a reply, for it calls for none. If you shall have patience to read it, and can do so, and shall believe that it is well intended, you will have done all I do, or have a right to ask. Still it will afford me pleasure, at all times, to hear from you, and to give you so far as I may be able, true information as to our condition.

SILAS WRIGHT

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked "*Private and Confidential.*"

1. Only a fragment of Wright's July 12, 1845, letter to Polk exists.
2. Here Wright cancelled the words "and the United States."
3. During the War of 1812 numerous "patriotic" banks were organized with a view of aiding the war effort through the purchase of government stock.
4. Born in Kinderhook, N.Y., Cornelius P. Van Ness moved to Vermont where he served in the state legislature, 1818-20; presided as chief justice of the state supreme court, 1821-22; served three terms as governor, 1823-26; went to Spain in 1830 as U.S. minister during Andrew Jackson's administration; and served as collector of customs at New York City from 1844 until 1845.
5. A New York City merchant, Jonathan I. Coddington had been postmaster of that city since 1836. He lost the mayoral election in 1844 to James Harper, the Native American candidate. Silas Wright, Jr., and Martin Van Buren supported Coddington as Van Ness' replacement.
6. Cornelius W. Lawrence.

FROM DANIEL T. JENKS¹

My Dear Sir

Philadelphia July 22nd 1845

I again take up my pen for the purpose of addressing you & giving you correct information. Nothing can be more objectionable, than the worldly spirit manifested by the candidates *aspiring* to the nominations of office and nothing in my opinion does more harm, than the drinking of toasts, that are calculated to blot out of existence the Polk Administration, by making it appear in the public eye, that every day between this and 48 the Polk Administration is going out of existence.

I beseech your Excellency as your sincere friend to put an *immediate stop* to the *combinations* of the men, who are not only waiting for your place, but have actively commenced throwing a shadow, over your administration; the annexed article² breathes the right spirit and ought to be countenanced in some decided manner by your Excellency. If at this early day, the democracy of the Union is to be told that a single term, has been *fixed upon by the party, or the sentiment is to be passed by without a rebuke*, then there will be no strength in your Administration. Indeed there will be no Polk Administration. All eyes of the office holders as well as office seekers, will be turned to the succeeding candidate & the President will cease to be an object of interest. Hence some of the papers say that the secretary of Treasury is the person, so says the New York Herald.

In addition to the toast about the *single term*, I find further of the papers forming one of the aspirants for 48 speak in the warmest terms of your Excellency's Administration not running in 48, while the editor, who writes this, has a brother as Inspector of the customs here, & a son in the post office of Phila.

Now I think as the Whigs will put up their best man for 48, we must have our best man, one who, has already showed his strength, & who can run best in the coming contest. But if the *succession men* are to *surround* the President & get their friends into office, at the expence of your personal friends every where, and keep their Presses teeming with laudations upon the *single term* & thanking the present victor who holds the executive chair, for going in for a *single term*, he will long before 48, be lost sight of for the next great Presidential battle.

It is therefore with the view of keeping up a Polk Administration that the article cut from the American Sentinal into this letter, was prepared for that Journal. It was pened by one who sees as far into the future, as any other public man in this country. I send it to your Excellency because I am your most sincere friend, and desire to see the

Polk Administration not wither away amid the blight of the succession, and that too by supporting the suckers *of the succession*, instead of its own natural shoots. The rivals for the succession are getting *themselves inoculated*, upon the Polk stock, and thus cast into the shade, the Polk administration, and bring the successions fruit only into notice; you must stop the attempts at Presidential inoculation. One of your most prominent office holders of this city, is paveing the way, is very clearly to be seen for Silas Wright, for the succession, one would think he would go for sustaining you, he did say when you was nominated that you could not be elected, his name I'll not mention in letter reserve it for my next.

I am clear of opinion that it will be necessary for you to run a second time, although you have said that you would not be a candidate for a reelection. If your friends say so you must submit, however this is between ourselves. I have written hastily to say I watch every movement, I am waiting to hear if Colonel Barton³ has returned to Washington, him with yourself. I want to know the different movements for the succession and carefully to note down what I write to you, which you will find to be pretty correct.

DANIEL T. JENKS

P.S. Any communication you may make to me for information shall be kept strictly confidential, I have been waited on to give you other information of an other movement if you write direct No 26th north 8th Street.

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. An ardent Democrat and former party worker in Bucks County, Penn., Jenks moved to Philadelphia in 1845 and secured an appointment as a clerk in the customs house in 1847.

2. Enclosure not found.

3. A New Orleans lawyer, Seth Barton served as solicitor of the Treasury from 1845 until his resignation in 1847.

TO CHARLES MANLY

Sir:

Washington City 22nd. July 1845

I have had the honour to receive your letter¹ informing me on behalf of the Board of Trustees of the University of North Carolina, that at the late annual Commencement of that Institution, they had "unanimously conferred upon me the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws." The honour conferred I beg to assure you was most unexpected, and is highly appreciated by me. You inform me "that no Diploma issues for

this Degree except when it is specially desired by the recipient." If it be not inconvenient to your Board to issue a Diploma, I shall be highly gratified to receive one.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS. NcU. Addressed to Raleigh.

1. See Charles Manly to Polk, July 8, 1845.

TO SAMUEL A. MULLEDY¹

Sir:

Washington 22nd July 1845

I have had the honour to receive your note² inviting me on behalf of the President and Faculty of Georgetown College, to attend the annual Commencement of this Institution on the 24th Instant, and to "Preside at the usual distribution of prizes and Premiums." It will give me pleasure to be present, though I must ask to be permitted to decline to preside on the occasion.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS. DGU. Addressed locally.

1. Samuel A. Mulledy served briefly as president of Georgetown College from January to September, 1845.
2. See Samuel A. Mulledy to Polk, July 15, 1845. ALS. DLC-JKP.

FROM ROMULUS M. SAUNDERS

My dear Sir,

Raleigh July 22d 45

I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of yr letter (private) of the 17th inst, in which you do me the favor to renew the intimation given me, when last I had the pleasure of seeing you, of your intentions, at some suitable period to tender me the acceptance of some foreign mission, either that to Spain or some other of equal grade. I thank you very sincerely for this mark of confidence, the more valued, as the appointment, if conferred, will be of your own free offering, alike honorable to me and gratifying as I have reason to believe to many of our mutual friends in this State.

As you desire me to say, whether such a service would be agreeable to me, I am frank to say, there are private considerations which would render a change of scene and of occupation particularly desirable to me, and I shall feel highly flattered, if it should comport with your views to engage me in our Diplomatic corps, anxious as I am for the success of your administration in every branch of the public service. And without presuming to interfere with any arrangement you may have

in contemplation, you will pardon me for suggesting that certain family considerations might render a residence at Berlin more agreeable, than at Madrid, tho' you will of course consult what you may consider as especially due the public interest.

In respect to the time of making the appointments to which you contemplate, I should have thought it both proper and respectful to await the meeting of Congress, unless in cases of pressing emergency, but for the appropriations made at the close of the last session. Those would seem to imply that a change in our diplomatic agents was not only expected, but called for. It would then become a mere personal question, and whilst I should myself feel very reluctant to leave the Country without a confirmation, if I anticipated the remotest difficulty, yet as I should feel no fears of that kind, I deem it not indelicate to add, in the event of my employment, it would be made agreeable to me to leave early in the fall. But this is a matter on which you are much more competent to decide & I beg you will not consider me as at all impatient. As to the Secretary,¹ it so happens the young gentleman to whom you refer is one of my friends, his selection of course would be entirely acceptable to me.

R. M. SAUNDERS

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Published in Elizabeth Gregory McPherson, ed., "Unpublished Letters from North Carolinians to Polk," *NCHR*, XVI (October, 1939), pp. 441-42.

1. Washington Greenhow.

FROM FRANKLIN H. ELMORE

Sand Hills
Near Columbia, S.C. July 24, 1845

Elmore notes that he received Polk's letter of July 17, and adds that he will reply "in the same spirit of frankness & personal friendship" on the subject of the collectorship at Charleston. While expressing a preference for retention of the incumbent, William J. Grayson, Elmore claims that he had not wished to take an active role in the appointment and therefore had declined to sign a memorial supporting the application of Henry L. Pinckney. He portrays Grayson as "a clear headed man of business, & one of the utmost courtesy in his official department," and declares that his retention as collector would "do most to meet the public wishes." Complying with Polk's request to furnish the names of others qualified for the collectorship, Elmore suggests several individuals as satisfactory alternatives to Grayson and Pinckney. However, he reiterates his support for the incumbent and, answering charges that Grayson owed his office to Whig influence, asserts that Grayson never committed an act "to aid them, or that shows his adoption of the Whig creed." Elmore concludes

that "nothing will give me more satisfaction than aiding you in coming to those just conclusions for which I know you are aiming."

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

FROM CHARLES FLETCHER

Mr President Grand Rapids Michigan July 24. 1845

I beg leave again respectfully to petition your excellency in favor of the Atlantic & Pacific Rail Road.

I took the liberty to write to you¹ on the subject from Geneva where I was detained by the afflicting death of my son in law since which I have journeyed slowly to this place in company with my family with very little fatigue having travelled a thousand miles from New York & the whole distance (except 70 miles) by steam boat & rail road. I am now about one third of the way from the Atlantic to the Pacific, about 1700 miles from the other side of the lake will reach the navigable broad waters of the Columbia: when we reflect that it is only a few years since any of us saw a railroad & now the length of rail roads in the United States is computed to be above five thousand miles and wherever the railroads are built the cars run & the little villages cluster around in thick succession. Here a few years ago the Indian built his wigwam undisturbed by the voice of the white man & this wide waste of wilderness was appropriated to the support of a few wandering savages; now smiling industry has made the wilderness to blossom as the rose and a thousand civilized inhabitants are fed from the rich soil which lately supplied but a scanty subsistence to one wild man of the woods.

For the rapid extention of civilization we are much indebted to the genius of Fulton,² he was an ardent lover of Democratic liberty & wrote much in its favor but the power of steam which was brought into action by his genius has far outstriped his writings and is carrying democratic liberty to the outermost parts of the earth.

But a few years more, by the fostering care of governments, this steam power will be tugging the loaded cars over the rocky barriers which seem to divide the shores of the Atlantic from the borders of the Pacific.

The newspapers talk about fortifying the lakes against the power of England. If this rail road be made, the power of England will be broken and the Canadas will solicit of their own accord to be admitted into the Union. England may use her navy on the Atlantic but the commerce of America will be on the Pacific and the whole Pacific Ocean will be

under the control of America; there will be but two great powers the Emperor of China & the president of the United States. England will loose the rich commerce of India & will gradually sink in the scale of nations.

The principle is now conceded by congress & the nation that “new states may be admitted into the Union” whether they are contained within the area of that tract of country ceded to the United States by Great Britain at the peace of '83 or beyond it & this the Canadas & California & the Hudson Bay Co. may each or all be admitted in turn or time.

But the great art of England now will be to defeat any more annexation and to prevent the United States having any more territory on the Pacific. She will try to build up a seperate government on that shore; already we see it announced in the newspapers that a new & independent Republic will be likely to be established on the Pacific and great exertions will be made by those opposed to American interests to impress the belief upon the people of the East that California & Oregon are too far off to be under the government of the United States. Let this rail road be finished and all their arguments will vanish as the distance will be performed from the Pacific to lake Michigan in ten days & from lake Michigan to New York, Boston & Washington City all in the space of five days—the route to Washington being from Buffalo to Geneva, thence up the lake to Port Jefferson, through the valley of the Susquehannah to Harrisburg & Washington City.

Besides the quick expedition of the rail road communication there will be a telegraphic connection with the capital & Astoria and the President can send an order to the mouth of the columbia river after breakfast & receive an answer before dinner. These are not mere chimeras—the inventions are already made and there is only wanting the power of government to assist individual enterprise to put them in use.

In addition to this I shall see those towns springing up along the line which I have beheld in vision in each of which the temples of the Most High God will be created and the devout followers of the Savior will be able to assemble to perform Christian worship according to their several tenets & the promise of the Lord will be heard from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof. The scalping knife & the tomahawk will be buried & the murderous rifle will be laid aside and all will unite under the Prince of Peace bound together by the common ties of Democratic liberty.

CHAS FLETCHER

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. See Charles Fletcher to Polk, July 8, 1845.
2. Fletcher's reference is to Robert Fulton, inventor and developer of the first commercially-successful steamboat.

FROM HARVEY M. WATTERSON¹

Dear Sir—

Beech Grove. July 24th 1845

I have just returned home, after an electioneering tour of some two weeks in Warren and DeKalb counties. Our friends in DeKalb are very sanguine, that they will be able to elect Col Floyd² to the House of Representatives. I have no doubt of it myself, unless there is treachery on the part of my opponent and the *few* Democrats who will support him, which I do not anticipate. I told all my leading friends in that county, to throw all their strength into the contest for the House, and to pay not the slightest attention to my election—that *I was safe without a vote in DeKalb*—that my majority in the other counties would be about two thousand, &c &c.

On the day before yesterday I heard Brown & Foster address the people at Sparta. It is enough to say that Brown made a very able speech, completely demolishing Capt Foster upon the Tariff and Texas. If he is not elected, it will be for the reason that truth can not be made to penetrate Tennessee Whiggery. But it seems to me that he must be elected—it can't be otherwise. The Democracy are confident of victory.

Sam Turney's election is certain. Minnis³ has about an equal chance with Mitchell.⁴ I have ever had the fullest confidence that Frierson⁵ will be elected in Bedford.

Upon a careful survey of the whole ground, my judgment is, that we will elect our governor and a majority to the Legislature.

Long life to you and a successful administration is the prayer of . . .

H. M. WATTERSON

ALS. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. A lawyer and the founding editor of the Shelbyville *Western Freeman*, Watterson served one term in the Tennessee House, 1835–37, and two terms in the U.S. House, 1839–43. Elected to one term in the Tennessee Senate, 1845–47, he presided over that body as its Speaker. From 1847 until 1851, he edited the *Nashville Union*; in 1851 he became editor of the *Washington Union*.

2. William Floyd, an Alexandria merchant, served as a colonel in the militia of DeKalb County.

3. A Democrat and lawyer, John A. Minnis won election to two terms in the Tennessee Senate, 1847–49 and 1859–61.

4. Reference is to Jabez G. Mitchell. A White County farmer and president

of the Sparta branch of the Bank of Tennessee, Mitchell served two terms as a Whig in the Tennessee House, 1845–49.

5. Erwin J. Frierson studied law in Polk's office in Columbia and later practiced law in Shelbyville. He served as attorney general for the Eighth Judicial Circuit, 1827–36, and represented Bedford County in the Tennessee House, 1845–47.

FROM ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Dear Sir, Consulate U States
Liverpool 26 July 1845

You will recollect a Conversation we had on the subject of the Fiscal agency of the United States in this Country.

As I then observed to you and as I now feel more strongly than ever, a great injustice was perpetrated by Genl. Harrison and Mr. Webster in the removal of the Messrs Rothchilds from that Agency and giving it to the Barings without any cause being assigned.¹ The only reason for it that I ever knew or heard of is that the House of Baring &c and all their branches both in Europe and America are and always have been the bitterest and most uncompromising opponents of the Democratic party that are to be found. In New York for instance Prime, Ward & King all whigs from top to bottom, and it was through them and Webster (Bates of Boston is a member of the firm in London) that it was brought about.²

It is not my design to aske for the agency myself, but to aske for Your private authority to look about and if as good a House can be had—in all respects as *safe* and *respectable*, That I may be instructed to ascertain if a change would not only be adviseable, but advantageous to our Government—and inform you.

I shall in no way compromise any one or at all interfere in the matter without your full permission and Instructions on the Subject.

The only interest I feel personally in the matter is as I explained to you that my position here would be much improved and perhaps made more valuable to me by having the authority to *attend* to a matter of so much Importance. I am geting on very well, and am rather better pleased than I expected. I have written to the Honbl Cave Johnson³ on the Subject of a mail arrangement Between the two Countrys and a Mail Marine—it is a subject of vast Importance and if carried out properly will do him and the administration infinite Credit with the whole world; it is well worth his most serious attention.

I have seen Lewis publication. Hall Eaton⁴ &c have no doubt made him believe that he could influence the Elections in Tennessee; he

never controled a vote in his life, was always the most unpopular man in the state. If he goes for Foster and the whigs he is at Home and in his proper position.

Mr. McLean⁵ is expected in the next steamer due 29th Inst.

With my best respects to Mrs P. Mr. & Mrs. Walker.⁶

R. ARMSTRONG

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked “*Private.*”

1. Taking advantage of Baring Brothers and Company’s close association with Nicholas Biddle during the struggle between Andrew Jackson and the Second Bank of the United States, Rothchilds replaced Barings in 1834 as the official bankers of the United States in Europe. In 1843 the government’s official account went back to Barings.

2. Edward Prime, Samuel Ward, James G. King, Daniel Webster, and Joshua Bates. Prime, Ward, and King, together with Denning Duer and A. Gracie King, shared partnership in the Wall Street banking concern known as Prime, Ward, and King. Bates, a native of Boston, became a partner of Baring Brothers and Co. in 1828 and remained with firm until his death in 1864.

3. One of Polk’s closest friends and political allies, Cave Johnson practiced law in Clarksville and served seven terms in the U.S. House as a Democrat, 1829–37 and 1839–45. Polk appointed him postmaster general in 1845.

4. Allen A. Hall and John H. Eaton. A strong supporter of Andrew Jackson, Eaton resigned his Senate seat in 1829 to become secretary of war in Jackson’s cabinet. Washington society’s refusal to accept Eaton’s second wife, Peggy O’Neale, led to his resignation two years later. Eaton received appointment as governor of Florida Territory, 1834–35, and then as U.S. minister to Spain, 1836–40.

5. Louis McLane

6. Sarah C. Polk and J. Knox and Augusta Tabb Walker. Knox and Augusta Walker were married in Lynchburg, Va., on December 2, 1841.

FROM THOMAS B. DRINKER¹

My dear Sir.

Cincinnati July 26. 1845

Upon my return this evening from an absence of several days on business in the country, I learn through a channel believed to be worthy of some credence, that a statement has been *privately* made for *public use* at Washington, emanating from this place, that I had been making arrangements with S. Penn Jr of the St Louis Reporter to establish a Paper here for the purpose of sustaining Gen Cass² for the succession to the Presidency. As I have recently yielded to the most urgent desires of a large portion of the Democracy here & consented to remain here and edit a paper to be called “The Ohio Union” designed to be *the Organ of the Party* here—and have within a few days sent

a Prospectus to Mr Ritchie—I deem it due to myself to the Paper I am about to start and to the Democracy at home, to give an unqualified denial of the whole statement. There has been some talk here of bringing Mr Penn here. I have always opposed any movement of the kind except upon these conditions—1st that the difference between Penn & Benton should first be reconciled or at all events that Penn should entirely abandon his denunciations of Benton: and secondly—that he must have the entire approval of yourself in the movement & the complete endorsement & backing of your Administration. This position I deffined to him in Washington to the Hon R. J. Walker, Cave Johnson and James Shields³—and these were I think the only persons connected with your administration to whom I spoke of the matter & It is possible they may recollect the substance of my remarks. I know nothing of Mr Penn’s feelings in regard to Gen Cass. For myself I have no choice. I opposed Gen Cass & his friends and received no small share of their denunciation during the last canvass of nomination to the Presidency. I supposed but a *few months* will pass before I *shall receive a second edition* for I shall decidedly oppose & condemn any movement in favor of any move for the succession—for at least eighteen months or two years hence. My position & the Position of “The Ohio Union” will be to support your administration first & last, leaving time and events to point out your successors, holding myself prepared for any emergency. And should the aspirants to the Presidency & their peculiar friends produce another controversy in the Party like that of 1844,⁴ I shall oppose them all and prefer a re-enactment of the Convention of ’44 with the same result and the same man. This is all I can with propriety say to you in your present position namely declining a candidacy for a second Term.

I hailed your nomination as the harbinger of peace in the Party upon the Presidential question for 8 years. I regretted the necessity or policy which dictated your letter declining a second term—tho’ I admitted its wisdom at the time and approved the motives which prompted it. I am opposed to the one Term principle as it is called and herein I am compelled to differ with you. I regard the history of Gen Jackson’s first & second Terms as complete answer to all the arguments which he or any one else has addressed in favor of it.

These opinions I have repeated & openly avowed both at home & at Washington—and I rarely change an opinion once formed upon deliberation & publickly avowed. The first & second numbers of the Ohio Union will be clear & explicit upon these and other important points. I have nothing to conceal, because I have no sinister purposes to accomplish. In assuming the position I am about to take, I have felt it both

my duty & my pleasure to be open & frank. You will be at liberty to use this letter in any way at your discretion.

T. B. DRINKER

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. Founding editor of the pro-expansionist Cincinnati *Ohio Union*, Drinker is not identified further.

2. Lewis Cass, presidential nominee of the Democracy in 1848, served as governor of the Michigan Territory, 1813–31; U.S. secretary of war, 1831–36; U.S. minister to France, 1836–42; U.S. senator from Michigan, 1845–48 and 1851–57; and U.S. secretary of state, 1857–60.

3. An Irish-born lawyer from Kaskaskia, Ill., James Shields held a number of state offices, including a place on the Illinois Supreme Court in 1843. He served as commissioner of the General Land Office, 1845–47; as a general officer in the volunteers during the Mexican War; as governor of the Oregon Territory, 1848–49; and as a U.S. senator, 1849–55. Shields removed to Minnesota and won election to a partial term in the U.S. Senate from that state, 1858–59; he commanded a regiment of Union volunteers in the Civil War.

4. Reference is to the factional conflicts at the Democratic National Convention of 1844. Democratic leaders supported for the party's presidential nomination included John C. Calhoun, Lewis Cass, Richard M. Johnson, John Tyler, and Martin Van Buren.

TO ANDREW J. DONELSON

My Dear Sir:

Washington City 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 merits the approbation of your Government, as it must that of the country. You repeat your request 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 affected. 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....

JAMES K. POLK

ALS. DLC-AJD. Addressed to Texas and marked "Private."

TO ROBERT ARMSTRONG

My dear Sir

Washington City 28 July 1845

My time has been so constantly occupied in the discharge of my daily duties, that I have omitted until now to write to you as I desired to have done by the last two steamers, and even now I cannot write so fully as I could wish. Since you left the country our great & good friend has gone the way of all the earth. No death has occurred in our time, which has made as deep impression upon the whole country without distinction of party as the death of Genl Jackson. My prediction in my Valedictory address when I retired from the office of Governor of Tennessee in 1841 has been and is being verified. You may not remember it. It was in substance that if the living would not, posterity would do full justice to his fame & his memory. Since his death the tongue of slander has been silenced and already we witness many of those who were his calumniators & defamers while he lived now the loudest in his praise. There is one matter of little consequence in itself, but still it may be of some importance to me, to which I wish to call your attention. Since his death, *Wm B. Lewis* in violation of all propriety has published in the Nashville Whig papers extracts of private letters, which had doubtless been drawn from the General, by the insinuating & false representations made to him by *Lewis* himself, by which *Lewis*, with the assistance of *Hall & Barrow* are laboring to make the public believe that I was guilty of a great outrage to the General, when I dismissed *Lewis* from office and that in consequence of that act and the change of the *Globe* I had lost his confidence. You know how false and absurd such an insinuation is. I received many letters from Gen Jackson, after these occurrences took place, all breathing the warmest friendship, personal & political and such as I am proud to have enjoyed from my youth to the hour of his death. His last letter which reached me was written on the 26th of May. The last which he ever wrote to any one was to me on the 6th of June, but two days before his death. By some *mysterious* accident this last letter never reached me. I have its substance from his Son Andrew Jackson Jr. These letters I cannot of course publish, without following the unjustifiable (not to use a harsher term) example of *Lewis*, in publishing extracts from *his private letters after his death*. In one of the extracts published, you are referred to not by name but

as the gentleman to whom I had written, informing him of my reason for removing Lewis. If I can lay my hands on them I will send you all the papers containing the extracts, which he has published. Now *My dear Sir* I desire that you will furnish me with a statement of your intercourse with Gen Jackson upon this & all other subjects relating to myself either personally or politically up to the period you left Tennessee. From your intimacy with him & the unbounded confidence which he reposed in you, you know perhaps better than any man living how false the insinuation is that I had lost in any degree either his confidence or his friendship. I wish you to state his feelings of friendship for me as expressed to you and especially whether the removal of Lewis or the change of the Globe had effected any change in his opinions or friendship towards me. Is it not too bad that such poor creatures as Lewis, now that the venerable man sleeps in his grave and cannot rise to rebuke him, should attempt to practice so gross a fraud upon the country. The contemptible effort which *Lewis Barrow Hall* & a few others of like character is to bring the might of Gen Jackson's great name & popularity to bear against my administration. It has as far as I learn produced no effects; still I desire if it should here after be necessary to be in possession of the facts within your knowledge to be used if need be. Circumstances may arise to make it necessary to publish your answer. Your statement if you choose may be addressed to *Nicholson Dr Robertson*¹ or some other at Nashville and enclosed open to me. It will not be used unless necessary, but if necessary it will be published. You may think I attach too much importance to this matter and perhaps I do; still after having defended the Generals former private & public character during my whole life, and having possessed as I know I did his confidence and warm friendship to the latest hour of his life, it is unpleasant to have even an insinuation made to the contrary, however unfounded. Gen. McCalla has voluntarily sent to me a letter to him received from the *Rev Mr Mathews*² of Ky who visited the Genl some time in April, from which the following is an extract: viz—"I asked General Jackson if he knew the reasons why the President removed Maj Lewis from office. His reply was I do not know and then added, I presume the President had sufficient reasons in his own mind which satisfied him. In the same conversation the General repeated more than once the remark, I have confidence in the honesty & judgment of Col Polk. He always deliberates well upon his conduct."

This extract I will not use because I will not submit to the humiliation of using the statements of strangers who were casual visitors at the Hermitage. Your knowledge must be much more full & minute. If therefore you see nothing wrong in it I wish you to address a letter

say to Dr Robertson containing a full statement of all the facts within your knowledge.

Though I have written in great haste, I have already extended this letter to so great a length that I can add but little upon other subjects of interest in the country. My administration is progressing quietly & with as few objections to it as I anticipated. On last evening I received official despatches from Maj Donelson conveying the gratifying intelligence that the *convention* of Texas did on the 4th of July pass an ordinance with but one dissenting vote accepting the terms of annexation proposed by the United States. The single dissenting member afterwards signed the ordinance. This great event is thus happily consummated. I think there need be but little apprehension of War with Mexico. If however she shall be mad enough to make war, we are prepared to meet her. Genl Taylor at the head of our whole Western forces is on the March to the Western frontier & will occupy the country on the Rio Grande. Commodore Conner³ with a strong squadron is in the Gulf so you see we are fully prepared to protect & defend Texas against the aggressions of Mexico if she shall make such.

I hope to hear from you as early after the receipt of this letter as may be practicable. Make my respects to your daughter & Mr Harris.⁴

JAMES K. POLK

L, in the hand of J. Knox Walker. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Liverpool, England, and marked "Copy" and "Confidential."

1. Son of James Robertson, Nashville's founder, Felix Robertson served as mayor of Nashville in 1818, 1827, and 1828; in 1844 he headed the Nashville Democratic Central Committee.

2. Polk's reference is to a letter from John D. Matthews to John M. McCalla, July 13, 1845. ALS. DLC-JKP. A Presbyterian minister from Lexington, Ky., Matthews was dismissed from his church for supporting Polk in the 1844 presidential election. Matthews was appointed to a clerkship in the General Land Office in 1847.

3. A veteran of the War of 1812, David Conner served as chief of the Bureau of Construction, Equipment, and Repair, 1842-43, and commanded U.S. naval forces in the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico, 1843-47. During the Mexican War Conner blockaded Mexico's gulf ports and supported the amphibious landing of Winfield Scott's forces in the assault against Veracruz.

4. Elizabeth Armstrong and Arnold S. Harris.

FROM DANIEL T. JENKS

My Dear Sir

Philadelphia July 28th 1845

I send your Excellency the foregoing, which I cut from the Ledger of Satterday.¹ I am sorry that the course here has been such as to remove

all the individuals who held places under Mr Tyler. In no part of the Union were the Tyler men, more numerous than in the city and county of Phila.—under the advise of Judge Sutherland² their great leader, they in my opinion carried the state for Gov. Shunk, & afterwards for your Excellency.

Something in my opinion ought to be done to quiet the great number of Tyler men, who have been turned out of office in Phila. You will excuse me when I say, that the removal of Judge Sutherland, was a most decided mistake. I cannot help urging that something ought to be done, and that promptly to correct this error.

The article from the Ledger, doubtless refers to Mr Sutherland as the individual here that did so much to secure the State of Penn. to your Excellency. The Whigs of Phila all say, that with his Tyler force carried the state against Clay.

I did hope that his Son³ would have been reappointed. Judge Sutherland ought to be Treasurer of the Mint, the present incumbent being a whig & was on one occasion Mayor of this city, but his party never put him in nomination a second time. Besides the Democracy is not satisfied with the keeping in of Major Roach⁴; I think your Excellency observed to me when last at Washington, that you thought that you would not remove Mr Roach. I dont think it will do to retain him, much longer, many democrats make heavy complaints against him, to the victors belong the spoils. Mr Sutherland has a legal & chemical education; he is therefore specially qualified for the place. I well know that you entertain a very high regard for the Judge; something in my Judgement therefore ought to be done for him. I know he is your friend, and wishes your administration great success.

The article at the head of this letter, is not in the right spirit. But nevertheless proves one fact, and that is that some how, or other every democrat, who was appointed by Mr Tyler, has been removed here, while men who voted for Clay are retained in the Custom House & elsewhere in Phila. Who was the author at the head of this letter is a problem, that I cannot solve.

The appointment of Mr. Horn was not the passive appointment that I expected, and I think I observed to you that since you had made the change, that it was the best you could have made, but I regret to say that the appointments he has made, is the cause of much dissatisfaction, and therefore has caused me to change my mind. I thought he would have acted more discreetly. I have since learned by a gentleman from his own ward, tha[t] he said you could not be elected when he found out you were nominated for the Presidency; he seemed to be so strongly bound to Mr Van Buren. He has appointed the man that

printed the coffin hand bills against the lamented Jackson; this with others thing is the cause of discontent. I should not wonder if his nomination should be rejected by the Senate; he once was rejected in Gen. Jackson's time; It is my firm conviction that you will have to consent to be a candidate for a second term, as far as possible, you ought to have men in power, who are not for any of the cliques. All the present aspireants, are buissy in geting their immediate friends into office, but we cannot use any of them, they were before the party in 44, and were pushed aside.

You must like Gen. Jackson consent to serve the party again, A *Patriot* has no right to *refuse when the Country calls*.

I write you as one of your sincere friends, and as I feel confident you consider me as firm and zealous suporter, as you can find in the whole union. I also wish to keep you advised of all thats a going on here, you keep a note of the information I give you, and see if I am not nearly correct; there are many wonder how I get information that I do.

I am yet confident that you will correct some of the appointments that you have made, where you have been deceived, as regards certain men, at a proper time.

DANIEL T. JENKS

P.S. I learn privately that you will receive a paper soon something about Mr Horn, a reccord from the court, they are determine to break him down I believe, this information is in confidence. I wont have any thing to do with it. I understand that there has been a meeting held in his ward against him.

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City; marked "*Confidential*."

1. Jenks' enclosure from the Philadelphia *Ledger* has not been found.
2. Joel B. Sutherland, a Philadelphia physician and lawyer, sat five consecutive terms in the U.S. House, 1827-37; in 1836 he ran for reelection as a Whig and lost. He served as naval officer for the port of Philadelphia from 1842 until 1845.
3. Thomas W. Sutherland, son of Joel B. Sutherland, served as U.S. attorney for the Wisconsin Territory, 1841-45, and as U.S. attorney for Wisconsin, 1848-49.
4. Isaac Roach was treasurer of the U.S. mint from 1841 until 1847.

FROM WILLIAM L. MARCY

War Dept
Washington 28. July 45

To the President.

The enclosed¹ shows the extent of the forces which have entered or are about to enter Texas. It is less than has been spoken of. Upon an

emergency it can be doubled but not in a shorter period than forty days from the time an order shall be issued for that purpose from this place.

W. L. MARCY

ALS. DLC—JKP. Addressed locally.

1. Marcy enclosed a memorandum from Roger Jones, adjutant general, dated July 28, 1845, outlining the complement of U.S. forces dispatched to Texas. Jones' report enumerated the following troops under Zachary Taylor's command: 101 commissioned officers and 1,534 enlisted men forming seven companies of dragoons, one company of artillery, and two regiments of infantry.

TO A. O. P. NICHOLSON

My Dear Sir:

Washington City 28th July 1845

I thank you for your several [letters]¹ on the subject of the last letter ever written by *Genl. Jackson* to me, and which I fear will never reach me. Its substance however I have received, in a letter from *Andrew Jackson jr.*,² and again in your correspondence with him, a copy of which you have forwarded to me.³ You refer the propriety of publishing your correspondence with *Mr Jackson* to me. *At present* I do not see that there is a necessity for its publication. Should such necessity hereafter arise, it may be done. Fortunately I have many letters from the General—written in his own bold hand, during the last three months of his life, the last dated 26th May. They all breathe, the same confidence and the ardent friendship, which I am proud to know he had for me, from my youth to the hour of his death. As to *Majr. Lewis* I shall of course enter no controversy with him. What he desires most is to make himself conspicuous by such a controversy. His course since his removal from office, proves his unworthiness, of which I had full and ample proof before I dismissed him, and I venture nothing in saying that if *Genl. Jackson* had been possessed of the same knowledge he would have acted as I did. I leave him in the hands of yourself and the newspapers—who will treat him as he may deserve. His vindictiveness and his wailings over the loss of his office, give me no concern, and can injure no one but himself. His publication of *Genl. Jackson's Private* letters, probably drawn from him by false representations—made to the *Genl.* by himself—is without excuse or palliation. I thank you kindly for the trouble you have given yourself about the last letter.

I received last night official despatches from Texas, announcing the acceptance by the Convention, of the terms of annexation proposed by the United States, without conditions, or change. Texas may now be

regarded as a part of our Country, and in anticipation of the consummation of the great event, you see, our land and Naval forces, are in a position & ready to protect and defend her. I do not however anticipate that Mexico will be mad enough to declare war. I think she would have done so, but for the appearance of a strong naval force in the Gulf, and our army moving in the direction of her frontier. I have scarcely a moment's [time]⁴ to devote to correspondence with my friends, and you will therefore excuse me I know for not touching on other matters, about which I would be pleased to communicate with you.

You must not fail to give me the earliest Election news.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS. NHi. Addressed to Nashville and marked "*Private*."

1. Manuscript torn; reading taken from a copy of same. L. DLC-JKP. Reference is to A. O. P. Nicholson's letters of July 7, 13, and 14, 1845.
2. See Andrew Jackson, Jr., to Polk, June 30, 1845.
3. Polk refers to a letter from Andrew Jackson, Jr., to A. O. P. Nicholson of July 8, 1845, and Nicholson's reply of July 12, 1845. DLC-JKP
4. Manuscript torn; reading taken from a copy of same. L. DLC-JKP.

FROM JAMES S. McFARLANE¹

Coleman's Hotel Washington City July 30, 1845

Expressing disappointment over his failure to secure an appointment as surgeon of the marine hospital at New Orleans, McFarlane outlines his claims to federal office and discusses his role in the presidential contest of 1844. Maintains that his "individual instrumentality" produced a Democratic majority in Louisiana. Notes that he toiled for a year to enroll 2,700 citizens who could not vote because they owned no property, paid no taxes, and thus did not satisfy the state's eligibility requirements. Explains that he planned and incorporated a city in Plaquemines Parish, sold a thousand lots at \$1 each, "fulfilled the letter of the law" with a 1 cent tax collected on each lot, and ultimately "neutralized" the efforts of the local Clay Club, "who did the same thing on the Whig side." Complains that recent appointments have slighted the "faithful democracy" of his district.

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed locally and marked "*Confidential*."

1. A Louisiana physician, James S. McFarlane served as corresponding secretary of the Louisiana Democratic Association during the presidential campaign of 1844. In 1853 he published a pamphlet on yellow fever entitled, *A Review of the Yellow Fever, Its Causes, etc. With Some Remarks on Hygiene*.

AUGUST

FROM JOHN Y. MASON

Sir

Attorney General's Office 1st August 1845

By your direction, I have examined the Memorial of certain Claimants under the Cherokee Treaty concluded at New Echota¹ on the 29th December 1835, and have considered the questions on which you ask my opinion in writing. They are:

1st Does the President possess the power to institute a new Board of Commissioners under the 17th Article?²

2nd If he possess the power can he or ought he to do so without a previous appropriation by Congress, to defray the expenses of such Board?

I have the honor to communicate a copy of an opinion given by Mr Legaré³ on the powers and duties of the President under the 17th Article.

The Treaty has undoubtedly the effect of law. But there must be a period beyond which the President cannot continue to exercise the power of appointment of Commissioners, and without examining into the extent of the power of the House of Representatives, where an appropriation of money is necessary to carry into effect a Treaty stipulation, it appears to me, that the Congress of the United States by the Act approved 17th June 1844, has by law, restrained the further exercise of mere Executive authority. That act appropriates:

“For compensation to two Commissioners to examine claims under the Treaty with the Cherokees of 1835, and pay of Secretary, including provisions for Indians during the session of the Board, and for contingent expenses, Eleven thousand five hundred dollars:

For defraying all contingent expenses of Commissioners to adjust claims to Choctaw Reservations under the Treaty of 1830,⁴ with the Choctaws, Six Thousand one hundred dollars: *Provided that the duration of either of said Commissions shall not extend beyond one year after the passage of this Act.*”

This proviso applies to both Commissions. The appropriations made cannot be expended for the purposes indicated beyond the period of one year from the date of the Act, and is a legal restriction on the Executive, which I would not advise should be disregarded. The power of the lawmaking authority to limit the execution of a Treaty, and to restrain the Executive in the exercise of the powers conferred by Treaty, cannot be questioned. It has been done in regard to the appointment of Commissioners under the Cherokee Treaty, by such plain implication, that I do not consider that the President can create a new Board without a disregard of the Legislative will, declared in the Act of 17th June 1844.

If there be any claims still unadjudicated, which I have not the means of affirming, and do not intend to question, I would advise that an application be made to Congress for a further appropriation, to enable the Executive to have the Treaty carried into full effect. Without such an appropriation previously had, my opinion is, that the President ought not to constitute a new Board.

J. Y. MASON

LS. DLC-JKP. Addressed locally.

1. Signed by the Treaty party on December 29, 1835, the Treaty of New Echota quieted all Cherokee claims to lands east of the Mississippi River, authorized U.S. citizenship for those choosing to leave the tribe, and provided million dollars and 7 million acres of western land as compensation to the tribe for its relocation. Upon receipt of the draft treaty in Washington, the Jackson administration added five supplementary articles, one of which voided the option of taking U.S. citizenship and remaining in the East with preemption rights to 160 acres.

2. Article 17 of the treaty states: “All the claims arising under, or provided for in the articles of this treaty, shall be examined and adjusted by commissioners, such as shall be appointed by the President of the United States for that purpose; and their decision shall be final; and on their certificates of the amount due to the several claimants, they shall be paid by the United States.” *7 U.S. Stats.*, 485–86.

3. Hugh Swint Legaré, founding editor of the *Southern Review*, 1828–32,

possible way and I am glad to see the manner in which you dispose of them.

The conduct of certain men in New York is certainly most outrageous. They appear to act on the principle of *rule* or ruin; if however you pursue the policy you have marked out they can neither do the one nor the other, except to bring ruin on their own heads. The country will stand by you, the mass of the people, the voters and working men of the party will adhere to you. The time has gone by when a few wire workers can control the many. These parlor men who manage and speculate and talk largely about public sentiment know nothing of it. What did they know in the last canvass of the power of the Texas question. The people took it up and forced it down the throats of those who swore it was rank poison. The only thing to be regretted in all your appointments is that an Anti-Texas man ever obtained a hearing. The rascals don't deserve anything and if they will bolt, let them go. They would have done so before but they dared not, nor will they now unless they want to ruin themselves, a very improbable thing among men whose guide is selfishness.

I see that you are to have a stormy time at the next session. Never mind, let them come on, all you have to do is to adhere rigidly to the text of the last election and if any drop off let them be branded as traitors. The people will soon see the cloven foot in these pretended democrats and that it is not for principle that they leave your administration, but because you will not do all that they want. You have only to keep the old banners flying and no combination can harm you.

I cannot say what truth there may be in the report that England has a mortgage in California, but if you have any reason to believe there is any foundation for it, I would suggest never to settle the Oregon question short of 54° unless Gr Britain renounced all pretensions to any farther possessions on our continent. England must never have California and it seems to me advisable to make Oregon the bone of contention to prevent it. The whole country will sustain you on Oregon.

I hope you will not think me presuming too far in addressing you thus familiarly. Attribute it to the warmth of my feelings, and the deep and sincere interest I feel in the success of your administration. We have been in days past engaged together in some hard conflicts and I cannot divest myself of old feelings and the desire to contribute my aid and such advice as my humble judgement may suggest. I know that you have conflicting opinions given you, but I beg you to recollect that all of those advisers may not be perfectly disinterested. I mean no one in particular but most of them have a game of their own to play.

Our old friend Ritchie is slow to anger and evidently dislikes parting

company with old associates but in the present crisis I would not spare the axe. He that is not for us is against us, and when that fact is sufficiently evident, off with his head and spare not. Henceforth the party should be the Polk party and its basis the old issues. Anti-Bank, Revenue Tariff, Texas & Oregon, No Distribution &c and see who dare to leave it. The reception of the news of the annexation of Texas was recd by the Americans here with great joy. All of our Ships in Port hoisted their colors to the masthead. Such a glorious consummation of a great cause is indeed gratifying to all true Americans and to you must be doubly so.

R. ARMSTRONG

LS. DLC-JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City.

FROM HEBER COWDEN¹

Mr. Polk Sir

Mich Center Aug 4 1845

Mutch is said in this Country about going and seteling in Oregon. Many are anxious to go there but wish to go with a propper and just and fair understanding. By many it is said the Government assist Emigrants in getting there and when they get there the government give a Certain quantity of Land. It is said by others that Emigrant there must be Organized into a Military boddy to receive aid from the Government.

As to the Claim of the British Government we thi[nk] but little of their Claim. We are willing to try titles with them at all hazards and risk the Result. We wish only to be at an agreement with our own Government.

Sir I purposs geting about thirty families who are desirous of Emigrating to that Country who are willing to bind themselves to each other to aid and assist each other in getting there. But Sir we wish to know what the Government will do if any thing what and how mutch. If they will furnish us with Rifles and amunition we are Readdy to organise our selves into a Military Boddy and march on to the spot Reddy for action to Defend the wrights of the Nation and to Cultivate the soil. But Sir we wish to know how mutch Land is given and upon what terms. We would Like some information on this subject and sir I thought you would be the most Likely to know and give the propper information than any other Person on this subject. Therefore Excuse thy servant for presenting this Request to your Excelency for a propper disposal. As I have often ben solisited to write to you by those with whom I associate in this Enterprise I have ventured to do so and for

their sakes and mine. I trust you will Condesend to give us the information we Nead on this important subject as soon as Conveniant for we purpose starting Next spring and we want all the time to prepare for the Journey. Sir you will do me the honour to direct yours in answer to this our Request to Col H Cowden Michigan Center Jackson County Michigan State. And mutch Oblige your friends and friend.

HEBER COWDEN

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 11, 1845.

1. Not identified further.

FROM LOUIS McLANE

My dear Sir,

London August 4, 1845

After a passage of thirteen days, I arrived at Liverpool on the 29th July, & here in the night of the 31st.

I saw our present minister¹ the following day; but in consequence of his engagement to go with his family into the Country yesterday he was not able to arrange for my official audience with Lord Aberdeen² earlier than Tuesday next.

Meantime I have approached such sources as have been acceptable to me; and I have also conversed with Mr. Bates from whom the information in Mr. Sturgis's³ letter to Mr. Bancroft proceeded. His means of information not less than his good sense & devotion to our Country entitles his communications to great respect. He was mainly instrumental in procuring the article from Mr. Senior,⁴ with which you are already acquainted & of submitting it previously to its publication to Lord Aberdeen, who, it is pretty certain, gave it his approbation.

The result of all I have learned is that this Government is earnestly desirous of adjusting the Oregon question, & willing to do so upon liberal terms. *Their chief difficulty arises from the opposition & influence of the Hudson's Bay Company.*

The Government will be disposed, I infer, under these circumstances, to adopt the 49th parallel to the Straits of Fuca, and thence by a line giving the whole of Vancouver's island to the British side; but will insist, at the same time, upon a continuance for a longer period of existing privileges to the Hudson's Bay company. The duration of this period, it is supposed, will form the most difficult point of the compromise.

I am not aware that this last fact has been intimated to you, and yet although I speak with out the benefit of official conference, I am

quite sure it will be apt to form a prominent demand in the negotiation. I will of course take the earliest opportunity after my audience with Lord Aberdeen to ascertain with greater formality the views of this Government, and in the mean time take the liberty, for obvious reasons, to address this letter directly to the President in whose discretion it may be communicated to Mr. Buchanan without connection with the Department. I take it for granted I will be regularly advised of the progress & details of the negotiation at Washington, in order that in attempting to second, I may not distract the efforts in that quarter.

LOUIS McLANE

L. PHi. Addressed to Washington City; marked "Private" and "Copy." Endorsement in the hand of James Buchanan reads as follows: "19 August 1845. The letter of which the foregoing is a copy was received by the President."

1. Edward Everett.

2. A native of Scotland, George Hamilton-Gordon, Earl of Aberdeen, was raised to the peerage of the United Kingdom in 1814; served as chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, twice as foreign secretary, and as secretary for war and colonies in the government of Sir Robert Peel; after 1846, he became the Peelite leader of the opposition in the House of Lords and subsequently formed a coalition government of Whigs and Peelites that lasted from 1852 until 1855.

3. McLane's reference is to William Sturgis. A Boston merchant, Sturgis served several terms in the Massachusetts House and Senate. In 1845 Sturgis published a pamphlet, *The Oregon Question*, in which he argued for settlement of the Oregon boundary at the 49th parallel.

4. Reference is to Nassau W. Senior. Educated at Magdalen College, Oxford, Senior twice held professorships in political economy at Oxford, 1825–30 and 1847–52. A frequent contributor of essays and reviews to the *Edinburgh Review*, Senior supported reform of the English poor laws and served on several royal commissions, including the poor law commission of 1833 and the Irish poor law commission of 1844. In 1845 he formed an alliance with Edward Everett, and with Everett's support—and the approbation of Lord Aberdeen—published essays in the *London Examiner* of April 26 and the July issue of the *Edinburgh Review* supporting resolution of the Oregon question. Favoring arbitration as the surest means of effecting an acceptable partition of Oregon, he suggested that neither Britain nor the U.S. possessed "any title, perfect or imperfect" to the territory and favored the 49th parallel—reserving Vancouver Island for Britain—as the boundary.

TO ROMULUS M. SAUNDERS

My dear Sir

Washington City, 4th Aug 1845

I should have replied to your letter of the 22nd ultimo earlier, but that my time has been so constantly occupied with my daily duties,

that I have scarcely a moments leisure to attend to my correspondence with my friends. I have considered of your suggestions and the result is that the mission to *Spain* is the one which it will give me pleasure to tender to you. There are considerations connected with that to Berlin, which render the propriety of a change of the Minister at least for the present a matter of some doubt. As to the time at which the appointment will be made I beg to say that the delay which may take place, does not proceed from any apprehension on my part that your nomination might not be confirmed by the Senate, but from other considerations. I have no doubt of your confirmation when the nomination is made. I could explain to you the reasons which induce me to delay the appointment for a few months, but this I know you will not deem necessary. They are wholly unconnected with yourself or your confirmation by the Senate. If however I shall find that I can make the appointment at the time you suggest, it will give me sincere pleasure to gratify your wishes.

JAMES K. POLK

L. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Raleigh, N.C.; marked "Copy" and "Private."

TO SILAS WRIGHT, JR.

My dear Sir

Washington City 4th Aug. 1845

I have not acknowledged the receipt of your very acceptable letter of the 21st ult earlier, for two reasons, first because you informed me that you would be absent from Albany for some time & secondly because my time has been very much occupied, with my daily duties. I thank you for the frank and clear view which you give me of the causes of the existing divisions in our party in New York. I had not before comprehended or understood them in their full extent, as you state them. In your local policy I ought not & cannot do more than express an opinion. It so happens that upon the several questions which you mention I have not to express that opinion for the first time. I am opposed to the creation of a State Debt and when it exists am the advocate of its liquidation at the earliest practicable period. In regard to all corporations including those of Banks I have openly & publicly maintained and advocated the doctrine of *individual responsibility* on the part of the corporators. Within the last six years I have had occasion to proclaim these opinions both in writing and in public discussions in my own State, where they are well understood. In Tennessee our debt is not so large as in many of the States. I found it in existence when I was elected Governor and in my official action strongly objected to

increasing it & recommended that all the resources of the State should be applied to its reimbursement before it fell due. As late as 1843 I reiterated these opinions and in a published address to the people of the State¹ laid down the broad principle without qualification, that no corporation for Banking or any other purpose should ever be granted by the Legislature, which did not make the Stockholders or corporators liable in their individual estates for all the engagements contracted by such corporations. I held for example that every Bank stockholder should be held individually liable for the redemption of every note issued and for the payment of every other liability contracted by the Bank of which he was a part-owner and that he should be regarded and treated as any other partner in trade liable individually for the debts of the firm. These opinions I have seen no reason to change, but on the contrary every days observations & experience confirms me in their correctness. You will perceive therefore that there is an entire accordance of opinion between us upon these questions and that so far as they are applicable to your state policy I entirely agree with you in your views. In regard to the independent Treasury or the policy of separating entirely the custody & management of the funds of the U. States from Banks you know what my opinions were when the subject first came up for action in Congress in 1837. I was then and have ever since been the decided & uncompromising advocate of the measure. In 1839–41–43 in my three several canvasses for Governor of Tennessee during these years I defended and advocated this great measure of *Mr Van Buren* all over the State and in two of these years issued a printed address over my signature maintaining this among other Democratic measures.² I regarded it as a most unwise act of the late administration when it was repealed. My opinions have undergone no change.

From this frank and unreserved reiteration of opinions long entertained and acted upon by me, you will perceive how unjust & erroneous the inference is which you state. Some have drawn from my appointment of Mr. Lawrence, which as you state they are pleased to “consider as indicating my preferences upon these great questions and as carrying me on the side of the Bank entirely.” Time however and their own calmer observation of my course will put all this right. I have not time to go into all the considerations which led to the appointment of *Mr. Lawrence* and if I had, it would perhaps be unprofitable to do so. It is enough to say that the selection of a suitable person was attended with great embarrassments. I knew Mr. L personally, having served with him in Congress. I had a high opinion of him. When I knew him he was a good and true Democrat & I learned had since that time

continued to be so. In selecting him I believed that the Government would have an honest, capable, & responsible officer, who would perform the duties of the office well and in whose hands, the vast amount of revenue collected at New York would be *safe*. I felt that I could feel assured that whilst he was collector another *defalcation* would not occur, and this last with his character & entire fitness for the station were high considerations, which had great weight with me in the selection of a collector for New York.

I thank you my dear Sir for the information which you have imparted and for the friendly & frank spirit in which it has been done and can only assure you if any assurance were necessary that the same spirit & feelings are fully reciprocated by me. I have written in great haste and in the midst of official duties demanding my attention. Your letters will of course be regarded as you desire them to be *strictly confidential* as I know you will regard this as well as my previous letters. I need scarcely add that I shall be at all times pleased to hear from you and whatever my engagements may be will endeavor to give time to respond to you.

JAMES K. POLK

L. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Albany, N.Y., and marked “Copy” and “Private & confidential.”

1. On May 23 and 26, 1843, the *Nashville Union* printed Polk’s “Address to the People of Tennessee,” which included his views on government expenditures, public debts, tariffs, and a national bank. For Polk’s review of his earlier public statements on these issues and specifically the question of granting limited liability to banking corporations, see Polk to Wyatt Christian et al., May 15, 1843, and Polk to George W. Smith et al., May 15, 1843.

2. A twenty-eight page pamphlet entitled “Address of James K. Polk to the People of Tennessee” was printed at Columbia and dated April 3, 1839. It was published serially in the *Nashville Union* on April 10, 12, and 15, 1839. A forty page pamphlet entitled “Address to the People of Tennessee” was printed at Nashville under the direction of J. George Harris in late March, 1841; Harris’ *Nashville Union* of March 29, 1841, carried the first installment of Polk’s “Address.”

FROM CHARLES CALLAGHAN¹

Sir,

New York 5th August, 1845

I have the honor respectfully to represent to you that a number of the “Monitor” issued at the city of Mexico in March 1845 published satisfactory evidence of the receipt by the agents of the United States after 24th April 1844 of near \$300,000 out of the local and maritime

Treasuries of Mexico—the amount of the 4th & 5th Instalments of the Mexican Indemnity due 30th April & 30th July 1844, amounting to near \$300,000.² Since those dates, they have been delinquent in remitting to the Treasury Department of the U States; it having been represented to the claimants, by that bureau, that the said collections, have not been received there. The report of the Secretary of the Mexican Treasury³ to Congress, dated in January 1845, reports that then, there remained due to the United States \$1,500,000 of the capital of the Indemnity, which is further proof that said officer, considered the United States agents, had already received up to that date, payment of five Instalments of the capital, its original sum being \$2,000,000; to pay, the Instalments of which, in January 1843, the Mexican Government imposed a direct Tax, which was collected and deposited in the local and maratime Treasuries, up to the commencement of the late revolution of November 1844; altho this direct Tax Law, the Congress repealed, in February 1845, under it the 6th Instalment, due 30th October 1844, was collected and deposited in the Treasuries, specifically, to pay the Indemnity. “El Monitor,” published copy of a writing called a “contract with Smith”⁴ of 27 April 1844, by which the agents of the U States at Mexico,⁵ received orders or drafts, on the local and maratime Treasuries, to pay them the Sum of near \$300,000 for Sundry claims, to Wit,

1st	of Tayleur Jamisson & Co. for	\$13,000
2	of Holders of Debentures issued at London by Lizzardi & Co. for £40,000 Ster for a claim of £20,000 Ster	223,255
3	of holder of H Morphi's claim for	61,000
		\$297,255

“El Monitor” remarks upon the injustice of this action, and the dormant interest of certain officials in it, as such claims, were of little value, and the Treasury, was not bound to pay them. Yet the contract gave orders to pay all their nominal value, to Tayleur Jamisson & Co. of Mexico. The agents of the U States at Mexico, Knew on 27 April 1844, of the existence of the Direct Tax Law, and that its operation, had already placed in the Treasuries, on or before 30th April 1844, the amount of the 4th Instalment, not less than \$140,000, that no other funds existed there, unappropriated, even to pay the current expenses of the Government, and for this reason all the cash they might draw out

was the Indemnity funds, and as faithful agents, they were bound to remit them to the U States on that account. The receipt given by these agents to the Mexican Treasury, is a discharge in full of all deman[d]s for said two Instalments which that writing declares they received in Cash, Governor Shannon stating in his letter to Mr. Buchanan of 2 July 1845.⁶ I understand it was dated 27, August 1844.⁷

Whether the “contract of Smith,” was made on 27 April 1844 specifically, to withdraw from the Mexican Treasuries, the Indemnity cash, and transfer it to the use of the combining Mexican & U States agents, representing the deteriorated claims for Debentures, Morphi, Tayleur & Co. on \$297,255, is not important to the claimants, but the suggestions, the U States agents at Mexico believed it their Interest to put into the mouth of Governor Shannon, as per his letter to Mr Buchanan dated 2 July 1845, that certain drafts they affected to hold representing these Instalments on 14 May 1845 would be paid as soon as the Mexican Government could command the pecuniary means, has proved a new source of damage to the claimants. The truth was, and is, that the Governments of Mexico, prior to, and at that date, declared it had paid to the U States Agents the 4th & 5th Instalments in Cash that no drafts, or orders, existed in the hands of any party, representing those payments, but that any existing drafts, in the hands of the U States agents, are the representatives of the Smith contract of 27 April 1844, and its items of Debentures—Morphi, Tayleur & Co.

Please review the dates! with the cash of the claimants, purchasing on 27 April 1844, the said items for \$140,000, the collecting with the contract another sum of \$157,255 of their fund, producing the amount of nett gain for distribution among the combining dormant partners in such “fair bussiness transaction.” Mr Shannon, remarking that Mr Voss of Mexico prior to 27 Aug 1844, handed drafts for collection over to Messrs Tayleur Jamisson & Co. of Mexico the date of the receipt, held by the Mexican Government which was upsett, and driven into Exile by the spontaneous rising of the agricultural class, lead on by Gen Parades⁸ on 27th Novemr 1844, whose official representatives issued an order suspending all payment from the public Treasuries, issued by the Santa Anna⁹ Administration, is proof of the U States agents of Mexico up to the latest dates, making a gigantic effort, to continue the claimants, as the Scape goats, to their exploded plan of 27 April 1844, denounced by all the public press of Mexico since March 1845, as outrageous.

As the chief Majestrate of the U States, I now respectfully ask of you, to issue directions to the proper Department of the executive

Government, to distribute the appropriation of \$275,000 made by Congress for the payment of the 4th and 5th Instalments of the Mexican Indemnity.

CHARLES CALLAGHAN

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 9, 1845.

1. A claimant under the Conventions of 1839 and 1843, Charles Callaghan expected payment of \$37,558 for losses incurred in the 1829 detention of the brig *Ann* at Veracruz.

2. In March 1843, the United States and Mexico concluded a Convention to provide for payment of over \$2,000,000 in claims awarded U.S. citizens under the terms of a similar Convention ratified in 1839. The Convention ordered the Mexican government to pay all interest due claimants on April 30, 1843, and established from that date a five year schedule of quarterly payments to be made in gold or silver.

3. Reference is to Pedro José Echeverría.

4. Not identified further.

5. Reference is to Emilio Voss who served as the U.S. agent in Mexico until December 1845. Voss is not identified further.

6. Attempting to explain his role in the controversy over payment of the fourth and fifth instalments, Wilson Shannon wrote James Buchanan on July 2, 1845. Shannon explained that he reached Mexico in August of 1845, after Emilio Voss had arranged to accept drafts from the Mexican government for payment of the instalments, and thus "had no agency in advising the arrangement." He maintained that Voss had attempted to secure payment from the Mexican Treasury but had failed because the government diverted available revenues to maintain the army and satisfy demands of the Mexican claimants. Adding that he had received assurances from Santa Anna that the Mexican government would "meet the future instalments promptly as they fell due," Shannon claimed that until the overthrow of Santa Anna's government he did not "anticipate the slightest difficulty in relation to the payments" of the drafts accepted by Voss for the fourth and fifth instalments. ALS. DNA–RG 59. Governor of Ohio, 1838–40 and 1842–44, Shannon served as minister to Mexico, 1844–45. He won election as a Democrat to one term in the U.S. House, 1853–55, and then moved from Ohio to Kansas Territory, where he served two years as governor, 1855–56.

7. Reference is to the above mentioned receipt, not Shannon's letter.

8. A Santa-Annista general, Mariano Paredes y Arillaga led the coup that ousted Santa Anna in 1844. Paredes' announcement of rebellion on October 31, 1844, together with congressional refusal to supply new troops and money, drove Santa Anna from the capital; rebel forces captured him near Jalapa on January 15, 1845. Santa Anna volunteered to go into exile and left Mexico on June 3, 1845. Leading a second coup in December 1845, Paredes served as president from January to July 1846.

9. A general in the Mexican army, Antonio López de Santa Anna often

headed the central government during the period from 1833 to 1855; he commanded Mexican armies in the Texas rebellion and in the Mexican War with the United States.

FROM EDWARD DEVLIN¹

Sir,

Louisville 5th August 45

As one of the Democratic delegates to Lagrange Convention I take great pleasure on the second day of the election to inform you that on the opinion of the best informed that beyond the possibility of a doubt "the Banner City" of the "Banner State" will send a democratic Candidate to Congress this term. The Journal² man says if the Whig Candidate does not go out of the City with a majority of 700 votes he Cannot be elected.³ This he Certainly will not get. He Cannot possibly get more than 600 in the City. This will be a triumph for the administration of which I am proud. Judge Douglass⁴ of Ill. addressed us yesterday evening and today we intend to push the last day of the election to the utmost.

You will excuse me for this liberty but my desire to overthrow the Clay party in his favourite City is my excuse.

EDWD. DEVLIN

P.S. We have heard from Lexington and Tom Marshall⁵ is running admirably, strong hopes of his election.

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked "unofficial." Devlin noted at the top of his letter, "last minute of Closeing the Mail Bags." Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 10, 1845.

1. A Louisville Democrat, Devlin owned a clothing store.
2. *Louisville Journal*.

3. In the election for Kentucky's Seventh Congressional District, Whig party candidate William P. Thomasson defeated Democrat Elijah Nuttall. Thomasson served in the Kentucky House from 1818 until 1820, and won election to two terms in the U.S. House, 1843-47. Nuttall is not identified further.

4. An Illinois teacher and lawyer, Stephen A. Douglas served as a member of the Illinois House, 1836-37; as Illinois secretary of state, 1840-41; and as a judge on the state's highest appellate court. He went to the U.S. House as a Democrat for two terms, 1843-47, before winning election in 1847 to the first of three terms in the U.S. Senate. Northern Democrats nominated him for the presidency in 1860.

5. Thomas F. Marshall won election to several terms in the Kentucky House, 1832-36, 1838-39, and 1854; he served one term in the U.S. House, 1841-43.

FROM S. G. LAWS¹

Dover, Del. August 6, 1845

Declaring himself a “subtreasury, hard money Democrat of the Tom Benton² school,” Laws advises Polk on the application of Henry Simpson³ for the office of Treasurer at the U.S. Mint in Philadelphia. He apologizes for discussing appointments beyond Delaware and adds that he “should not have felt at liberty” to tender his recommendations for the office “were it not one in which we all have a deep interest.” Laws attests to Simpson’s “zeal, industry and efficiency in the Democratic cause,” and concludes he has no hesitation recommending Simpson to Polk’s “favorable consideration.”

In addition, Laws offers “suggestions of a general nature” on the subject of federal patronage in Delaware. Arguing that the “Democratic creed” encompasses the belief that “Government should be administered with the greatest economy,” he claims that the “enormous compensation” of federal officers in Delaware violates this principle. Laws suggests that the federal government could pay its officers in Delaware “at least 25 percent and some instances 75 percent less” and continue to employ “good, substantial, respectable and trustworthy citizens.” Adding that the “present compensations” prove detrimental to the interests of the Democratic party, he notes that John M. Clayton⁴ and fellow Delaware Whigs accuse the Democrats of “*professing* one thing, and *practicing* another,” and thus silence the “just complaints” against the “extravagance and profligacy of the whigs here at home.” Laws urges attention to his suggestions and concludes that “if these things should be suffered to continue as they are, we shall not only be injured as we were in 1840, but in the coming contest of 1846, we shall be embarrassed by them much more than we ever have been.”

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. A native of Kent County, Del., Saxe Gotha Laws gained admission to the Dover bar in 1835, joined the Democratic party in 1836, won election as clerk of the Delaware Senate in 1839, and devoted himself to politics and scientific studies until his death in 1876.

2. Thomas Hart Benton.

3. Henry Simpson, brother of noted Philadelphia editor and author Stephen Simpson, served as an alderman of Philadelphia, as well as a member of the state legislature. In the late 1830’s he held the post of appraiser for the port of Philadelphia, but lost that position in 1841.

4. John M. Clayton won election to a seat in the Delaware House in 1824; served as Delaware’s secretary of state, 1826–28; sat in the U.S. Senate as a National Republican, 1829–36, and as a Whig, 1845–49 and 1853–56; presided as chief justice of the Delaware Supreme Court, 1837–39; and negotiated the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty with Great Britain during his tenure as U.S. secretary of state, 1849–50.

FROM JAMES WHITCOMB¹

My Dear Sir,

Indianapolis, August 6, 1845

We have carried both of our candidates for the State legislature in this (Marion) county by an average majority of 74. Last August the Whig candidates were elected by 102 maj. & last Nov. Clay's maj. was 81.

Our news from Hamilton co. adjoining us on the north is that we have elected both our members to the legislature by a decided majority. Last year the Whigs carried the co.

We now feel a strong confidence that we shall have a decided maj. on joint ballot in our next legislature.

A letter from Rush co. states that Col. Smith² (our candidate for congress in that district) has improved on his former vote in that co.

On the contrary we are informed that Joseph A. Wright's³ minority in Hendricks co. (the only one we have heard from in his district) is some 20 or 30 greater than it was before. Yet we have not lost hope, as we confidently expect he will gain in his own county and probably elsewhere.

Of Judge Wick's⁴ election in this congressional district we have no fear. He gets about the same maj. in this co. that our members to the legislature have.

JAS WHITCOMB

P.S. Since writing the above I am assured that Mr Wright instead of losing has actually *gained* on his vote in Hendricks.

ALS. DLC -JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked "*Private.*" Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 10, 1845.

1. A lawyer from Terre Haute, Ind., Whitcomb served as a member of the Indiana Senate, 1830-36; as commissioner of the General Land Office, 1836-41; and as governor, 1843-49. From 1849 until his death in 1852, Whitcomb sat in the U.S. Senate as a Democrat.

2. A tanner, Thomas Smith served in the Indiana House and Senate prior to his service in the U.S. House as a Democrat, 1839-41 and 1843-47.

3. Joseph A. Wright served as a Democrat in the U.S. House, 1843-45; as governor of Indiana, 1849-57; and as U.S. senator, 1862-63.

4. An Indianapolis attorney, William W. Wick served several terms as presiding judge of Indiana's Fifth Judicial Circuit and as Indiana secretary of state, 1825-29. He won election to three terms in the U.S. House, 1839-41 and 1845-49, and served as postmaster at Indianapolis, 1853-57.

TO JAMES BUCHANAN

My Dear Sir:

Washington City 7th August 1845

I enclose to you a letter from *Mr Bancroft*,¹ and will add to what he has said, that the information from Mexico, comes in so authentic a shape as to entitle it to entire credit. The strong probability is that a Mexican army of eight or ten thousand men, are now on the Western borders of Texas. Should they cross the *Del Norte*² as no doubt they will, our force at present in the country, will be inadequate to resist them in their march upon Texas. Orders will be issued to day, to increase our force as far as our disposeable troops will enable us to do so. The necessary despatches from your Department to *Majr. Donelson*, or (in the event he has left the country), to the U.S. Consul at Galveston,³ will of course be prepared by *Mr Mason*. I wish it were so, that while these important steps are being taken we could have the benefit of your advice.

Before you left you requested me to inform you, if any thing should occur, which in my judgement, would make it necessary for you to return earlier than you intended. We are in daily expectation of receiving further information from Mexico, which may and probably will confirm the statement given you by *Mr Bancroft*. The news of the action of the Convention of Texas, was despatched from New Orleans to Vera Cruz, by the Mexican consul on the 15th ultimo, and would probably be conveyed to the City of Mexico by the 21st or 22nd. Upon receiving this information some decisive action no doubt took place.

In addition to these reasons which make it very desirable to have the benefit of your counsel, I must confess that the developments which are taking place, as well as my daily reflections, make it in my opinion more and more important, that we should progress without delay in the Oregon negotiation. You may consider me impatient on this subject. I do not consider that I am so, but still I have a great desire, that what is contemplated, should be done, as soon as it may suit your convenience.⁴ I have felt great reluctance, in saying thus much, because I desired not to interfere with your arrangements during the short recreation, which you have taken from your arduous labours.

JAMES K. POLK

P.S. If you determine to anticipate the period of your return to Washington, you will see the propriety of leaving Bedford in a way to produce no public sensation, as to the cause of your sudden departure. That it

may not be known that you leave, on receiving a letter from me, I will not place my frank on this letter. J.K.P.

ALS. PHi. Addressed to Bedford, Penn., and marked "*Private*." ALS, draft. DLC-JKP.

1. Polk's reference is to George Bancroft's letter to James Buchanan of August 7, 1845. In that communication Bancroft stated that he had visited Baron von Gerolt, Prussian minister to the United States, and that Gerolt claimed to possess reliable information on affairs in Mexico. In their conversation Gerolt discussed Mexican troop movements against Texas and suggested that Mexico "would shun battles and carry on an annoying guerilla warfare; that she would protract the war into a very expensive length; that she would agree to no settlement of boundary with us, but under the guarantee of European powers." Bancroft added that Gerolt's "seemingly authentic news of hostile intentions" prompted William L. Marcy, "under proper sanctions, to increase his little army in Texas." PL. Published in George T. Curtis, *Life of James Buchanan* (2 vols.; New York: Harper & Brothers, 1883), I, p. 590.

2. Polk's reference is to the Rio Grande.

3. Thomas N. Herndon served as U.S. consul at Galveston in 1845.

4. On July 29, 1845, Sir Richard Pakenham, British minister to the United States, 1843-47, had rejected the United States' proposals for the partition of the Oregon Country. Polk wanted his secretary of state, James Buchanan, to respond promptly to Pakenham's letter; and on August 30, 1845, Buchanan wrote Pakenham withdrawing the United States' earlier proposals from consideration and explaining that Polk would not have offered to divide the territory at the forty-ninth parallel of latitude had not his predecessors extended those terms in two prior negotiations. For the texts of both letters, see House Document No. 2, 29 Congress, 1 Session, pp. 170-92.

FROM ALEXANDER McCALL¹

Dear Sir

Saltville Aug 7th 1845

Mr. A. L. Gammon² of Sullivan Cy. is an applicant for the office of U.S. Marshall for the District of E. Tennessee, the late Mr. Woods³ having died. Mr. Gammon is honest competent and none could be better fitted in all respects to fill the duties of the office. I came through E Ten & think A. V. Brown may be elected though it is more certain a majority on joint Ballot will be secured. Mr. Gentry representing the Bell-interest in opposition to Jones, will be elected over Nelson.

Western whigs will reorganize under the flag of Clay & Judge McLean⁴ for Vice President, the latter to receive the mantle should the apotheosis of the former occur. This is a bank-Tariff abolition-methodistic ticket of no light bearings. The Western Democracy will not relish any committals for the future national nomination of Silas

Wright, which it is supposed he will get at any & all hazards. Cass & King⁵ of Ala. (why not A. J. Donelson?) will be the Peoples Candidates by county nominations, while Mr. Calhoun by caucus nomination, will in the South hold a controlling number of votes, *but not for himself*, either in or out of the house. Foreign war may change the relations of these parties before three years elapse; the expression of American interests has made England recede from her Texian position, but she will fix her eye upon Calafornia.

I heard it said a *special 300,000£* will have more power in a certain place *here* than the same could have over the migrated mass in Texas. Respecting this 300,000£ you doubtless have received intimations. At Harrisburgh it happened that 99,000\$ procured nine democratic votes which gave the charter to the Pen. U.S. Bk. But things of this cast to be detected & exposed call for peculiar guardianship.

On *the Texas admission & the donative connection* of 15,000 Post masters, with the general Post office, the opposition will rally next winter & I hope Mr. Johnson, abiding the action of Congress (on which, for a time the responsibility should rest) will not assume much responsibility. Our people are too smart for *elegant reports or messages*— they should have simple *Ledger-briefs* with no materials for distortion “*a la Woodbury*.”⁶ The Democracy have confidence that after the troubling of the waters all will be clear; but to receive the fury of the first onset of blind assailants Some tubs should be cast out with straw men defendants, as was sometimes employed by Gen Jackson.

Congress *cannot be induced* to place the Tariff so low as the best revinue would demand & if a full treasury would build ships at Memphis & open a canal for vessels of war from the Mississippi to Chicago, I would be content, *as one man*, to pay an extra tariff for a while. The caravan cotton trade, silk thread, lace and tea exchanges at San Francisco, extension of states and location of the seat of our government near St. Louis Mo. are all questions that soon will occupy publick regard.

In consolodating the Power over commerce, manufactures and civilization which directly is based upon the cheap products of seven millions of slaves in Cuba, Brazil & the United States a sound diplomatic action *will be elicited*. Representatives in Spain & Brazil *you will make equal* to the delegation now in England. After three hundred years care over the minds & bodily developement of blacks shall any hesitate to reap the harvest secured solely by the abundance, cheapness & variety of americanized slave products? Even Mr. Websters threats failed to make the self interest of the north fix a cordon of tariff-posts between itself & the slaves of the south.

I would mention that a Mr. Flack⁷ of Matagorda on his way to N. York 7th day of June last spoke of English & French imports to Galveston, for sale in the U. States, after annexation.

Inspection of comparative Tariffs will show there would be poor speculation in the scheme, because the articles of low Texian duty are those that would be cast into collision with articles of lowest prices from our own manufactories. There will be this year including the cotton of Texas 2,900,000 bales against 2,460,000 last year. The product of grain in the West & South will equal that of 1840 & yet many sections will suffer severely from drouth. Mrs. Polks friends will expect her on a visit with yourself, in the next year, at Nashville.

A. McCALL

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked "Private" and "Confidential." Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 16, 1845.

1. A physician and Democrat from Washington County, Va., McCall is not identified further.

2. A Sullivan County farmer, Abraham L. Gammon served one term in the Tennessee House, 1857-59.

3. Appointed U.S. marshal for East Tennessee in 1838, Richard M. Woods held that post until his death in 1845; he had also served as sheriff of Greene County, 1826-40.

4. John McLean of Ohio served four years in the U.S. House, 1812-16, and five years on the Ohio Supreme Court; he was appointed postmaster general by James Monroe in 1823, and was reappointed by John Q. Adams. Declining a place in Jackson's cabinet, McLean became an associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court in 1829 and served until his death in 1861. During his years on the federal bench he was often mentioned as a possible presidential candidate.

5. Lewis Cass and William Rufus King. King served as U.S. senator from Alabama, 1819-44 and 1848-53, and as U.S. minister to France, 1844-46. Elected vice-president of the United States in 1852, he took the oath of office in Cuba and died shortly after returning to Alabama in early 1853.

6. Levi Woodbury served as U.S. Treasury secretary from 1834 until 1841. Earlier he had served as governor of New Hampshire, senator from that state, and secretary of the navy. In 1841 Woodbury returned to the U.S. Senate and served until his appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1845.

7. Not identified further.

TO WILLIAM L. MARCY

Sir:

Washington 7th August 1845

I have carefully examined the numerous letters and memorials, relating to the Pension Agency at Albany, which you submitted to me

on the 1st Instant, with a request, that as Albany was your place of residence, I would decide the matter in issue between the parties. It appears that the duties of Pension agent have been performed by the Mechanics and Farmers Bank of Albany, for many years, and as far as I can learn those duties have been satisfactorily performed. It is now urged by many citizens that this Bank shall be discontinued, and that the Albany City Bank, shall be employed in future as the Pension agent. Many other citizens protest against the change, and insist that the Mechanics and Farmers Bank shall continue to be employed as heretofore. There appears to be great division of opinion among the Citizens of Albany, and in some other parts of the State of New York on the subject. If the laws permitted it, this controversy between rival moneyed institutions, for the use of the public moneys, necessarily placed on deposit with the agent, would seem to indicate, beyond all doubt, the wisdom of relieving both from the trouble of the agency, and depriving both of the profits derived from it. This however in the existing state of the law cannot be done, and as you desire me to decide the question, between these two Banks, the conclusion to which I have come is, that there is no sufficient reason at present to change the agency. The Mechanics and Farmers Bank will therefore be continued as the agent of the Government for the payment of Pensions in the State of New York as heretofore. You will perceive that I have regarded the Bank as the agent, for although the name of its President is used as agent, yet it is in his official character as agent, that he acts, and therefore the Bank acting by its President, is in fact the agent.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, draft. DLC—JKP. Polk's AE on the cover states: "Rough Draft of a Letter not sent, in relation to the Pension Agency at Albany N.Y. Instead of sending this letter I endorsed on the papers, in brief, that no change of the Agency would be made at present."

FROM THOMAS L. RAGSDALE¹

Sir,

Washington City 7 August 1845

Knowing that you desire to extend a fair protection to the interests of the South and West, I take the liberty to make this communication to show that those interests are in danger of being injured for the purpose of favoring certain gentlemen of Pennsylvania.

Before Mr. Walker appointed me to a Clerkship in his Department, I had arranged, with a friend of much experience in such business, to offer proposals for the work to be done at the Memphis Navy Yard; but

your kindness in providing for me here, now makes it unnecessary for me to seek employment out of this City. By my enquiries preparatory to that business, I have ascertained facts that indicate a deep laid scheme in progress to prevent fair competition in bidding for the contract.

Col. Warford,² a *rail road* Engineer of Pennsylvania, was appointed by Mr. Tyler, I think in February last, to superintend the construction of the Yard. His letters of recommendation, which ought to be either on your files or the files of the Navy Department, will show whether his appointment was procured by the following gentlemen, some of whom are his relations and connexions, and all of them have been contractors on the public works of Pennsylvania, viz. Jas. Cameron, J. K. Marshall, M. Brooke, S. M. Lawrence, Geo Nagle, J. Mitchell, R. Miles, R. S. Bailey, W. Miles, Genl. B. Clarke, W. F. Parker, and perhaps Judge Ives.³

In Pennsylvania, I am told, contracts are frequently managed by collusion among the Contractors and Engineers on the public works, so as to inure to the exclusive benefit of certain cliques; and if you have any doubt upon this point, I can satisfy you by the testimony of an Engineer who knows the facts, and who is an active friend of your Administration.

Col. Warford was about *one month* in making the trip from Memphis to this City. The day he left, my agent at Memphis apprised me of his departure by letter of that date and the letter reached me *within nine days*. Upon his arrival, I enquired of the Engineer whether he had been detained by sickness; he answered that he had not; but that he had been delayed by the *high water*. *Yet, the high water had not delayed the letter which was mailed the day he left Memphis*. The true cause of the delay may be accounted for thus: viz. Instead of coming directly through to Washington, the Engineer went to Pennsylvania, tarried there several weeks, visiting among the Contractors named; and that too at the very time when he knew that his presence was daily expected and wanted at the Navy Department.

The advertisement for proposals is worded so obscurely, that no one, unless he is in the confidence of the Engineer, can make a satisfactory estimate of the amount of the work. And the time limited to bidders for going to Memphis after information without which they cannot bid at all with safety for so large a contract, seems to me to have been fixed for the purpose of driving off other bidders, in order that the Engineer's relations and friends may secure the work to be done at their own prices.

Though it is possible that Col. Warford is really innocent of any design to improperly favor this party, yet, the circumstances could not

have been more skilfully devised than they are, if it had been his object to confine the bidding to his own relations and friends.

The facts justify, at least a *suspicion* that this clique had Col. Warford appointed by Mr. Tyler. The Yard being to be established in *Tennessee*, it certainly would not have been improper for Mr. Tyler to leave the selection of the Engineer to you, instead of his appointing a Pennsylvania gentleman who has furnished reasons by his conduct, enough to satisfy many persons that he is but an instrument in the hands of a clique.

All the gentlemen alluded to, are, I understand, the influential political friends of the Hon. Secretary of State⁴; and I am sensible therefore of the danger I incur in exposing to you this probable combination to advance the Pennsylvania interest at the expense of the South and West. But, I should be deficient in my duty to you both as your Clerk and obliged personal friend, if I hesitated to lay before you the information herein communicated.

THOS. L. RAGSDALE

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed locally. Polk's AEI on the cover states that he referred Ragsdale's charges to George Bancroft.

1. Formerly a clerk in the Navy Department, Thomas L. Ragsdale accepted appointment in 1845 as a clerk in the office of the First Auditor of the Treasury.
2. Reference to A. B. Warford, brother-in-law of James and Simon Cameron.
3. These twelve Pennsylvania contractors are not identified further.
4. James Buchanan.

FROM WILLIAM S. COLQUHOUN¹

Sir,

Washington Aug. 8th 1845

I trust it has fallen to your lot to reorganize the Militia of this Dist. This great and important duty of the Executive, has been neglected too long. Nearly thirty years have passed away, since any efficient action of the Militia of the Dist., has been exhibited as formerly. Notwithstanding, the troubled state of our relations with England for years; we here in Washington, appear to have resigned ourselves to another Bladensburg defeat.²

An incident reminded me of this defeat in carrying out the requirements of the Constitution in reference to this arm of the National defense (and I regret to say the same apathy prevails in all the States). The occurrence I refer to, was that in passing a store a youth requested me to lend him a dollar to buy a musket. On enquiry, I found that hundreds of muskets have been sold by the Govt. and that I could have choice for 1.50 from the purchasers. The evil effects of selling public

arms is seen at a glance. Civil War and rebellion is one of the fruits of this system. Servile insurrection is greatly to be feared whilst arms can be obtained at 1\$ & 1.50; they are sold publicly at auction and in this city where abolitionists abound (and I hope you will ferret them out of office). Negroes bid for them and buy them with impunity. Our Government has been for more than 30 years manufacturing arms which by neglect and want of use become unfit for service, and instead of re-manufacturing them as all other Governments do we ingloriously sell them for less than 1/10th of their value.

After the seven years war the French Govt gave orders for the sale of all the muskets & pistols on hand which had been used from the period of the Campaigns of the Duke of Marlborough. The sale took place, and not until Marshall Vauban³ met the trains of Wagons containing them on the great road to the Rhine was it known that France was almost entirely disarmed. He hastened to Paris had the order countermanded and the sale cancelled. But the great error in selling Government Arms is the permission to trade in them. Before this was the case and when I was in the Militia as an officer in time of the War and afterwards I could legally seize any public arms in the hands of any one not authorised to use them. Now it is different, and arms issued to the Militia are bought and sold as private property. Assuredly this ought to be prevented. England marks her public property with a crow foot, the U States with U.S.—England works up all her old materials the U. States sells them at less than 1/10th their cost or value. Briefly sir I have placed this matter before you and I hope you will reflect on it *independently*; for if referred to the Ordnance dept. (whose error it has been to cause this irregularity) it will be refuted.

But to return to the reorganization of the Militia let a board of officers be convened and the militia arranged into companies of 100 men with a Captain and three Lieuts. The boundaries of the company beats be surveyed, and marked out and the Companies to be armed and mustered four times a year. The want of legal obligations to Volunteers, renders them insubordinate and the most pernicious effects of the system is the separation of the foreigners from the natives by placing them in independent companies. Whilst the reverse is the case when Natives and foreign or adopted Citizens stand shoulder to shoulder in the ranks. This volunteer system will eventually form two separate and distinct interests Native and foreign and in case of War the most disastrous consequences might ensue. The above is humbly submitted by

W. S. C.

FORMERLY OF THE ARMY

ALI. DLC—JKP. Addressed locally. Endorsement in clerk's hand reads as follows: "W.S.C. formerly of the army' no doubt *W. S. Colquhoun*. Against the sale of arms, showing the dangers and abuses of doing so—in favor of reorganizing the militia of the Dist Columbia—does not wish this letter referred to the Ordnance Bureau."

1. A lieutenant in the army from 1819 to 1829, William S. Colquhoun served as the interim collector of customs at Matamoros in 1848. Following the Mexican War he applied for the consulship at Matamoros but did not receive the appointment.

2. Reference is to the defeat of American forces at the Battle of Bladensburg, August 24, 1814. The retreat of the Maryland and Washington City militias allowed British troops to enter Washington and burn the Capitol, the president's mansion, and numerous public buildings.

3. Faulty reference is probably to Sebastien le Prestre de Vauban, French marshal and engineer who died in 1707.

FROM J. GEORGE HARRIS

(Friday night 10 o'clock.)

Nashville Aug 8. 1845

My Dear Sir

I hasten to send you returns of late elections so far as received, giving our gains and losses as compared with county majorities in the Presidential election of 1844.

	dem gains	dem losses
Maury ...	—	87
Davidson ...	—	24
Wilson ...	276	—
Lawrence ...	(reported)	40
Sumner ...	—	71
Robertson ...	14	—
Williamson ...	279	—
Bedford ...	80	—
Giles ...	94	—
Rutherford ...	80	—
Reported by the stage drivers	Hickman ...	50
	Dickson ...	60
nothing reliable	Humphries ...	30

Thus you will perceive that we are gaining largely in the great whig counties & losing a few in the great democratic counties.

You will also perceive that in the ten counties from which reliable

returns are in we are gaining at the rate of from sixty to seventy in each, which would carry our majority beyond five thousand.

Frierson¹ is elected to the Legislature from Bedford. Allen has beaten Buchanan in Lawrence by six votes.²

Gentry is undoubtedly elected to Congress and Muirhead (of Wilson) to our Legislature.³ So our unfortunate Governor Jones⁴ is *no more*.

The probability is that there will be from 20,000 to 30,000 votes less in the aggregate than were polled last autumn.

Mr. Currin⁵ (a whig) who arrived in the stage from Memphis to night says that the facts of Stanton's⁶ being shot by Christian⁷ will ensure his election. I write in great haste. Please communicate its contents as you please.

J. GEO. HARRIS

ALS. Polk Memorial Association, Columbia. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 16, 1845.

1. Erwin J. Frierson.

2. William B. Allen and Franklin M. Buchanan. Elected as a Democrat to the Tennessee House in 1845, Allen served as a captain of volunteers in the Mexican War and was killed at the Battle of Monterrey in 1846. A Lawrence County Whig, Buchanan served several terms in the Tennessee House, 1837–43 and 1847–49.

3. Meredith P. Gentry and John Muirhead. Mayor of Lebanon from 1829 until 1830, Muirhead served as a Whig in the Tennessee House, 1841–43, and the Senate, 1845–49.

4. James C. Jones.

5. Not identified further.

6. Frederick P. Stanton.

7. Harris' reference is to J. R. Christian, a Memphis physician. On August 9, 1845, the *Nashville Union* reported that Christian had shot Stanton following a July 30 political rally in Germantown, Tenn.

FROM ROMULUS M. SAUNDERS

My dear Sir,

Raleigh Augt. 8, '45

I thank you for your kind letter of the 4th instant. I should as a matter of choice prefer the mission to Spain above all others, and only suggested Berlin under the impression that it might be more agreeable to my family on account of the Protestant worship and the education of my children. But I take it there would be no difficulty on this score in Madrid. The health of Mrs Saunders¹ not being good and her spirits still worn owing to our dreadful affliction of last winter, on her account & to avoid a winters voyage, I ventured to suggest an early day. So far as I am personally concerned, a few months delay would not be

objectionable. But I beg these matters may not be allowed to change any arrangements of yr own.

Our election is just over. I have no fears of this part of the State. I have some doubts as to the Washington & Rockingham districts—neither of our candidates are very strong. I have strong hopes of the Charlotte district. Fishers² election would aid us greatly in regaining the State.

Allow me to congratulate you on the success of Texas annexation. I fear there may be a difficulty on the part of some Senators. Mr. Haywood,³ remarked to me a few days since, he wished you had by some sort of compact removed the scruples of some Senators, but I should think public opinion was too strong to admit any difficulty.

When you shall have decided as to the Mission, time &c I shall be glad to be advised, that I may arrange my private matters.

R. M. SAUNDERS

ALS. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Published in *NCHR*, XVI, pp. 444–45. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 9, 1845.

1. Anna Heyes Johnson Saunders.
2. Charles Fisher served one term in the North Carolina Senate, 1818; won election to two terms in the U.S. House, 1819–21 and 1839–41; and served as a Democrat in the North Carolina House, 1821–36.
3. William H. Haywood, Jr., served several terms in the North Carolina House prior to his election as a Democrat to the U.S. Senate in 1843; he resigned his seat in 1846 rather than obey unacceptable instructions from the state legislature.

FROM JOHN TYLER

White Sulphur Springs

Dear Sir: Greenbriar County, Va. August 8. 1845

I feel it to be but a naked and sheer act of justice to Major Noah of New-York¹ in compliance with the earnest request of a friend of his, to state that Major Noah was recommended to me for the mission to Constantinople by many of the Synagogues and most of the distinguished Israelites of the U. States, by persons of the same persuasion equally distinguished in Europe, and by many most respectable citizens of the U. States unconnected with the Jewish Nation and whose recommendations and opinions are entitled to the highest consideration.

This statement is called for by the fact that his testimonials—

supposed to have been left with me, cannot be found and that justice to Major Noah would seem to require that he should have all the benefit this statement can give him in the absence of his testimonials. Without designing to do more than to make the above statement to avail as far as it may, and abstaining from the expression of any sentiment or wish upon the subject

J. TYLER

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 12, 1845.

1. A native of Philadelphia, Mordecai M. Noah served as U.S. consul to Tunis from 1813 until 1816. Upon his return to the United States he settled in New York City and until his death in 1851 edited several newspapers, including the *National Advocate*, the *New York Enquirer*, and the *Evening Star*. Noah served as a sheriff of New York, 1822–23, and as associate judge of the New York Court of Sessions, 1841–42. In 1845 he published a collection of his newspaper essays, *Gleanings from a Gathered Harvest*.

FROM JAMES WALKER

Dear Sir,

Columbia Aug. 8. 1845

We had a remarkably quiet election on yesterday. The result is

Brown	1852
Foster	1263
Martin	1808
Kendrick ¹	1203
Thomas	1937
Williford ²	1010
Wilkes	1737
Gordon	1662
Spinks	1069
Potter ³	912

falling off since P.E. ⁴	185
Brown's loss on Presidential election	89
gain upon the election of 1843	236

In Giles Brown's majority 187 & two precincts to hear from, that it is thought may reduce his majority to 125. Buchanan⁵ is certainly elected in Giles by a majority of about 125.

Our Democracy have behaved exceedingly well— almost to a man they adhered to the regular nomination, repudiating the Volunteer candidates, Spinks & Potter. Would you believe it “all the decency” at this precinct voted for Spinks. Dr. Polk⁶ voted for him. As the Dr. & myself have quit speaking, I cannot rally him upon this small specimen of Federal animosity. The Governor’s election is certainly doubtful. I do not like the falling off from the Presidential election but that was an extraordinary effort with our Democracy, far better than we expected. If we take Maury for the criterion of change & estimate from the election of 1843, Brown is certainly elected. I think there can scarcely be a doubt of our carrying the Legislature.

JAMES WALKER

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk’s AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 16, 1845.

1. In Tennessee’s Sixth Congressional District race Barkly Martin defeated William P. Kendrick. A Columbia lawyer and Democrat, Martin served three terms in the Tennessee House, 1839–41, 1847–49, and 1851–53, and sat for one term in the Tennessee Senate, 1841–43. He won election to the U.S. House and served from 1845 until 1847. Kendrick, the unsuccessful Whig candidate, subsequently joined the American party and represented Wayne County in the Tennessee House, 1857–59.

2. In the contest for the Maury/Giles seat in the Tennessee Senate, Jonas E. Thomas defeated the Whig candidate, probably William L. Willeford. A successful lawyer and farmer, Thomas first represented Maury County in the Tennessee House, 1835–41, and then sat for Maury and Giles counties in the Tennessee Senate, 1845–47. Willeford is not identified further.

3. In contests for seats in the Tennessee House, Richard A. L. Wilkes and Powhatan Gordon defeated John C. Spinks and James O. Potter respectively. A Maury County Democrat, Wilkes served two terms in the Tennessee House, 1845–49, and won election to one term in the Tennessee Senate, 1849–51. Gordon represented Maury County as a Democrat in the Tennessee House for two terms, 1843–47, and ran unsuccessfully for the U.S. House on the American party ticket in 1855. Spinks, a Maury County planter, is not identified further. Prior to succeeding Pleasant Nelson as circuit court clerk in Maury County in 1844, Potter served as postmaster at Spring Hill.

4. Reference is to a decline from the aggregate vote for Clay and Polk in the presidential election of 1844.

5. A Giles County Democrat, John Buchanan served several terms in the Tennessee House, 1835–37, 1839–43, and 1845–47.

6. A Maury County physician, William Julius Polk was the son of William Polk of Raleigh, N.C., a half-brother to Lucius and Leonidas Polk, and the president’s cousin twice removed.

FROM J. GEORGE HARRIS

My Dear Sir, Nashville Aug 9. 1845

I continue to send you returns of our State Election as follows:

	dem gains	dem losses
Warren	—	54
Smith	122	—
Cannon	20	—
Montgomery	45	—
Lawrence		same as last year

In fourteen counties from which we have reliable returns there is a nett gain of 820 for the democracy. In these Brown runs about 200 stronger than did Pres. Polk. Foster runs about 620 short of Mr. Clay, in 1844.

There is a rumor that we have gained 200 in Lincoln.

The Whigs seem to have given up that Brown is elected Governor. Their hopes are all upon the Legislature.

The confidence of our friends that we have carried everything increases every hour.

J. GEO. HARRIS

ALS. Polk Memorial Association, Columbia. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 16, 1845.

TO WILLIAM H. HAYWOOD, JR.

My dear Sir, Washington City 9th Augt. 1845

If you knew how constantly my time has been occupied, and how utterly impossible it has been to give proper attention to my correspondence with my friends, you would I know, readily excuse me for failing to write to you (as I desired to have done) for so long a time. I received your very acceptable and friendly letter in May last,¹ and intended to have answered it, but other engagements prevented, at that time, my attention being called to other matters, and I feel now, that I owe you many apologies for the delay. The truth is, I have scarcely written half a dozen letters except such as my official duties required me to write since I saw you.

My administration thus far has encountered quite as little opposition as I anticipated. I have been much perplexed, and have had some trouble in the dispensation of the public patronage. When there are

half a dozen applicants for the same office, all cannot be gratified, and those who are disappointed will as a matter of course complain. But these are small matters, and of comparatively little consideration. I most sincerely wish that I had not an office to bestow. So far as principle and the policy of the government are concerned, the path of duty lies plain before me, and I shall pursue it whatever may be the consequences, to myself without turning to the right or to the left. My political opinions are not of yesterday, but are those of my whole public life. They were publicly proclaimed before my election, and will be sternly maintained.

The action of the Government and people of Texas, on the question of annexion, shows I think the wisdom of the choice of the alternative propositions which was made. If the other alternative had been chosen, I think we have now abundant evidence to prove that Texas would probably have been lost to the Union. If negotiations had been opened by commissioners great delay would necessarily have taken place, giving ample opportunity to *British* and *French* intrigue to have seriously embarrassed, if not defeated annexation. It was not until after I entered upon my duties that I had an opportunity deliberately to consider of the two propositions, and to select between them. I acted upon my own best judgment and the result has proved that I was right. You are probably apprized too of the fact, that one of the last acts of the late administration was to select the same alternative: and when I came in, I found that an express messenger had been despatched with it to the Texan government. My own judgement approved the selection, though not all the views contained in the despatch which had been sent out. These were modified and a second messenger quickly followed the first. These are matters which I feel at liberty to state to you, as one of the Senators, and in such matters, one of my constitutional advisers: they are stated however for yourself alone. It is probable that *Texas* Senators and Representatives will be chosen under the new constitution, which the convention are framing and that they will appear here next winter with their state constitution in their hands, ready to take their seats as soon as the act of admission of Texas is passed by Congress. This was the course pursued by Michigan when she was admitted. I cannot anticipate any difficulty in our Congress. The national faith stands pledged, to admit Texas as a state, if she presents a Republican Constitution (as no doubt she will) and that faith, I have no doubt will be observed. The abolition tinctures of a small portion of Congress, cannot I think seriously embarrass her admission. Regarding Texas as now virtually a part of our country, I have yielded to the invitation of the Texan Congress and convention,

and have ordered a part of our land and naval forces to her frontier, to protect and defend her people and territory against the renewed invasion of Mexico. Care has been taken, that all our military and naval movements shall be strictly defensive. We will not be the aggressors upon Mexico; but if her army shall cross the Del Norte and invade Texas, we will if we can drive her army, to her own territory. Less than this, in good faith to Texas, I think this government could not have done. We invited Texas to unite her destinies with our own. She has accepted the invitation, upon the terms proposed, without limitation, alteration, or restriction and if because she has done so, she is invaded by the Mexican Army, surely we are bound to give her our aid in her defence.

Nothing has occurred upon the Oregon question which it is proper for me to state, further than to say, that the negotiations pending during the last year have not been brought to a close.

I have much more which I would be pleased to say to you, but I have already written a long letter, and my time is limited. I find my Dear Sir, that the Presidential office is no sinecure or bed of roses. I have never in my life, labored more constantly or intensely than I have since the 4th of March. Fortunately however my health continues good and I can endure as much labor as most men. I have not been absent from the seat of government a single day, and do not expect to be until after the next Congress, if at all, during my time.

With kind salutations of Mrs. Polk and myself to Mrs. Haywood² . . .

JAMES K. POLK

LS, draft. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Raleigh; marked "Copy" and "Confidential."

1. See William H. Haywood, Jr., to Polk, May 19, 1845.
2. Not identified further.

FROM ROBERT H. MORRIS¹

My Dear Sir, New York August 9th 1845

The bearer is Moses Y Beach Esq² the proprietor and Editor of the New York Sun, a paper of the largest circulation in the Union. In this city alone he circulates daily, excluding extras and weekly papers, over Thirty four Thousand.

His paper without being a partizan print, is most thoroughly democratic upon every principle, and was the first not only at the north but I believe in the Union that Started Texas Annexation. In this city his print is beyond all question the most influential among the masses.

Mr. Beach is a plain, practical strong minded man, discriminating and schrewd, one of our best, most wealthy and influential citizens. In favour of the right he is an important auxiliary.

I commend him to your favour and kindness.

ROBT. H. MORRIS

ALS. DLC–JKP. Probably delivered in person. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 11, 1845.

1. A lawyer and Democrat, Morris served three terms as mayor of New York City, 1841–44; Polk appointed him postmaster of the city in December 1845.

2. Apprenticed as a mechanic, Beach became the sole proprietor and editor of the *New York Sun*, the most popular of the "penny press" newspapers, in 1838. An innovator in newspaper management, he helped found the Associated Press during the Mexican War. In January 1847, Polk appointed him a confidential agent of the U.S. in Mexico to seek an end to the conflict.

FROM JAMES BUCHANAN

My dear Sir,

Bedford Springs 11 August 1845

Yours of the 7th Instant reached me on Saturday night. In obedience to its suggestion I should have left here this morning if I could have done so without producing a sensation. I shall take my departure tomorrow morning & expect to be with you on Wednesday evening, unless, in the mean time, news from Mexico should be received of a pacific character. I have important business of a private nature to transact between fifty & sixty miles from this which has been long neglected: and should I receive any authentic & favorable news by this evenings mail, then you need not expect me on Wednesday.

In my opinion it was highly proper to increase the force on the Del Norte. It proved to be much smaller than you had expected. Whilst expressing this conviction, my opinion has in no degree been changed by Baron Gerolt's¹ news. Our advices from the consul at Mexico² are as late as his information: & I have considerable regard for Mr. Parrot's³ judgment. It was the most natural thing in the world for the Mexican Government to march their forces as far from the capitol as possible both for the sake of self preservation & to produce an excitement in favor of Herrera's⁴ election by a demonstration in Texas. It is strange we have not yet heard from the Mexican Congress.

If the Barons news should prove to be correct, then it is clearly our policy to temporise, as to time, with Great Britain & to delay our answer for the present. To say to her, in strong terms, that we will insist upon our extreme right would be to exclude her altogether from any outlet to the Pacific, although she would still be the undisputed owner

of more territory than ourselves west of the Rocky mountains. The Russian line is limited to the stripe between the coast & the mountains. We ought not, in my opinion, to do any thing at the present moment which might tend to make G.B. the ally of Mexico, in case of war when the delay of a few weeks can do no possible injury. But I need not indulge in these hasty speculations; because I shall probably have the pleasure of seeing you before the arrival of this letter, in case the mail is as much deranged on returning from Bedford to Washington as it is in coming from Washington to Bedford. The last *Union*⁵ received here is that of Thursday.

I shall prepare the way to day for leaving here without observation tomorrow.

JAMES BUCHANAN

ALS. DLC–JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City.

1. Baron Friedrich von Gerolt served as Prussian minister to Mexico, 1836–44, and as minister to the United States, 1844–68. From 1868 until 1871 he served as minister of the North German Confederation to the United States.

2. A native of New York, John Black received appointment as consul at Mexico City in 1843.

3. A native of Virginia and a trained dentist, William S. Parrott engaged in Mexican business operations that subsequently led him to file indemnity claims against the Mexican government. On March 28, 1845, Polk appointed Parrott to serve as a confidential agent of the United States in Mexico; Parrott later held the post of secretary of legation in Mexico before and after the war.

4. A veteran of Mexico's struggle for independence, José Joaquín Herrera served as acting president of Mexico, 1844–45. He supported negotiation with the United States on the questions of boundaries and Texas independence but was deposed by Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga. Although opposed to war with the United States, he acted as second in command to Santa Anna, 1846–47. Elected president in 1848, Herrera served until 1851.

5. *Washington Union*.

FROM JOHN LAW¹

Vincennes, Ind. August 11, 1845

Law states that he just returned from a mass meeting in southern Illinois attended by an estimated two or three thousand supporters of Oregon annexation. He notes that all the prominent men of the area attended, including Sidney Breese, John A. McClernand, and Orlando Ficklin.² Law adds that without dissent the crowd passed resolutions declaring, "Oregon was ours—ours from the 42^o to 54^o40'—no compromise no arbitration—no negotiation. The whole or none." Informing Polk that the *Washington Union* will likely publish a copy of the resolutions, Law concludes that he has "never

witnessed a more unanimous expression of public sentiment on any occasion” and expects similar meetings will be “gotten up in all the Western and South Western States.”

In addition, Law apprises Polk of Indiana election results. He predicts a “decided majority” for the Democrats in the state legislature and concludes Indiana will stand “among the *certain* democratic states of the Union.”

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk’s AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 19, 1845.

1. An Indiana lawyer and legislator, Law served as a delegate to the 1844 Democratic National Convention, as a judge for the Seventh Circuit Court of Indiana, and as a two-term member of the U.S. House, 1861–65.

2. An Illinois Democrat and attorney, Breese served as U.S. district attorney from 1827 until 1829 and sat for one term in the U.S. Senate, 1843–49. Judge of the Circuit Court of Illinois, 1855–57, he served on the state supreme court from 1857 until his death in 1878. An Illinois lawyer, McClelland served several terms in the state legislature, 1836–43, before winning election as a Democrat to four terms in the U.S. House, 1843–51; he was returned to the House again in 1859 and served until October 1861, when he resigned to accept a commission in the Union army. A member of the Illinois House, 1835, 1838, and 1842, Ficklin won election to three terms as a Democrat in the U.S. House, 1843–49 and 1851–53, and served as a Democratic presidential elector in 1856.

TO JAMES WALKER

Dear Sir: Washington City Augst. 11th 1845

I received your letter of the 21st ult. some days ago, but have been too much engaged to answer it until now. As to the *Lewis* matter it will effect no one injuriously but himself. It is fortunately out of his power to shake the public confidence in my fidelity and friendship to *Genl Jackson*, or of the Genl’s Friendship for me. I think you have taken the right course as to the name designated by the *seven stars*,¹ in the extract of the letter published by *Lewis*. Let it pass off silently. The Genl had no doubt been deceived by false information communicated to him, probably by *Lewis* himself. The publication of the extract from *Genl Jackson*’s letter proves *Lewis* to be base and unworthy, as I knew him to be before, and therefore I removed him.

In regard to *Mr Pickett*’s desire to have the place at *Marsailles* it is attended with much embarrassment. When you were here I supposed it might be in my power to give him that agency, and so intimated to you. Further information satisfied me that I cannot do so, with propriety, nor indeed without subjecting myself to great public censure, and my administration to severe attack. Having become satisfied of this, I

addressed *Mr Pickett* a letter informing him, on the 26th of June last.² I addressed it under cover of an envelope to the House of Messrs W. S. Pickett & Co. New Orleans. The letter enclosed was sealed and marked on the outside *private*. In a short note enclosing it, I requested that if *Mr. Pickett* had left New Orleans when it arrived that it should be forwarded to him, stating that it was of a private character and not relating to the business of the House. I am surprised that *Mr. Pickett* had not received it before the date of your letter. I informed *Mr. Pickett* that *Mr. Denby* who now holds the place, was a Virginian and that great interest was taken in his behalf by leading men of that State. Among the number are *Judge Daniel*³ of the Supreme Court, Judge Mason and others. Very strong letters have been addressed to me, and earnest appeals made against his removal. Though appointed by *Mr. Tyler*, he is represented to have been a uniform, consistent, and sound Democrat, and very active in sustaining Democratic men and measures in Virginia. These are facts of which I was not apprised when you were here. Such a man I am sure you would not ask me to remove. If I were to do so, and to appoint a relative of mine in his stead, it would do my administration incalculable mischief. As to *Havre* the same difficulties exist which did on the 4th of March. However old *Mr. Beasley*⁴ may be, he has great popularity. *Mr. King* writes from *Paris*, urging that he be retained. Such was the strong desire of Genl. Cass: and if I were to remove him, the chances are that any man I could name as his successor would be rejected by the Senate. Under all the circumstances *Mr. Pickett* needs to be patient. I would be glad to serve him if I could do so, consistently with my duty to the public and to myself. At present I can not do so.

I am more sensitive too, upon another point, than I was when I saw you. I have been subjected to abuse because I renominated *Wm. H. Polk*⁵. If it was to do again I would hesitate long before I would do it, though under the circumstances existing at the time, all considerate men would approve it. It has been charged too, that I have given my nephew *J. Knox Walker* an honourable & lucrative office. Various rumours have already been sent abroad by letter writers here that I would appoint *Mr. Pickett* another relative to a good office, that I had appointed *Mr. Cargill*⁶ (who is charged to be a relative) and that I was to appoint other relatives to office. Now as to *Knox* I had precedent and usage for his selection, and nothing can be made out of his appointment to my prejudice. However anxious therefore I may be to promote the interest of your family I can not do so at this time, and I am sure you will see the wisdom and propriety of my course. My brother in law *Dr. Rucker*⁷ became greatly excited because I did not appoint his brother⁸

who resides in Mississippi Marshall of the Southern District of that state. I can not help it. I could not yield to his wishes because it was improper that I should. Again *Thos. Polk*⁹ (the son of uncle William¹⁰ to whom you know I am under personal obligation) wants to be Receiver of a land office in Missouri. The Son-in-law of *John P. Campbell*¹¹ wants another. *Alexander Nelson*¹² of Bolivar who married *Eugenia* wants an office. There are others too of my relations collaterally, who want office. If it were a private or personal matter, it would be one thing, and I would be glad to serve them. But when I am called to execute a public trust it is quite a different thing. Were I to yield to their wishes I should be justly chargeable with nepotism. None of my predecessors, unless it be *Mr. Tyler*, have done so. I can not do so, and if I receive the displeasure of any relative by refusing, I shall regret it, but still I shall be satisfied that I have acted properly. After what I have said, you will see that there are a combination of cogent reasons why I can not gratify Mr. Pickett at present. It may be & I hope it will be so, that during my administration I may have it in my power to serve him, but not at present. Had Mr. Pickett received my letter, it would have been unnecessary for me to have written you this long letter. Knox & Augusta the children and servants have all gone to Lynchburg, which increases my labours at present, having to perform the duties of secretary as well as President. Knox expected to be back in two weeks from the time he left. Augusta and the children expected to remain until the last of Sept.

JAMES K. POLK

L, draft. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Columbia; marked “Copy” and “Private.”

1. In a published version of Andrew Jackson’s letter to William B. Lewis of April 8, 1845, the editor of the Nashville *Republican Banner* substituted seven asterisks for the name of Simon Cameron. See A. O. P. Nicholson to Polk, July 13, 1845.

2. See Polk to William S. Pickett, June 26, 1845. L. DLC–JKP.

3. A native Virginian, Peter V. Daniel served as associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court from 1841 until his death in 1860.

4. Reuben G. Beasley.

5. Polk’s only surviving brother, William H. Polk, practiced law in Columbia and served three terms in the Tennessee House, 1841–45 and 1857–59, and one term in the U.S. House, 1851–53. In December 1844 he traveled to Washington to secure a diplomatic post. President Tyler appointed him chargé d’affaires to the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, but the Senate failed to act on the nomination. Renominated by the new president, William won confirmation on March 13, 1845, and served as U.S. minister to Naples until 1847.

6. Polk probably refers to Henry A. Cargill, who was appointed deputy collector of the New York City Customs House in 1845.

7. William R. Rucker.
8. John W. Rucker, Sarah C. Polk's brother, is not identified further.
9. Thomas M. Polk, son of William Wilson Polk, is not identified further.
10. Reference is to William Wilson Polk. Known in family lore as "Stingy Bill," William Wilson received a captain's commission in the Maury County militia in 1808; he subsequently moved to Middleburg in Hardeman County; and by 1840 he had removed to Phillips County, Ark. Polk had borrowed \$9,000 from his wealthy uncle and had not repaid the "personal obligation."
11. A son of John and Matilda Golden Polk Campbell, John Polk Campbell founded Springfield, Mo., and held the post of receiver of public monies at that place from 1839 until 1842. Campbell's son-in-law is not identified further.
12. Alexander Neilson married Eugenia Polk, a daughter of Ezekiel Polk. Neilson is not identified further.

FROM AMOS KENDALL

My Dear Sir,

New York Aug. 12th 1845

I met today Mr. Townsend¹ who is connected with the Express Office, and he told me he had a letter of recent date from Gen. Almonte² of Mexico, in which he said that the present government of Mexico is opposed to war with the United States; that a powerful minority if not a majority of Congress, is in favor of war; that the people are almost unanimously in favor of war; and that another revolution was probable which would bring men into power on the principle of instant war.

Mr. T. further stated, that Almonte told him before he left New York, that he was opposed to war and should exert all his influence with the government of Mexico to prevent it. His impression now is, that the war spirit will overthrow the government itself.

I give you this information because I deem it of some importance though you may have that which is equally authentic.

AMOS KENDALL

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked "Private." Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 14, 1845.

1. Reference is to William B. Townsend, editor of the *New York Express*.
2. Juan N. Almonte, a general in the Mexican army, served as Mexican minister to the United States from 1842 until 1845, when he was recalled.

TO JAMES E. SAUNDERS¹

My dear Sir,

Washington City 12th August 1845

There are several applicants for the appointment of Collector of the port of Mobile. I have carefully examined all the testimonials before

me, and have made up my mind to appoint you. On consulting Gov. Bagby² this morning who is not unfavorable to your appointment he informed me that he had understood that you left *Mobile* in May and were probably spending the summer in the neighborhood of Courtland. It at once occurred to me that it might embarrass the business of the Custom House if I removed the present incumbent and appointed you, and you should be absent from Mobile when your appointment arrived at that place; I write now to say, that if on receiving this letter, you inform me that you will return to *Mobile* immediately, (which is as I understand your permanent residence, and that you only spend the summer in the upper country) I will forward to you the appointment. It is important to the public interests as well as on other accounts, that you should be at Mobile, when the change takes place. I will write to Dr. Shackelford³ to forward this letter to you, if you are not in the neighborhood of *Courtland* when it reaches that place.

JAMES K. POLK

P.S. I suggest to you the propriety of saying nothing about my intention to appoint you, until you receive your commission at Mobile. J.K.P.⁴

L, draft. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Courtland, Alabama; marked “Copy” and “Private.”

1. An educator and Democratic politician, Saunders represented Lawrence County in the Alabama legislature in 1840. He moved to Mobile in 1842 to engage in commercial operations and received the appointment as collector of customs for that port in 1845.

2. A Democrat and an ally of Thomas H. Benton, Arthur P. Bagby served as governor of Alabama, 1837–41; U.S. senator, 1841–48; and minister to Russia, 1848–49.

3. Polk interlined “Dr. Shackelford” and deleted “Major Watkins.” A physician, John (Jack) Shackelford served in the Alabama Senate, 1822–24. In 1836, he raised, outfitted, and headed a company of volunteers that joined James W. Fannin’s command in the Texas Revolution; he survived the Goliad Massacre, escaped capture, and returned to his medical practice in Courtland, Ala. A cotton planter, Robert H. Watkins of Lawrence County, Ala., was the father-in-law of James E. Saunders.

4. Postscript in Polk’s hand.

FROM ROMULUS M. SAUNDERS

My dear Sir,

Raleigh Augt. 12. ’45

From what we hear I think it certain, we have elected *Six* & the *Whigs three*, to the next Congress. I very much regret the loss of Fishers election, for whilst we have gained one in the East, the

strength is in the West. I fear Genl. Dromgooles ill-timed letter about Barringer¹ & the threat injured us in Mecklenburg. I send you The Register,² in which I have marked the districts. Biggs has beaten Outlaw & so we think Clark is elected in the Edgcomb district.³ Reid⁴ is certainly elected.

R. M. SAUNDERS

ALS. DLC–JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City. Published in *NCHR*, XVI, pp. 444–45. Polk's AE states that he received this letter on August 16, 1845.

1. George C. Dromgoole and Daniel M. Barringer. Dromgoole, a Virginia lawyer, served five terms in the U.S. House, 1835–41 and 1843–47. Barringer won election to several terms as a Whig in the North Carolina House, 1829–34, 1840, and 1842, and served three terms in the U.S. House, 1843–49. Appointed U.S. minister to Spain in 1849, Barringer served until 1853. Saunders' reference is not identified further.

2. *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Gazette*. Enclosure not found.

3. Asa Biggs, David Outlaw, and Henry S. Clark. A North Carolina attorney, Biggs won election as a Democrat to one term in the U.S. House, 1845–47. He served in the U.S. Senate, 1855–58, and as judge of the U.S. district court of North Carolina, 1858–61. Outlaw served in the North Carolina House, 1831–34, 1854, and 1858, and won election as a Whig to three terms in the U.S. House, 1847–53. A North Carolina Democrat, Clark sat one term in the U.S. House, 1845–47.

4. David S. Reid served in the North Carolina Senate, 1835–42, and won election to two terms as a Democrat in the U.S. House, 1843–47. He served as governor of North Carolina, 1850–54, and in the U.S. Senate, 1854–59.

FROM J. GEORGE HARRIS

Wednes. Night 12 o'clock

Nashville Aug 13. 1845

My Dear Sir

The E. Ten mail, just in, settles everything. It brings three dem gains for the Legislature, shewing so far as heard from, a majority of one in the Senate and three in the Legislature, *four* on joint ballot. This calculation is predicated on the supposition that the few counties to be heard from come in as they did before. We expect one or two more *gain*, nor do we fear losses.

We have lost Blackwell,¹ but we have gained Stanton, as also Senator & floater from Memphis district.

Rest assured, we have our Governor, Legislature and a majority of Congressmen.

We think Brown's majority will be not less than fifteen hundred and will probably exceed 2,000.

Both parties agree that we have carried every thing. The counties to be heard from cannot affect the expected result.

J. GEO. HARRIS

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 20, 1845.

1. A Democrat from Athens, Julius W. Blackwell won election to the U.S. House from the Fourth District in 1839 and from the Third District in 1843.

FROM J. GEORGE HARRIS

My Dear Sir

Nashville Te Aug 14. 1845

It is as I wrote you last night. We have carried a majority of every thing. I was compelled to write you on a piece of wrapping paper, it being midnight and none other at hand. We are rejoiced in our hearts, and yet our friends bear the triumph quietly, and without any appearances of a desire to deepen the wounds of our opponents.

Thus has your own State done her duty—thus added a crowning glory to the triumph of 1844. An intelligent discriminating people have quietly and carefully examined the principles of your administrative programme as well as the acts which have followed, and without any extraordinary excitement have recorded their entire approbation of your course.

Permit me to congratulate you and the country on this auspicious result, which renders Tennessee unquestionably democratic for years to come.

J. GEO. HARRIS

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 21, 1845.

FROM JOHN A. MAIRS¹

Dear Sir

[Yalobusha County, Miss.]² August 14th 1845

I nough take the oppitunity of riting you a fewlins to inform you that we are all well at present hoping thes lins will fin you enjoy the saime. I rought you 17th of July.³ We have Bin vary dry sense that time. The coten has failed some oughing to the drouth thoug we had a fine rane saturday & monday and I stil think If It is seasonabl frome this we will make a fine crope of coten. Our corn is good. We saved a nise lot of foder not a drop of rane on it untwil housed. The hands preforms thire duty well as yet. We have done some clearing & going on finely on the negrose clothing &c. We are nough piking out cotin. But it is not much

opin. But I think it will give me aplenty to doing. The stock looks well In good helth. It has Bin vary dry in some parts of this county. The ar making nothing so i am told. I have nothing More of Intrust only reckon yours

JOHN A. MAIRS

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk’s AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 29, 1845.

1. Mairs became the overseer of Polk’s Mississippi plantation in 1845.
2. Place identified through content analysis.
3. Letter not found.

FROM JOSHUA L. MARTIN¹

Tuscaloosa, Ala. August 14, 1845

Martin announces his victory in Alabama’s gubernatorial election with a majority “of near 5000 votes” over his chief opponent, Nathaniel Terry.² However, he claims that Democratic newspapers in the state have misled the “Democracy of the union” on his position in Alabama’s recent political controversy. Martin believes the Washington *Union* should publish his views so that they might “be fully, & correctly understood.” In addition, he expresses hope that Polk “may be early disabused of any erroneous impression” made by the Alabama Democratic press.

Explaining the crisis in Alabama, Martin concludes that mismanagement of the banks, under the control of the state legislature, precipitated the state’s financial difficulties. He notes that the banks’ debtors, having benefitted from the legislature’s passage of acts extending payment of debts to an undue length of time, “embrace nearly all of the office holders, politicians, & aspirants to office, as well as those who take the largest part in managing the political affairs of information on the indebtedness of their legislators and found “the avenue to information had been studiously guarded by those deeply interested to conceal the truth.” He alleges that Democratic members of the legislature attempted to circumvent the people with a nomination in convention of a candidate friendly to the “bank debtor influence” that selected Terry as the “regular nominee” of the Alabama Democracy.

Martin claims that he had no desire to seek the governorship but agreed to run after being “urged again & again” by the large body of Democrats dissatisfied with Terry’s irregular nomination. He believes his election “proves that the people are honest & will do right when they know the right” and will “give confidence to our bond holders, to the world, that Alabama is resolved to maintain her honor at all hazzards.” Martin offers assurances of his “undeviating” conduct as a Democrat for more than twenty-five years and concludes that throughout the gubernatorial campaign he adhered to the “strictest democratic doctrines.”

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk’s AE on the cover

reads in part: "I have shewn this letter to the Hon. *J. Y. Mason* & Hon. *James Buchanan*, as requested by Gov. Martin."

1. An Alabama attorney, Martin won election to several terms in the state house, 1822–28; served as state solicitor, 1827–31; won election to two terms as a Democrat in the U.S. House, 1835–39; and served as governor from 1845 until 1847.

2. A Limestone county planter, Nathaniel Terry served in the Alabama Senate from 1836 through 1844; he was president of that body for four years. In 1845, he ran unsuccessfully as the Democratic candidate for governor.

TO ROBERT BUTLER¹

My Dear Sir: Washington City 15th Augt. 1845

You have been already notified of your appointment as Surveyor General of Florida, to take effect on the 1st day of October next, on which day, the resignation of *Mr Conway*² will take effect.

I transmit to you herewith a Report from the Commissioner of the General Land Office,³ relating to the proposed removal of the office to *Tallahassee*. My impression is that *Tallahassee* being the seat of Government of the State, is the proper location for the office. Before I act however, I would be pleased to have the opinion of some of your leading citizens, who may be competent to judge. The opinions of *Governor Mosely*, *Mr Senator Wescott*, *Walker Anderson* & *Gov. Branch*, would have decided weight with me.⁴ Unless the public interest would suffer by the restoration of the office, to the seat of Government there is a manifest propriety in locating at that place. I will thank you to give me your own views, as well as to forward to me, the opinions of the gentlemen named, and others you may choose. I am altogether inclined to gratify your wishes, and hope I may be able to do so, with propriety. As you will not enter upon the duties of this office until the 1st of October, that will be ample time, for you to forward to me the information which will enable me to decide understandingly, and I hope according to your wishes.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Tallahassee.

1. Robert Butler served as surveyor for the Territory of Florida, 1824–42; appointed surveyor general of Florida by Polk in 1845, he served until 1849.

2. Valentine Y. Conway served as surveyor general of Florida from 1842 until 1845.

3. Enclosure not found.

4. William D. Moseley, James D. Westcott, Jr., Walker Anderson, and John Branch. Polk's classmate at the University of North Carolina, Moseley served in the North Carolina Senate, 1829–36, but lost his gubernatorial race in 1834.

He subsequently moved to Florida, where he served in the territorial legislature; in 1845 he won election as the first governor of the State of Florida. Westcott served as U.S. attorney for the middle district of the Territory of Florida, 1834–36; won election to one term in the territorial legislature, 1832; and served in the U.S. Senate, 1845–49. He removed to New York City in 1850 and practiced law. A native of Virginia, Anderson studied law in North Carolina and taught briefly as a professor of history and literature at the University of North Carolina, 1831–32. In 1845, Polk appointed him naval agent at Pensacola, a post he held until 1849. Anderson served as chief justice of the Florida Supreme Court from 1851 until 1853. Branch won election as governor of North Carolina, 1817–20, and as U.S. senator, 1823–29; he served as secretary of the navy from 1829 until his election to the U.S. House in 1831. Branch was appointed governor of Florida by Tyler in 1844.

FROM HENRY HORN

My Dear Sir,

Philadelphia 15th Augt 1845

In pursuance of your request¹ I called this morning upon Mr Harrison who wrote you in relation to your portrait.² He is willing as stated in his letter to you to sell the large picture which you have of course seen for Sixty dollars. It is without a frame and it occurred to me that you might prefer having it framed here. It can be done for 10 or 12 dollars. If so please advise me of your wishes and they shall meet my prompt attention.

It would have afforded me great pleasure to have presented the picture to Mrs Polk but fearing that I might meet the fate of the man from Baltimore who offered you the horse last spring I dare not venture.³

HENRY HORN

ALS. DLC–JKP. Marked “*Private.*” Polk’s AE on an unaddressed cover sheet reads: “Has bought for me, my portrait, painted by Sully. Recd. 16th Augt. 1845. Ansd. 18th Augt. 1845, & enclosed to Mr. Horn a check on New York for \$72.”

1. Polk wrote on August 13, 1845, asking if his portrait, painted by Thomas Sully, Jr., was for sale for \$60; Polk enclosed recently received letters tendering such an offer, which he thought might be a hoax. Polk also stated that Sarah Polk did not want the small full-length likeness. ALS. Not available for publication.

2. Possibly Virgil F. Harrison or M. F. Harrison, partners in a Philadelphia engraving firm. Letter not found.

3. See Thomas Lloyd to Polk, March 13, 1845. ALS. DLC–JKP.

FROM AARON V. BROWN

Dear Sir

Nashville August 16th 1845

I suppose that before this reaches you, you will have learned the welcome news that Tennessee has been rescued from the spoilers in all her departments—both branches of the legislature, the Govr. and a majority of the members of Congress. In looking over the field of battle, I feel proud of the improvement in our vote in the two extremes of the State. Our adversaries as you might well expect look quite mortified but I rejoice that our friends have not perpetrated a single act of indecorous exultation. Our friends have every where done their duty & none more effectively than H. M. Waterson in his Senatorial District. But for the defection of Dr Fonville¹ in Weakly our victory in the Western District, would have been complete—overwhelming. I now turn with infinite joy to the execution of my plans in reference to my little children—to gather them once more under the parental roof & superintend in person their education & to assist in the formation of proper habits of thinking as they grow up in the World. But who shall *assist* me in this pleasing task? Well, Mrs P. can guess better on that point I suspect than you can. I shall not however attempt to aid the sagacity of either of you on the point. But enough of *that*. Now as to the Oregon negotiation—If the case requires it let its termination lie over until you can obtain *the advice of the Senate* next winter as to the propriety of forming a treaty by which any portion of the territory claimed may be surrendered. If this course be *practicable* I should think it most adviseable in order to avoid future difficulties. Popular opinion in this country is hardly now in a condition to be reconciled to the surrender of any portion of that Territory, and a little *delay* & the previous recommendation of the Senate might be necessary to avert outbreaks on the subject.

The Crozier appointment I reckon will do pretty well but you made it *sooner* than I expected.² The mail closes soon & I must be content with the expression of my sincere respects to Mrs Polk & yourself.

A. V. BROWN

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 24, 1845.

1. A Weakley County physician, John B. Fonville won three terms in the Tennessee House, 1837–43.

2. Arthur R. Crozier served as editor of the *Knoxville Standard* in 1845; as marshal for the eastern district of Tennessee, 1845–49; and as comptroller of Tennessee from 1851 to 1855.

FROM JOHN CATRON

My dear sir.

Nashville, Augt 16, 1845

The Election is over, and what little smoke was raised by the canvass, seems to have cleared off. The Whig leaders are wounded in feeling at the result I am informed, but they do not show it in their conduct, and so far as I can judge Social relations are on a better footing here than they have been for fifteen years among those opposed in politics. Mr. Brown conducted the canvass with exceeding good temper, but with great skill as a tactician and debater, & has raised his character very much. Mr. Foster maintained his good temper exceedingly well, considering the constant bold charges of inconsistency brought to bear on him by Brown: They were unspairing, and told in the result, especially in the large Whig counties, where the audience was Whig; contrary to all the calculations of Mr Foster and his friends, who took great pains to have present a very large Whig crowd.

The temper in Tennessee is strongly tending to political repose. The death of Genl. Jackson has quieted the bitter feelings of many men whose envy annoyed them. This common evil passion was the chief cornerstone of the movement in Judge White's latter days, and has been kept up until it has burnt out for want of the old aliment; and your Silent course has afforded no new one.

Rumour says we are to have a war with Mexico. The appointment of Col. Almonte Secy. at war, looks belligerent, but if war comes, the only fear is, we cannot stop short of doing too much, and thereby exciting European Jealousy; and especially as our newspapers are constantly vaunting that the Union will add California and Mexico this side of the Cordilleras.² This is provoking folly Just at this time, with the Texas and Oregon qns. on our hands, and the charge of grasping ambition being re-iterated on the Democratic party by every Whig paper. That "Enough for the day, is the evil thereof,"³ is an excellent scripture, & on which I should wish to see something like a Sermon from Mr. Ritchie, and the sooner the better. A Mexican war will sweep out all clamour against it in the west—you need not doubt it. I should like to see it avoided; but the Gulf can be half covered with troops, such as conquered the creeks, in 60 days. Houston says he can conquer Mexico with 10.000 muskets constantly in the field, and would want no more force. He explained to me at length the reasons, and the mode. He says he could overthrow the Mexican power on the East of the mountains with a very few troops.

Such a trouble as getting *out*, when we got into Mexico, I do not

wish to see the country incumbered with. The taking of Vera Cruz, and Matamoros, may answer to found a peace, & a Texas boundary on; and nothing more in my Judgment should be done, or asked if war be declared by M., as I think it very probable will be the case. The people there are not equal to our slave population in the middle States, & cannot know, our strength—indeed the best of them do not—Santa Anna did not when in the U.S. No doubt they have had the especial common to Jealous Spaniards at work to see what the strength of our regular Army was, and think of contending with that. I know such were pretty much St. Anna's notions.

I think the U.S. troops are sent to a very proper point, and am in favour of not hearing much said on a specific western Texas boundary, *Just now*. Let the new State come in, & then we may *act*, not *talk*, for the love of it. The English never talk of what they mean to do in India; and their history in India is worth the study of an American Statesman at the present Juncture. Their policy has been, as acted out by Clive, Hastings, and pre-eminently by Wellesley,⁴ to silently draw together at the point to be secured, ample strength to take, and that backed by power to hold, (Simply Rob. Roy's sale of acquisition), & to fight hard and deadly at the onset, if fighting must be done to save the country, & *then treat*.

That history teaches by example, is a State truth, & I think Mr. Packenham⁵ will admit to his Bachelor Brother Buchanan, that we have read that of India with profit, by the time the Texas question is ended. At least for me, I shall set you down (one and all) as bunglers, if you fail to follow the English example.

We are all in health, & I am happy to learn you & Mrs. Polk are: of her's I had no fears, of yours very great.

J. CATRON

ALS. DLC—JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City.

1. A Knoxville lawyer, Hugh Lawson White began his career as private secretary to William Blount; served on the Tennessee Supreme Court, 1801–07 and 1809–15; won election to several terms in the Tennessee Senate from 1825 until 1840; and ran unsuccessfully for the U.S. presidency in 1836. White broke Democratic party ranks in 1836 when he allowed his name to be put forward as the South's presidential candidate; his supporters subsequently provided much of the leadership for the Whig party's formation and management in the southern states.

2. Catron's reference probably is to the Sierra Nevada mountain range of eastern California.

3. Paraphrase of Matthew 6:34.

4. Robert Clive, Warren Hastings, and probably Richard C. Wellesley. Clive began his career as a clerk for the British East India Company and later

distinguished himself in the military campaigns which secured British hegemony in southern India. He served as governor of Bengal from 1765 until 1767. Hastings served as the first governor general of India, 1774–84. Wellesley served as governor general of India, 1797–1805, and as Britain's foreign secretary, 1810–12.

5. A career diplomat, Sir Richard Pakenham served as British minister to Mexico, 1835–43; to the United States, 1843–47; and to Portugal, 1851–55.

FROM WILLIAM H. POLK

Naples, August 16, 1845

William H. Polk expresses regret that the "deranged state" of his finances has become a source of embarrassment for his brother and promises to do "every thing reasonably in my power" to remedy the situation. Calling attention to his adoption of "the most rigid economy" as a means of satisfying debts, he complains that he now lives "in less style" than his peers and thus suffers in a society in which one "is not valued by the scale of intellect, but by the *flash of his style*." He encloses a draft for "between seven and eight hundred dollars," provides specific instructions for satisfying his numerous creditors, and promises an additional two or three hundred dollars before the end of the year, which he deems "a mere 'drop in the bucket.'"

In addition, he discusses the news of Texas annexation and speculates on the reaction of Great Britain. Predicting that "*John Bull* will be forced to growl a reluctant submission," he dismisses the possibility of war with Britain. He expresses hope that "the curse of war may long be averted," but adds that if Mexico declares war, he would prefer to trade his current position for one in the army.

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he answered this letter on September 27, 1845.

FROM A. O. P. NICHOLSON

Dear Sir:

Nashville Augt 17. 1845

In a hasty note a few days since I gave you the complexion of the election returns and the probable result.¹ Let me now congratulate you upon the complete restoration of Tennessee to her ancient position. Brown majority is 1800, six members of Congress, one majority in the Senate and three in the House. Tennessee is once more democratic and will now stand by and sustain the Administration. You can better imagine than I can describe the effect produced upon the leading whigs here. It is worse upon them than the defeat of Mr. Clay. In the midst of their deep mortification they are taking some comfort from the prospect of controlling the election of a Senator. They hope

to unite on some democrat who can carry a few democratic votes and in that way defeat the regular candidate. Gov. Jones is conspicuous in making calculations and if he continues it a few more days I shall open a broadside on him which he will never cease to feel. The Union² now has power and Gov. Jones is in a condition now to be made to feel that power. During the canvass I have avoided the discussion of all topics which would irritate and exasperate the peculiar friends of any whig aspirant. I have said nothing of Gov. Jones or Mr. Bell. The result in Wilson and Williamson shows how correct my course was, but I am under no such prudential consideration now to withhold the lash. They make large calculations upon using Sam and Henry Turney; they talk of getting Hop. Turney, Trousdale, McLemore and Turly to run; they take it for granted that I am to be the democratic candidate and they are studying out some way to beat me.³ I cannot tell of course what success they may have in their intrigues but as far as I can they shall be headed. There is an intimation here that when Maj. Donaldson gets home he will set up for Senator. The suggestion came here from Washington but I have no knowledge of its origin. If such a movement should be made it will produce more excitement than any other. I am satisfied that at this time in Caucus I would get 38 out of the 52 votes against all aspirants; what changes may be brought about by intrigue I cannot tell. The only democrat from whom I look for a strenuous effort to use the whig votes is Judge Turly. His conduct towards me on another occasion induces me to regard him as capable of such a movement. I believe you were present in your room in the Inn during the last session of the Legislature when he came in and in a most positive manner announced his determination that I should be one of the two persons to be appointed by the Supreme Judges to review the Statutes. He afterwards went against me and induced the other two Judges to appoint F. B. Fogg.⁴ So I learn in a way that satisfies me of its correctness. Of course I can have no further confidence in him.

There is a strong disposition here to make Yoakum the Comptroller of the Treasury.⁵ We do not know whether he would accept it as he is about removing to Texas, but Keeble and John Childress think he would agree to take it.⁶ Graham says he will not be in the way of any other democrat. McIntosh and Joel M. Smith wish to be the Treasurer and I have heard R. P. Currin spoke of.⁷ Humphreys will be a candidate for re-election as Attorney General.⁸ I have heard of no opposition to him. Jos. Horton will be ready to take his old position in the Bank.⁹

We are beaten in Weakly by the treachery of Dr. Fonville who went over to the whig candidate with all his forces. Weakly was the Brown

County! Thomas and Watterson are spoken of as Speaker of the Senate and Guild¹⁰ of the House.

The whigs here are denouncing Gentry with much bitterness. They attribute much of their defeat to his denunciation of Gov. Jones. Gentry denounced him on every stump. In Wilson the anti-Jones candidates for the Legislature are elected. No man has suffered like the Governor. He is finding his true level very fast.

A. V. Brown has been with us for several days. He bears his new honor meekly. It is generally rumored that he is about effecting another annexation here. It is said that he and Mrs. Sanders are about to be annexed and the signs look very much that way.¹¹

I should like to hear from you.

A. O. P. NICHOLSON

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked “Private.” Polk’s AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 24, 1845.

1. See Nicholson to Polk, August 13, 1845.

2. *Nashville Union*.

3. Samuel Turney, Henry Turney, Hopkins L. Turney, William Trousdale, John C. McLemore, and William B. Turley. A Lincoln County Democrat, Henry Turney served two terms in the Tennessee House, 1843–47. A lawyer from Winchester, Hopkins L. Turney served four terms in the Tennessee House, 1825–31 and 1835–37; three terms in the U.S. House, 1837–43; and one term in the U.S. Senate, 1845–51. A native of North Carolina and veteran of the War of 1812, Seminole War, and Mexican War, Trousdale represented Sumner and Smith counties for one term as a Democrat in the Tennessee Senate, 1835–36. An unsuccessful candidate for Congress in 1837, 1839, and 1845, he served one term as governor of Tennessee, 1849–51, and accepted an appointment as U.S. minister to Brazil in 1853. John C. McLemore, an early settler of Nashville, married Elizabeth Donelson, daughter of John Donelson, Jr., and niece of Rachel Donelson Jackson. McLemore, a wealthy land developer, assisted in the financing of Democratic party newspapers and campaign promotions in the Western District of Tennessee. A Clarksville attorney, Turley served as judge of the eleventh judicial circuit, 1829–35; and as a justice of the Tennessee Supreme Court, 1835–50.

4. A Nashville attorney and longtime partner of Ephraim H. Foster, Francis B. Fogg represented Davidson County as a Whig for one term in the Tennessee House, 1851–53.

5. A graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, Henderson K. Yoakum served as mayor of Murfreesboro, 1837–43; won election to one term in the Tennessee Senate, 1839–40; moved to Texas in 1845; and authored a two-volume *History of Texas*, which was published in 1855.

6. Edwin A. Keeble and John W. Childress. A lawyer and editor of the Murfreesboro *Monitor*, Keeble served as mayor of Murfreesboro in 1828 and 1855, campaigned successfully as a Democratic presidential elector in 1856,

and represented Tennessee in the Confederate Congress in 1864 and 1865. A younger brother of Sarah Polk, Childress lived in Murfreesboro where he practiced law.

7. John McIntosh, Joel M. Smith, and Robert P. Currin. McIntosh held a clerkship at the Tennessee State prison in Nashville during the 1830's. Smith had been part owner of the *Nashville Union* in the 1830's. He served as a Nashville alderman, 1827-28 and 1837-38. An early settler of Williamson County, Currin operated a factory for the manufacture of cotton-bagging. He served as superintendent of public instruction from 1840 until 1844.

8. A lawyer from Somerville, West H. Humphreys won election to a single term in the Tennessee House, 1835-37, and served as state attorney general and reporter, 1839-51. He presided over the U.S. District Court for West Tennessee from 1853 until 1861.

9. Joseph W. Horton, sheriff of Davidson County from 1822 to 1829, worked as cashier of the Bank of Tennessee's Nashville office.

10. A veteran of the Seminole War and a Democratic presidential elector in 1844, Josephus C. Guild served two terms in the Tennessee House, 1845-47 and 1851-53.

11. On September 16, 1845, the recently-elected governor of Tennessee married Cynthia Pillow Saunders.

FROM DANIEL GRAHAM

Dear Sir,

Near Nashville, Tennessee, 18 August 1845

Our election is over and as you will see from the papers, whiggery is once more prostrate in Tennessee. The most untoward circumstance is that Sam Turney is a thirteener again.¹ In the H. Rep's the majority of three will be sufficient for all practical purposes even though the representative from Maury adheres to his brother in law again for Comptroller.² The Governor elect has been with us during last week and is now on a visit to his children at Murfreesboro. He inclines to a desire that I should seek a restoration which I had entirely lost sight of until mentioned by him at our first interview & until pressed by some of our Nashville friends. I said nothing to others, but to Brown I finally said that if the thing should ultimately seem right, I would occupy any attitude which might be desired by the party, but that I would stand back for any one who was fit and who might be respectably supported.

Guild, Glenn or Brookins Campbell,³ will either be satisfactory for Speaker of the House & no difficulty is apprehended, but for Senate the old difficulty of 1841 is expected. Sam Turney will doubtless use his position for himself, his brother Hop, or for both. Waterson is impatient of promotion, and Jonas⁴ old acquaintances believe that he would make a very fit speaker. Should he have much feeling on the subject,

the whole case will present some trouble at first. I have inferred that you would be written to to use your good offices, but it will perhaps be best for you to leave the matter to work its way out unless you could be here to see the question under the varied aspects which it may assume. H. L. Turney, we understand has aspirations to the Senate. Nicholson has been looked to by a majority, if not with partiality themselves, yet with a full expectation that he would be Senator should the democrats have the majority; others are lately spoken of by their friends and the final adjustment may be perplexing.

For two or three days after Foster had given up the Governors election he seemed to be pretty confident that the Whigs would have the Legislature, and was manifestly consoling himself with the hope of Senator. My own opinion is that he would have been the choice of a majority of the whig members, but Bell would not have been set aside without a desparate struggle. The Representation from Rutherford & Williamson would have gone stedfastly for him whilst poor Jones would have relied on nothing but Wilson and perhaps Smith. Gentry has produced much jawing with his party in the district. Some adhere to him openly against the Jones branch of the party whilst some of Jones' friends, in & out of the district, censure Gentry severely. I understand that Foster is inclined to attribute his defeat to Gentry. Such at least seemed to be his first impression when the heavy Whig losses were first coming in from Williamson, Wilson & Rutherford, whilst he was holding his own in Davidson, Robertson & Sumner. The Sumner loss is attributable to the running of Patterson,⁵ the independent demo. candidate agt the nominee. Pattersons friends swapt Brown off.

You will have seen Squire Walkers letter in the Union.⁶ It is sensibly written and is well spoken of. My old friend William B.⁷ has certainly managed worse than could have been expected of a prudent, discreet, sober, experienced man. The matter looks worse and worse to every body every day. I have seen him but at a distance since the funeral of the General, walking disconsolate & alone. I understand he is contrite— at least, he repents of having injured himself.

You should be writing the Message, a paragraph every day. Yield nothing about Origen. Let us know that the negotiations which you found on hand are amicably pending; that our rights will be maintained &c. We will wait the fullness of time for the final arrangement, which can be attended to when the Texas question is fully settled.

We were all much pleased to see that poor Crozier had got a little office. He deserves & needs one.

Keep a steady eye to your health. We read that Mrs Polk is looking remarkably well, but that you are thin as a shad. Tell Knox Walker

to keep a steady eye on the domestic expenditures. You must have something to keep up the Household when you return to Tennessee.

The gossips already have the Gov elect looking to the widow Saunders who still reigns Belle of the season.

DANIEL GRAHAM

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked “Private.” Polk’s AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 27.

1. Graham’s reference is to the “Immortal Thirteen” Democratic members of the Tennessee Senate who held a majority in that branch of the 1841–42 General Assembly and refused to hold a joint election convention with the Whig-controlled House. Knowing that on a joint vote two Whigs would be chosen, the “Immortal Thirteen” argued that the traditional joint-convention method of electing U.S. senators was unconstitutional and that a concurrent majority in both houses was required for election. Tennessee’s two seats in the U.S. Senate went unfilled for the period from February 7, 1842, until October 16, 1843.

2. Powhatan Gordon and Felix K. Zollicoffer. A prominent Nashville Whig and husband to Louisa Pocahontas Gordon, Zollicoffer served as adjutant general of Tennessee, 1841–43; comptroller of Tennessee, 1843–49; in the Tennessee Senate, 1849–51; and in the U.S. House, 1853–59. Commissioned a brigadier general for the Confederacy, he was killed in battle early in the Civil War.

3. A lawyer from Washington County, Brookins Campbell served five terms as a Democrat in the Tennessee House, 1835–39, 1841–43, 1845–47, and 1851–53; he won election to the U.S. House in 1853 and served until his death in December of that year.

4. Jonas E. Thomas.

5. Patterson is not identified further.

6. On August 16, 1845, the *Nashville Union* published a letter from James Walker in which he reaffirmed his lifelong support for Andrew Jackson and refuted claims he had been a potential buyer for the *Washington Globe*.

7. William B. Lewis.

TO EZEKIEL P. McNEAL¹

My Dear Sir: Washington City 18th Augt. 1845

I desire to pay off the balance due on my two notes, to *Bills and McNeal*² and to *William H. Wood*,³ and for this purpose I request you to calculate the interest, deducting payments which have been made, and draw a Bill on me at sight for the balance. Draw a Bill, for such sum as will suit you at Bolivar, the balance alone to Wood and yourself. Draw a Bill on me at sight. I presume you will find no difficulty selling

such a Bill. If you wish to use this amt. at the East yourself, draw in favour of your correspondent at Philadelphia, and I will when this Bill is presented to me, remit this amt. to him at Phila. if it is desired. When you draw the Bill, cancel my notes to Wood and yourself, and enclose them to me.

The amt. which has been paid on your note according, to the statement which you enclosed to me in your letter of the 1st of May is, \$594.66, which deducted from \$1000, the amt. of the note would have a balance of the principle due of \$405.34. On the 30th of July I remitted to you a check on the Branch of the Union Bank at Jackson for, \$51.11, which I presume you have received, and which being also deducted will leave a balance of principle due you of \$354.23. Add to this the interest due on your note, from the day it fell due (4th Decr. 1844, I believe it was) and the balance will be ascertained. I do not now recollect whether the \$130, rent due by Mr Wood to M. T. Polk's Heirs,⁴ for 1844, was placed as a credit on my note held by Mr Wood, or whether it was included in your amt. in the credit on your note. You will know how this is. Whatever the balance be on both notes I am desirous to pay it off, and wish you to draw on me for the same on receipt of this letter, forwarding to me my notes cancelled at the same time.

I repeat to you and to Mr Wood my thanks, for the loan which you were kind enough voluntarily to make to me. It came at a time when it was much needed.

I have directed the proceeds, of my present years crop of cotton to be applied to the payments of my note to *Uncle Wm. Polk*. In addition to this I have directed *S. P. Walker* to apply portions of other monies, which will be in his hands, for the same purpose. This will reduce the debt one half or more. The balance I will pay as soon as practicable.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Bolivar, Tenn.

1. A first cousin to Polk and a Bolivar merchant and land agent, McNeal handled Polk's business affairs in Hardeman County.

2. A merchant and the postmaster at Bolivar, John H. Bills married Ezekiel P. McNeal's sister, Prudence Tate McNeal, on September 9, 1823. Bills and McNeal formed a business partnership in Bolivar in the late 1820s.

3. William H. Wood resided in Hardeman County and married Benigna Polk, youngest daughter of Ezekiel Polk.

4. Polk was the executor of the estate of his brother, Marshall T. Polk, who died in 1831 and was survived by his wife Laura Wilson and two children, Roxana Eunice Ophelia and Marshall Tate, Jr.

TO WILLIAM S. PICKETT AND COMPANY

Gentlemen: Washington City 18th Augt. 1845

I have directed my overseer in Mississippi to ship my present years crop of cotton to your House. I have no instructions to give, as to the period at which you may think it best to sell, but leave that to your better judgment, not doubting that you will consult my interest. I have authorized *Col. Robert Campbell jr*¹ of Columbia Tennessee, who is my agent, to draw on you for as much of the proceeds of my crop when sold, as may be necessary to defray the expenses for the plantation, and to pay for Bagging, Rope & other articles, which he may buy from your House, which will amount probably to six or eight hundred dollars. The balance of the proceeds of my crop I wish you to pay over to *William Polk Esqr* who resides on the Mississippi River a short distance below Helena. If *Mr Polk* desires it, pay him whatever balance may be in your hands when the crop is sold, once you have sent *Col. Campbell's* Draft, in *Gold*. You will be pleased to advise *Mr Polk*, that I have directed the payment to be made to him.

I wish as heretofore to have my cotton insured against the dangers of the River. I desire that you will advise me, as it arrives at New Orleans, and when sales are made.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to New Orleans.

1. Campbell served as Polk's business agent in Columbia. The son of John and Matilda Golden Polk Campbell, Campbell used the suffix "Junior" to distinguish himself from his uncle of like name.

TO WILLIAM W. POLK

My Dear Sir: Washington City 18th Augt. 1845

I have this day written to my nephew *Saml. P. Walker* at Memphis, to pay *Two Thousand Dollars* (\$2,000) on my note which you hold. I have also directed *W. S. Pickett & Co.*, my commission merchants at New Orleans, to pay over to you the proceeds of my cotton crop of this year, after reserving enough to defray plantation expenses and to pay for bagging and rope for next year. I will make another payment before the end of the year, but will not be able to pay off the whole note by that time. *Mr. Walker* informed that he told you I might not be able to pay the whole debt until sometime next year. If however you should stand in need of the money, sooner, I will put myself to inconvenience, and

submit to sacrifice to raise it for you. It was a great accommodation to me, when you made me the loan. It was much needed at the time, and I again return to you my sincere thanks for it. With the payment I now make, my cotton crop, and other monies which I will direct to be applied to its payment, I think I can discharge the whole debt, in the course of the spring or early in the summer of next year.

In regard to public affairs I can give you but little information other than what you see in the newspapers. My administration thus far encounters quite as little opposition as I have a right to anticipate. I have been very closely confined on my part and very laboriously engaged in the discharge of my public duties. I am however favoured with good health, [...] ¹ as much labour as most men. My Cabinet is very able and industrious and, I am happy, to say, that perfect harmony prevails among themselves, and in their relations with me.

I shall be gratified to hear from you, when your leisure may permit.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Arkansas.

1. Faint ink transfers render parts of two lines illegible.

TO SAMUEL P. WALKER

My Dear Sir:

Washington City 18th Augt. 1845

I wish you to draw a Bill on me at sight, for *Two Thousand Dollars* (\$2,000) (which I presume you can readily sell in the market), and apply the proceeds toward the payment of my note held by Uncle *William Polk*. If the Bill will sell better payable at Philadelphia than at Washington, you can draw it, in that way, and I will on its being presented to me promptly remit the amt. to Philadelphia. My note is payable in *specie*, and I was to have received *specie*. You informed me however that *Mr Howard* ¹ had sold the gold at 2. per cent premium & paid me in *Bank paper*, which made a difference between gold and Bank paper of \$180.00. If however you pay in Bank paper, (the same kind of funds, which I received) this will make no difference. If you are required to pay in specie, instead of paper, then it will be just and proper to correct this original error. You know how particular I am in my business and when you pay the money, I wish you to see my note credited yourself. This you can easily do if *Howard* holds it. If the note has been sent to the old gentleman, then arrange it in such way that the payment will be certain to be credited on the note.

I have directed my crop of cotton for this year to be sent to your House at New Orleans, as heretofore. I have authorized *Col. Robt.*

Campbell, Jr. my agent, to draw on your House, for a sufficient amount to defray the plantation expenses, and to pay for Bagging & Rope for next year. This will amount probably to six or eight hundred dollars. The balance of the proceeds of the crop I wish paid to Uncle *William Polk*, in further liquidation of my debt to him. The balance of that debt I will pay as soon as practicable. If you ascertain, that the old gentleman wants the whole of it, at any given time, let me know it, and I will make the arrangement here though it would be at some inconvenience to pay it. He rendered me a great favour when he made the loan to me, and he is not to be disappointed for a single day, when he wants the money returned to him. I informed him through your father,² who negotiated the loan with him, that I would not probably be able to pay more than half of it at the end of this year, when the note falls due, and in that event I would pay the balance at the end of next year. I shall I hope be able to do it much sooner than that time.

I will write to day to the old gentleman directed to Helena Arkansas, that I have requested you to pay \$2000, now, and to apply the proceeds of my crop, in further payment.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Memphis.

1. Wardlow Howard married Mary Wilson Polk, daughter of William Wilson and Elizabeth Dodd Polk, in Hardeman County, on December 27, 1834.
2. James Walker.

FROM GEORGE R. COLLIER¹

Sir, Salisbury, Somerset Co., Md., Aug. 19th, 1845

A formal declaration of war on the part of Mexico against this Government, will have reached you before you receive this letter, the object of which is to offer you the services of a considerable number of volunteers. Since the rumour of war has assumed a reliable form, numbers in this & the adjoining county (Worcester) have declared their readiness & willingness to volunteer their services in behalf of the Government, subject to all legal & proper orders. But, having no assurances of protection or pay, there may be some difficulty in organizing a body of men regularly, without this assurance, & the proper commissioning of officers. I now hold a Major's commission in the regular militia of the State; & it is my desire to be actively employed in my Country's service. If this be worthy of your notice, a reply, with directions & instructions, preliminary to organizing, will be duly observed & obeyed.

GEO. R. COLLIER

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk’s AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 22.

1. Not identified further.

FROM JOHN M. BASS¹

Sir

Nashville Aug 20th 1845

The citizens of this part of the country feel a deep interest in the improvement of the navigation of the Cumberland from this place to its mouth & It is probable the subject will be brought before the Legislature at its approaching session.² Preliminary to such a movement it seems proper that an accurate survey should be made with a view to ascertain the best mode of improvement & the probable cost. I am requested thus by a number of our most respectable citizens to enquire of you whether it is within the range of the power with which you are invested to detail a competent corps of civil Engineers to perform that duty for us. Of your favorable dispositions toward such a work we feel already well assured. The river has already been surveyed by an US Engineer from the head of navigation to this place but not below it.

Should it be found that you have the authority without the intervention of an act or resolution of Congress may I ask the favour of you to inform me in what form or shape the request or petition of those interested in the subject should be presented to you to induce you to give the necessary orders.

The months of Sept & Oct next will be in all probability from the shallowness of the water a favorable time for the survey.

JNO. M. BASS

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk’s AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 28, 1845.

1. Bass married Malvina Grundy, daughter of Felix and Ann Phillips Rodgers Grundy; he served as mayor of Nashville in 1833 and subsequently headed the Union Bank of Tennessee in the late 1830’s and early 1840’s.

2. On January 31, 1846, the legislature of Tennessee gave a charter to the Cumberland Navigation Company for the improvement of navigation on that river below Nashville.

FROM STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS

Dear Sir,

Quincy Ills Augst 21st 1845

From the late news received from New Orleans and Mexico we are inclined to the opinion that the next mail will bring the news of a declaration of war. In that event I presume that volunteers will be

wanted in addition to the regular army. Ferdinand Kennett¹ Esq of St Louis desires a commission as Colonel with authority to raise a regiment for the purpose of marching against Santa Fe—and California. I know Mr Kennett well and have been intimate with him for years. I think him admirably adapted to the service he seeks. He is a gentleman of fine talents, and with a chivalry of character unsurpassed, and possess[es] an intimate knowledge of the habits & character of the Indians Tribes as well as the intervening country. Were I going on such an expedition, I would prefer Mr Kennett for a leader to any gentleman of my acquaintance. If he succeeds in obtaining authority, his intention is, I understand to make up a regiment of mountain-men as they are called in this country—being a peculiar class of men, who have been in the habit of trading to the Rocky Mountains—New Mexico and California, and are perfectly familiar with the country, the Indians tribes, the mode of travel and subsistence. Mr K[']s acquaintance with and influence over that class of men would enable him to raise a regiment without any difficulty. In the event therefore that you shall deem it your duty to authorize the raising of volunteers I do sincerely hope that Mr K may be selected for that service, believing that he would discharge the duty in a manner highly honorable to himself and his government.

S. A. DOUGLASS

PL. Addressed to Washington City. Published in Robert W. Johannsen, ed., *The Letters of Stephen A. Douglas* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1961), p. 118.

1. A St. Louis merchant and banker, Kennett served as an officer in the St. Louis Legion during the Mexican War.

FROM ALEXANDER McCALL

Dear Sir

Abingdon 22nd Aug 1845

The Democracy of Tennessee may well congratulate Your Excellency upon the ascendancy of their great cause. In Ala. by the election of Govr. Martin less responsibility devolves on the Party than if Terry had been elected. Mr. Bagby has serious difficulties to adjust with his State.

Mr. Hopkins was grieved that his name is not mentioned with Mr. Davis' in the Union for the Speakers place¹—he would court the favor of McDowell's friends for support as candidate for U.S. Senate, but Pennybacker is the favorite & McDowell belongs to the Bentonian

clyque.² I wish Pennybacker could remain Judge as no other can so well fill his place. Tyler the Ex President, would make an efficient Senator in the affairs of Texian growth. He could be elected if it be proper.

W. B. Lewis regrets his course & A Jackson will only entrust his fathers papers to Mr. Bancrofts future care. Your expression upon the one term principle last year *is enough*—let there be no disfranchisement, because in time of protracted war the people may have no leisure for President hunting.

Mexico has no right to *British Umpirage* & having no sailors for privateers the result must be that our ships will *sink crews* composed of French Spanish & British subjects. The advancement of true American interests is destruction to the antiquated debts & taxation of Europe & therefore a general war for *national existence* is close at hand. It cannot be averted & therefore let every feature of American interests be fully claimed.

These matters clearly oppose ultra views in regard to equal advalorem tariff action; the protective policy favoring American tonage & bottoms is *sui generis* & so is the reasonably high *prohibitory duty* upon iron & sugar. In collecting *highest revenue* upon the articles of any nation, reference must be had to the whole *imports*, grading the duty on special articles, according to the agricultural products *exported* for barter. The coffee, hides, horsetails, grass bags and hats of Brazil should be duty free because we do not desire to encourage their growth of cotton. The tea & silks of China should have light tariffs because we would barter for them *lead, ice & cottons*. We have free trade among our own States & therefore Texas was willing to share with us & if Cuba & Brazil cant come in, we can extend many favors to them. Seth Barton could represent our interests in Brazil & Tom Marshall of Kentucky understands them.

If any one owned the northren states as a plantation and the Southern states as another plantation, he would quickly apprehend the bearings of the exports & imports of both; and instead of laying all the burdens on the Southren place would call over his hands to the more favored region.

I am sure these positions are sound & are such as will be found in your tariff action, at least until Michigan Lake is connected with the Mississippi by a *ship canal*.

If it is possible in the nature of the case, not to call Congress, why do it before November or December? The country will fully sustain the administration in all energetic prudential measures of Texian warfare.

Our Mr. Coyle³ speaks of ascertaining ballances in behalf of Post

masters old *accts* for *half the gain*—see his *circulars*; but who can inspect his errors made in such reexaminations at this late date?

A. McCALL

[P.S.] I learn from Nashville [that] Mexico has declared war. That no European nation can be allowed to interpose in conflict of this continent will be the prevailing sentiment of our nation.

Will the President allow me to say that a febrile affection often called Bronchitis exists throughout the country of highly contagious character.

The President had it when speaking in E. Tennessee & it can be renewed on any one by the breath or by occupying cushions or beds on which Patients have rested. All that is necessary to avoid it is to keep the *receiving room ventilated* and to occupy the windward side of those we are compelled to be in conversational contact with.

I know the correctness of what I here allude to & inattention may cause any ones lungs to become seriously diseased.

Respects to Mr. Walker. Success to the administration. A.M.

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on September 6, 1845.

1. George W. Hopkins and John W. Davis. A Virginia lawyer and Democrat, Hopkins won election to seven terms in the U.S. House, 1835–47 and 1857–59. An Indiana Democrat, Davis served four terms in the U.S. House, 1835–37, 1839–41, and 1843–47; he presided as Speaker during his last term.

2. James McDowell and Isaac S. Pennybacker. McDowell served as governor of Virginia, 1842–46, and won election as a Democrat to the U.S. House, 1846–51. A Virginia Democrat, Pennybacker won election to one term in the U.S. House, 1837–39; served as judge of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Virginia, 1839–45; and served in the U.S. Senate from 1845 until his death in 1847.

3. Fitzhugh Coyle served as a clerk in the Treasury Department from 1842 until 1843. In 1845 he published *A Letter of Fitzhugh Coyle to the President of the United States, Respecting certain debts due by the Post Office department and the conduct of P. G. Washington.*

FROM H. CAMPBELL¹

State of Indiana Foun County²

Mr President,

August the 23d 1845

Having entertained a desire (for a considerable length of time) of becoming acquainted with you and having waited with impatience for a suitable opportunity I became affraid that one or the other of us would be sent for to fill some station in an other world before such an

opportunity as I could desire should roll around; consequently I have determined to lay aside all timidity and with the boldness common to a true born American address a few lines to you. And my reasons for wishing to form an acquaintance with you particularly at this time are these. Mexico I suppose has declared war against uncle Sam and you know that military glory is just the thing to carry a man into office. So I thought that I would get in with you to appoint me commander of some dozen or fifteen men and then I would drive through Mexico like ten furies and get some one to publish my actions so that I might run for president the next canvassing though I am not known ten miles from home at this time. Neither were you four years ago so my chance is as good as yours was.

H. CAMPBELL

[P.S.] Please Answer This Immediately.

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on September 1, 1845.

1. Not identified further.
2. Fountain County.

TO GEORGE M. DALLAS

My dear Sir,

Washington City 23d Aug. 1845

My time has been so constantly occupied with my daily duties that I have had scarcely a moment to devote to correspondence with my friends. Indeed I have not written a dozen letters in that number of weeks and none except such as were indispensable.

I would be gratified to confer with you occasionally concerning our public affairs and to have the benefit of your opinions and views. Closely identified as we are by the remarkable circumstances attending our nomination & election as well as in our political principles, this I think not only desirable but highly proper. My administration thus far encounters quite as little opposition as I had any reason to anticipate. The success of Texas annexation seems almost to have quieted opposition to that great measure and I think there is no reason to apprehend serious resistance to the admission of the new State into the Union. The terms proposed by the U States having been accepted by the Texan Congress and Convention, the compact becomes obligatory and the public faith of both parties is pledged to execute it. Regarding Texas as now virtually a part of our country I have felt it to be my duty to take the most energetic measures to protect & defend her people and territory against the threatened invasion of Mexico. In this I doubt not

I will be sustained by the country. Our latest reliable information from Mexico is from Vera Cruz on the 5th inst. The war question was still under debate in the Mexican Congress. The probabilities I think are that there will be no formal declaration of War against the U States but that a considerable army will be marched into Texas. We have apparently well authenticated information that Gen Paredes is at *San Luis Potosi* about 200 miles West of the Rio Grande at the head of 6000 men (infantry) and that *Arista*¹ is at *Monterey* at the head of 3000 cavalry. This is a formidable force. Should they cross the Rio Grande & invade Texas our army under *Gen Taylor* with the aid of the Texan Militia will I think be able to drive them back. Our orders to our troops are to act strictly on the defensive and let the first hostile movement be made by the Mexican army. Now if hostilities should actually commence either by an open declaration of War or by an invasion of Texas by a Mexican army the question will arise whether it will be necessary or proper to convene Congress in Extra Session and upon this point I would be pleased to have your opinion. It is proper that I should say that I am very much averse to extra Sessions and nothing but imperative duty or absolute necessity would incline me to call one. The subject has of course been brought to my attention, and opinions prevail with some that Congress should be convened. My impressions are against it. Could we not conduct a defensive war with the means already at our command until December as well without as with the additional means which Congress might (if in session) grant? Congress could not be convened before the 1st November which would be but a month before the beginning of the regular Session. There may be no occasion which will make it necessary to decide this question, but it is proper to look ahead and be prepared for it should such occasion arise. I desire to consult you about another matter which in some sense may be regarded as local to your city & State. I have had several applications for the appointment of Treasurer of the Mint. I have not acted upon them because I have had some doubt whether it is proper to make a removal. If you think it proper to remove the present incumbent & Mr. Richard Rush² will accept the place I will appoint him. If you shall be of opinion that Mr Roche³ should be continued, you will of course say nothing to Mr Rush on the subject. If on the other hand you think the removal should be made you are authorized to say to Mr. Rush that I will appoint him if he will accept it. I name Mr. Rush because he is a man of high character and undoubted qualification and because I have an impression on my mind derived from some general conversation with you that you would think he should be preferred to any others. If my impression in this respect is wrong you will of course correct me

& need not mention the subject to him. I would have been pleased to explain to you some of the circumstances attending the appointments at Philadelphia which were made some time ago, but no opportunity for that purpose has occurred. When I shall have the pleasure to see you I will do it.

JAMES K. POLK

L, copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Philadelphia and marked "*Confidential*."

1. A participant in Mexico's struggle for independence and general in the Mexican army, Mariano Arista served as secretary of war under José Herrera in 1848. Elected president of Mexico in 1851, he served until 1853.

2. A lawyer, diplomat, and writer, Rush served as U.S. attorney general, 1814–17; as acting secretary of state, 1817; as minister to Great Britain, 1817–25; as secretary of the Treasury, 1825–29; and as minister to France, 1847–49. An unsuccessful vice-presidential candidate on John Q. Adams' ticket in 1828, Rush moved into the Democratic ranks during the fight over rechartering the Second Bank of the United States.

3. Isaac Roach.

FROM BARKLY MARTIN

Dear Sir.

Maury County Aug 23rd 1845

Maj Lewis¹ left a few days since for Washington, the object of his visit you no doubt are or will be apprised before the receipt of this. I can say in our last canvass, he was as in 44, industrious, and efficient, and deserves well of the democracy for his past services. I need not recommend Maj L. to you, knowing that Col. P.² is acquainted with him, of longer date than myself, and will duly as in all cases heartofore consult the best interest of our common country, and if that interest can be advanced, in the aid of Maj Lewis will no doubt favor his individual affirmation.

You have no doubt long before this received the intelligence from Tennessee, and in common with your old friends from Johnson to Shelby felt no little gratification, that in the last genl engagement we were victorious. More and more am I confirmed of our principles, that they are the principles of the constitution and must prevail, & to have prevailed, in conflict, with the cohorts of whigery led on by the *Dum idol*,³ to battle; which has resulted in such triumphant victory, is to one of the *Immortall thirteen* glory enough the residue of my political pilgramage.

Altho I have been silent heartofore, it has not been because I did not take an interest in the progress of your administration. But felt

that one so humble as myself might intrude upon the attention of one, whose position in Government, claimed a higher order of communication. I trust you will permit me to say humble as I am, that I have a concious pride in having been one of the many, who hepted to do honor to the American nation, by the elevation of *one* whose policy domestic and foreign as far as manifest seem to have the honor & glory of the Nation for its exclusive object.

Your policy in riguard to origan, seems to meet with genl approbation. Even Kendric,⁴ accorded to you just sentements on that subject, and contended you would have been exclusively right, had it not of been for one remark as to our title. The expresion he said was "imprudent," but he said it but once, his opponent dwelling upon the word "imprudent," as in bitter taste, and more in character with the feelings and loyalty of a British subject.

You know not the gratification I feel, discovering the energy of the Government directed to Texas. You may be assured Whigs as well as Democrats, though not so gloingly as the latter yield their assent to the moving west our military, and can but applaud the action though entertaining dislike to the Powers that be.

The observer⁵ is out again this week on Mr. Walker your Secretary. Well, well, the apple tree that yields good fruit, will have the brush and stones thrown into its tops, by the mischievous urchin. Mr. W.s fain is to firmly fixed, to be clouded by such mists of falshoods & detraction. I suppose when I come to Washington to prove the observer a true prophet I shall have to cultivate and acquaintance with Mr. W. with whom and acquaintance would be prefered to almost any man in the nation.

I trust my Dear Sir, that you may be guided by wisdom in the high station called to fill by the American people, that your administration at its close for perminat good, may eclips the passd. that in the future your greatest reward may be a nations gratitude, recollecting only to admire the patriotism, & fidelity of Tennessees youthful President following in the footsteps of *him*⁶ though dead, yet living in the green memory of Freemen.

To Mrs. P. our highest riguard.

BARKLY MARTIN

PS. If a moments leisure will permit I should be pleased you acknowledge the receipt of my hasty scroll.

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on September 2, 1845.

1. Micajah G. Lewis operated a tavern in Columbia; previously he had held

a part-interest in the *Columbia Observer*, 1834–35. Polk appointed Lewis commissioner to the Comanche Indians in 1845.

2. Reference is to Gideon J. Pillow, a Columbia attorney and general in the Tennessee militia. Dedicated to Polk's political career, Pillow played a key role in securing his friend's nomination by the 1844 Democratic National Convention. Pillow later served as general officer in the Mexican War and commanded a Confederate brigade during the Civil War.

3. Reference is to Habakkuk 2:18-19.

4. William P. Kendrick.

5. *Columbia Observer*.

6. Martin's reference is to Andrew Jackson.

FROM WILLIAM S. PICKETT

Dear Sir

Nashville August 23d 1845

In a private letter received from you within three or four days past by Jas Walker Esq,¹ you mentioned that you had written to me under date of 26th June last, on the subject of the appointment you had contemplated bestowing upon me, and informing me that you found it impracticable, from politic & prudent motives, to carry out your wishes in regard to it.

It is due to myself to inform you that I have never received your letter of 26th June. When I left New Orls (3d July) I gave my agent instructions to forward all letters, that wore the appearance of private communications, to me at Columbia, and how to account for this omission, I am unable to comprehend. I have however written to New Orleans to inquire for the letter & to understand the cause of its delay. Had that letter reached me in due time, or had your late letter to Mr Walker arrived even three days sooner than it did, it would have prevented any inconvenience to our business, and also the sacrifice of an Insurance Agency in New Orleans (worth about \$3000 p annum) which I resigned within the last week, after consulting with Mr Walker, under the belief that you would find no difficulty in making the appointment we expected. I immediately hastened to Nashville, but too late to prevent any action upon my resignation, as another Agent had been appointed & regularly inducted into the office.

This unlucky circumstance, as you will see, has caused a serious blow to our business prospects. I am not however, disposed to attach any blame to you in the matter, believing you are disposed to serve me when you can do so with propriety.

I am now attending to the distribution of circulars, & otherwise

endeavouring to promote the interest of our house in New Orleans where I shall return early in the fall to resume business as usual.

W. S. PICKETT

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City; marked “*Private*” and “Favor by Majr M G Lewis.” Polk’s AE on the cover states that he received this letter on September 5, 1845.

1. See Polk to James Walker, August 11, 1845.

FROM JAMES WALKER

Dear Sir,

Columbia Aug. 23, 1845

I have received yours of the 11th. With its contents *I am not satisfied. I ought not to be.* The facts are now precisely the same they were when I was in Washington. If you had then candidly told me you would not appoint Mr. Pickett to office, I might have felt some dissatisfaction, but would have had no cause for bitter complaint. The *injury* that has been done to him and Sam.¹ by the just expectation and the disappointment would not have occurred. It seems you had made up your mind when you received my letter of the 21st ult, and must have known that Mr. Pickett had not received yours of the 26th of June, from the contents of my letter. If you had then apprised me of your determination, a business to the House worth at least \$2000 pr annum, would not have been lost. One single week’s earlier notice would have saved that loss. Mr. Pickett was agent of the Insurance Co. at Nashville, and had built up a business worth in commissions from 2 to \$3000 pr annum. It was generally expected he would go abroad, and Porter² backed by the powerful influence of *Dick & Hill*³ applied for the agency. As a condition for continuing Mr. Pickett, he was required to say positively that he would go to New Orleans and attend to the business in person. This was one of the pressing reasons why I so urgently begged you to do whatever you intended to do without delay. Here was the case. I had told Mr. Pickett and Sam, what had occurred between you & me at Washington. That you desired to give him the naval agency at Mersailles, but that if when you came to look into that matter you found insurmountable obstacles, you would make him Consul at Havre or Rio Janario. That you would make the appointment in two or three months. Afterwards Knox⁴ wrote to him, as I understood by your directions, telling him he would be commissioned immediately after the August election, and to make all his business arrangements accordingly. Later, Mr. Barnett⁵ writes after an interview with Knox that it was settled that Mr. Pickett should go to Mersailles or Havre. I had never known you say you would

do a thing and not do it, if it was in your power. The position abroad was even more desirable than the lucrative agency, and I could not say I entertained a doubt as to his appointment to Mersailles, Havre, or Rio, and upon this state of the case Mr. P. was compelled to say whether he would or would not go to New Orleans, and he unfortunately did not promise to go there, and in consequence lost this profitable business. Misfortunes never come alone. Sam had gone to the District for the purpose of taking in a third partner, upon the supposition that Mr. Pickett was to go abroad. This he has probably done, and employed a clerk at a high salary, and here is another heavy loss, as according to the present state of things they want neither partner nor clerk. What distresses me, and makes my heart sick, is the fact, that in my desire to better their fortunes, and relying without a single doubt, on what passed between you & me, I have been mainly instrumental in causing them to sustain this disappointment and loss. How earnestly do I regret that the thing was ever thought of. They might have lived without your aid, and no heart burnings would have existed.

When I was at Washington I was perfectly aware of Mr. Danby's⁶ character, and told you I apprehended you would find a difficulty in displacing him. I told you he had been chairman of the Central committee of Virginia, and I believed a sound Democrat and in anticipation of this very state of things, and knowing your hesitation about the removal of Beasley, I suggested the Rio Janario appointment, and told you that would be satisfactory. There was no difficulty whatever about the Rio appointment. The incumbent was to be removed any how and you could without the slightest censure or risque have given it to Mr. Pickett. When you gave that away to another, I could not but suppose you had made up your mind upon Mersailles or Havre. The recommendations upon which Mr. Tyler appointed Mr. Pickett to Havre were numerous & of the very highest character. They would have justified his appointment to Liverpool or Havannah. You knew him to be worthy & well qualified. His renomination was expected and would have given satisfaction, *would have been confirmed*. The fact that you did not renominate him is an imputation upon him. No one could believe it was because he was kin to you that you refused; your nomination of your brother with less grounds, would contradict that assumption. The fact that he is the husband of your niece does not make him the less worthy, and if men of the highest standing recommended him it was a sufficient justification to you. If persons are connected to you by marriage, is that a reason why they are to be put under the ban and for that single reason to be inelligible to office when their fellow citizens recommend them to office.

Your re-nomination of William never was censured by any but contemptible letter writers & political opponents. By these every appointment you have made has been censured, and endeavored to be turned to your prejudice. The odium that has attached to William's case has been owing to his own conduct in going off with plenty of money and leaving his unfortunate mother-in-law & brother in law⁷ to be ruined by securityships for him. But for his conduct in this respect, no odium could or would have been attached to his case. You did however appoint him to high office, and in his case, at least have admitted that it is not criminal to be your blood relation.

I cannot see what analogy there is between Dr Rucker's brother⁸ & Mr. Pickett's case, unless it be to inform me that if you cannot appoint your wife's connections to office, you must not appoint your own. I presume you did not appoint him because others had higher claims, and their appointment would be more satisfactory where the duties were to be performed. You surely did not refuse to appoint him for the single reason that he was the brother of your brother-in-law.

If *Thomas Polk* has evidence before you that it is the wish in the region where the office is located that he should be appointed, his being the son of your uncle and friend, I do not think ought to bar him. So of all others you have mentioned. Each case ought to stand on its own merits. But of all others, it is most extraordinary that it should be charged against you that you have given your nephew an honorable and lucrative office, made him your private secretary. This I understand is no office at all, and the position has been usually occupied by the son or near relative of the President. The position is an honorable one, but certainly not lucrative. When you selected Knox for this position he thought it his duty to accept it, because you desired his services. He gave up a lucrative practice as I thought more to gratify your wishes than to promote his own pecuniary interest. And is it possible that these miserable letter writing gossippers, and newspaper squibbers can give your mind any concern, influence your public acts, or prevent you from doing that which in itself right, and expected by all right thinking persons to be done.

Have I no claims upon your kindness and good will? Has Sam none? Is the fear of a half column of newspaper slang to prevent you from rendering an important favor in your power to bestow upon those whose whole lives have been devoted in time and money to exertions to elevate you? When have I failed when you needed such services, to do every thing in my power to prevent your inveterate enemies from crushing you, to elevate you to the highest positions? Is there any thing on earth that was honorable, that Sam would not have done to

advance you? And in return you will not risque a letter writers gossip, or a newspaper squib, to do him a substantial benefit, for which him, his children & family would be forever grateful to you. He has been embarrassed and has struggled hard to support what promises to be a large family. What would cost you nothing, not even an iota of the good opinion of your countrymen, would be every thing to him. You refuse the man lest it might cost you a newspaper squib.

For what did I, in the darkest hour of your political history, expend my time, money and whatever talents and influence I had, but to save you from political destruction. To aid in your elevation Great as are your talents, they never could have turned the scale, but for the efficient engine I put in motion, at great expense, labor and contumely. These things are all forgotton. Your ends are accomplished, and it is a sin for me or mine to be kin to you. That is sufficient to deprive any one of the rights of an American citizen, and *you* recognise it. Your bitterest enemies will rejoice that your cause is such as your letter indicates. They charge that you are selfish, that you require service and give none in return. It ever was, and ever will be true that there can be no permanent friendship without reciprocity of actions.

I have met with many misfortunes, been threatened with ruin, but nothing has ever yet happened that has given me so much pain, has so deeply mortified me, as this occurrence. I am at that period of life when my great and almost sole object is to see my children in comfortable circumstances, making their own livings in an honorable manner. I have long since given up hopes of giving them fortune, but I did hope that I might be of service to them in the way of advice and assistance. To feel conscious that I have given advice that has resulted in deep injury is deeply distressing and humiliating. We must however depend upon ourselves, & let what may happen. I hope we will retain a consciousness of having performed every social duty. I can only account for Knox's not giving me information that was so important, upon the supposition that he himself was in ignorance. If he knew the conclusion you had come to, he was guilty of great remissness in not communicating it to me. *He* certainly had time to write three or four lines.

The very same principle which would make it improper for you to give office to a family connection, would make it equally improper in them to vote for you to office. To give a vote is a high public act. You would have thought very strange and hard of it, if we had all refused to vote for you because you were our relation. You did think hard of those of your relations who opposed your elevation.

Your letter of the 26th of June came to hand on yesterday. The

P.M. at New Orleans neglecting a written instruction. Marshall found Williford.⁹ He has *sore eyes*, says if he gets better in time he will finish the survey. I think Curran Frierson¹⁰ can do what is necessary. The difficulty is that Majr Brown¹¹ claims part of the land.

JAMES WALKER

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover reads, "Is in a bad humour, complains bitterly, and I think without reason because *Mr Pickett*, has not been appointed to office. Recd. 3rd Sept. 1845."

1. Samuel P. Walker.
2. James A. Porter, son of prominent Nashville merchant Alexander Porter, served as president of the Nashville Insurance and Trust Co. in 1845.
3. Walker refers to Dicks and Hill, a New Orleans cotton brokerage firm.
4. Joseph Knox Walker.
5. Reference is to Isaac Newton Barnet, who married Walker's daughter, Jane Clarissa, in 1842.
6. Nathaniel B. Denby.
7. Reference is to Lucinda and Percy Dickinson.
8. John W. Rucker.
9. References are to Walker's son, Lucius Marshall Walker, and William W. Williford. Williford, a mathematician and land surveyor, taught at several Maury County schools and served as a trustee of Jackson College in Columbia during the 1830's. He unsuccessfully sought an appointment as surveyor general for Mississippi in 1830 and 1835.
10. Elias Currin Frierson, a Maury County land surveyor, served on the building committee which contracted for a new courthouse in 1845 and assisted in founding the Maury Central Turnpike Company in 1856.
11. Reference is to James Brown, a land locator and surveyor who had been associated with Samuel Polk in surveying the Western District. During the 1830's, Brown established a business partnership with James Walker. By 1839, he removed to Oxford, Miss., and he represented Polk's land interests in that state during the 1840's.

FROM GEORGE M. DALLAS

My Dear Sir, Philada. 25. August 1845

Your letter of the 23d inst. did not reach me until this morning, yesterday having been the Sabbath. One of its topics has occupied so much of my anxious reflections for some weeks, and is of such urgent interest that I cannot permit the mail to return without giving you the opinion in relation to it which you honor me by requesting.

The recently published official papers of the Mexican Government,¹ followed by the accumulation of forces at San Luis de Potosi and Monterey, constitute, as I think, such a military demonstration as

cannot be disregarded without hazarding the most painful consequences. It will not do to depreciate our adversary: and if there be half the number of infantry and cavalry you mention at so short a distance from the Del Norte, under the command of such men as Paredes and Arista, excited as we see all Mexico is, I shall feel extreme solicitude about the comparatively small and hastily collected force of General Taylor. A single and sudden defeat would give a shock to the whole country, and disgrace us throughout Europe; especially after the bold language and manner we have been using: and depend upon it, however great and just our confidence must be in the officers and soldiers of the United States, it will be rash, very rash, in contemplation of the deplorable and immediate results of mischance, if our gallant fellows are permitted to encounter three times their own number. The loss of a battle at this moment, in that place, should not be risked: it would place in jeopardy Texas, and make Oregon ludicrous.

So deeply am I impressed with this view that you must excuse me for earnestly imploring the utmost possible energy and activity of movement in concentrating military strength on the Rio Bravo.² As far as I am informed the vigor of Mr. Bancroft has inspired universal confidence in the naval operations: the same may be said of Gov. Marcy, except that we all fear he has not forces enough to direct.

My plan of proceeding would be the following: and I intrude it upon you in the hope that it may possibly suggest a useful idea.

1. I would accept the services of *Volunteers*, the number of at least 10,000, contingent upon their actual employment being authorized by Congress: this would save the intermediate time.

2. I would call Congress together on the 10th of October, with a Proclamation setting forth the causes; and especially adverting to the official menaces and military movements of Mexico; and to the high and paramount duty of vindicating the rights and dignity of the Nation from the threats and invasion of a neighboring power.

3. I would issue fresh orders to our naval and military commanders, so as to prevent their construing too narrowly the position of *defensive* war. If Genl. Taylor saw good reason to believe that Paredes was marching to join Arista, in order to make a combined attack upon his small army, he should, at least, not be able to find in his orders any thing so peremptory as to prevent his getting at Arista first and beating him if he can, so as to be in less danger of being overwhelmed by numbers. So, also, if our Squadron off Vera Cruz be apprized of actual battle on the Del Norte, the Commodore should not think his hands tied by positive orders to act on the *defensive*, but should be at liberty to bombard every Mexican seaport he can reach.

The calling of Congress is the prescribed Constitutional measure for extraordinary occasions. A resort to it in order to remedy mere *domestic* difficulties has proved injurious, and it is, therefore, regarded with repugnance. But when resorted to in 1813 to rouse and equip the country against *foreign* assault, it was eminently successful: and such would be the case now. I think your proclamation would be answered by shouts of applause from every quarter: and that before the expiration of the first week of the session, you would have an additional force of 20 or 30,000 men, and a loan of 20 or 30 million, at your disposal. Speak to your Country plainly the sentiments of a determined and constitutional patriot, and rest assured that she will rally round you in a way that will not merely strengthen your administration, but give to yourself a popularity and position like that of Washington. It is in emergencies like the present that the foundations of greatness and usefulness are laid. Think but a moment on the mortifying effects of a reverse, on the reproaches to which you would be exposed from our Whig adversaries and our discontented friends, if the future should prove that Congress might have saved us from disaster and disgrace.

It has been out of my power to elaborate or prune these views, owing to constant interruptions: and indeed, I am sensible that to you elaboration is unnecessary. You will observe that in respect to the particular point of your enquiry, I am strongly disposed to an immediate call of Congress in case either, *first*, of a declaration of War by Mexico, or, *second*, of certainty (such certainty as will sustain a report to Congress) in the official addresses issued by the Mexican Government to their departments and in the military assemblages under Paredes and Arista. In practical bearing the *second* alternative is to my mind a more powerful motive for the call than the *first*, for it is *action* and not *declamation*.

On the other topic of your letter, I hope soon to be able to write to you fully, and remain ...

G. M. DALLAS

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. Reference is to a translation of a report communicated by Luis G. Cuevas, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the Chamber of Deputies on July 21, 1845. The report notes that Mexico "shall declare the nation at war" with the United States if "Texas has annexed itself to the American Union," or if U.S. troops have "invaded" Texas. In addition, the report states that the objects of a war will be to "secure the integrity" of Mexico and "insure the independence of the nation." *Washington Union*, August 18, 1845.

2. Alternative name for the Rio Grande Del Norte.

FROM STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS

Sir,

Quincy Ills August 25th 1845

Last night's mail brought the news that the Mexican government, in anticipation of a declaration of War against this country, was preparing for the invasion of the State of Texas, and that ten thousand Mexicans were on their way and within eight days March of Gen'l Taylor's encampment. It is also stated that a requisition has been made upon the Governor of Louisiana for several Regements of the militia. Relying upon the correctness of this information, I presume that actual hostilities have already commenced. In such an event policy and honor would alike require that the invasion should be promptly repelled, and such chastisement inflicted upon its authors as will teach them to respect our rights in future. I do not think that our government ought to confine its operations to mere defensive warfare. The Northern Provinces of Mexico including California ought to belong to this Republic, and the day is not far distant when such a result will be accomplished. The present is an auspicious time. The declaration of war by Mexico renders such a step necessary and proper; and I hope the administration will resolve upon an expedition against New Mexico and California immediately. Such a movement will meet with the enthusiastic support of the whole west. In the event you shall determine upon this line of policy I would like to receive your authority to raise a Regement of Voluntiers from this State. As I have given Mr. Kennett of Missouri a letter to you recommending him for a similar appointment in that State¹ I do not [wish] to have this application interfere with his appointment. But I presume that both and perhaps more will be necessary, and if consistent with your views of propriety and the public interests I would feel grateful for the commission asked for. I have the honor to be

S. A. DOUGLASS

PL. Addressed to Washington City. Published in Johannsen, ed., *Letters of Stephen A. Douglas*, pp. 119–20.

1. Douglas to Polk, August 21, 1845.

FROM WILLIAM H. HAYWOOD, JR.

Raleigh, N.C. August 25, 1845

After acknowledging receipt of Polk's letter of August 9, Haywood discusses briefly North Carolina's elections and congratulates Polk on the Democratic victory in Tennessee. Expresses satisfaction over the defeat of Ephraim H.

Foster and feels “heartily glad” that the U.S. Senate will not include one “whose reputation has out run his merit” and with whom “it is a cardinal doctrine of political faith to dislike *you*.”

In addition, Haywood expresses apprehension over opposition to Texas annexation and reminds Polk that twenty-four senators “are pledged against it upon *constitutional* grounds.” Observes that he once considered advising Polk to open a secret negotiation with Texas to frame a treaty ceding her “wild lands” to the U.S. and facilitating admission of Texas into the union. Such a treaty would not interfere with or supercede the annexation resolutions already accepted by the Texas government. A treaty “would answer the purpose of curing the honest scruples of friends,” while “disarming the opposition of political opponents” who have questioned the method of annexation.

Discussing the tariff issue, he states that he once believed that reform could be effected simply by electing a majority favorable to revision. Concludes, however, that one Congressional session has convinced him “to the contrary” and adds that another session “will not reverse the impressions of the first.” Predicts that the tariff “will not be *materially* altered” and that the failure to do so will not be ascribed to Polk. Urges Polk to remember this prediction and see if at the close of the session he may not be called a “Yankee for a guess.”

Haywood notes that he sent a letter to the Treasury Department recommending the appointment of James T. Miller¹ as naval officer at Wilmington, N.C. Forbears grumbling about his having received no reply. Says that he wrote only because Polk’s Wilmington friends had urged him to do so. Offers assurances that he has no desire to see Polk’s “administration confer an office on any person whose appointment will not be satisfactory.”

Addressing the prospect of war with Mexico, Haywood observes that the newspapers are full of advice on how Polk should conduct such a conflict. Says that it would constitute “an act of supererogation” on his part should he attempt to advise Polk and suggests that a “real friend” of Polk’s administration would “avoid the vanity of public advice.” Concludes that “we seem to be in a fair way to supplant the Govern. by the intrusion of the press.”

Offering in a postscript his own advice on the defense of Texas, Haywood states that “we owe it to *ourselves* to prevent a forcible interference with our negotiations and as for going upon the soil of Texas for that purpose the Govern. of the U.S. had the leave of Texas & her invitation so that *no wrong is done*.” Adds that if Mexico wanted a conflict, “her War declaration should have been made when we *passed the Texas Resolution*.”²

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked “*Private*.” Published in *NCHR*, XVI, pp. 447–51. Polk’s AE notes that he received this letter on August 26 and answered it on August 29.

1. Miller served as naval officer at Wilmington from 1845 until 1850.
2. Reference is to the congressional resolutions of March 3, 1844, annexing the Republic of Texas.

FROM JAMES L. HOMER¹

Boston, Mass. August 25, 1845

Homer encloses copies of his articles in the *Boston Post*² relating "to the dilapidated and crumbling condition of some of the prominent islands and headlands in Boston bay," and suggests that their protection is important "to the commercial and navigating interests of the whole country." Advises Polk that attention to this matter will enhance the administration's popularity in "this strong-hold of whiggery."

Discussing the conduct of Marcus Morton³ in the Boston collectorship, Homer complains that Morton's "singular sluggishness" in removing Whigs from office has produced "much dissatisfaction" among Boston Democrats. Warns that Morton's conduct "in not making removals" and his habit of appointing "particular friends and neighbors" will doubtless have a "seriously prejudicial effect" on the interests of the party.

He expresses disappointment for having failed to secure an inspectorship in the Boston customs house and adds that "many highly respectable men" supported his application. Adding that the possibility of war with Mexico might "make considerable *extra work*," Homer expresses confidence that he could serve the government in "almost any thing."

ALS. DLC-JKP. Marked "Private."

1. A former editor of the *Boston Commercial Gazette*, Homer served as a clerk in the Boston post office in 1844. In 1848 he published *Notes on the Sea-Shore, or, Random Sketches in Relation to the Ancient Town of Hull and Nahant, and Other Places on the Northshore: Being a Continuation of Notes on the Sea-Shore*.

2. Enclosures not found.

3. A lawyer from Taunton, Mass., Morton won election to two terms in the U.S. House, 1817-21, and to four terms as governor of Massachusetts, 1840-41 and 1843-44; he served as customs collector for the port of Boston from 1845 until 1849.

FROM DAVID CRAIGHEAD¹

Dr Sir

Nashville August 26. 1845

Before this comes to your hands you will have heard the result of our election. Like old blind Samson our hero Jackson has in his death drawn down disaster and utter ruin upon the adversaries of truth. The war of the conspirators upon republican principles in Tennessee is over. The orriginators of it are humbled and rebuked. Deserted by their followers in the hour of trial they afford one more example of the danger as well as of the guilt of treachery.

Our majority in the Legislature is small. Perhaps it is best so. It will tend to promote concert of action and harmony unless there is lurking treachery in our camp. I hope we may take warning from our adversaries who vanquished themselves when they could find no one else to do it. Nicholson is a prominent democratic candidate for the Senate. It is said that Lean Jimmy² is calculating the chances of bringing in H L Turney by means of Whig votes.

Others say that Nicholson has forestalled him in this game by an article³ in which he admits the principle of protection, beyond the revenue standard. It is hard to account for this admission of Nicholson on ordinary grounds and it is very unpleasant to find him at his dirty work again.

With this exception Nicholson has certainly conducted his paper with ability and effect. His head is clear. His self command is perfect. His style is easy natural and plain. The entire absence of all passion gives an apparent candor and fairness to his arguments which is the more seductive because it is so rare in times of party strife.

Thank God the old five points⁴ have now all been passed and safely weathered except the tarriff and this I hope and believe will be disposed of next winter. If that is once accomplished you are another Collumbus out in a grand untried but tranquil Ocean. Your old adversaries whether rivals or opponints can neither revive the old issues (they are forever dead) nor come in on any new ones. They will drift into the eddy of forgetfulness if you continue to steer right a head without being drawn to the right or to the left. This course will unquestionably so conduct you to the close of your present term that if you should then vote for your own retirement you will find your self in a meager and a disreputable minority. This is a risult most ardently to be coveted and contended for by every friend of democracy. It is a theme upon which I could expatiate with pleasure and perhaps not without fruit but I will now close by a fervent wish that you may continue as you have begun even unto the end.

DAVID CRAIGHEAD

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked as "Confidential." Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on September 3, 1845, and answered it on September 13, 1845.

1. A wealthy Nashville lawyer, Craighead served one term as a Democrat in the Tennessee Senate, 1835-37.

2. James C. Jones.

3. Article not identified.

4. Reference not identified.

FROM CHARLES J. INGERSOLL

Forest Hill Philad County

Dear Sir

August 26th '45

I will make known to Mr Guier¹ the substance of that part of your letter of the 23d inst.² which concerns him.

I had before heard from a reliable source what you state about Texas, upon which subject I have for some time felt so anxious that I trust you will excuse a brief submission of my apprehensions to your better judgment.

The tone of public sentiment as disclosed by the Press respecting a Mexican war, especially that of the Washington Union, is deplorably like that of the English press towards this country in 1812. Our great enemy thus despised us and we worsted her. With fresh recollections of that conjuncture, I dread the contempt with which we seem to be disposed to treat Mexico. Never despise an enemy.

If we are checked in the first encounter with the Mexican forces, the effect will be fatal to your administration & disastrous to the country, which may lose both Texas and Oregon by such a misfortune.

I fear our force in Texas is not one third as strong as it should be, and you may rely upon it that neither this country, nor England and France, will be, the one satisfied, the others struck as they all should be, by merely driving back a Mexican invasion of Texas. If the Executive has not power to employ greater force and give stronger orders to it, in my opinion Congress should be called together for that purpose without a moments delay.

I do not understand what you mean by acting strictly on the defensive. But if our commanders are prohibited from acting till actually attacked, instead of being allowed and encouraged to become the assailants when they know they are about to be attacked, it will be contrary to the plainest common sense of all military experience, and place our troops under such disadvantage that their defeat will be almost unavoidable.

If we are unsuccessful in the first encounter the war will last longer than your administration, and you must meet your first Congress under the most disreputable circumstances.

Whereas if our troops signally crush and demolish the first attempt, you will meet Congress with such strength as to ensure the possession of Texas, peace with Mexico, and the character with all foreign nations to ensure a long career of unmolested and

progressive prosperity. I am far from desiring any unconstitutional step on your part. But the contingency is altogether novel and calls for the full exercise of the whole national power of the American government. If in your judgment the President cannot authorise the American troops in what is assumed as part of American Territory, to do more than await and repel attack, I submit with perfect respect to other judgments, but under a strong impression of my own, that it is your clear duty to call upon Congress for whatever additional power is necessary.

If we have force enough in Texas, and they are authorised not merely to repulse, but crush the Mexican forces as soon as known to be advancing to attack ours, all may be well. Otherwise I dread the issue. And to tie the hands of our officers by sea, if their orders are the same as to those of the troops on shore, must render the naval squadron in the Gulf of Mexico worse than useless.³

I entreat you, my dear Sir, to beware of reliance on any thing but *superior* force, authorised to *anticipate* attack. Government was confident, and on better premises than yours, of Hull's⁴ success, he was as brave an officer as Taylor, when he consternated the country by surrendering to an inferior enemy.

Mexico has no occasion for a declaration of war in order to subdue a revolted province.

But you cannot possibly dispense with such a declaration unless you take all the responsibility of doing without it.

I owe it to every sentiment of patriotic feeling and every one of personal regard for you to declare that, unless I misunderstand your position, it is one of halfway measures which jeopardds a great and glorious result completely within your power.

I pray you to pardon the freedom of my expression and to believe me

C. J. INGERSOLL

LS. DLC-JKP

1. Reference is probably to George Guier, a Philadelphia insurance broker and notary public.

2. Polk's letter has not been found.

3. Text below is in Ingersoll's hand.

4. Reference is to William Hull. In 1805 Thomas Jefferson appointed Hull governor of Michigan Territory. In his military capacity as brigadier general in the War of 1812, he surrendered Detroit to the British on August 16, 1812; he remained a prisoner of war until February 1813 and subsequently stood trial by court-martial for cowardice.

FROM ELIHU PEDRICK¹

New York, August 26, 1845

Pedrick maintains he has held a long-term interest in the "progress of events" in Mexico and claims to have knowledge "of the politics and the situation of that Government." Argues that Mexico would never invade Texas or declare war on the United States without a promise of aid from Great Britain. Suggests that the "crowned Heads of Europe," although professing neutrality in a conflict between Mexico and the United States, will attempt to check the growth of the United States "under the pretence of *suppressing and extinguishing the slave trade throughout the World.*" Concludes that British diplomats "regulate the affairs of Mexico" and claims that British gold supports the Mexican army and navy.

Citing an 1826 treaty² between Great Britain and Mexico as evidence of Britain's interest in the slavery question, Pedrick speculates that Britain will eventually join the conflict as an ally of Mexico. In addition the French "will be stirred up by a threat that Mexico will have her National Catholic Religion exterminated"; and Mexico's priests "will join in for their Religion and for a Regular Crusade against Slavery." Concluding that Britain ultimately desires the dissolution of "our Union," Pedrick submits his opinions for Polk's "serious consideration" and offers assurances that he has "only the good of my country at Heart and the prosperity of its people."

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked "*Private & Confidential.*" Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on August 28, 1845.

1. A New York City commission merchant, Pedrick is not identified further.

2. On December 26, 1826, Great Britain and Mexico concluded a Treaty of Amity, Commerce, and Navigation in which both nations pledged reciprocal freedom of commerce. In article fifteen of the treaty, to which Pedrick refers, Mexico agreed "to cooperate with His Britannick Majesty for the total abolition of the Slave Trade, and to prohibit all Persons inhabiting within the Territories of Mexico, in the most effectual manner, from taking any share in such trade."

TO GEORGE M. DALLAS

My Dear Sir: Washington City 28th Augt. 1845

I was very anxious to have received your letter on yesterday,¹ but was subject to constant interruptions, by calls, until a late hour at night.

My chief and indeed my only embarrassment in relation to Mexico, grows out of the uncertainty of the intentions of that Government. And information though such as to awaken the greatest vigilance, leaves it

still in doubt, whether it is really intended, to march a hostile Mexican army into Texas. The information which I gave to you² of the force under *Paredes* at *San Louis Potosi*, and under *Arista* at *Monterey*, was derived not from official sources, but was still such as to induce the belief, that the fact was probably so. I have exerted the whole power with which I am invested by the Constitution and laws, to defend the people and territory of Texas, against an attack, should one be made. *Genl. Taylor* has with him and *in route*, for *Corpus Christi*, 5,000 men, of the Regular army. Arms and munitions of War have been forwarded to Texas ready to be placed in the hands of the Texan Volunteers, should an emergency, in the opinion of *Genl. Taylor*, render their services necessary. Other steps have been taken which it would be tedious, and unnecessary to detail. When I said to you that we would act strictly on the defensive, I intended to be understood as meaning, that we would not commence the war, if war comes, but that the first hostile movement should be made by Mexico. I was far from meaning, that if Mexico, invaded Texas, we should wait for her to strike the first blow by making an attack. If she invades Texas in force, it will be an act of War on her part, and will be treated accordingly, and their army will be driven back across the Rio Grande by *Genl. Taylor*, if he shall be in force to do it, as I doubt not he soon will be. Our dates from his camp are up to the 13th Inst. and at that time, there was no knowledge that the Mexican army, had crossed or were any nearer Rio Grande than they were many days before. You may rely upon it, that the moment the first act of hostility is committed by Mexico, either by a Declaration of War, or by marching a strong army across the Del Norte, which will be war, our land and Naval forces will, not as you seem to believe, have their hands, tied up by their orders, so as to prevent them from "carrying the war into Africa,"³ & attacking the army, by land and sea wherever they can strike an effective blow. In our present state of information I do not see that I would be justified in calling Congress, or that there is any necessity for such a step. Neither of the contingencies, on the happenings of which, you advise the measure, have occurred. *First* there has been no declaration of war by Mexico, and *second* there is no *certainty* that her army will invade Texas. Should information of either be received, the call of Congress will be a subject of immediate and grave consideration. In the mean-time, everything has been and will be done to be prepared for any sudden emergency which may arise. I agree with you that a disaster in the opening of a war, would be most unfortunate. Such I think cannot happen. The greatest solicitude I have had is, that all the forces which have been ordered and are now on their way to *Genl. Taylor's* camp, may not reach him, as soon as they are

needed. I have my opinion however that the Texas Volunteers would rush to his standard in great numbers, upon a moment's notice, that a Mexican army were advancing or that their services were needed. Genl. T. too is authorized to call on the Governors of the adjacent states, for additional force, if he thinks their services will be needed. In a word I have anticipated every possible contingency which may happen, and have done all I need do, unless there was an actual declaration of War, or an invasion. The call on the states, for 10,000 Volunteers, "contingent upon their actual employment by Congress," which you suggest, could not meet any sudden emergency which might happen, any more effectively than the steps which have been taken. *Genl. Taylor* is an officer of high character and great prudence, and I have full confidence, that he will conduct the campaign properly, taking all the necessary precautions to prevent surprize, or any advantage from being taken of him. I have thus given you the information of the steps which have been taken. They have been taken quietly and without noise, because it was unnecessary to produce excitement in our own country, or by proclaiming what we were doing to give notice to the enemy. Such is still our true policy, and you will of course regard all that I have said in this or in my former letter as *strictly confidential*. To you I can properly communicate it, but to few, if any others, out of the Cabinet with safety, to the service. I pray you to give me any other views you may entertain frankly and without reserve.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, draft. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Philadelphia and marked "*Confidential*."

1. See Dallas to Polk, August 25, 1845.
2. See Polk to Dallas, August 23, 1845.
3. Oblique reference to the Roman conduct of the Second Punic War.

FROM GEORGE PLITT

Dear Sir,

New York, 28 August, 1845

I had the honor to report to the Secretary of State yesterday, that, after an interview with the Collector of this Port,¹ I learned that the *Neptuana* had sailed on *Friday last*, and that after she had obtained her clearance papers from the Custom House, she stopped some time off the Battery and took in what was supposed to be stores, and that she finally sailed before the Collector became aware of this fact.

From a personal examination of the papers, to-day, at the Custom House, I find that the vessel alluded to is the Steamer *Neptuno*, and

that she is supposed to have sailed on Tuesday the 19th instant, this being the date of her clearance on the books. She is owned by a Spanish House in Mexico, came in here for repairs, and was fitted up by the respectable house of Peter Harmony & Co. of this city. It is true, that after she had obtained her papers, she stopped off the Battery some considerable time, but as yet I cannot learn, from any source, for what purpose. I have, however, arranged for an interview with her Pilot, either to-night or to-morrow morning, from whom I hope to obtain all the desired information. It is not presumed here, that she is destined for any but a legitimate purpose, being supposed to have been fitted up especially for the coasting trade from Vera Cruz.

Thomas Goin,² who is quoted as the authority for the information given to the government, and who is a master in the naval service, positively denies ever having stated, that the *Neptuno* had sailed "for the purpose of privateering, under the Mexican flag, against the commerce of the United States," or that "there were fourteen other vessels in port, preparing for the same destination." His statement to me, is, that all he said, was, that the *Neptuno* was fitted up in such a manner as to be able to take care of herself, and that, in case of a war, he had no doubt she would be used as a privateer. In relation to the other vessels, his expression was, that he knew of eight schooners having been built here and sold to Mexican houses, which might, in case of war, be used as privateers; and that powder, shot, and guns, were constantly shipped from this port for Mexico, though not in greater quantities now than was customary previous to the present difficulties. In the ship-yard docks of Brown, Bell, & Co. of this city, there are now lying three schooners of a similar character to those above alluded to. I examined them to-day. They are made after a most beautiful model, reputed to be very fast sailers, and are admirably calculated for privateers; but they have not yet been purchased. There are also at the same yard two unfinished Steamers, one on the stocks and the other in the water, which, with the three schooners named, are said to be intended for the Mexican service, and that some money had already been advanced upon them, but not sufficient to warrant the sending off the schooners, which are finished and ready for sea. These rumors may, however, be without proper foundation.

Mr. Goin has promised me an interview with a gentleman named Hudson,³ who has seen, according to his statement, blank commissions and Letters of Marque, signed by the proper authorities in Mexico, in the possession of a person here, to be used for privateering purposes the moment Mexico declares war. I cannot believe that any such papers

are in existence here, but of this I shall be able to judge when I hear Mr. Hudsons' statement.

All the gentlemen to whom I had letters from the State, Treasury, and Navy Departments, and with whom I conversed to-day, are of the impression, that there is no ground, as yet, to suspect any of our citizens with being engaged in the getting up of Privateers to be used against our commerce, in case of a war with Mexico. The Collector of this Port will give special directions to his officers upon this subject, and the attention of the Commander of this Station,⁴ has already been drawn to it, by the Secretary of the Navy.

GEORGE PLITT

ALS. DLC-JKP. Polk's AE on the cover reads: "He had been sent to New York, to ascertain whether vessels, were fitting out in that Port as privateers for the Mexican service in case of War with that country. Rcd. 30th Augt. 1845."

1. Cornelius W. Lawrence.
2. Thomas Goin, proprietor of a New York City shipping office, published *Remarks on the Home Squadron, and Naval School* and *The American Naval, and Patriotic Songster* in 1840.
3. Not identified further.
4. A Delaware native and decorated veteran of the War of 1812, Jacob Jones served as port captain of the harbor of New York in 1845.

TO WILLIAM H. HAYWOOD, JR.

My Dear Sir: Washington City 29th Augt. 1845
 I have received your very acceptable le[t]ter¹ of the 25th Instant, but have not time this morning to do more than respond to the business part of it. On enquiry, I learn that the only letter of yours on file in the Treasury Department, relating to the appointment of Naval Officer at Wilmington N. Carolina, is one to the Secretary of the 21st of March last. In that letter you express the opinion that according to the information then in your possession, you would say that *James T. Miller Esqr.* would be more acceptable to the community than any other, but you request the Department to suspend any action in the previous, until you could take steps to ascertain their wishes with more certainty. If you have written any other letter on the subject, it has not been filed. If you will inform me on receipt of this letter what your wishes are, prompt attention will be given them.

JAMES K. POLK

P.S. Since writing, I have seen the Secretary of the Treasury, who asks me to say to you, that he has received no letter from you on the subject

of the Naval Office at Wilmington except that of the 21st March now on file and to which I have referred above. J.K.P.

ALS, draft. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Raleigh.

1. Manuscript torn.

TO ISAAC TOUCEY¹

My Dear Sir:

Washington City 29th Augt. 1845

I have read with much interest your friendly letter of the 22d Inst.,² and although my constant engagements compel me to neglect almost entirely, my correspondence with my friends, I seize a moment, to acknowledge its receipt. I thank you for the friendly suggestions which you have made and can only say, that my friends in Connecticut may rest perfectly assured that, it is, and ever has been, my intention to do them full justice. My great difficulty has been, in arriving at correct information of the local interests and wishes of your people. One of my first acts (the appointment at New Haven)³ I learn gave great dissatisfaction to a portion of my friends, in that vicinity, and yet I acted, upon the best lights before me, & with a sincere desire to gratify their wishes. In reference to some other of your local offices such has been the division of opinion among those representing themselves to be my friends (for you know that I am personally acquainted with very few of your citizens) that I may unintentionally have fallen into some errors.⁴

So far as particular principles and measures are concerned, I shall have but little difficulty. My political creed as you know is not of yesterday. It was known to my countrymen before they elected me to my present responsible position. My opinions remain unchanged and on measures of policy, my path is plainly marked before me. I shall pursue this path without turning to the right or to the left. It is only in reference to the dispensation of the public patronage, that I derive my trouble, and that is occasioned by the widely varying and conflicting opinions and wishes of my friends. I often wish that I had not an office to bestow. If that were so, I should be saved from much the greater part of my labour and visitations. After all, the people, I mean the great mass, look to *measures and not men*,⁵ and if their Government is well administered and on proper principles which they approve, they will regard the appointment to office as substantially unimportant. So with a firm resolution, I shall endeavour to do my duty, and leave the rest to God and the judgement of my country.

I remember My Dear Sir: with pleasure our association in Congress,

and our entire accordance of opinion upon most of the great questions which arose at that day, and I take pleasure in saying that your opinion and wishes will at all times have great weight with me. I hope you will communicate to me without reserve, whatever information or opinions, you may think would be useful to me in the proper discharge of my arduous, and responsible duties.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Hartford and marked "*Private.*"

1. A lawyer from Hartford County, Conn., Toucey served as a prosecuting attorney, 1822–35 and 1842–44; as a member of the U.S. House, 1835–39; as governor, 1846; as U.S. attorney general in Polk's cabinet, 1848–49; and as a U.S. senator for one term, 1851–57.

2. Toucey's letter has not been found.

3. Reference is to Polk's appointment of Norris Wilcox as collector of the customs at the port of New Haven on March 10, 1845.

4. Blurred ink transfers render the following 18 lines indecipherable.

5. Quotation attributed to Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, *Letters*, March 6, 1742.

TO AARON V. BROWN

My Dear Sir:

Washington City 30th Augt. 1845

I have received your letter,¹ written after the result of the Tennessee election was ascertained and certain. Though the Democracy succeeded by a small majority, the triumph is the most signal that has occurred in my state for many years, or that can occur in any for many years to come. Your election is the topic of constant conversation here among citizens and visitors, and is the subject of universal rejoicing among the Democracy throughout the Union. You have achieved what I failed to do in two hard fought battles, and most heartily do I rejoice at it. You have the thanks of the whole party, for your invaluable services and arduous labours, which as *you* know *I* know, have to appreciate. The Legislature too was vastly important, because it will secure one Senator from my own state, upon whom I may rely for support in all measures which the Democracy ought to support, and I trust I will not desire support for any others. From what I learn from the state, some troubles may arise in the selection of the candidate for Senator. Upon this subject there is but one unwavering and safe rule, and much will depend upon your influence to have that rule adopted & enforced. It is that a majority of the Democratic members of the Legislature in full caucus, should select the candidate, and the friends of all others should yield and give him their support. The same rule should be

observed in all other elections to be made by the Legislature. It should be impressed upon every Democratic member before he reaches the seat of Government, as well as afterwards. It is the only rule of safety and certain success, which the party can adopt. None should object to it for it is in effect and in fact a rule which enables the majority of the [...] ² to control and govern. I have witnessed the difficulty in former times, of bringing individuals, of our party to agree to it. There has been a prejudice against it by some, which has led, and if unfortunately they shall continue to act, will again lead to the worst of consequences. As a general rule, any man who is elected to office, by his political opponents, united with a minority or small faction of his political friends, is placed in embarrassing circumstances and sometimes [...] is [...] upon his vote and his services are [...] Our majority in the Legislature is small [...] members who may break off from their party [...] our common adversary to prevail. I urge you therefore, to step forward boldly and to be timely so as to prevent such a disaster in any election to be made by the Legislature. Let the first thing done, when the members of the Legislature convene be to meet together & [...] that a majority in caucus shall in all cases prevail and that the candidate nominated by said majority, shall receive the unanimous support of the party, and thus prevent any election from depending on Whig votes. In this way every election can be decided on the first ballot. [...] Let this [...] be carried into the choice of the party [...] of the two Houses. If they act [...] in this way and [...] to the view, [...] no further trouble. If [...] not done, the party will be fighting over the election [...] in the [...] which I favor. I pray you to write to our friends, let others also write, and let the press speak out in bold terms, before the Legislature meets. Of course I cannot and ought not to take any part between friends in any election which may take place, but I am bold to proclaim the rule I suggest to you, and I will add that all true Democrats who wish the party well, and look more to the success of principle, than their own, will cheerfully agree to it. All the states in which there has been a close contest between the parties have been compelled to resort to this rule as their only security. Our political opponents even in Tennessee, resort to it, & shall our friends never learn experience? After the caucus have decided, if any democrat, shall become excited, denounce caucuses, and set himself up, as an independent candidate, let him get the Whig vote *alone*, and meet the fate, which he deserves. I feel deeply on this point, because it is your only danger, but I have said enough about it.

On the *Oregon* question, to which you allude, I *venture* to say to you, what I have not said, to any one, except the *Cabinet* and I say it

to you in the *strictest and most profound confidence*, that there is no probability that it can be settled by negotiation. I do not feel that, it is proper (because I have solemnly assured the Cabinet that I would not communicate to it, to any one; they are under like obligations) to say to you what has transpired. It is enough to say that I have been greatly embarrassed by the action of my predecessors. The negotiation is not yet brought to a close, but I think you may rest satisfied, that I will stand on safe and dependable ground, and that you will approve what I have done. In the present aspect of the question, I expect there is no probability that there can be a Treaty, unless the Senate shall [...] previously to its signature advise its terms. I shall I think occupy strong and high ground on this question, at the meeting of Congress. I do not think the prospect of a Mexican war so great as I thought it ten days ago. I think the prompt, appearance of our forces on the border by land and sea will probably deter the Mexicans, and prevent either a declaration of War or an invasion. There are with Genl. Taylor and *en route* to join him 5.000 regular troops. In addition to this he is invested with power to call for Volunteers from Texas and the adjoining states if need be. We have sent also 15.000 arms, cannons & all the munitions of war to Texas, ready to be used by any activated forces which may be called into the field. Our squadron in the Gulf, is the strongest we have ever had together at any one time since we have been a nation. These energetic & ample preparations, will I think probably prevent war. All this is said to you, as though you were a member of my Cabinet and under like injunction. Write to me often, & give me your mind freely about all public matters. I am still closely, confined to my office and leave infrequently, but my health seems much better.

JAMES K. POLK

P.S. Not knowing where this letter will certainly reach you, I address it to you at Nashville, and have written Cheatham to have it forwarded to you, if you are not at that place. J.K.P.

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Nashville.

1. See Brown to Polk, August 16, 1845.
2. Blurred ink transfers render word or words illegible here and below.

TO SAM HOUSTON

My Dear Sir:

Washington City 31st Augt. 1845

I received your letter addressed to me at Bon Air¹ in Tennessee, and should have answered it sooner but for the uncertainty, of your whereabouts. I now avail myself of the occasion, of the return of your friend

Col. Eldridge, to Texas, who leaves to night with despatches, to the commander of our "army of occupation" in Texas, and to the commander of our squadron in the Gulf, to write you a hasty note. The Texan Congress and Convention having accepted the terms for annexation proposed by the U. States, I have considered it my duty to protect and defend the people and territory of Texas, against the threatened invasion by Mexico. To effect this object, the most energetic measures within my power have been adopted. The force of *Genl. Taylor* now with him, and *en route* to join him will consist of 5.000 regular troops, which is two thirds of our whole regular army, under our peace establishment. *Genl. Taylor* is invested with discretionary authority, to call for the aid of volunteers from the Texan authorities and from Louisiana and other South Western states, if he should deem their services necessary. I have ordered 15.000 small arms, muskets and rifles, cannons, and the necessary munitions of War to Texas, which have doubtless reached *Galveston* before this time, and will be ready to be placed in the hands, of such volunteer force as may be called to the field. We have in the Gulf the strongest squadrons which have ever been together since we have been a nation. Should Mexico declare war, she will be promptly met by our forces, by sea and by land. Should she instead of declaring war, invade Texas by crossing the *Del Norte* by a considerable force, we shall regard that act as the commencement of hostilities on her part, and our forces, will drive them back, if Taylor has sufficient force to do so. Regarding the *Del Norte* as your true Western boundary, not a Mexican soldier (in the event of hostilities) should be permitted to remain East of that river.

In these movements our squadron will of course cooperate, with the army, on land, and will blockade the Mexican ports in the Gulf. Whether hostilities are actually to occur or not, is still in doubt. It was the part of prudence however to ready to meet them, if attempted, and have our preparations. Our information from Mexico, is vague and unsatisfactory, as to her real intentions. The rumors are, and all her movements indicate, that such is her intention. It may be however that our strong force in the gulf and on land may, deter her and prevent it. But for the appearance of this force on her border, I am satisfied, that she would invade Texas. I am glad to hear from *Col. Eldridge*, that you will return shortly: for in the event of war, your presence in Texas, will be important.

We have heard nothing of the proceedings of your Convention for over a month. I take for granted however that, they will form a Republican Constitution, and have it at Washington, ready to be submitted to our Congress at the opening of their Session in December. There

can be no doubt, but the new state will be admitted as a member of our Union, almost as a matter of course; certainly with no serious resistance. The majority in both Houses favourable to the measure will be large and decided. Upon that point therefore, you need not I think give yourself any uneasiness. I congratulate you on the re-union, and shall be most happy to see you here, representing the sovereignty of the junior member of our confederacy. We will welcome your young state into the Union, and will not treat her as though she was a step child, but will not only extend to her the protection of our stars and stripes, but will do her full justice.

I have written in great haste, and have no time to revise, what I have said.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Marked "*Private*."

1. Letter not found. Bon Air was the site of a popular hotel and mineral springs in White County.

COURTESY & PROPERTY OF
SUPREME COUNCIL OF
KHMER HELP KHMER (SCKHK)

SEPTEMBER

FROM HENRY HORN

My Dear Sir, Philadelphia Sept 1st 1845

Your portrait¹ is now handsomely framed and ready to be forwarded, but the person by whom I intended to send it is not yet ready to go. I shall send it by the first good opportunity, and if none other should occur having business at the Treasury Department in the course of a few days I will bring it myself.

I could send it by the ordinary conveyance if you are anxious to have it immediately but as there [are] always some risks to run from the carelessness of ordinary carriers I think it safer to send an article subject to injury, by transportation, in the care of some trusty person.

HENRY HORN

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked as "*Private.*" Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on September 2, 1845, and answered it on September 4, 1845.

1. See Horn to Polk, August 15 and September 4, 1845.

FROM RICHARD M. JOHNSON

Dear Sir, White Sulphur 1st Sept 1845

If Mexico has or shall declare war agt the U. Stats authorise me to raise 2000 mounted volunteers, & give me 8000 Infantry the whole

force to be raised in Ky & Missouri & give me Genl Jessup as the regular officer to put at the head of the Infantry, and in 60 days from the day of Rendevous in Missouri, we will be in possession of San Tafee & working the gold & silver mines, to pay our troops & feed & Cloth them—the mounted men to make charges upon the enemy & the infantry to charge Bayonet. I wish to undertake this as my part of the business—the plan to undergo any modification the President may make.

RH. M. JOHNSON

ALS. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on September 8, 1845.

TO JAMES HAMILTON, JR.¹

My Dear Sir:

Washington City 2nd Sept. 1845

The copy of your letter of the 27th ultimo, to Mr Buchanan,² which came under cover to my Private Secretary has been handed to me. Your letter written in June last³ enclosed to Mr Buchanan was received, and I certainly owe you an apology for my failure to answer it. The suggestions which you made in it, were fully considered and their importance appreciated. Mr McLane however was about to go to London as Minister, and was of course fully possessed of the views here, in reference to all our interests at that Court, as well as those relating to Mexico & the annexation of Texas. It was not therefore deemed, necessary or proper *at that time*, to act upon the important suggestions contained in your letter, in the manner proposed. I beg you to be assured My Dear Sir, that my failure to answer your letter, was far, very far, from being intended as a rebuke, to you, as you intimate, in your letter of the 27th ultimo, it would imply. So far from such an intention existing in my mind, I was much gratified to receive it, and fully intended at the time, to have answered it promptly, and now feel that I am subject to just rebuke for not having done so. You can scarcely appreciate, the constant confinement, which I am compelled to endure, and urgent duties which I have to perform. They occupy my whole time daily, and compel me to neglect almost entirely my correspondence with my friends. I have scarcely written a dozen letters in that many weeks, though I have received many letters, which it would have been highly proper to answer. I trust upon this explanation, you will see nothing in my silence, to give you pain, for certainly nothing was further from my intention. I shall be pleased, My Dear Sir to hear from you whenever it may suit your convenience or inclination to communicate with me about our public

affairs, and will promise hereafter to be more prompt in answering your letters. It is due to Mr Buchanan that I should say, that he is blameless in the matter. He handed your letter to himself with mine enclosed, to me, and doubtless supposed that I had long since written to you in reply as I now frankly confess I should have done. I regret that it was not done, and that it lay here with hundreds of others, on my table unanswered.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Charleston, S.C., and marked “*Private.*”

1. A lawyer and planter, Hamilton served as a member of the U.S. House, 1822–29, and as governor of South Carolina, 1830–32. Initially a supporter of Andrew Jackson, he became an outspoken advocate of free trade and a leader of the states’ rights party in South Carolina. Hamilton moved to Russell County, Ala., after the nullification crisis of 1833. Enthusiastic in his support for Texas, he served as one of its European commercial agents and advocated its annexation to the United States.

2. See James Hamilton, Jr., to James Buchanan, August 27, 1845. ALS. DLC–JKP.

3. Hamilton’s letter of June 11, 1845, to Polk has not been found.

FROM HARVEY M. WATTERSON

Dear Sir,

Beech Grove. Te Sept. 2d. 1845

Now that the battle is over, the slain decently interred, and the wounded snugly stored away on the Whig fork and Federal prong of Salt River,¹ I have concluded to write you a short letter by way of congratulation and glorification.

The three dearest *looking coons* that you ever put your two mortal eyes upon, are *Gimmy Jones*, *John Bell*, and “*Our Eph.*”² “God bless his *fool soul*” as an old lady said, when she heard him tell his “*Bull-calf story.*” I went down to Nashville the day after the election, and remained there until it was clearly ascertained that we had whiped them on every part of the track—Governor, Legislature & all. Foster in his *peculiar* way, attempted to *laugh off* the mortification which was piercing the inmost recesses of his soul. But alas! none were so blind as not to see, it was the *grin* of a grave yard. Bell & Jones held up their heads, as long as there was any hope that the Whigs had carried the Legislature. But when the Memphis mail arrived and settled *that* question, they looked like the Cholera had just made its appearance, and swept away the nearest and dearest relatives they had on earth.

It would have amused you to have heard the little boys crying through the streets in ever direction—"Eph's got him"! "Eph's got him"!

We gave a few more votes to Brown in each county composing this Senatorial District, than were given to you in Nov last. We should have done much better had it not been for the miserable quarrels between Trott & Ellidge in Cannon, Northcut & Hill in Warren, Roberts & Caulson in Coffee³—and the treachery of that infernal unprincipled scamp that the Whigs made a tool of to run against me for the Senate.⁴ At least one hundred and fifty of my friends in DeKalb, went up to the polls and voted for him with *large open* tickets, in order to prevent him & his few grocery-democratic-friends, from swaping off Col Floyd. Yet it all would not do. They swaped us out of the county, when we would have carried it by a majority of between fifty & a hundred votes. I have no patience with such creatures. I hope the time will arrive when we will be sufficiently strong to kick all such out of the party, to throw them overboard whenever and wherever they show their diabolical heads.

The way I have pitched into Foster this summer was any thing but comfortable to his friends. I paid him up with *interest* for all old scores. Thank God and the people he is now a "dead cock in the pit," and I am at least as happy as he *was* when he prevailed upon his Whig brethren in the Senate of the United States to reject my nomination as Charge De Affairs to Buenos Ayres.

You have got the Ship of State *under way* with such a favorable breeze, I have no doubt you will have a happy and prosperous voyage. That your Administration will be a popular one all your friends here have the fullest confidence. As a Spaniard would say "God preserve Your Excellency many years."

H. M. WATTERSON

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on September 11, 1845.

1. A river symbolizing the route to oblivion for defeated political candidates or parties. Watterson's reference derives from an incident in the 1832 presidential campaign. Henry Clay boarded a riverboat at Pitts Point, Ky., on the Salt River to travel down river en route to a campaign stop at Louisville. The boat instead went "up Salt River" and caused Clay to miss his speaking engagement.

2. James C. Jones, John Bell, and Ephraim H. Foster.

3. Henry Trott, Jr., Isaac W. Elledge, Adrian Northcutt, Hugh L. W. Hill and Isaac H. Roberts. Caulson is not identified further. A farmer and merchant in Woodbury, Trott served as first clerk and master of the Chancery Court in Cannon County, 1836-42, and represented that county as a Democrat for two terms in the Tennessee House, 1843-47. Elledge served as sheriff

of Cannon County from 1842 until 1844. A Warren County Democrat and captain of Tennessee volunteers during the Mexican War, Northcutt served several terms in the Tennessee House, 1845–49 and 1855–57, and won election to two terms in the Tennessee Senate, 1849–51 and 1853–55. Hill, a farmer, school teacher, and distiller from Warren County, served three terms in the Tennessee House as a Democrat, 1837–43, and won election to one term in Congress, 1847–49. County Administrator for Coffee County in 1842, Roberts served two terms as a Democrat in the Tennessee House, 1837–39 and 1853–55.

4. Watterson's reference is to his opponent, James McGuire. A sheriff of DeKalb County, McGuire served one term in the Tennessee Senate, 1847–49.

FROM ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Consulate U States
 My dear Sir, Liverpool 3d Septemr 1845

I have been looking for Mr Harris¹ up to this moment. Harris was present at a conversation between Genl Jackson and myself in relation to Majr Lewis, his first publications at Washington &c. As soon as he comes I will compare recollections with him and make out a Statement that will be satisfactory. The Genl had no Feeling about Majr Lewis discharge from office. I regret that you never recd. his last letter. (There is a mistery in the loss of this letter) Lewis was there, Andrew² ought to give you the substance his recollections &c &c.

Mr. Everett with his family are here at the same House I am and leave in the steamer of 4th Int. He is a *little* bitter the old Federal Leaven is still there. Mrs E.³ has quite a tongue. They are disposed to *underrate* everything done by *our party*, in a word they are English in heart and you have done well to recall Them. Ogden⁴ who was Twelve years Consul here and then Consul at Bristol (*but Lives here*) is another *American* with an *English* heart and feeling.

I know your engagements that you have but little time to spare but I would be glad to hear from you. I feel so anxious that your administration should succeed well and satisfactorily to yourself.

I may do something in Commerce here if I do & am fortunate it will put us both at ease in *retirement*. Present me to Mrs. Polk and Mr & Mrs Walker.

R. ARMSTRONG

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked "*Private*."

1. Arnold S. Harris.
2. Andrew Jackson, Jr.
3. Charlotte Brooks Everett.

4. A veteran of the War of 1812 and aide-de-camp under Andrew Jackson at the Battle of New Orleans, Francis B. Ogden served as U.S. consul at Liverpool, 1830–42, and as U.S. consul at Bristol from 1840 until his death in 1857.

FROM GEORGE M. DALLAS

My Dear Sir,

3. Sept. '45

Your last letter¹ has left upon my mind the agreeable conviction that nothing remains undone which it was in the power of the Administration to do, for the security of Texas and the national honor. The question on the expediency of a Special Session of Congress, dependent upon war, actual or declared, seems to become hourly less likely to arise: and its solution agreeably to your own impressions is perhaps wiser at the expiration of every day which brings us nearer to December. It is not probable that any new consideration affecting this interesting and grave question can present itself to my judgment, partially informed as to existing facts as I must necessarily be: but should such a one occur to me, I will avail myself of your kind suggestion and communicate it with frankness.

In reference to the other topic of your letter of the 23. of August, the Treasurer of the Mint and his office, I find myself, after much reflection, obliged, by the incidents of a half year's experience, to abstain from saying a word. I thought at one time, altho' generally disinclined to meddle with the exercise of patronage, that a few long known and meritorious friends, in the immediate and narrow place of my own residence, might be recommended to your preference, without my incurring the risk of running counter to any system of proscribing designed to be applied to the whole country. It has turned out that you were unable to gratify this small ambition of mine in a single instance: nor have I felt myself at liberty to doubt for a moment the insuperable nature of the reasons which compelled you to forego the kind assurances under the influence of which I left you in March last: but, to speak with the candor to which you are entitled, I fear another failure, another complete check-mate, and am not willing to incur again the chances of the game.

As your letter adverted to Mr. Rush, you will, I am sure, excuse me for saying that his name never has been coupled by me with the post referred to. Perhaps I entertain an exaggerated opinion of his pretensions as a public man, of his intellect, of his experience, of his worth: I thought, and so said to you, that if he were appointed Collector, he would lift the character of the station: respectable as both certainly

are, yet, under my notions of men and things, I would as readily propose to Mr. Rush to be the teller of a Bank as the Treasurer of the Mint: it would be a mere proposal to his contracted means, not an homage to his merits.

The season of sickness in Washington is approaching, and you must have undergone most severe trials during the excessive heats of the last two months. I advise an Executive recess. You ought to brace up for the winter, and avoid, by some relaxation, the danger of being fagged out. If you will come this far north, I will guarantee to you the very best weather and Welcome.

G. M. DALLAS

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. See Polk to Dallas, August 28, 1845.

FROM WILLIE B. JOHNSON¹

Sir,

Clarksville Tennessee Sept [3rd] 1845²

Nothing could induce me to take this privilage with you, but our former acquaintance & I hope friendship.

As the Brigr. Genl of the 15th Brigr. of Tennessee Militia, I tender to you the Services of a Regiment of Volunteers for any portion of Texas you may require & subject to your orders.

I am shure that my brother Cave Johnson will be opposed to my going, is the reason I do not address him first that he might speak to you on the subject.

I must congratulate you on the Success of Democracy in Tennessee. I hope for years to come we will have no further trouble with Whigism.

I have the Honor of being . . .

W. B. JOHNSON

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on September 9, 1845.

1. A Clarksville lawyer, Johnson sat in the Tennessee Senate for one term, 1835–37, and served twelve years as attorney general for Tennessee's Seventh Judicial District, 1839–51.

2. Postal cancellation reads "Clarksville Tenn Sep 2."

TO CHARLES DOUGLAS¹

My Dear Sir:

Washington City 4th Sept. 1845

I have felt desirous to gratify your wishes to be employed in the public service, but find that it will not be in my power, to appoint you

to the station which you prefer. In one of your letters you intimate that you would be pleased to accept, one of the Barbary consulates. Those are now filled, and I do not contemplate removing either of the incumbents. The consulate at *Rio Grande* in Brazil, will probably be vacant in a few days, and if the place will be acceptable to you, it will give me pleasure to confer it upon you. It is a place of some importance. The consulate fees I understand, were in 1840, about \$1300, and are probably now greater. I will thank you, to inform me whether, it will be agreeable to you to accept it. If you accept I will issue the commission immediately. If you decline, I must appoint some other person soon. There are several applicants for the place before me, but I will suspend making the appointment until I can hear from you.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to New London, Conn., and marked "Private."

1. An outspoken critic of the factory system, the physician Charles Douglas had been one of the leaders of the Working Men's movement in New England. In the early 1830's he established the *New England Artisan* and the *New London Political Observer and Working Man's Friend*. In 1832 he served as the president of the New England Association of Farmers, Mechanics, and other Workingmen and also ran as the Democratic nominee for state senator from Connecticut's Seventh District. Douglas declined Polk's offer of a consulate in Brazil but accepted in 1847 a position as commissioner of public buildings in Washington.

FROM HENRY HORN

My Dear Sir, Philadelphia 4 Sepr 1845

I beg leave thus to make you acquainted with my esteemed personal and political friend Thos Sparks Esqr¹ who visits Washington upon business connected with the treasury Department.

Mr Sparks is one of our most highly respected citizens and has been so obliging as to take with him your portrait.² I commend him to your friendship.

The lid of the box containing it you will perceive is secured by screws so that it may be easily opened without danger of injury to the picture. And in each end there are two screws passing through the box into the frame of the picture to secure it against friction. After removing these screws the picture can be taken out of the box without the least difficulty.

HENRY HORN

ALS. DLC–JKP. Delivered by hand of Thomas Sparks. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on September 5, 1845.

1. A Philadelphia merchant and shot manufacturer, Sparks served as a vice president of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.

2. See Horn to Polk, August 15 and September 1, 1845, and Polk to Horn, September 4, 1845.

TO HENRY HORN

My Dear Sir: Washington City 4th Sept. 1845

I have received your letter of the 1st Inst., in which you intimate that you may visit Washington, on business at the Treasury Department in the course of a few days. I was pleased to hear that you would be here, as I desire to see you, on matters of some interest. There is no hurry about the portrait.¹ You can bring it with you, if you come to Washington, or send it, when it is perfectly convenient to you.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Philadelphia; marked *Private*."

1. See Henry Horn to Polk, August 15, 1845.

TO JAMES BUCHANAN

My Dear Sir: Washington 7th Sept. 1845

I have received your note, transmitting a rough sketch of your reply to *Mr Lee*.¹ It meets my approbation, subject to one or two unimportant alterations, which I take the liberty to suggest for your consideration. On the second page you say, "It is certain however that the Government of Texas *remains unchanged and that it*, still possesses all the powers, that it formerly did, except such as would be inconsistent with the engagements of the respective parties to consummate annexation." I suggest that the words underscored, viz, "*remains unchanged and that it*," be omitted. On the third page where you say, "Whilst therefore the President cannot receive you, in a diplomatic character, he will be most happy if you will remain in this City, as an agent of *your Government*"; I suggest that the words "*your Government*," be struck out, and the word "*Texas*" or the words "*The State of Texas*," be substituted in their stead. I submit these modification for your consideration.

JAMES K. POLK

P.S. I return to you the rough sketch of your letter. J.K.P.

ALS. PHi. Addressed locally.

1. Buchanan's draft letter to Polk has not been found. Appointed chargé d'affaires to the United States by Anson Jones in August, 1845, William D. Lee is not identified further. In a September 6, 1845, letter to Lee reflecting Polk's suggested revisions, Buchanan noted that it would not be proper to receive Lee as chargé from the Texas government and "thus treat it as a foreign nation." Citing ratification of the terms of annexation and the dispatch of U.S. troops to Texas, Buchanan added that Texas had "become in fact, if not in form, one of our States." He concluded, however, that "it would be extremely convenient, if not absolutely necessary, to have an agent of Texas" in the United States and noted that Polk would "be much gratified" if Lee could remain in Washington. PL. Published in John Bassett Moore, ed., *The Works of James Buchanan* (12 vols; New York: Antiquarian Press Ltd. reprint, 1960), VI, pp. 254–55.

FROM WILLIAM H. POLK

Dear Brother

Naples Sept 7th 1845

Enclosed I send you the *duplicate* of a draft on Messers Barring Brothers & Co, the first of which I forwarded to you two weeks ago. I hope the first went safe—please inform me. In my former letter¹ I entered somewhat at length into the present condition of my affairs, a knowledge of which may be of service to those persons who are liable on my paper. If you have not received it I will again state it, when informed of its miscarriage.

Since writing my former letter I have been no little disturbed and uneasy on the subject of my Western lands. I fear if immediate attention is not given to them some *tracts* may be lost, having been sold for the taxes. The seven years may slip and vest the title by virtue of the sale. Ask Knox to make the suggestion to L. J. Polk or Dr Hays.² I regret to give you trouble or draw one thought from your public duties which I know are sufficiently harrassing without the addition of my tangled affairs, but in your last letter³ having kindly consented to give them some attention, I *thankfully* accept the proffer and *value the kindness*. The letter to Mother you will please forward, which I also enclose to you. I have not as yet been able to do anything on the subject of a Commercial treaty. Every thing seems *ripe* for it, but it is difficult to get the subject in actual motion. The next week will be devoted to pleasure, being the occasion of a grand "*fiesta*" during which time no business is transacted, after which I am led to believe attention will be given to the treaty with the United States. I have not written a Dispatch to the Department since my first, which was on the 28th of August, having deferred it, until I would be able to give some definite information on the subject of the proposed treaty, and for the reason that I had nothing to write about. I receive no paper but the New

York Herald. You mentioned in your letter that the Washington Union had been ordered to be sent to me. I have not received the first number. Ask Knox to jog the memory of Heiss & Co. If Heiss will send the paper to Boston marked for the Liverpool Steamer, I will receive my papers twice every month, whereas if he deposits them in the State Department two or three months may elapse before they reach me. Let him be particular to have the papers franked to Boston or there they will *stick*. When my letters or papers reach London, directed to the care of the American dispatch agent at that point, he forwards them without delay. This may seem a small matter, but an American News-paper to me is a *great treat*. My respects to all.

WILLIAM H. POLK

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on October 5, 1845, and that he had cashed a draft previously received and had cancelled the enclosed duplicate of same.

1. See William H. Polk to Polk, August 16, 1845.

2. Lucius J. Polk was the son of William Polk of North Carolina and Polk's cousin. Owner of a large plantation in Maury County; Lucius Polk served one term in the Tennessee Senate, 1831–33; his wife, Mary Eastin Polk, was Rachel Jackson's niece. John B. Hays, a Columbia physician, married Polk's youngest sister, Ophelia Clarissa Polk.

3. Polk's letter has not been found.

FROM WILLIAM PENN CHANDLER¹

U.S. Consulate

Sir Puerto Cabello Venezuela Sept 8th 1845

The present having been the first Administration to which the constitutional restrictions (of my state) as to age has permitted me to contribute my feeble support as well with *vote* as with voice and pen, I feel naturally keenly sensitive to any thing concerning its honor or connected with its prosperity.

This together with an ardent attachment to my native land and the interests of my countrymen, of the depth of which I was unaware until I had left it, and lost their society; must plead my apology for presuming to lay before you *unofficially*, a few suggestions in reference to the American trade with this country, which have occurred to me since my residence here. True I have not as yet been here a long time but, while I have, every day has been occupied in an examination into the condition of the country its business and prospects, the habits manners and general situation of the People.

That I might not be hurried beyond the limits which a prudent and calm observer would fix upon the subject I have thoughtfully weighed every fact, which can bear upon it, and sedulously examined every aspect that it can bear.

I feel but little doubt after having made careful examination and inquiry both at the sea ports and the capital, but that this country is upon the high road to a state of prosperity, such as it would have been ridiculous to have predicted of any one of the South American Republics, a very [few]years since.

This prosperity will consist of a vast increase of Population, and of information among the people, and the opening of roads and other channels of communication with the Interior, from which will result a great increase of business.

Already companies are in operation for the introduction of English and other European Emigrants in larg numbers, and from the islands of the East as well as of the West there are daily arriving many of that class, whose presence is most beneficial to a country. Several roads are in an advanced stage of perfection, and other improvements in rivers and harbors are now being made.

A Public system of education supported by Government seems to guarantee at least some degree of popular enlightenment.

As an assurance of this happy progress, and these fortunate results the long continued permanence of the present government, and the tranquility of the country, as well as the excellence of its political institutions seem to afford happy views. To these may be added the almost entire absence of that curse which has ruined so many american countries; the influence of Priest craft and superstition.

The Catholic religion although ostensibly supported by the State, is feebly tottering to a disgraceful fall. Its influence is nothing, its votaries few and those few selected from the very lowest class of the People.

The misfortune of this country seems rather to be, an entire destitution of all religious feeling, form, or influences, so far has the liberal extreme been carried. "Venezuela has no religion," or "there is no Religion here," is the remark of every intelligent Venezuelan, and every observant foreigner with whom I have met. When in connection with these facts you take into consideration, a soil of such immense fertility, as even the imagination cannot present to a mind unfamiliar with tropical countries, my views may not seem exaggerated. Perhaps it should also be mentioned that the charm which has been thrown around this country so long, which by tabooing it with a character for unhealthiness, had almost established nonintercourse between it and

other nations, is now broken and it is decided that foreigners may live in *most parts* of it with as much security as in other tropical places.

This false reputation, the result of Spanish Jealousy and Creole indifference, is so fast disappearing, that in certain portions of the country invalids from distant climes may be encountered who have made it their residence for the benefit of their health.

The effect of these impulses upon the Business of the Country are however but just beginning to be felt, and emersion from the state of distress occasioned by the indulgence in a vast and inflated system of fictitious credits must be regarded as more *certain* than *speedy*.

This is a *Planting* country. Such must ever be its business. Its staple products are Cotton, Coffee, Cocoa, Sugar, Indigo, Tabacco, Hides and tropical fruits. In the far interior, upon the high Table lands near Barquisimeto, are grown large quantities of Wheat but the difficulty of transportation from so great a distance and through a mountainous region, must if not for ever, at least for a period the duration of which cannot be calculated, prevent its being used for the consumption of the seacoast or the planting districts, where the great masses of the population are placed. Maize is grown throughout the country, but the demand for the plant in its green state (under the name of Molojo) for the feeding of the myriad of horses oxens mules and Asses required for the labor and travel of the country; together with the superior profits to be derived from the culture of Coffee Sugar Cocoa &c &c &c, will effectually prevent the production of much of this article for human consumption. From whence there is this vast population of which a large nucleus is already here to be fed? At present our country supplies a large portion of the provisions consumed here.

But (and it is to this point that I wish especially to call your attention) the duties are so oppressively enormous, that the amount at present consumed, though presenting a rather formidable appearance in numbers, is but a trifle to what will be required under the existence of a state of things shortly about to ensue as I am supposing, provided a more liberal rate of duties is adopted.

The duty upon Flour is about 100 per cent, upon Butter, cheese, Ham, Salted Beef Pork & fish and Lard Soap & Candles which are articles of extensive importation from the States, are from 50 to 80 per cent, ranging nearer the last than the former. Beside these, when there is a failure of the crop here Peas beans & Maize are imported from the States upon these as well as Rice & Oats for which there is always a steady demand there is no duty. Coarse domestics, lumber, Carts, Carriages & machinery are also brought from America, but are subjected to oppressive duties. The greater portion of these articles

tho always liable to be required for many reasons, chiefly intrinsic to the country and the climate, can never be produced here, in any considerable quantities.

Now in glancing over the present condition of the U. States under the recent revival of business and the renewal of prosperity, it seems to me that if the Agricultural Interest, the only one remaining unsatisfied, could be fostered and nourished in *some ostensible manner*, so as to take from it, its present cause for complaint, there need be but little reason to feel fear, at least any speedy return of those severe depressions in business, which have given such frequent and violent shocks to our Political Institutions.

Whoever then can be instrumental in aiding in so happy a movement will have deserved well of the country and earned from a grateful People, a meed of Praise and Honor, such as could not be too highly appreciated by the Patriot and the Philanthropist.

Excuse me if coming from a portion of this most distressed Agricultural district of our country to this consuming region, where were it not for the excessive governmental imposts, a portion of our vast surplus might be consumed with so great a mutuality of advantage, I speak warmly upon the subject.

The opening of the single market of Venezuela I am aware would not afford to the Agriculture of the Middle States, *complete relief* from that grinding pressure of low prices, a much longer endurance of which will be almost impossible. But it will have (if brought about) opened the way. It will have struck upon the nearest and most convenient salient point and similar results may well be hoped in other South American countries. The Middle and Western States are designed to be the Sicily, and Egypt of America. Happy he who succeeds in establishing for them these positions to which they are so justly entitled.

But the important question is, how is this to be done. With all the *varied means* of Diplomacy you are perfectly familiar. It is unnecessary for me to specify them. But I may properly add that the vigorous labors of our late chargé d'affaires² here were sufficiently profitable to indicate that the course of action pursued by him should not be abandoned, even tho more than one agent actively as under the advice of the Chargé d'affaires should be required to bring about a successful result.

The late Chargé succeeded in receiving the support of "El Liberal" newspaper to the measure which is the only paper of any importance and influence in the Republic and is regarded tho not as an official organ, as the only efficient supporter of the present Administration.

I doubt not but that this measure could be easily accomplished but for the violent and bitter hostility exercised toward it, as toward all other measures tending toward the prosperity & happiness of America, by English Diplomatic influence, and Interest. Indeed, but for the malignity exercised at the time of the formation of this Tariff, "1841" by the English interest then prevalent in the councils of this country, and but feebly and impotently resisted by our then feeble chargé upon whom as it is said here too much censure cannot be bestowed, the United States would not now be obliged to complain of the various means by which while it keeps the treaty promise "of the ear" (that our products should be admitted upon the same basis as those of the most favored nations), "breaks it to the pope"³ by taking care that nearly all the revenues of the country shall be drawn from those articles which are almost exclusively imported from the U.S., while the products of European nations are admitted at very reasonable not to say low rates of duty. If even a *commercial treaty* should be deemed necessary it might not be deemed inadvisable since there are no articles imported from this country to the States, except Hides (with which the very Hides of Texas may hereafter compete) which can come into competition with our Home Production.

Tabacco is very common—as much so, as is allowed that of the States being transport[ed] here and both Sugar & cotton must go to Europe while prices prevail as at present, or for the past.

The importance which, whether justly or not I have attached to this subject, must be my Excuse for the great length of the communication.

WM. PENN CHANDLER

[P.S.] Allow me to present my congratulations on the happy issue, under your direction of the Texas Annexation. Every American here whether Whig or Democrat rejoices at the success of his country over the low Intrigues of British Diplomacy.

Is it not possible for the Government to grant my application for a transfer to Pernambuco (or elsewhere)—if not, I must resign, & return home as I *cannot live* on the income of the office here.

ALS. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked as "Private." Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on September 30, 1845.

1. A native of Delaware, Chandler served as consul at Puerto Cabello, Venezuela, from 1845 until 1847.

2. A native of North Carolina and resident of Nashville, Allen A. Hall served as chargé d'affaires to Venezuela, 1841–45; as assistant secretary of the U.S. Treasury, 1849–50; and as U.S. minister to Bolivia, 1863–67. In addition to his diplomatic appointments, Hall served as editor and publisher of several

Nashville newspapers including the *Republican Banner*, the *Nashville Whig*, and the *Nashville News*.

3. Quotation not identified.

FROM DAVID SALOMON¹

Dear Sir

New York 8 Sepr. 1845

I did not think I would trespass again upon your valuable time so speedily after the pleasure of my recent interview, but actuated by a warm desire to serve your interests I am induced to write you a few lines which I promise shall be duly condensed for I am cognizant that ingrossed as you are with the cares of state, "brevity must be the soul of wit" with you.

I am convinced from the information that I now receive from the South and from communications with influential friends here, that the course pursued by the parties having the direction of affairs at New Orleans and Pensacola is doing serious injury to your administration. I am convinced that there has never existed any necessity for the requisitions made by Gen Gaines² and unless you adopt some energetic measures at once, we shall have a repetition of the "Florida War" with its long bill of expences to be settled by the Government.

This will entail not only serious injury upon the Executive with the probable defeat of the party in 1848 but will also create a heavy debt thus affording an opportunity to raise a hue and cry to keep up the *beauties* of the protective tariff system.

I have understood that the Governor of Alabama³ has been called upon also to furnish volunteers and as one of the staff of His Excellency, it would perhaps be well for me to know whether it would not more closely meet your views in Washington to defer any proclamation until there exists a greater certainty of troops being needed. For my own part, I do not believe that we shall have any war with Mexico and should hostilities actually commence and our regular troops require reinforcements ought not the assistance to be effected by Texas?

I received a letter to day from Mr. Saunders⁴ in which he informs me that you have tendered to him the appointment of Collector for the port of Mobile. It is the most judicious selection that you could have made and will tend to strengthen the party in our section. I learn from my friend Col. James Lee who is about as safe an index to the true state of democratic sentiment in this quarter as you could select, that Mr Lawrence is giving satisfaction to the party, and has secured thus far the approval of the mercantile interests in the discharge of his duties.

Col Lee also tells me that the movement of the Treasury Department in retaining the present number of depositories for the public money to this city and not reducing them to two only as at one time contemplated, has given general pleasure to the business community. It is perhaps important that you should know that a policy can be pursued in this city which although is not sufficiently powerful to change the Whig merchants into Democrats may render them perfectly neutral and unwilling to lend themselves in any way to injure a democratic administration. It is a point which should be carefully looked after.

Should the weight of business pressing upon your Excellency not interfere it would be a satisfaction for me to hear a reference to the call to Alabama for troops as I design writing the Governor on the subject and I will now await a letter from Washington before doing so.

With assurances of my great respect and regard I remain . . .

D. SALOMON

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on September 10, 1845.

1. A resident of Mobile, Ala., Salomon was a business partner with James Lee of New York City.

2. Commissioned as a lieutenant in the army in 1797, Edmund P. Gaines served in the War of 1812 and commanded troops in the Black Hawk and Seminole wars. Commander of the western department at the outbreak of the Mexican War, Gaines called on volunteers from Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, and Missouri to support U.S. forces commanded by Zachary Taylor. Officially reprimanded by the War Department for his actions and ordered to Fort Monroe for court martial, Gaines defended his conduct and argued that he had authority to muster volunteers. Although the court maintained that Gaines possessed no such authority, it recommended the dismissal of charges. Thereafter, he served as commander of the eastern department until his death in 1849.

3. Saloman's reference is to Benjamin Fitzpatrick. Governor of Alabama from 1841 until 1845, Fitzpatrick twice served in the U.S. Senate, 1848–49 and 1853–61.

4. James E. Saunders.

FROM WILLIAM S. COLQUHOUN

Sir,

Washington 10th Sept. 1845

If the subject of this letter does not furnish its apology, I have none, and the alternative is a consequent mortification.

My brotherinlaw and self, after a protracted suit of two years, procured a number of negroes, who had sued for their freedom by the

advice of a Mr. Dermot, generally known as the negro lawyer, and who died soon after the institution of the suit, which was afterwards prosecuted by Messrs Clement Cox, and Marbury, of Geo town, and Danl Ratcliffe, of Alexandria.¹ The deceased Judge Thruston while on the bench advocated their claim, by expatiating largely, on the injustice, of slaveholding, and but for that high reverence for the constitution, which ever governs Judges Cranch, and Morsell, and who resisted by their decision an instruction to the jury, we should have been defeated in the cause.² But it was a dear bought victory. The Marshals fee for keeping the negroes 2 years in Jail 710\$ Lawyers and clerks 150\$ or thereabouts loss of services at least 200\$ and depreciations in value about 200\$ by incarceration so long in prison. Thus Sir without any just plea a negro can sue "*in forma pauperis*"³ if he can find a Judge *kind* enough to grant his Petition, and I have only to add my well earned solicitation that you be guarded in your appointment of Judge in the place of Thruston, some gentleman who does *not* view slavery as a *social* and *moral evil*. I have the honor to be Sir

WILLIAM S. COLQUHOUN

N.B. I trust you will pardon me for the liberty I have taken as nothing but the pecuniary loss and injury I have sustained can excuse the interference. W.S.C.

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed locally. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on September 11, 1845.

1. J. J. Dermott, Clement Cox, John Marbury, and Daniel Ratcliffe. These four Washington City attorneys, Dermott, Cox, Marbury, and Ratcliffe, are not identified further.

2. John Buckner Thruston, William Cranch, and James S. Morsell. A native of Virginia and graduate of the College of William and Mary, Thruston served in the Virginia General Assembly, 1789, before removing to Kentucky in 1790. He served as a judge of Kentucky's circuit court from 1802 until 1804, and won election to one term in the U.S. Senate, 1805–1809. In 1809 he accepted an appointment as assistant judge of the circuit court of the District of Columbia and served in that post until his death in August 1845. Commissioner of public buildings from 1800 until 1801, Cranch served as an assistant judge of the circuit court of the District of Columbia from 1801 until 1805, when he accepted appointment as chief judge. He presided over the court until his death in 1855. An assistant judge of the circuit court of the District of Columbia, Morsell is not identified further.

3. Legal term describing the permission given to a poor person to sue without liability for costs.

FROM WILLIAM D. MOSELEY

State of Florida
Executive Department

Sir, Capitol Tallahassee Sept 10. 1845

By the 6th Section of the 17 Article of the Constitution of this State, entitled "*Schedule and Ordinance*," it is ordained and declared, as follows:

"6. The General Assembly shall have power by the votes of *two thirds of both houses*, to accede to such propositions as may be made by the Congress of the United States, upon the admission of the State of Florida into the national Confederacy and Union,¹ if they shall be deemed reasonable and just; and to make declaration of such assent by law; and such declaration when made shall be binding upon the people and the State of Florida as a Compact, and the Governor of the State of Florida, shall notify the President of the United States of the acts of the General Assembly relating thereto; and in case of declining to accede to such propositions or any part thereof, the General Assembly shall instruct the Senators and Representative of the State of Florida in Congress, to procure such modification or alteration thereof as may be deemed reasonable and just, and assent thereto, subject to the ratification of the General Assembly by law, as aforesaid."

In obedience to the requisitions of this provision, I have now the honor to notify you, of the passage, *according to said provision*, by the General Assembly of the State of Florida, at its first Session, held in June and July last, of an act entitled "An Act declaring the Assent of the State of Florida to the terms of admission into the Confederacy and Union"; as will appear by the printed copy of said act at page 35 &c of the pamphlet "Laws of the State of Florida," and page 112 of the Journals of the Senate of said State, and pages 159 & 160 of the Journals of the House of Representatives of said State, at said Session; which are herewith transmitted to you.² Please acknowledge the receipt hereof.

W. D. MOSELEY

LS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he answered this letter on September 25, 1845.

1. Congress admitted Florida to statehood on March 3, 1845.
2. Enclosures not found.

FROM ARCHIBALD YELL

My Dear Sir

Waxhaws Arkansas 10th Sepr 1845

I have been so constantly engaged since my return and haveing nothing to communicate that would interest you I have saved you the annoyance, of reading long and uninteresting letters, by my silence! The late glorious result of the election in Tennessee Alabama Indiana and N. Carolina, is perhaps a fit occation to congratulate You and the Cause of Democracy for such a gratifying result.

It is exceedingly gratifying to me on Your account, as well as the Cause in general. It has afforded evidence strong as "Holy Writ" that your Adm has been acceptable to the great body of the people. You are now supported by a majority in both Houses with an overwhelming Majority of the people to give force and effect to the policy of your Adm which can not be resisted, and it will tend to deter the disaffected and grumbles from any improper and factious opposition. Those who will have the hardihood to attempt a war upon your Administration (I meane those claiming to be Democrats) will find themselves, frowned upon, with indignation by the whole republican party—and on account of a *few dessenters* and *disappointed* polititions, who I know & so do you—I truly rejoice that they have been estoped!

It would be needless for me to say that I had full faith and confidence in all the leading measures of the Party, being fully, sustained and boldly advocated by You, and I have no doubt you will be sustained not only by Congress, but by a large majority of the Nation; and that Democracy, under your guidance will be so firmly established that we will carry the next Presidential election, by acclimation. The greatest Error of your life was to commit yourself upon the One term principle. A crices may arise as was the case in Genl Jacksons second election that might demand Your reelection. The safety of the Country and the preservation of republican principles might require it, and if such a contingency should arise, You will be forced to assent to a reelection.

I congratulate you upon the favorable result of the Texas question. I do not now anticipate any serious opposition to the final consumation of that matter; the opposition is too weak to make a bold stand and the cause too popular to produce much opposition. If you can only be as fortunate in the negotiation of the Oregon question You will have cause to rejoice and your friends will be armed against all opposition, by such a fortunate and glorious result. Whither you are alike successful in that

matter or not, I am sure you will not comprimit the honor of the Nation, in any thing you may do. To make your Adm. bright & glorious we want a War with Mexico, and from present appearances we may also be blessed with an opportunity to give the Mexicans a drubing, (which they have long deserved) and acquire N. Mexico & upper California, which has of late become indespensable to the govermitt, to complete our definse and wants on the Pacific. In the event of a War (which I antisipate) I shall raise a regt of Vo[...]¹ mounted Gen men—say 1000 strong for six or twelve months—and make a tender of them to your Excly, who I am sure will not reject them. I shall not go however till the meeting of Congress and I can get to vote for *a War*, for I am for my Country “right or wrong” and I shall not be fou[...] voteing against any war measure.

The whole county is full of fight and we would find no difficulty in raising any number of troops. We will hold ourselves ready to march either to the frontier of Texas or to Santafe or to California, and would prefer the latter, for many of them would not be in a hurry about returning. I am also anxious to see that country, and I hope you will afford us a chance if War with Mexico is inevitable?

I expect to leave for Washington about the 20th Octr. Be pleased to present me, to Mrs Polk and accept for yourself the kindest wishes of your old friend.

A. YELL

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk’s AE on the cover states that he received this letter on September 30, 1845

1. Ink run here and below have rendered word or words illegible.

TO ROBERT ARMSTRONG

My Dear Sir: Washington City 13th Sept. 1845

I received by the Great Western, your letter of the 23d ultimo.¹ I have much to say to you, but have delayed writing, until within an hour of the closing of the last mail, by which a letter can reach the next *steamer*, which goes to Europe, before she sails. I agree with you that *Lewis* is scarcely worth looking after. His late conduct in publishing garbled extracts from Genl Jackson’s letters, has brought upon the just contempt of all honourable men of all parties. It was designed as you suppose, to make capital for the Whigs in the Tennessee election. In this it signally failed. That election has resulted in the greatest triumph to the Democracy of the State, that has occured, since the election of 1839. *Brown’s* majority over *Foster* is

about 1800. The Delegation in Congress stand 6. Democrats and 5. Whigs. The Democratic majority on the joint ballot in the Legislature is 4, viz. 2 in the senate and 2 in the House. Since the election nothing has been heard of *Lewis*. I do not know that it will be necessary or proper to publish your previous conversation with Dr. Robertson, but I ask that you will write it down while the words are fresh in your memory. It may be important in other cases that I should have it.

I fear our friends in Tennessee will have trouble in selecting a Senator. There are I learn some 8 or 10 aspirants. Of these my information is, that *Nicholson* will probably have a majority of Democratic Members over all others. Such is my information. The other Democratic aspirants, as I learn are *Huntsman*, *Judge Turley*, *Coe*, *Judge Brown* of Memphis, *Fitzgerald*, *Genl. Trousdale*, *H. L. Turney* and perhaps others.² I cannot & dare not take part between them. It would be charged as *Dictation* from Washington. I hope whoever may be chosen will not owe his election to Whig votes. I have written to *A. V. Brown*³ urging him to restore harmony if possible, among all our candidates. By the way, *Brown* I learn is the happiest man now living. He is Governor, and what is of first consequence to him is, as madam rumour has it, to marry *Mrs Saunders* very soon.⁴ The story goes that *before* the election, she was deliberating about [....]⁵

[...] *Genl. Taylor* will be in command of 5,000 regular troops West of the *Nueces* in Texas. Commodore Conner commands the largest and most formidable squadron in the Gulf, that we have ever had together since we have been a Nation. We have sent 19,000 stand of arms, together with a large supply of cannon, ammunition &c., to the seat of threatened hostilities, ready to be placed in the hands of the Texas volunteers or those from the U. States, if need be. If Mexico either crosses the *Del Norte* or strikes a single blow by land or sea, it will be the commencement of hostilities, and we will "carry the war into Africa."⁶ We will not strike first, but will hold possession of the country up to the West Bank of the *Del Norte*, and be prepared for any [...] if a Mexican army should cross that River. My impression now is that our formidable force by sea and land, will deter Mexico, and that after all her threats we will have no war. I am most happy to have the most conclusive evidence that the country will sustain me, with almost entire unanimity in the energetic measures which have been taken on this subject. I have scarce anticipated such a patriotic spirit as now prevails throughout the whole country. I have no doubt, if a call was made, 100,000, volunteers

could be raised in sixty days. The whole nation is roused, and in truth many of our young men will be greatly disappointed if we have no war. My impression now is, that our timely preparations will prevent war.

As far as I can judge my administration meets with quite as little opposition, as I had any reason to expect.

I have written in great haste, and find I must close or lose the mail. I hope you will not fail to write to me often, and give me any information you may collect, which concerns our own country or our interests. I see we are damned without stint by the *Times* and other English. This may drive Englishmen, but will not prevent us, from asserting, and maintaining, all our rights.

JAMES K. POLK

P.S. I enclose in a separate envelope a letter to you which was forwarded to me, but know not from whom it is.

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Liverpool and marked “*Private*.”

1. Letter not found.

2. Adam Huntsman, William B. Turley, Levin H. Coe, William T. Brown, William Fitzgerald, William Trousdale and Hopkins L. Turney. Huntsman, born in Virginia, had moved by 1809 to Overton County, where he practiced law and engaged in extensive land speculations until 1821. He sat three terms for Overton County in the Tennessee Senate, 1815–21, and later represented Madison County in the Senate for two terms, 1827–31. A loyal Jacksonian Democrat, he defeated David Crockett for a seat in Congress and served one term in the U.S. House, 1835–37. A popular lawyer and Democrat from Somerville, Coe sat two terms in the Tennessee Senate, 1837–41, and presided over that body as Speaker during the latter part of his second term. Fitzgerald served as circuit court clerk in Stewart County, 1822–25; sat one term in the Tennessee House, 1825–27; and held the position of attorney general of Tennessee’s Sixteenth Judicial Circuit before winning election in 1831 to a single term in the U.S. House. He moved to Henry County in the late 1830’s and in 1841 became judge of Tennessee’s Ninth Judicial District. A former law partner of James Grundy in Nashville, Brown served as judge of Tennessee’s Sixth Circuit Court, 1836–38, and afterwards established a legal practice in Memphis.

3. See Polk to Aaron V. Brown, August 30, 1845.

4. Cynthia Pillow Saunders, Brown’s fiancée.

5. The third page of the press copy did not ink sufficiently to overprint heavy bleed-throughs from page two; transcription below omits all of the text on page three excepting the last three words of the last line.

6. Reference is to the actions of the Roman general, Scipio Africanus Major, during the Second Punic War.

7. Word or words illegible.

FROM ALFRED BALCH¹

Dear Sir,

Nashville 13th Sepr. 45

Tennessee is at last politically regenerated after a hot war of ten long years. Those Whigs whose insolence was hardly to be borne in 1840 are now subdued and crest fallen. Some of them are even complaisant and *almost* sycophantic. Mr Bell now condescends to stop in the streets and hold familiar conversations with vile Democrats. Grand mama Jinney Yeatman² it is said has sold out her big Bell and cart. She has gone into a state of *retiracy* disgusted at the vulgar rabble. McNairy looks as tho he had just buried one of his children and Bob McEwen mourns as one without hope.³ Wm. Nichol and Ledbetter expect to be ousted.⁴ Some few have already given in their adhesion to the Democracy and in decent time they will be followed by crowds.

Ephraim since his over throw has deported himself with decency. His most intimate associates say that he has never cracked a smile since the fatal news reached him. Old Mrs Governor Foster⁵ has been boiling over like a homminy pot ever since she learned that the vulgar LocoFocos had laid her Ephraim flat of his back.

The Governor elect is to be married on Tuesday next. He either is or imagines that he is dreadfully in Love and so does she. He has been here for the last three weeks. Every evening he leaves the Inn at 4 Oclock and returns at one in the morning. The other day Strickland⁶ the architect who is a witty man said Govr Brown I saw last night a sight which elevated my soul to the highest pitch of pleasure. I saw the moon first hide herself behind the green trees and then gradually sink beneath the Western horizon, turning to the South I beheld fiery Mars slowly ascending the vault of Heaven. Brown after stretching himself up replied I also beheld Sir those magnificent spectacles and at the same time the most divine angel that ever lighted on this orb of clay was hanging tenderly and fondly on my shoulders! I said to myself Hurra for old Gid Pillows gal turned into an angel!⁷

Between the two there are seven children some of whom are no better than they should be. What sort of a Bedlam the Govr elect will have around him may be easily divined. I really pity both him & her. Two of Browns children occupy a room near mine, and such squalling, screaming and yelling I never listened to in all my life.

Our political prospects are now bright and if the depending questions with foreign governments can be peacably and honorably settled your administration will occupy one of the most brilliant pages of our national history. I think it absolutely necessary that you should

in your first annual message, plant yourself firmly upon our principles & policy by a clear and fearless avowal of them. Then you need not fear any opposition. Your party will adhere to you like the faithful Apostles to the cause of their great master. I think that Brown with a little schooling will make an excellent Executive officer and by his course will add to our strength as well as secure his triumphant re-election. I could add some more items to this epistle but I know that you cannot have time to read them. Present me kindly to Mrs Polk.

ALFRED BALCH

P.S. I perceive that old Thruston has left the stage. I fear that you can neither satisfy your own conscience nor the public by confining the selection of his successor to the *Democratic* Lawyers of the District.

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on September 25, 1845.

1. A Nashville lawyer and influential political strategist, Balch accepted an appointment to a four-year term as judge of the U.S. Middle District of Florida in 1840; he resigned his judgeship before the end of his term and declined all subsequent overtures to run for public office.

2. Balch's reference is to Jane Erwin Yeatman Bell, the wife of John Bell. John Bell had presented a large bell to the Bell Highlanders militia company of Williamson County in recognition of that unit's drill performance at the Whig mass meeting in Nashville on August 21, 1844. See Daniel Graham to Polk, August 25, 1844.

3. Educated at the University of Pennsylvania, Boyd McNairy returned to his native Nashville after completing his medical studies and practiced medicine there until his death in 1859; McNairy was an ardent Whig and great admirer of Henry Clay. A prominent Fayetteville merchant, Robert H. McEwen served as Tennessee's first superintendent of public instruction from 1836 until 1840.

4. A wealthy merchant, banker, and steamboat owner in Nashville, William Nichol served as mayor of Nashville, 1835–36. A Rutherford County Whig, William Ledbetter served in the Constitutional Convention of 1834 and won election to several terms in the Tennessee Senate, 1835–39 and 1841–43.

5. Jane Mebane Lytle Dickinson Foster married Ephraim H. Foster following the death of her first husband, John Dickinson, under whom Ephraim Foster had studied law.

6. William Strickland, a prominent Philadelphia architect, engineer, and member of the American Philosophical Society, designed the state capitol of Tennessee.

7. Brown married Cynthia Pillow Saunders, the daughter of Gideon J. Pillow, Sr., and sister of Gideon J. Pillow, Jr., on September 16, 1845.

TO ROBERT BUTLER

Dear Sir: Washington City 13th Sept. 1845

I have received your several letters¹ with the papers enclosed, relating to the proposed removal of the Surveyor General's Office from St. Augustine to Tallahassee. Other communications on the same subject, have also been submitted to me, for my consideration. I am not entirely satisfied of the propriety of the removal at this time. There seems to be a division of opinion among the prominent citizens who have expressed an opinion. With a sincere desire to gratify your personal wishes, if it can be done without inconvenience or prejudice to the public service, I yet feel constrained, with the information *now* before me to postpone action for the present. I do not mean to be understood as avoiding the question either way, but as holding it open for further examination, upon additional information, which I may receive. I hope therefore that you will take charge of the office, at its present location, on the 1st of October, and in the course of the ensuing winter, I shall be able to determine whether it shall remain there or be removed to Tallahassee.

Mrs. Polk, unites with me in presenting our kind salutations to Mrs Butler,² whilst I remain with high regard

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Tallahassee.

1. See Robert Butler to Polk, August 30 and September 8, 1845.
2. Rachel Hays Butler.

TO DAVID CRAIGHEAD

My Dear Sir: Washington City 13th Sept. 1845

I received your esteemed favour of the 26th ultimo, some days ago, but my time has been so constantly occupied, that I have not had a moments leisure, to acknowledge its receipt and thank you for it. Indeed I am compelled almost entirely to neglect my correspondence with my friends, not having written a dozen letters in that many weeks.

No one was more rejoiced at the result of the Tennessee Election to which you allude, than I was, first because it restored the State to her true political position, from which she had been seduced by means with which you are familiar, and secondly, because it was very important to the success of my administration, that I should

be sustained by my own State. With prudent action on the part of the next Legislature she will continue to be Democratic. I hope no more measures of doubtful policy will be attempted. If my councils would prevail, I would say let the necessary public business which is not of great importance be dispatched in the shortest possible time, and let an example be set of a short session. Such a session would meet the approbation of all parties, be right in itself, and be decidedly popular. I hope that union and harmony may prevail with the Democracy in the choice of a Senator, as well as in all other matters of a party character.

My administration thus far encounters quite as little opposition as I had a right to anticipate. It is gratifying to perceive that the energetic course pursued towards Mexico, seems to meet the approbation of the country. I now think the probabilities are that the appearance of our formidable forces in the Gulf, and on the frontier, will deter Mexico and prevent either a declaration of War or an invasion of Texas. If a single blow should be struck by Mexico, we are prepared to make a short war of it. If however her armies remain West of the *Del Norte*, and no other act of hostility is committed by her, we will not strike the first blow. Now that a new President of Mexico¹ has been chosen we may expect to learn in a few days, what the policy of his administration will be.

On the subject of the tariff, to which you also allude, it is scarcely necessary to say, that my opinions are unchanged, and that I will do *my* whole duty. What Congress may do it is impossible to foresee. Much probably will depend upon the state of our foreign relations when they meet, and especially upon the fact whether we are at peace or war with Mexico, as a state of war would assuredly render a larger revenue necessary than a state of peace. It is useless however to speculate in advance on these things. In any event, I will do my duty.

Your note to Mrs. P. in favor of Mr *Samuel Polk*² of New Orleans, which was enclosed in your letter I have of course seen. I do not think I can gratify his wishes, first because there is no suitable place at present at my disposal, and secondly however from what I have heard of him, he has no previous claims upon me or the Democratic party. He has written to me, and others have written in his behalf, and among them my kinsmen in *the District*. He is I hear a Whig, and so strong are his party ties, that neither his *name* nor *relationship* to me could induce him to give me his support last year. Mrs. Polk joins me in presenting our kind salutations to Mrs. Craighead³ . . .

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Nashville and marked "*Private*."

1. José Joaquín Herrera.
2. A resident of New Orleans, Samuel W. Polk is not identified further.
3. Mary Macon Hunt Goodloe Craighead.

FROM CHARLES FLETCHER

Mr President

Buffalo Sept 13 1845

Permit me again to call the attention of your Excellency to the subject of the Atlantic & Pacific Rail Road.

I know that the recent manifestos of a neighboring nation has required watchful vigilance & that your time is constantly occupied by the weighty matters of the State. Still the very movement of troops caused by the belligerent attitude of that neighbour must have forcibly demonstrated the great value of our internal improvements in time of War. Yesterday I went aboard the propellor Princeton, a splendid vessel named after the War Steamer. She left Detroit on Wednesday evening with a regiment of Soldiers & landed them at Cleveland on Thursday morning.

I was standing on the Buffalo Pier when this fine vessel entered this harbour. A stranger saluted me, he said 30 years ago he was encamped on the very ground where Buffalo now stands, then a dense forest covered the spot not a house to be seen except a few log cabins & a clearing had to be made for the encampment. Now a large & populous city has sprung up as it were by magic. He described in a rapid glance the facilities of moving troops now compared to the War of 1812. Then, he said, a few miles a day was all that could be made by the army over miry roads & through woods & swamps. Now an army is moved almost with the swiftness of lightning. At least intelligence can be communicated with that velocity & troop can be carried from Detroit to Cleveland in one night.

When the Atlantic & Pacific Rail Road is made (as made it will be) troops may be sent from Detroit to the Pacific Ocean in ten days!

I have been led to these remarks from a recent journey through Canada West.

Passing from Detroit to Chatham by Steamer I there entered upon one of the most beautiful roads in America, graded all the way from Chatham to Hamilton on lake Ontario and planked most of the way. On this road stages travel with ease at the rate of ten miles an hour. A branch planck road has been made from London to port Stanley on Talbot point on lake Erie thus connecting lakes Ontario with lake Erie at two points besides the Welland canal.

The splendid McAdamised road cut through the mountain from

Ancaster to Hamilton is worth a journey there to see. Then there is the stupendous work at Burlington bay making a harbour there for her fleet to lay at the bend of lake Ontario. All these works have been constructed by the British government to over awe the Canadians & hold firm possession of their country & to be ready to throw an army in the states suddenly in case of war.

The inhabitants of Canada seem to take no interest in these improvements. They say, the government does this & that, but there is an apathy among the people which is not seen in the States; here the people do the works, there the government.

In addressing your Excellency as the head of this government it is far from my views that the government should undertake to build this rail road. I know the people can do it better—the people work & the government protects them in all their labours. What is desirable is that your Excellency will recommend to Congress the granting a charter to a company with a liberal allowance of public lands through which it passes reserving rights to the government to carry the mail & to transport soldiers in time of war.

No one can stand on the wharves at Buffalo or see the vast moving houses called steamboats constantly being loaded with freight & passengers for the great West without being filled with admiration at the vastness of this Western World which can receive & sustain the thousands who are daily wending their way thither—people of all nations of Europe seeking a home where they can govern themselves without the intervention of Kings & priests except of their own choosing.

Last evening the famous steamer Oregon started for the upper lakes closely stored with goods & having from appearances nearly a thousand persons on board of all ages from the old man down to the sucking babe—people who are to raise up generations to assist in governing this great nation. The Dewitt Clinton left also the same evening, ominous names. This, commemorating the name of the man who had the boldness to begin the way to the west that, foreshadowing the ultimate hopes of the nation the union of Oregon among the States. DeWitt Clinton uniting Oregon with New York ere long we shall see the locomotive “President Polk” steaming away across the Rocky Mountains & meeting that great leviathan of the Ocean the steam ship “Star of the East” just thirty days from Canton.

That the territories of Oregon and upper California will both be settled by the Saxon race is now no longer a problem but reduced to certainty and that they will disdain the rule of the Norman barons is equally certain. Noah Webster’s spelling book will be taught in the schools and the English translation of the Bible will be read in the

churches throughout all those territories and Democratic liberty will be the necessary consequence.

These inhabitants thus descended & thus taught must very soon be admitted into this confederacy and the road which I have had the honor of advocating before your Excellency will be the high way for their representatives to Congress and for the interchange of commercial social & intellectual relations between the East & the West.

CHAS. FLETCHER

ALS. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on September 22, 1845. Also in his AE Polk further comments: "An interesting essay, in relation to a Rail Road across the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. Wishes a charter granted to a company, with a grant of public land to aid them in constructing the Road."

FROM DAVID HENSHAW¹

Sir

Boston Sept 13 1845

The whole community here feels a deep interest and the whole country has a great and an abiding interest in the appointment of a successor to the late Judge Story.² The Judiciary is the permanent branch of the Government. Thus accumulation of power may be steadily pursued, and has been steadily pursued for a series of years by the same individual on the Bench; and hence the importance of selecting for that Station men thoroughly involved with the principles of our institutions, and who will be content in administering that important branch of the government to keep within the orbit prescribed by the Constitution.

No man acquainted with the late Judge Story, I presume, will deny to him the possession of great learning, untiring industry and excellence of character as a gentleman and a citizen. At the same time, however, none who has examined his Judicial career, but must have perceived in his decisions frequent encroachments upon the principles of our institutions, and a constant tendency to stray from his constitutional orbit. I think he has engrafted more false law and foreign law upon our code, and has hence done more to vitiate our Jurisprudence than any other man connected with any branch of the administration since the formation of our government.

Public attention here, and I presume elsewhere was directed immediately on the death of Judge Story, to the Hon Levi Woodbury, of New Hampshire, as the most suitable person to fill the vacant seat.

Gov. Woodbury has a sound Judgement, an accute and discriminating mind, great legal learning and experience both as Judge and

counsellor. He has occupied, and always ably, high legislative, Executive and Judicial stations. He is familiar with the operations of our federative system, and what I conceive to be of essential importance, is thoroughly imbued with the true principles of our institutions—with those great and leading ideas upon this subject which pervade the American mind, and the influence of which brought the present administration into power.

Thus far, as a general remark and I say it with all due deference I think the administration has not been fortunate in the more important appointments in this quarter. With a few exceptions the persons appointed are doubtless men of capacity, honesty sobriety and respectability, and these certainly are primary considerations; but in addition to all these the persons appointed ought to harmonize in feeling with the leading measures of policy and the great objects of the administration, so that the moral influence of these appointments may tend to sustain in the public mind the general course of the executive. Annexation, a moderate, revenue tariff and the non intervention of the free states in the Slave question, were certainly understood by those who brought the administration into power to be leading, paramount objects. Now, unfortunately most of the important appointments here are of abolitionists, tariff men and anti Annexation men or of men who have until quite recently advocated these principles; and if any change have taken place in them recently in expressing those opinions, it may be a question whether the change results from expediency or principle—and thus in these appointments the administration seems to have crossed its own purposes. This course is regretted here (without attaching blame to the administration), as a mistake resulting from a want on its part of full and correct information on the subject.

What has been done cannot well be changed, and besides, as these appointments are for but short periods, their influence will be proportionably limited; but the appointment of a Judge is much more important, and I cannot but hope it may be given to none except he be, politically, completely orthodox.

The interest which as a citizen, I feel in the successful operation of our political system, and the strong desire I entertain that your administration may advance the welfare of our common country, and increase your own fame, are my apologies for addressing you upon this subject.

DAVID HENSHAW

ALS. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on September 15, 1845.

1. A successful Boston businessman and founder of the *Democratic Boston*

Statesman, Henshaw held numerous state and federal offices: member of both the Massachusetts Senate, 1826–27, and House, 1839–40; collector of the port of Boston, 1830–37; and ad interim secretary of the navy, 1843–44.

2. A lawyer and scholar from Salem, Mass., Joseph Story received his appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1811 at the age of 32. He gained prominence for his legal opinions and commentaries, many of which were published, and held a professorship at the Harvard School of Law. He had planned to leave the bench to devote more time to the law school but died in September 1845.

FROM FITZWILLIAM BYRDSALL¹

[Dear Sir,]

New York Sepr 14th 1845

My letter to you of the 27th Ult. handed to you by Genl. Duff Green,² has by its exposition of the state of feeling pervading the three sections of the Democratic party in this city, given you information, which if not new to you, is at least worthy of your attention. I might flatter myself that my letter has already produced some effect, (from the fact that the friends of the Secretary of War are making overtures to the friends of Van Buren & Wright) but that such a gratification is of no consequence unless good is ultimately produced. I learn however, that an interview is projected between a few of the friends of the Secretary and Van Buren & Wright, and as both have a common interest in being reconciled, we might expect a compromise between them, did less personal and political hostility exist. But I learn also from an authentic source that Senator Dix is indignant about appointments, that John Van Buren is undisguisedly malcontent,³ and that the leading men of that section of the party, express themselves to the effect that the Secretary ought never to have been placed in the cabinet—"that if the President desires to have harmony in the party, let him send Marcy to Russia." "And, let him take the best Democrats into his councils."

On the other hand, they are apparently disposed to coalesce with the friends of Mr. Calhoun. The latter has recently become a great man in their mouths, and the Morning News, whose Editor is now in Washington, has lately been extolling him in his paper, and giving his readers a wood cut likeness.⁴ These political ruses are all intended to operate upon your mind, in order to bring you to terms of capitulation. In short, the object of all this political gasconading and manoeuvring is to get the controle of your administration into their hands.

I am doubtful as to any sincere union being effected between the friends of Governor Marcy & those of Van Buren & Wright. The old animosities of 1837 are in full growth, to which is added the charge that

the Secretary worked for Cass in the national convention. With regard to your administration, there is no difficulty whatever in carrying it on to the satisfaction of the Democratic people, so long as you conduct it on the principles declared by the Baltimore resolutions. Here you could bid defiance to all the political Leaders but that Achilles like, you are vulnerable in one point, with regard to the congressional printing. They have votes, and on this ground they assume a haughty demeanor.

It is essential to your administration not to receive a rebuff on any ground at the commencement of the first Session. Any conspiracy for such a purpose, you will be perfectly justifiable in defeating by any means in your power. To make concessions for the union of all sections of our discordant party, may be a matter of duty. But to really capitulate to any one section, would be sacrificing too much to politicians.

Even if the congressional printing should be lost to your administration by political craft, those engaged in it, will gain nothing by their success. They will stand before the people in no very enviable light. The "Union"⁵ can, even in such an event, be sustained and should be cheerfully supported by your friends. As it is not likely that we shall have another southern man in the presidency after you, I shall hope for the sake of that section of the union where you were born and I was raised, that your administration will be so liberal and so independent as to deserve and attain the highest degree of success.

F. W. BYRDSALL

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked "Private."

1. A New York City Calhoun Democrat, Byrdsall published *The History of the Loco-Foco or Equal Rights Party* in 1842.

2. Letter has not been found. A journalist, politician, and industrial promoter, Green edited the Washington *United States Telegraph* from 1825 until 1836. He followed Calhoun in his break with Andrew Jackson in 1831 and supported Henry Clay for the presidency in 1832. From 1842 until 1844, Green served as an unofficial representative of the United States in Great Britain and France. Returning to the United States in January 1844, he accepted appointment as U.S. consul at Galveston, Texas. Green subsequently founded the New York *Republic* and in its columns advocated radical free-trade policies and reform of the civil and postal services.

3. John A. Dix and John Van Buren. Soldier, lawyer, and railroad president, Dix served two years as adjutant general of New York, 1831–33, and one term as a member of the New York House in 1842. Elected as a Democrat to the U.S. Senate seat vacated by Silas Wright, Jr., in 1845, Dix ran unsuccessfully in 1848 as the gubernatorial candidate of the Free Soil party, served in the Union army as a general officer during the Civil War, and won election to the governorship on the Republican ticket in 1873. A lawyer and member of the

radical wing of the New York Democracy, Van Buren won a single term in 1845 to the office of attorney general; he married Elizabeth Vanderpoel, the daughter of James Vanderpoel, who was a prominent Albany lawyer and wealthy landholder in Kinderhook.

4. John L. O'Sullivan was the editor of the *New York Morning News* in 1845.
5. *Washington Union*.

TO GEORGE BANCROFT

My Dear Sir:

Washington 15th Sept. 1845

I have the honour to present to you *Mr Hart* of Kentucky,¹ who comes introduced to me by the Honble. Thomas F. Marshall of Ky. whose letter I enclose.² Will you do *Mr Hart* the favour to give some letters to your friends at Boston?

JAMES K. POLK

ALS. MHi. Addressed locally.

1. A Kentucky native, Joel Tanner Hart was a prominent sculptor who specialized in portrait busts of prominent men, including Andrew Jackson. His life-sized marble statue of Henry Clay, commissioned in 1846, and the marble statue "Woman Triumphant" secured his artistic fame.

2. See Marshall to Polk, August 23, 1845. L, copy. ICU.

FROM AARON V. BROWN

Dear Sir

Nashville Sepr. 15th 1845

Every day information satisfies me that the appointment of our friend Bell¹ to the collectorship at N. Orleans will give the highest degree of satisfaction to the business men of that City. He is young active skillful & energetic & from gratitude as well as interest would pour his whole soul into the office. *Just let him at it*, when the time comes & he will redeem all the assurances of his friends & make for the govert. and your administration an officer that it may be justly proud of. You know I seldom err in my presentments & so with the familiarity which I know you will pardon, "I say go it freely." If I urge this thing a little too strongly, place it to my account & when you have charge the appointment to me only remember that it was given to one who never waverd in his friendship to both of us in every emergency of our lives.

I have just closed an engagement with Revd. Mr. Wheat² to accompany me tomorrow evening at 6. Ock. a few miles from this city, to consummate *another* enga[ge]ment, which I understand our Democratic friends mean to celebrate by a National salute such as they gave

a few nights after the 7th Augst. last—name not mentiond but left to the sagacity of Mrs. P. to discover.

A. V. BROWN

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE states that he received this letter on September 22, 1845.

1. Polk appointed John M. Bell navy agent at New Orleans in 1845; Bell served until his resignation in 1848.

2. An Episcopal priest in Nashville, J. Thomas Wheat served as rector of Christ Church from 1837 until 1848.

TO AARON V. BROWN

My Dear Sir:

Washington City 15th Sept. 1845

About two weeks ago I wrote to you.¹ Since that time *Johnson* has received letters from the State, which lead to the apprehension, that there will be great and I fear irreconcilable divisions in the choice of a Senator. I hope however that your prudent and timely councils, may induce our political friends in the Legislature, finally to act in harmony and concert, and as one man. Majorities must rule and minorities submit. Let all personal sentiment be if possible prevented, and let all be induced if possible to act upon the principle, "every thing for measures, nothing for men."²

I hope no new measures of doubtful policy will be attempted by the Legislature. There is not much public business requiring Legislative action, and if my councils could prevail I would say, let the *necessary* business be transacted in the shortest possible time, and let the Democracy set an example of a short session. This would meet the approbation of all parties, be right in itself, and be decidedly popular. If this course be adopted I do not hesitate to express the opinion that the Democratic party will be stronger at the close than at the commencement of the session. The Legislative sessions since the revision of the Constitution in 1834 have been unnecessarily long, and whichever party have been in the ascendancy and had the responsibility, have at each session lost ground. It will be so again unless the course suggested be pursued. I hope this view of the subject may be impressed upon your mind, and that our political friends in the Legislature, may see the great importance of acting upon it.

You will of course be careful in the preparation of your Inaugural Speech. The worthy will expect an able State paper from you. We have no war yet with Mexico, and I still think the probabilities are we may not have. We are prepared with a formidable force by land and sea, and if Mexico, either declares war or her army crosses the

Del Norte, we will make a short war of it. Mexico knows this, and I think [will]³ be deterred from committing any hostile act. We will not of course strike the first [blo]w. I have nothing to communicate about the Oregon question since my last.

Mrs. Polk, has just stepped into my office, and s[ee]ing that I was writing to you, desires me to say that she is expecting to receive from you [...] marked *strictly confidential* [...] important event not open to the whole world, which as madam rumour has it, is shortly to take place. Mrs. P says she is decidedly in favour of the annexation proposed, and begs that you will present her kind salutations to Mrs. S., or Mrs. B.⁵ as the case may be.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Nashville and marked “*Private*.”

1. See Polk to Brown, August 30, 1845.
2. Variation of the phrase, “measures not men.” Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, *Letters*, March 6, 1742.
3. Faint ink transfers render word or words illegible here and below.
4. Parts of three lines illegible.
5. Reference is to Cynthia Pillow Saunders, Brown’s fiancée.

FROM THOMAS HERRING¹

New York City, September 15, 1845²

After asking if Polk personally had arranged his appointment as a weigher in the New York Custom House, Herring requests the President’s assistance in obtaining the position of marker, which would pay the same but would require less work. Herring informs Polk that because of his pledge to serve only one term some factions consider him to be “defunct” and “the cliques are indecently contending over the (presumed) lifeless body” for the Presidency in 1848. Herring suggests that Polk use his patronage power to establish an administration party, particularly in the New York custom house, in order to prevent factionalism in the Democracy. Polk should maintain his public commitment to a revenue tariff because the “term is comprehensible by the masses, yet sufficiently indefinite to admit a scale of duties adequate to every purpose of the government, and serviceable to the manufacturing interest.” Herring believes that some protection would maintain the Democracy in Pennsylvania and would be “the only effectual preventive of an adverse union between that State, and New York.”

ALS. DLC–JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City. Content analysis determined that the letter was addressed to Polk.

1. During the 1844 presidential campaign Herring wrote a number of editorials for the New York *Evening Post* in support of Polk and Dallas.
2. Place identified through content analysis.

FROM JOHN L. O'SULLIVAN¹

Monday Morning

Dear Sir, [Washington City, September 15, 1845]²

Without intruding on your time by a personal call, I beg to be informed whether you will feel disposed to comply with the request to be at the head of the Jackson Statue Committee, if waited upon by a committee deputed this evening from the public meeting of citizens for that purpose.

I have matured and prepared a plan of operations for the collection of the subscriptions, which *cannot fail* of being crowned with a splendid result, while it is one which personally keeps you entirely aloof from either trouble or pecuniary responsibility. This I will submit to the Committee after it is appointed. Your name at its head will be of almost vital importance. If you would desire to see me on the subject, I will call at any hour.

I subjoin the names proposed for the Committee.³

J. L. O'SULLIVAN

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed locally. Polk's AE reads "In relation to the Erection of a statue to the memory of *Genl Jackson*. It was determined that the President should not be a member of the committee, but that he should head the subscription list. 15th Sept. 1845."

1. A New York City journalist, O'Sullivan joined Samuel D. Langtree in founding and editing the *United States Magazine and Democratic Review* in 1837. A strong advocate of American expansionism, O'Sullivan served one term in the New York legislature, 1841–43, and with Samuel J. Tilden founded and edited the *New York Morning News* from 1844 to 1846.

2. Place and date identified through content analysis.

3. In addition to Polk, the proposed committee included Cave Johnson, Francis P. Blair, Thomas Ritchie, Amos Kendall, John C. Rives, William A. Harris, Jesse E. Dow, James Hoban, John W. Maury, Benjamin B. French, and Alexander Hunter. A Democrat from Virginia, Harris won election to one term in the U.S. House, 1841–43; edited the *Washington Spectator*, the *Baltimore Constitution*, and later the *Washington Union*; and served as chargé d'affaires to the Argentine Confederation, 1846–51. Dow held the post of doorkeeper of the U.S. House in 1844. A Washington City Democrat, Hoban served as U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia, 1845–46. Maury earned his living as an exchange broker and lottery manager for Washington City. A Democrat from New Hampshire living in Washington City, French held the clerkship of the U.S. House from 1838 to 1847 and later served as treasurer of the National Democratic Committee. Hunter won appointment as U.S. marshal for the District of Columbia in 1834 and held that post until 1848.

FROM JOHN CATRON

Dr Sir.

Nashville. Sepr. 16, 1845

We are in great repose here at present; not enough leaks out of administration gossip at Washington for a paragraph unless the N.Y. Herald is cited, and since Mr Ritchie has dropped all notice of the Herald's correspondent, he is no longer reputable. There is a little trifling and sparing at you personally in the two Whig papers here, especially the Banner, but is so feeble, and obviously personal on part of the Editors,¹ as to be the subject of Jest by the Whigs themselves. On the Tariff, decided ground is taken by the Whigs with north. Although the question is too complicated for the comprehension of the mass, & a large majority are too little interested to care much, if anything about it; at least not enough to cross a party line. Still it tells with the strongest thinking Whigs; those who have to buy most, & who sell most. And the cotton factors all or nearly all, admit, that the democratic doctrine is true, out & out—that the price of the raw article is greatly depressed and that of the goods made of Cotton increased by the operations of the tariff of 1842. These opinions of course are spreading, but with no active rapidity; the influence they have is *decidedly* manifest in a deadening indifference to party success. Men are constantly saying to me, "I am done with politics, and very willing Mr. Polk shall have a fair trial. He and his cabinet manifest an inclination to a moderate and prudent course, and seem to be carrying all before it. It must soon be a onesided business, and it is useless to be struggling against it." Now all this has no turning in it; but the result is the same. Between us, and us only, the greatest point you have gained is the change in the Editorship of the Union. Mr. Blair is a shrewd capable man, but he belonged to a class of thinkers, and editors, totally different in his habits from the Jefferson school. His editorship was bred up in the new & old court politics of Ky.,² & aggressive throughout. It proceeded on the idea that in Inns, should make war on the outs; and that personal character was fair game for the press. The course of the Govt. paper during the 24 years of the three virginia presidents,³ was such as Mr. Ritchie is pursuing. He is improving very much by the way, & having the advantage of authentic facts, and the authority of the administration to back him, can as formerly, break-down any other papers, if moderation, strength of argument, & strict integrity are pursued. No one now denies any thing in the nature of a fact, that Mr. Ritchie states as such; and as the world reasons not much, the facts being admitted, the reasoning on them is taken as true, pretty much

of course. The Intelligencer, I read side by side with the Union, & pretty nearly in the Virginia Style of reading the R. Inquirer,⁴ down to the advertisements. I think Mr. Gales's paper will be a harmless sheet, if not a hurtful one to its party, very soon, from its long lumbering articles, and its anti-American tendencies; and yet it must continue at the head of the Whig press; and that party will be compelled to endorse its articles. It follows, if the Union can break down the *doctrines* of the Intelligencer, the Whig party will wither in the same degree. On the subject of your course in Texas, if Mr. Gales had consulted Mr. Ritchie for a course best suited to the interests of the "Union," no one could have been thought of better than that adopted by Mr. Gales, so far as the valley of the mt. is concerned. I think the exceedingly able letter in the Union of the 8th inst. from London,⁵ ought to open Mr. Gales's eyes a little, as the letter comes from a quarter he knows well, London, and shows the (undoubted) difference between a strong policy & a weak one, in the estimation of our ancient Mother; who has so often played the same game in India; and but Just now in China; and with a *receipt*, in Afghanistan. Your administration is fast gaining ground throughout the southwest to a certainty, and will as it seems to me wither the Whig cause into a dead repose.

We are all in good health.

J. CATRON

P.S. Our friend Gov. Brown was married last evening⁶ to Mrs. Saunders. His namesake Berry,⁷ had some thirteen rounds fired to celebrate the event about nightfall. With the *taste* of the thing I dare say the Gov. might have differed. Still it norated to the Town, that the leader of Berry's people was in luck; that he was not only Gov. but had a young & pretty wife, and that the Whigs were out, and had to put up with their old ones. And thus was the turn the women (Berry's friends) gave to the taunts kited at them. I heard no Whig reply worth recording, except, that the firing was done hours *too soon*. J.C.

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on September 25, 1845, and answered it on October 4, 1845.

1. Allen A. Hall, editor of the *Nashville Whig*, and Washington Barrow, editor of the *Nashville Republican Banner*. The *Republican Banner* of September 10, 1845, described Polk as a small man who had "cowered beneath" the violence of the Nullification Controversy and "sought shelter between the colossal legs of Andrew Jackson."

2. In 1824, the Kentucky legislature enacted legislation limiting the ability of creditors to collect from debtors. The Kentucky Court of Appeals declared the legislation unconstitutional because it violated the sanctity of contracts.

The legislature then abolished the Court of Appeals and created a new court sympathetic to the interests of debtors. The old court declared the legislature's actions unconstitutional. As Kentucky moved closer to judicial anarchy and civil war, supporters of the old court regained control of the legislature in 1825. Within the next year the new court ceased to exist, and the old court resumed operation.

3. Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and James Monroe.

4. *Richmond Enquirer*.

5. The letter, written by the *Union's* London correspondent under the pseudonym "Morgan," stated that the British regretted the annexation of Texas by the United States but could no longer prevent it. Much of the British concern dealt with the fact that the United States had been able to annex Texas in defiance of Britain and France. Continental politicians viewed annexation as the "necessary consequence" of the increasing power and influence of the United States.

6. Catron's postscript was written the following day, September 17, 1845.

7. Not identified further.

FROM PAUL K. HUBBS¹

Esteemed Sir,

New York Sept 16 1845

Feeling a personal Interest in the Trade of Morocco I trust you will excuse me for making a suggestion.

The refusal of the Emperor to receive Mr Th Carr² being entirely *personal* and not intended to be prejudicial to the Nation, it becomes our Country to succeed him by the appointment of a man possessed of sufficient discretion to respect the Arab habitudes and Religion, without compromising his own—to maintain firmly but discreetly the honor of his Country—whilst he cultivate a reciprocity of national Good Will.

To *submit* to the choice of the Emperor, our Government representation; would be *humiliating* as the endeavour to enforce upon him, a man personally *hated* by him, would be injudicious.

Maintaining these views with a prospect of entering somewhat into the Commerce of that Country, *I* should; and so would our Commercial men having Business there generally, be glad to see *A. J. Bergen*³ transferred there from Bermuda. And if necessary to provide for Carr, that he go to Bermuda.

Bergen will not remain if he go to Bermuda. The British Colonial policy requiring in the fulfilment of Contracts that Produce of the United States be brought in British Bottoms has made that Consulate of little value. His Father⁴ our late worthy representative I know was excessively mortified that his Son should have applied for Havanna with the

Strength politically & Commercially of this State and have received Bermuda. I think the arrangement I have ventured to suggest would be well *politically*, and I am with others anxious for it Commercially.

PAUL K. HUBBS

P.S. I learn that Mr Bergen late M.C. has come down from Niagara on his way to Washington.

Mr. Lawrence is too timid in relation to removals & appointments. Conciliation is very well to talk about, but we *cant afford it*—the party will go to atoms under the panoply of Conciliation. It is a poor compliment to our party & *principles* to say that whigs must be retained by consequence of their better *capability*.

I enclose a Statement of Messr Stanton & Co in relation to Ten Eyck appointed to Sandwich Islands.⁵ I am afraid he is a bad fellow. It seems that Williams⁶ is now studying for *clerical* profession—that the firm is pretty much “run out” as they say in Detroit. Mr Stanton is a very cautious man, now retired from business & Expresses himself astonished at the appointment & relates a Severe Story of Ten Eyck. Mr Stanton is a man strictly careful in all his transactions, but was overreached by *Phelps*,⁷ who should had never made or had wherewith to make any shipment, upon which to predicate the Dft by which he procured Goods from Stanton. Those men W & Ten Eyck, Compared with Phelps make no return in Four Years, nor answer any inquiry. Ten Eyck expects to leave in October, it is said but may choose to get off as early as possible.

[...]⁸ P. Stanton beside being a man of large Estate, is greatly Esteemed and withal one of our “Pillars of fire by *night*”⁹ during the late Campaign. Paul K. Hubbs

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked “*Private*.” Polk’s AE on the cover states that he received this letter with enclosure on September 18, 1845.

1. An active Democrat, Hubbs operated a fancy goods importation business in New York and Philadelphia.

2. Abd ar-Rahman and Thomas N. Carr. Abd ar-Rahman reigned as sultan of Morocco, 1822–59. Carr of New York served as U.S. consul to Morocco from 1838 until 1842. Polk re-appointed Carr to that post in December 1845.

3. Alexander J. Bergen was a New York merchant in partnership with his brother Cornelius J. Bergen.

4. A Brooklyn native, John T. Bergen served as a captain of the New York militia in the War of 1812; as sheriff of Kings County, 1821–25 and 1828–31; and for one term as a Democrat in the U.S. House, 1831–33.

5. Enclosure dated September 15, 1845. L. DLC–JKP. Anthony Ten Eyck and probably Thomas P. Stanton. A native of New York, Ten Eyck moved to

Detroit, Mich., in 1835 to practice law. In 1841 Ten Eyck accepted an appointment as a commissioner to the Sandwich Islands and served until 1843, when he returned to Detroit to become clerk of the Michigan Supreme Court. A Cass delegate to the 1844 Democratic National Convention in Baltimore, Ten Eyck served as U.S. commissioner to the Sandwich Islands, 1845–49; as deputy postmaster at Detroit, 1860–61; and as major and paymaster of volunteers during the Civil War. Stanton was a commission and shipping merchant in New York.

6. Reference is to G. Mott Williams, Ten Eyck's law partner in Detroit.
7. Phelps is not identified further.
8. Word rendered illegible by ink run.
9. Paraphrase of Exodus 13:21.

FROM ROBERT J. WALKER

Sir: Treasury Department September 16th 1845

I have the honor herewith to submit a communication from the Commissioners of the General Land office requesting, in accordance with the desire of the War Department, that the enclosed diagram¹ may be laid before you in order that your sanction may be obtained to the proposed reservation from the sale or entry of any kind of all the Islands, Keys, and Banks, comprising the group called the Dry Tortugas, with the other Islands or Keys on the Florida coast embraced within the red lines on said diagram, till the completion of a survey which has been ordered with the view of determining their relations and capabilities in a military point of view.²

R. J. WALKER

ALS. DLC–JKP. Polk's AE reads: "Issued an order to the Commissioner of the Genl. Land Office, to suspend sales as requested by the War Department."

1. Enclosure, probably returned with the presidential order, not found.
2. As early as 1830, U.S. military authorities believed a fort in the Dry Tortugas would both protect the nation's commerce in the Gulf of Mexico and deter any Spanish attack from Cuba. In 1846 the War Department commenced building what eventually became Fort Jefferson on Garden Key, a small island seventy miles west of the Florida Keys. Built around a lighthouse (erected in the 1820's), the hexagonal Fort Jefferson had casemates for over 450 guns. Construction on the brick-masonry walls proved lengthy, expensive, and ultimately of little military value; the development of rifled cannon during the Civil War rendered the fortifications obsolete.

TO THOMAS B. CHILDRESS¹

My Dear Sir: Washington City 17th Sept. 1845

Your desire to be appointed to a situation in the Mobile Custom House has been made known to me. In the course of a few days I will appoint *James E. Saunders Esqr.*, formerly of Courtland, but now of Mobile, Collector of the latter place. The Collector, according to the laws of the U. States, nominates, and with the approval of the Secretary of the Treasury appoints, the inspectors and other assistants. Though I have often been applied to by persons seeking these situations in the several Collection Districts from Portland in Maine to New Orleans, I have not thought it proper in a single instance to interfere with the free choice of the Collector. If I could depart from this rule in any case, it would certainly be in yours. The testimonials which have been presented to me in your behalf, by leading citizens of Alabama, bear ample testimony to your qualifications and merits, for a higher station than the one you seek. I shall certainly be much gratified if *Mr Saunders* (the new Collector at Mobile) shall appoint you to a situation in the Custom House. It would be most gratifying too to Mrs. P.² who takes a lively interest in your welfare. I presume you are personally known to *Mr Saunders*, and I think probable that if you will make known your wishes to him, he will gratify your wishes, if he can do so consistently with his sense of duty.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Marengo County, Alabama, and marked "Private."

1. A Marengo County attorney, Childress was the brother of William G. Childress and a cousin of Sarah Childress Polk.
2. Sarah Childress Polk.

FROM DAVID CRAIGHEAD

Dear Sir Nashville Sept 17 1845

This will be handed to you by my son James¹ who is on his way to Cambridge.

Hopkins L. Turney and Mr Nicholson will I believe be the only candidates for the Senate.

The former has six or seven democrats pledged to support him. There are other democrats who are dissatisfied with Nicholson on account of his tariff article which I have already mentioned to you.² Mr

Chase³ our talented member of Congress was seriously provoked by the article in question and was inclined to have Nicholson defeated. He has I understand imbued Voorhies⁴ and perhaps other members with his opinion.

Our party is decidedly stronger and healthier than it has been since the White defection.⁵ Our rank and file do not care a fig between the candidates. All they desire is that Democrat elected by democrats.

Such are my feelings also. And yet if Nicholson could be elected by democrats I think it would be best.

If defeated he will remain at the paper⁶ and if so I fear we should soon have him stirring in the succession or in some other mischief. Gov Aaron⁷ was married on tuesday evening to the widow Saunders. He bears his recent successes with moderation and decorum. He appears to be hapy and he certainly is at this time very popular.

Indeed you are gaining strength and are strengthening your friends here and throughout the South daily.

Many whigs of my acquaintance have become your eulogists. The necessity of a modified tariff is almost univrsly admitted in this Country.

This is the last stone which whiggery has to stand upon. You have nothing to dread from foes, your prudence and experience will guard you against injury from injudicious and selfish friends.

DAVID CRAIGHEAD

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked “Confidential.” Polk’s AE on the cover states that he received this letter on October 6, 1845.

1. A Columbia lawyer, James B. Craighead was a captain in the volunteers at the start of the Civil War.

2. See Craighead to Polk, August 26, 1845.

3. Lucien B. Chase practiced law in Charlotte, Tenn., until 1843, when he moved to Clarksville and formed a partnership with Willie B. Johnson; Chase won election as a Democrat to two terms in the U.S. House; 1845–49; at the end of his second term he moved to New York City.

4. A Dickson County merchant and farmer, Jacob Voorhies represented Dickson, Benton, Humphreys and Stewart counties as a Democrat in the Tennessee Senate from 1843 until 1847.

5. Tennessee Democrats split over the question of who should succeed Andrew Jackson as President. The Democratic National Convention nominated Martin Van Buren, whom Jackson had ordained to be his successor. Van Buren’s nomination alienated many Tennessee Democrats, who preferred U.S. Senator Hugh Lawson White of Tennessee. When White agreed to run for President with Whig support, many of his Tennessee Democratic supporters joined the Whig party. To Jackson’s chagrin, White carried Tennessee in 1836.

6. *Nashville Union*.
7. Aaron V. Brown.

TO WILLIAM P. DUVAL¹

My Dear Sir: Washington City 17th Sept. 1845

On yesterday I appointed your friend Mr *Dillon Jordan*² collector of Pensacola.

I have received your letter relating to the proposed removal of the Surveyor General's office from *St. Augustine* to *Tallahassee*.³ Several other communications on the same subject have been forwarded to me from Florida. I have examined these with my disposition to gratify the wishes of my old friend *Col Butler*, if it could be done without inconvenience or prejudice to the public interest. In view however of the divided state of opinion, among those who have expressed an opinion to me, I have determined not to remove the office for the present, and have so written to *Col Butler*.⁴ I have not definitively decided against the removal, but have postponed action upon it, until I can be better informed, than I am at present.

I hope *Col Butler* will take charge of the office at its present location, and if during the winter I shall become satisfied that the removal is proper, I can thus order it.

I thank you My Dear Sir for several letters with I have had the pleasure to receive from you since I have been here and have to make you an apology for not having answered them or acknowledged their receipt. The truth is my time is so constantly occupied, that I have been compelled to neglect almost entirely my correspondence with my friends. I have scarcely written a dozen letters in that many weeks, and none but such as were indispensable.

I hope My Dear Sir: that you will continue to write to me concerning all matters, which you may think important, and especially those relating to the interest of the new State of Florida.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Tallahassee, Fla., and marked "Private."

1. Originally a Kentucky lawyer, Duval served as a Democrat for one term in the U.S. House from that state, 1813-15; sat as U.S. district judge for East Florida in 1821; served as governor of Florida from 1822 until 1834; and removed to Texas in 1848.

2. Jordan served as U.S. district judge for West Florida from 1838 until statehood in 1845; he was appointed collector of customs at Pensacola in 1845.

3. Letter not found.
4. See Polk to Robert Butler, September 13, 1845.

FROM SAMUEL H. HUNTINGTON¹

Dear Sir

Hartford Sept. 17th 1845

Permit me to express my gratification at the promptitude with which you acted in reference to the Surveyor of this Port, when the subject was properly brought to your attention.² The appointment so far as I have heard, has given great satisfaction to your political friends, and though of no very great importance in itself, has had a very favourable effect upon our party in this City. This convinces me that a little action at Washington would greatly aid us in our approaching campaign, and with such assistance I entertain strong hopes that we can carry the State at our next election.

My friend Mr Toucey, I am happy to say is rapidly recovering. His right arm was very seriously injured & I fear he will not be able to use it for some time to come. I have however conversed with him very fully, & I think I have his concurrence in the views I now propose to submit to your consideration.

The Marshall of this District, the Postmaster of this city,³ and several other officers, connected with the customs in other parts of the State ought to be removed. I have not a dissenting voice from this opinion among the true friends to your administration. These offices are now filled by men whose connexion with the Democratic party is of a very equivocal character, and who detract from, rather than add to the respectability and influence of the General Administration. Besides in many instances the public interest in their hands is unquestionably suffering. They were generally introduced into their present places by your predecessor, with whom, so far as they were concerned, the only qualification requisite to his favour, seemed to be an avowal of personal adhesion. Certainly in most of the offices referred to no other qualification existed, unless these men, who are looked upon by the honest and upright of our party, as having never sustained it, or as having betrayed it in the hour of trial, can be removed and faithful and competent men put in their places, it will be in vain to attempt to arouse the party to an efficient and successful effort. If these changes can be made it will inspire us with zeal and confidence, which as I have already suggested will be productive of the very best results. From the views you expressed when I had the honor of an interview with you, I infer, that without doubt you will be ready to act in reference to these matters when they are properly presented

for your consideration. Candidates will be named and so supported by the leading men & others of our party as will I trust relieve you from all embarrassment in deciding upon the respective individuals to be appointed.

Many gentlemen, with whom I have conversed, have expressed the feeling that Connecticut had been too much overlooked, in connexion with the appointments of the National Government, and I was glad to hear you express the same opinion in our conversation, as it convinced me that the wish on your part was not wanting, to do us justice in this particular. It seems to be generally desired that some gentleman from Connecticut, whose fidelity to the Democratic party is undoubted, who possesses its fullest confidence, and whose knowledge of its true interests cannot be questioned, should be placed in a respectable position at Washington, as a sort of representative, or medium through whom, we could at all times, as occasion required communicate with the President. I have been informed that you contemplated, shortly making a change in some of the Heads of Bureaus. I think this would be desirable, and it strikes me that one at least in strict justice is due to Connecticut. Should you be inclined to this opinion, I know of no gentleman whose appointment to such a place would be more useful to the government, or more satisfactory and beneficial to the party at home, than would that of Mr Welles⁴ of this City. I am confident he exercises an influence with the Democratic party in this state as extensive and effective as that of any other individual; and should he secure such an appointment, I think it would tend greatly to harmonise the party & to concentrate its efforts in support of your administration. This suggestion is not made with the knowledge of Mr Welles. His political friends however feel that some appointment of the character referred to is due to them and him, I therefore hope that it will strike the President favourably. Should it, I will take measures to procure such an expression from the leading men in the State as will fully and satisfactorily indicate their wishes, in relation to the matter.

SAM. H. HUNTINGTON

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. A Hartford attorney, Huntington served as clerk of the Connecticut Senate during the 1830's.
2. Polk appointed Seth Belden surveyor of the port of Hartford in 1845.
3. Benning Mann served as U.S. marshal for the district of Connecticut from 1844 until 1849. Joseph Pratt served as postmaster at Hartford from 1843 until 1846.
4. A Hartford journalist, Gideon Welles won election to several terms in the Connecticut legislature, 1827-1835; headed the Hartford post office for five

years, 1836–41; and under Polk held the chief clerkship of the navy's Bureau of Provisions and Clothing, 1846–49. Later he helped found the Republican party and served as navy secretary from 1861 until 1869.

FROM WILLIAM H. POLK

Dear Brother

Naples Sept. 17th 1845

I received last evening the letter which .¹ The statement of Mr Hunt² inflicted a pang that chilled every hope of future success in life, and for the moment I felt, as if "I stood alone upon my hearth, with my *household Gods* shattered around me."³ That I have been unfortunate all know—that I have been negligent to a fault *I admit*—but that in any case I have compromised my honor *I deny*, although the charge is sanctified by the *oath* of Mr Hunt. I am able to bear any reverse of fortune, to battle the most exquisite misery steeped in poverty; but when my *honor*, "The last Castle of *hope*," is assailed, every ray warming my mind to exertion is clouded and leaves but little prospect before me. It is true that I had an interview with Mr H. at the Presidents Mansion, and the chain of circumstances which brought it about is correctly stated. That I also informed him that Congress had made no appropriation for my Outfit *is true*, but that I told him my departure from the United States would be delayed until the meeting of Congress is *incorrect*, in this he may have misunderstood me, as I did inform him that it remained for the next Congress to make the appropriation. In both the interviews with Mr Hunt at Washington and New York, I was particular to inform him of my destitute and embarrassed condition, and of my inability to settle my debts, but hoped from my Salary to save sufficient to pay a part of the whole of them. The order which I gave him on Knox Walker, will speak for itself, in which no definite promise is given, but I say in substance to pay Mr Hunt a portion of the first fund which I will *endeavour* to place in his hands for the benefit of my creditors—not meaning before leaving the Country, as Mr Hunt seems perversely bent on construing it; but as I clearly expressed to him, from *time to time* as I found it could be spared from my necessary expences when abroad. It has always been my intention to save, by a course of economy, something for my creditors, and I assure you such is still my disposition and *intention*, but it is hard to struggle, and still be wounded by the sting of complaint. All this I know, is the consequences of my youthful indiscretions, I complain of no one except myself. If the small amount which I can save from my Salary, will not appease my creditors, who seem "as pitiless as fate," then I cannot silence their

complaints, but must submit to the portion my misfortunes measure out to me.

In a former letter⁴ I sent you a *bill* of Exchange on Messers Barring Brothers & Co for 154£, 17s, 6d, which I hope you have received, and also informed you of my intention of sending by the close of the year about three hundred dollars more. I enclose you a Bill of Exchange of Messers Barring Brothers & Co,⁵ for Seventy Seven pounds nine shillings, which you will please appropriate to the payment of my debts. If you think best appropriate the whole amount of the *present Bill* to Mr Hunt, in payment of his claim. I have now done my uttermost for the present, and do so relying upon my next Months pay, to settle my House-rent. In April I will send you \$500, and in September next \$500 more. This you may rely on if life is spared. By close calculation I find this much can be spared.

Write me—let Mother know I am well. The prospect of making a *Treaty* is encourageing, it is doubtful what extent of reduction I will be able to secure on our Cotton, Tabacco &c, if any at all, but hope to cut down present duties to such rate, as will permit the introduction of our products. My Dispatch to the Department of State will explain what progress has been made in forming a Treaty. The Minister of Foreign Affairs⁶ by letter suggested that I would submit a detailed or general proposition for a Treaty. Not being furnished by the Government with the provisions of a treaty in detail, I thought it best to enclose the Minister a Copy of the treaty concluded between the United States and Austria,⁷ with additional Articles providing for the reduction of duties on our products. This Copy of the treaty I merely submitted as presenting the general principles, which formed the basis of most of our treaties with other Nations, and expressed a willingness to make a *similar treaty*, if a proper reduction of duties was granted. I give you the substance of the correspondence hastily. The Treaty with Austria covers the substance of my *instructions*. The treaty between this Country and England⁸ is confined to the direct trade, and I will scarcely be able to secure one possessing the feature of perfect and general reciprocity, but must confine it to the direct trade. This my instructions authorize me to do. I sent Mr Buchanan a copy of the English Treaty with this Country, and suggested in case the negotiation with the United States was commenced, that much difficulty would be presented, in secureing a [red]uction⁹ of duties on our products, imported into this Kingdom, which I hope will draw from him some suggestions to govern me in the negotiation. Would it do to make a Treaty similar to the English, without adhering to the reduction of duties? We cannot expect them to grant us any reduction,

unless we give them a corresponding reduction on their Wines, Oils, Sewing silks &c.

Excuse this letter, it is written in great haste.

WILLIAM H. POLK

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on October 21, 1845, and answered the letter on October 29, 1845.

1. Letter not found.
2. Reference probably is to Samuel Hunt, a Baltimore tailor and merchant. See William H. Polk to James K. Polk, November 17, 1845.
3. Quotations here and below are not identified further.
4. See William H. Polk to James K. Polk, August 16, 1845.
5. Enclosure not found.
6. D. Foules Ruffo de Calabria.
7. *Treaty of Commerce and Navigation between the United States of America and His Majesty the Emperor of Austria*, signed at Washington City, August 27, 1829, and ratified in 1831.
8. *Treaty of Commerce and Navigation between Great Britain and Sicilies*, ratified at Naples, June 25, 1845.
9. Portion of word obliterated by a tear in the manuscript.

TO JOHN SLIDELL¹

My Dear Sir:

Washington City 17th Sept. 1845

Recent intelligence received from Mexico, renders it probable that the Government of that country will neither make war against the United States, nor attempt to invade Texas by marching an army across the *Del Norte*. Our dates from the city of *Mexico*, are to the 29th and from *Vera Cruz* to the 30th ultimo. The war spirit which seemed to pervade the whole Mexican population a few weeks ago, has greatly subsided. The opinion of our *confidential agent*² now in Mexico, and also of our consul at *Vera Cruz*³ is, that *President Herrera* and the new Cabinet seem to be quite willing and even desirous, to re-open diplomatic relations, with the United States, if such an initiative were made by the latter. But though these opinions are expressed with some confidence, they do not rest, on any positive information or assurances from the Government to that effect. The next arrival from *Vera Cruz* may bring more authentic information on the subject. Conner's squadron of *Vera Cruz* in the Gulf, is under orders to keep us regularly and speedily advised, of ac[tions]⁴ that may transpire in Mexico, we may expect to he[ar] again from *Vera Cruz* in the course of a week or ten days from this

time, perhaps sooner. As soon as I can have reasonable assurances that a minister will be received it is my intention to send one and my object in writing to you, is to say, that in that event, I will desire to avail myself of your services in that character. It may not be proper to send a Minister, and it certainly will not be, if we run any risk, of having him rejected by the Mexican Government. This must depend on the character of the information which we may hereafter receive. The probabilities are that, our next information may be such as to justify the appointment of a Minister, and in that event, my opinion is, that the success of his Mission may depend much, on his proceeding promptly, and with the least possible delay, to the City of Mexico. I regard it be of the greatest importance too, that the fact that a Minister of the U. States has been appointed (should such be the fact), should be kept perfectly secret, until the information shall return from Mexico. The reasons for this you will at once perceive. If it was proclaimed in advance the British and French Ministers here, would of course be advised of it, and might adopt measures to thwart and defeat the object of the Mission. Whatever arrangements can be affected with Mexico, would probably be accomplished very speedily after the arrival of our Minister at Mexico. The Representatives of other Governments at Mexico, should know nothing of our intention to send a Minister until his arrival. So important do I consider the secrecy, with which the matter is kept, that I cannot charge you too strongly on that point. It will not be safe for you to communicate it to a human being. In the event of your appointment, you can be taken from *Pensacola* to *Vera Cruz* in a vessel of War, without any one knowing your official character. I thought it important to give you this notice, of my intentions, that you might silently and quickly make such preparations, as you might find necessary, so that on receiving notice of your appointment you could leave without a day's delay. I will add, that if Diplomatic relations can be assured I think the present a most propitious moment to settle all our difficulties with Mexico, including of course those of boundary, and such acquisitions as may be deemed important, to our national interest. In regard to these however, (in the event of your appointment) you will of course be fully instructed.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to New Orleans; marked "Private & Confidential"; and inclosed in Polk to Cave Johnson, September 17, 1845.

1. A native of New York, Slidell moved to New Orleans, La., in 1819 to practice law. He served as U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Louisiana,

1829–33, and won election to one term in the U.S. House, 1843–45. In 1845 Polk appointed Slidell minister to Mexico, but that government refused to receive him; he later served in the U.S. Senate from 1853 to 1861.

2. William S. Parrott.

3. A native of Rhode Island, Francis M. Dimond served as U.S. consul at Port au Prince and Vera Cruz; he was elected as a Democrat to the lieutenant governorship of his home state in 1853, and served as acting governor for most of his term, before losing the gubernatorial race of 1854 in his own right.

4. Portion of words here and below obliterated by a tear in the manuscript.

TO SAMUEL P. WALKER

My Dear Sir:

Washington City 17th Sept. 1845

On the 18th of August I addressed a letter to you at Memphis, requesting you to draw a Bill on me at sight for *Two Thousand dollars*, and apply the proceeds, towards the payment of my note held by Uncle Wm. Polk. I learn from your brother¹ that you are now at Columbia, and that explains the reason why I have not heard from you. On your arrival at Memphis I wish you to draw the Bill as requested in my letter to you, at that place, and when you do so write to me. I have directed my cotton-crop to be shipped to your House at New Orleans as fast as it is gathered, and have written to *Pickett & Co* at New Orleans directing how the proceeds are to be applied.

I regret exceedingly that your father should be dissatisfied, as I learn from one of his letters² that he is so because I have not appointed *Mr Pickett*. Certainly I entertain very kind feelings toward *Mr Pickett*, and would be glad to favor him if I could do so with propriety. I wrote to *Mr Pickett* in June³ explaining the reasons, which would prevent me from appointing him to the place, which I at one time hoped I might be able to give him. I had no reason to doubt but that he had received that letter in due course of mail, until I learned otherwise from your father. If it had been forwarded to him by your House in New Orleans, to whom it was enclosed, as it should have been, it must have reached him long before it did.

No one can so well judge of the embarrassments which surround me, in the dispensation of the patronage of the Government as I can. All others must take a one sided view of each particular case in which they take an interest, instead of surveying the whole. In my letter to your father⁴ to which his was a reply, I explained some of those difficulties to him. My explanation it seems was not satisfactory. I regret it but cannot help it. *Mr Pickett* himself wrote me after the date of your father's letter [...] ⁵ which has [...] in my estimation. My friends and

especially my relations should, I think, remember that I am in the first year, and indeed in the first months of my administration, that this is the most trying period of my administration, and they should not think it strange, if they cannot all be gratified at once. I wrote these general remarks to you, [...] you know my friendship for you, from your boyhood up, and that nothing would give me more pleasure than to advance your interest, whenever I can do it consistently with integrity and my public duty. Your [fa]ther's letter was a very harsh one, and such as I do not think I had given him any cause to write. But still I make due allowance for his disappointment, and the manifest interest with which he wrote, and pass it by as though it had not been. Nothing can occur to [...] in unkind feelings towards him. I hope during my administration to have other options to give you even more substantial evidence of my friendship. [...] my public duty I must perform [...] not to subject myself or my administration to unjust attack whereby my usefulness, may be impaired. Write to me when you get to Memphis.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Columbia and marked “*Private.*”

1. J. Knox Walker.
2. See James Walker to Polk, August 23, 1845.
3. See Polk to William S. Pickett, June 26, 1845.
4. See Polk to James Walker, August 11, 1845.
5. Blurred ink transfers render word or words illegible here and below.

FROM CHARLES FLETCHER

Mr President Geneva N.Y. Sept. 18. 1845

Since I have undertaken to be sentinel upon the outpost of the American Boundary it behoves me to be vigilant that no part of our country be alienated from the rest; it appears to be as necessary to watch against the insidious writings of our own countrymen as against the warlike demonstrations of our enemies.

I have been led to these remarks by an article which has just met my eye, published in the Courier & Enquirer of the City of New York on the 1st inst. which article I enclose for the perusal of your Excellency.¹ Here is the beginning of an attempt to form a separate & independent government disconnected with the United States. This will suit England exactly. She will hold on to as much of the territory of Oregon as she can & she will try to foster us in dependent government of the remainder & of all California with whom she can have treaties without consulting the government of the states east of the Rocky mountains.

By this arrangement Great Britain will completely shut out the commerce of the United States from the pacific ocean except such as can be obtained by commercial treaties. Instead of commanding this trade we shall have to ask permission of a foreign nation to enjoy a part of it.

To counteract the designs of our enemies I beg leave to suggest to your excellency the propriety of appointing a governor over those citizens who have emigrated west of the Rocky Mountains.

This will not interfere with the rights of England, she has already a government established there which exercises authority over her own subjects and the Americans might likewise institute a government over their own citizens whether residing in Oregon or elsewhere west of the mountains. Then the subject of the boundary might be postponed to a more convenient season.

Suppose Congress were to pass a law similar to the following.

sketch

Whereas a number of the citizens of this republic have emigrated west of the Rocky Mountains and others are on the way thither together with much cattle and Whereas the boundaries of our territory there are not yet definitively adjusted so that it can be laid off into a territorial government and Whereas it is necessary for the peace & security of the inhabitants to have an established government.

Be it enacted &c that the President is authorised to appoint a governor over all American Citizens residing west of the Rocky Mountains &c &c.

Be it further enacted &c that such citizens so residing shall meet at such time & place as may be designated & elect members, who together with the governor shall form a government, &c &c this government to have all the powers of a territorial government & the only difference will be that no territorial limits will be defined, but authority will be given over all American Citizens settled west of the Rocky Mountains, a delegate to be sent to Congress who would attend to the interests of his constitutents &c &c

Some such law as this—the establishment of a government, of a post route to Astoria and the granting of a charter for a Rail Road will effectually secure a large territory west of the rocky Mountains & give this nation an outlet on the Pacific.

This outlet is very desirable to the inhabitants of this country for from the highest to the lowest the inhabitants are all tea drinkers & the tea plant is almost as necessary for their comfort as the wheat plant.

In the remote west by the poorest people living within log cabins this herb has become a necessary beverage; therefore for the benefit of all the inhabitants the tea trade with China ought to be encouraged and the direct route opened as Speedily as possible.

CHAS. FLETCHER

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on September 22, 1845.

1. The article suggests that the most satisfactory solution to the Oregon question for all parties involved might be the establishment of an independent republic consisting of Oregon and California. DLC-JKP.

FROM WILLIAM W. POLK

Dear Sir,

Sepr. 18th 1845

I have Received yours of the 18th Augt. Some days ago when I was lying under the Influence of a Severe attack of fever & this is the first day Since It has cooled on me but as you Require to hear from me I will try to write. On the Subject of yours you Say it will not be convenient for you to make punctual payment of the Borrowed Money. It has ever been a fixed maxim with me to be punctual myself & to Require punctuallity from all others. You Say that Mr. James Walker told me you might not pay the whole Amount untill Some time next year & that assented to It. That must have been a loss of memory in Walker or Something worse (a Sin against truth). I assented to no such thing. Mr. Walker told me it could & would be paid in Six Months or even a Shorter time (If Required). The Reason why you called on me for the Loan was that I was willing to let you have It on better terms than you could get it any where else. I have large Amounts now out (well Secured) at 10 PrCt in Arks. Also in *Louisiana* at 8 PrCt. I would be a bad financier indeed if money had been my object to take 6 PrCt. in preference to 8 or 10. diference would be \$2 or 300 dollars Pr Annum. Indulgence after the Note becomes due, must not be Expected it.

WILL. POLK

[P.S.] It is indeed Seldom that I have asked favors (of the people or those whom they have placed in Power) never for myself. Once a Small appointment for my Son¹ my application *Refused* & my feelings hurt Somewhat disgraced by the Refusal. Republics are ungrateful to their best & wealthiest Citizens. Who pays the Collectors & taxgatherers. Books will tell. I pay more than Some 4 or 5 Countys that I could name in Arks. I will give you a Sum to Cypher. Suppose all my cotemporarys & those that has come on the Stage of life Since had Failed managed &

acquired property as I have done. How much more wealth would there be in the U States than there now Is. Will. Polk

ALS. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on October 8, 1845, and answered it on October 9, 1845.

1. Thomas M. Polk.

FROM JOHN McKEON¹

My Dear Sir,

New York Sep 19. 1845

When in Washington I promised Mr. Ritchie to send him an abstract of a French pamphlet which referred to Texas & Oregon. I enclose my article² and as you are somewhat defended, I have taken it for granted you would desire to peruse it. Will you do me the favour after perusal to hand it to Mr Ritchie.

Whilst on this subject may I take the liberty of saying that the views of this writer as to the duty of the United States on the Oregon question are most cordially responded to by myself. We have affirmed that point in which a small quantity of decision and nerve will give the country increased power amongst the nations of the world. Far be it from me to dictate to the Executive the course he should pursue but it appears to me never had any President a better opportunity than yourself to stamp the impress of American statesmanship on the history of the world. At this moment the European powers are watching with anxiety the extension of the United States. They dread the power which must grow up here and for the first time the doctrine of a balance of power is talked of on this continent. That means some method to check the advance of the Union. I believe that Mr Guizot's suggestion as to balance of power³ and Mr Peels threat⁴ would be well met by a declaration (it would in fact be nothing more than reiterating Mr Monroes doctrine) that the *United States would not permit in silence European interference in this continent*. What is to prevent an American President from addressing Congress in strong language on the corrupting interference of Transatlantic Powers. The popular explosion which would follow such a declaration would annihilate British influence here and give an overwhelming impetus to the Democratic party.

The President is the immediate representative of the American people & his name in questions of national honour is more powerful than that of any European Sovereign so long as the President expresses the popular will.

JOHN McKEON

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked “*Private*.” Polk’s AE on the cover states, in part, “Placed the communication under an envelope & addressed it to Mr Ritchie. 24th Sept. 1845.”

1. McKeon, a New York City lawyer, served as a Democrat in the New York Assembly, 1832–1834, and in the U.S. House, 1835–1837 and 1841–1843.

2. McKeon’s article appeared in the September 26, 1845, issue of the *Washington Union*.

3. A lawyer and historian, François Guizot supported the July Revolution that brought Louis Philippe to the throne in 1830. He served as minister of public instruction, 1832–37, before becoming premier in the 1840s. Guizot was ousted from political power in the revolution of 1848, and devoted the rest of his life to writing. In a speech to the Chamber of Deputies on June 10, 1845, Guizot proposed a balance of power in North America between the United States and Great Britain, and France’s interests could require its intervention to maintain that balance.

4. Son of an industrialist, Sir Robert Peel began his service in Parliament in 1809; received his first ministerial appointment in 1828; and served as home secretary and chancellor of the Exchequer before becoming prime minister in 1841. His ministry lasted five years. In response to Polk’s inaugural address, Peel declared in a speech to the House of Commons on April 4, 1845, that British rights to the Oregon Territory were also “clear and unquestionable” and that his government was prepared to maintain those rights.

TO JAMES E. SAUNDERS

My Dear Sir: Washington City 19th Sept. 1845

I have received your letter addressed to me from Courtland,¹ in which you informed me that you expect to reach Mobile about the 25th of the present month. I conclude to postpone your appointment, until I am advised by you that you are at that place. Immediately after I hear from you that you are at home, I will cause your commission to be transmitted to you.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Mobile, Ala., and marked as “*Private*.”

1. See Saunders to Polk, August 30, 1845.

TO JAMES H. THOMAS

My Dear Sir: Washington City 19th Sept. 1845

I wrote some weeks ago to James Walker requesting him to cause a resurvey to be made of the land sold by M. T. Polk to Thomas Gregory,¹ with a view to correct the error which I supposed had occurred in a

former survey made by *Mr Frierson*. I will thank you to give your professional attention to the case, and whatever claims, if any, may be recovered against M. T. Polk's Heirs, I will be ready to pay, on being informed by you of its amount. I am well satisfied that no claim can be recovered against them, if the justice of the case can be reached.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Columbia.

1. Polk's letter has not been found. Gregory is not identified further.

TO LEVI WOODBURY

My Dear Sir:

Washington City 20th Sept. 1845

I have this day appointed you one of the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States, to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of Judge Story. I hope it may be in accordance with your views to accept the Station. I regard it to be the most important appointment which I have made during my administration. I am fully sensible, that your loss from the Senate will be sensibly felt by the Democracy and by the Country, but however important your services in that Station may be for the time being, I regard them as vastly more important on the Supreme Court Bench. Your Successor in the Senate I cannot doubt, will be a man of sound Democratic principles. In tendering to you the appointment which I now do, I not only perform my public duty, but gratify, my personal feeling and friendly regard for you. It has now been near twenty years since I formed your acquaintance at Washington, and during that long period none other, than the most friendly relations have existed between us, and I am sure none other ever can exist. We have agreed too, in opinion upon all public measures of importance. The whole Democracy have the most entire confidence in the orthodoxy of your constitutional opinions, upon all the great questions which have divided the country. This confidence, will make your acceptance of the Judgeship, most acceptable to the country.

Will you present the kind salutations of Mrs Polk and myself to Mrs. Woodbury.¹

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Portsmouth, N.H., and marked "*Private*."

1. Elizabeth Williams Clapp Woodbury.

FROM JOEL TURRILL¹

Oswego, N.Y. September 21, 1845

Turrill has been informed by Ransom H. Gillet² that the U.S.S. *Congress* has been delayed so that Turrill, Anthony Ten Eyck, and their families could take passage to the Sandwich Islands. He thinks that "a visit to the Islands from one of our ships of war" will make a favorable impression of American interests. Turrill believes that "injudicious management on the part of some of the Representatives of our Government at these Islands" have hurt American commercial interests in the Pacific. Notes that with 700 whale ships in the Pacific "a valuable commerce is springing up between the islands & our settlers in Oregon." He predicts that the Sandwich Islands are destined to become "the West Indies for that quarter of the globe." Turrill asks Polk to appoint him bearer of despatches if any are being sent to the islands on this voyage.

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked as "*Private.*" Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter September 25, 1845.

1. An Oswego attorney, Turrill won election to the New York Assembly in 1831; served as a Democrat in the U.S. House, 1833-37; and held the post of U.S. consul to the Sandwich Islands from 1845 until 1850.

2. In addition to his two terms in the U.S. House, 1833-37, Gillet served two years as register of the U.S. Treasury, 1845-47, and also two years as its solicitor, 1847-49.

FROM JOHN Y. MASON

Attorney General's Office

22d September 1845

Sir

On the 11th June last, you did me the honor to refer to me a Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs of the 19th May, and a reply thereto by Mr. William H. Thomas,¹ on behalf of certain Cherokee Indians, who claim a commutation for removal and subsistence, under the Cherokee Treaty approved 23d May 1836,² with the accompanying papers, and to direct me to communicate to you my opinion in writing, touching the said claims, and the legal construction of the Treaty and law under which they are preferred.³

I regret that very urgent engagements have delayed so long my compliance with your direction. I have devoted a considerable portion of time to the examination of the subject, and have arrived at conclusions which I will now proceed to state.

In a memorandum which is among the papers transmitted, there are four questions propounded, on which you are desired to take my opinion. They are [as follow:]

1st Are the Cherokees remaining in the States of North Carolina and Tennessee, entitled under the 8th and 12th Articles of the Cherokee Treaty of December 1835, to \$53.33 $\frac{1}{3}$ for their claims for removal and subsistence allowance, which has been paid to the Cherokees in Georgia?

2d. In the event that the Attorney General should be of opinion, that the Cherokees in North Carolina and Tennessee, are not entitled to compensation for their claims for removal and subsistence allowance, whether the grant made by the State of North Carolina to the Cherokee Indians in the year 1783, vested the fee simple title in the Indians, while they continued to reside thereon; and whether under this provision of the grant the fee simple title has not vested exclusively, in the Cherokee Indians now residing within its limits?

3d. Whether the Treaty of December 1835, made with the Cherokees of Georgia, does or does not legally convey to the United States the land granted to the North Carolina Indians by the Act of 1783. Whether the power of the Cherokees as a nation had or had not ceased to exist at the time of the Treaty of December 1835 was concluded in consequence of the tribe having passed under the dominion of the States?

4. Whether the relinquishment of interest in the lands which the Treaty of December 1835 purports to convey, is or is not confined to those Cherokees who have and do receive their due portion of the consideration money, and whether the title of those who receive no part of the compensation, has passed to the United States?

The first of these involves an enquiry whether under the Treaty of New Echota, those Cherokees who had remained in the States of Tennessee and North Carolina, are entitled under the 8th and 12th Articles of the Treaty to \$53.33 $\frac{1}{3}$, for removal and subsistence allowance?

This enquiry is embarrassed by the fact, that these allowances have been made to Cherokees who have remained in Georgia, by decisions at the War Department, and by the fact of payment being made to others of the tribe who did not emigrate by the Joint Resolution of Congress approved 15th June 1844. The interpretation under which the Georgia Indians were paid, appears to have been acted on by the War Department for but a short time, and that Department has for many years uniformly rejected such claims. The circumstances under which the payments were directed by the Joint Resolution are stated in the Report of the Commissioner of Indian affairs. It appears to me, that the confirmation of the decision of Messrs Eaton and Hubley,⁴ declared by that Resolution, cannot with all the respect due to Congress, be regarded as settling the construction of the Treaty, so as to furnish

a guide to the Executive, in carrying the Treaty as a law into execution. In determining your duty in this respect, it appears to me, that the only guide is the Treaty itself in all its stipulations, and if a measure of relief is withheld, it will be competent for Congress to supply the deficiency.

“The Constitution by declaring Treaties already made, as well as those to be made, to be the supreme law of the land has adopted and sanctioned the previous Treaties with the Indian Nations, and consequently admits their rank among those powers who are capable of making Treaties. The words ‘Treaty’ and ‘Nation’ are words of our own language, selected in our diplomatic and legislative proceedings by ourselves, having each a definite and well understood meaning. We have applied them to Indians as well as to other Nations.”⁵ The Indian Nations, and as one of them the Cherokees, have been at all times regarded by this Government as independent political communities and while they have at all times been treated and acknowledged to be within the jurisdictional limits of the United States, they have been dealt with as separate communities. Treaties of Cession have been held to convey the joint property, and to direct the title of the Tribe, as to the community and as to the individuals composing it. The Executive of the United States must therefore regard the Treaty of New Echota, as binding on the whole Cherokee Tribe and the Indians whether in Georgia Alabama Tennessee or North Carolina are bound by its provisions and as a necessary consequence, they are entitled to its advantages.

The North Carolina Indians in asking the benefit of the removal and subsistence commutation, necessarily admit the binding influence of the Treaty on them and their rights—they cannot take its benefits without submitting to its burthens. The Executive must regard the Treaty as the supreme law, and as a law construe its provisions. In its construction it is said that the language used in this Treaty with Indians should never be construed to their prejudice. How the words of the Treaty were understood by this unlettered people rather than their critical meaning, should form the rule of construction. So far as there are conflicts of interest between the United States and the Indians, there ought always to be the utmost liberality in construing the language of Treaties with Indians. But in construing provisions which affect only the rights of different portions of the tribe, I cannot perceive on what principals the Government in its fiduciary character as the common Trustee of the whole Tribe, can depart from the established rule of construction to benefit one portion at the expense of another. If this claim is paid out of the Cherokee fund, the per capita

dividend of those Indians who have emigrated will be diminished to that extent. It is a question between the Indians themselves, and the Treaty must be executed according to the intention of the parties to it, if to be derived from its stipulations and the language in which they are expressed. If there is no ambiguity, then parol evidence is not admissible to explain or to give to the language employed a different meaning than that which it plainly imports.

When the Treaty of New Echota was negotiated, a portion of the Cherokee Tribe had emigrated and were settled on their lands west of the Mississippi, and the larger portion still inhabited their lands in the States of Georgia North Carolina Tennessee and Alabama. The primary object of the Treaty was to promote the emigration of the Indians East and a reunion with their brethren West. An entire cession of the lands of the Nation east of the Mississippi was contemplated and provided for in the first article of the Treaty. This cession comprehended all their lands east of the river. The nation ceased to be a landholder within the States, on the ratification of the Treaty. Individual Indians became proprietors of the lands reserved to them separately. The United States agreed to pay five millions of dollars as the consideration to be expended paid and invested as stipulated in the succeeding Articles.

By the 8th Article the United States stipulated to remove the Cherokees to their new homes, and to subsist them one year after their arrival there, for which appropriations were to be made. The expense thus incurred was a charge on the fund. But this article provides, that "such persons and families as in the opinion of the emigrating agent, are capable of subsisting and removing themselves, shall be permitted to do so; and they shall be allowed in full for all claims for the same, twenty dollars for each member of their family; and in lieu of their one years rations, they shall be paid the sum of Thirty three Dollars and Thirty three cents, *if they prefer it.*"

It cannot be questioned that this article was intended exclusively to stipulate the mode of emigration and its plain and unambiguous provisions, were intended to ensue only to those who should emigrate. The United States agreed to *remove* the Cherokees to their new homes, and to subsist them for one year *there*: if any chose to remove themselves and the agent thought them capable of doing so a commutation in money is given them that is in lieu of bearing their expenses of removal to and subsistence at their new homes, fifty three dollars and thirty three cents for each one thus deemed capable and permitted to emigrate himself, was to be paid in money. If there could be any doubt on this subject it would seem to be removed by the concluding clause

of this article: "Such Cherokees also as reside at present out of the Nation, and shall remove with them, within two years, west of the Mississippi, shall be entitled to allowance for the removal and subsistence as above provided."

Taking the 8th Article by itself, I cannot perceive how it is possible to doubt, that emigration and residence West of the River, were indispensable conditions to a claim for the allowance for removal and subsistence.

The 12th Article provides that "Those individuals and families of the Cherokee Nation that are averse to a removal to the Cherokee country west of the Mississippi, and are desirous to become citizens of the State where they reside, and such as are qualified to take care of themselves and their property, shall be entitled to receive their due portion of all *personal benefits* accruing under this Treaty for their claims improvements and per capita as soon as an appropriation is made for this Treaty."

What were the personal benefits thus secured to those Indians who did not emigrate? They were limited to claims improvements and per capita. It cannot be maintained that the term "*claim*" covers the removal and subsistence allowance. It is true the Treaty secures many rights, and each individual of the Tribe has in some sense a claim given by the Treaty to each of its beneficial provisions, but this is not the sense in which the term is employed in the 12th Article, because if so, there would have been no propriety in using the terms, improvements and per capita, for after the ratification of the Treaty the claim for the value of improvements and for the per capita dividend provided in the 15th Article, were at least as strong as that for removal and subsistence. The claims secured to those who did not emigrate were claims for spoliations, which existed prior to and independent of the Treaty, and the 12th Article which treats only of those who did not intend to emigrate, affords a strong confirmation of the construction which I have placed on the 8th Article. The 15th Article and the supplemental Article corroborates this interpretation of the term "*claims*." It is not contended that the personal benefit for improvements includes the pecuniary allowance of \$53.33. Does the term *per capita*? The 15th Article provides, "that after deducting the amount which shall be actually expended, for the payment for improvements, ferries, *claims for spoliations*, removal, subsistence, and debts and claims upon the Cherokee Nation *the balance* whatever the same may be, shall be equally divided between all the people belonging to the Cherokee Nation east, according to the census just completed." This is the only per capita division or claim, which the Treaty contemplates

and does not take place until the expenditures for removal and subsistence have been made. Therefore no claim to the personal benefit growing out of the commutation allowance in money, can be based on this per capita division.

With one more remark I will close my examination of the subject. The United States were to remove and subsist the Indians. Those who were by the emigrating Agent deemed capable of doing this for themselves and families, were to have a commutation in money. It was not intended to be given to any class or division of the Tribe, but to individuals, so judged to possess these qualifications. Now if the claim set up shall be recognized, it extends the benefit to the whole of the North Carolina Cherokees, without emigration and without reference to their capacity to remove and subsist themselves.

For these reasons it appears to me, that according to the plain and unambiguous stipulations of the Treaty, those Indians of the Cherokee Tribe, wherever they may have resided who did not emigrate, are not entitled to the money allowance provided in the 8th Article of \$53.33 1/3 at end.

In the papers accompanying your communication are several statements furnished by the Commissioner who negotiated the Treaty,⁶ on the part of the United States, and by respectable persons who were privy to the negotiations, tending to show, that the Indians were assured that those who did not emigrate, should have the benefit of this pecuniary allowance. An agreement entered into by William H Thomas on the part of the North Carolina Indians and the Treaty party is also transmitted. This last mentioned paper bears date three days after the ratification of the Treaty and does not appear to have any title to be regarded as a part of the Treaty. The 4th Article of that agreement shows very conclusively, that the commutation allowance was only to be expended for emigration and subsistence west.

According to well established principles of law, I am of opinion, that this evidence is not admissible to establish a construction of the Treaty, inconsistent with its own provisions and unauthorized by its language. Whatever may be done by Congress to fulfil expectations thus created I am clearly of opinion, that the Executive cannot execute the Treaty on any such construction. The other three questions may be resolved into one enquiry whether the lands in North Carolina belonged to the Indians residing on them? Those lands have been sold by the State of North Carolina, and are I presume in the possession of the purchasers. As the Executive of the United States, would have no power to divest those in possession, and the question is one for the judiciary. I have not deemed it necessary to embrace my views on it in this communication.

Nor have I deemed it proper to express any opinion, on the hard measure which seems to have been dealt out to the North Carolina Indians, whose lands have been sold, while they have received no corresponding benefit. I have examined the subject as one of legal construction only, and have no doubt of the correctness of my conclusions in that aspect.

J. Y. Mason

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed locally. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on September 23, 1845.

1. Having grown up among the Cherokees, William H. Thomas served as legal counsel for the tribe in the 1830s and fought against removal. Using Cherokee money, Thomas purchased land in North Carolina for them to live on, though he kept the title himself. In 1859 the land was sold to pay his creditors, but Congress and the federal courts eventually returned the land to the Eastern Band of Cherokees.

2. In December of 1835, federal Indian commissioners and a contingent of Cherokees signed a removal treaty at New Echota. The vast majority of the Cherokees, including tribal councilmen, did not sign the pact. Nevertheless, Congress ratified the treaty in May of 1836.

3. Neither Polk's letter requesting Mason's opinion nor Thomas Hartley Crawford's report of May 19, 1845, has been found.

4. John H. Eaton and Edward B. Hubley. Hubley is not further identified.

5. Source of Mason's quotation has not been identified.

6. John F. Schermerhorn, appointed from New York, was named Indian Treaty Commissioner by Andrew Jackson in 1832; following the Cherokee removal, Schermerhorn lived with the western branch for two years and with the eastern band for six months.

FROM ROBERT CAMPBELL, JR.

Yalobusha Co., Miss. September 24, 1845

Campbell informs Polk that he has arrived at the President's plantation in Mississippi with Caroline, a slave whom Polk had purchased from Elizabeth Whitsitt Childress. After ten days of confinement for a fever Polk's slave Eliza died. Another slave, Avy, gave birth to a son, whom she named Julius. Campbell believes that the slaves are in better condition than they were the previous December, and that they get along well with their overseer, John A. Mairs. Because of a July drought Campbell thinks the yields on Polk's cotton and corn crops will be low; however, there will be more than enough corn to meet the plantation's needs. Despite the weather problems, the plantation should produce between 120 and 125 bags of cotton. Even though the cotton crop is not large, it is of high quality, largely because extra care has been taken in picking it. Campbell reports a temporary halt to the ginning and baling of cotton because the cotton press has broken down. Campbell thinks that Mairs's

management of the plantation has been exemplary, so Campbell has employed him for the next year. The plantation's only financial obligations are doctor's and blacksmith's bills, and the sale of the plantation's surpluses will cover those costs. In a postscript dated September 25, Campbell requests permission to substitute a better field hand for Caroline and take her back to Columbia with him as a personal servant for his daughters.

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on October 5, 1845, and answered it on October 11, 1845.

1. See John W. Childress to Polk, August 20, 1845. Elizabeth Whitsitt Childress was the mother of Sarah Childress Polk.

TO JOHN T. LEIGH¹

My Dear Sir:

Washington City 24th Sept. 1845

I thank you most sincerely for your letter of the 6th Instant.² The account you give me of my plantation, and the management of the overseer is gratifying, and highly satisfactory. I have a good account of *Mr Mairs* from *Mr James Brown* before he was employed, and am sure since I have your opinion of him, that he is a good manager. I will thank you to say to him that as long as he continues to do as well as he has done this year, I will desire to continue him in my employment. I expect *Col. Campbell*, (my agent) will visit the plantation during the present month, and I hope he will employ *Mr Mairs* for the next year. If any thing should happen to prevent *Col. C.* from being at the plantation before the end of the year, I will thank you to say to *Mr Mairs*, that I wish him to continue for the next year. I enclose herewith a letter to *Mr Mairs*, about my business with which I will not trouble you.³

In answer to your inquiry, whether the Land office at Granada will be opened for entry soon, and if so at what time, I have to inform you, that on inquiry at the General Land office, I learn that it is contemplated, to open the office in the course of a few weeks. Orders will be issued to this effect as soon as it can be done with propriety.

With the kind regards of Mrs. Polk and myself to Mrs. Leigh⁴ [. . .]

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Yalobusha County, Miss.

1. Leigh owned a plantation adjacent to Polk's in Yalobusha County, Miss.

2. Letter not found.

3. See Polk to Mairs, September 24, 1845.

4. Not identified further.

TO JOHN A. MAIRS

Dear Sir:

Washington City 24th Sept. 1845

I received a letter from your neighbour *Mr J. T. Leigh*¹ a few days ago, giving me a good report of your management of my plantation. I expect *Col. Campbell* will [...] ² returning this month. He will of course purchase for the place, all articles, which may be needed and are not made at home. I was pleased to learn from *Mr Leigh* that your cotton crop is as good as any in the neighbourhood, and that you will have corn and pork enough to support the place until next year. I was glad also to hear that you are making the greater part, if not the whole of [...] own clothing. The negro shoes will of course have to be bought. *Mr Leigh* mentioned that you will need some two horse plows. Any items of that kind must of course be purchased. The cotton-bagging, salt &c, for next year will be sent up from *New Orleans to Troy*, as soon as *Col. Campbell* informs my commission merchants, *W. S. Pickett & Co.*, the quantity which may be needed. In a former letter ³ I requested you to haul your cotton to *Troy* as fast as it was ginned and baled, and to give directions to the merchant at *Troy*, to ship it to *Pickett & Co.* by the first rise of water in the *Yalobusha River*. This you must not neglect as I think it probable that the early market this season will be the best. I am much gratified to hear that the negroes behave well, and that you have but little trouble with them. I wish you to encourage them by rewarding them for their good conduct, by making them such allowances or giving them such presents at the end of the year as you may think right. Tell them all too, that I am much pleased to have so good an account of them, and that if I live to return, I will on my first visit to the plantation make them a handsome present.

From what I have from *Mr Leigh* and others I am pleased with your management of business, and as long as you do as well as you have done thus far, I will if you desire it, continue you in my employment. I suppose *Col. Campbell* will employ you for the next year. If any thing should happen to prevent him from visiting you, before the end of the year, I wish you to continue for the next year. Be very careful of your stock as I must raise enough every year to support the place.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Yalobusha County, Miss.

1. Letter not found. See Polk to John T. Leigh, September 24, 1845.
2. Faint ink transfers render word or words illegible here and below.
3. Letter not found.

TO SAMUEL P. WALKER

My Dear Sir: Washington City 24th Sept. 1845

I have received your letter from Columbia¹ notifying me that you had drawn a Bill on me, (as I had requested you to do), for \$2000, in favour of Wm. B. Partie,² the proceeds of which I directed to be applied towards the payment of my note, held by *William Polk* of Arkansas. To day the Bill has been presented and paid to the holder, to whom it had been endorsed. When you see that the credit has been placed on *Wm Polk's* note, advise me of it. You were right to pay the \$10. to *Jonas E. Thomas*. I have no recollection of the transaction, but have no doubt it was right as he said so.

I wrote to you to Columbia a few days ago³ in reference to the Bill I had authorized you to draw, and also in reference to *Mr Pickett*, and hope my letter may be forwarded to you, if it did not arrive before you left for Memphis.

My accounts from my plantation up to the 6th Inst. were forwarded. My overseer was gathering the crop rapidly, and hauling it to *Troy* as fast as it was baled, so as to be ready to be shipped to your House at New Orleans by the first rise of water in the *Yolabusha* River. By the last accounts from Liverpool, there is every reason to believe that the price this year will be better this year than it was last year. I hope it may be so, for after all I find it must be my main reliance to pay my debts. I find that my present position is no money-making affair. Indeed such has been the case in every public position I have ever held. Let me hear when you have paid the money to *Wm Polk*, and give me your opinion whether the cotton crop this year will be equal to the last.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Memphis.

1. See Walker to Polk, September 11, 1845. ALS. DLC-JKP.
2. William B. Partie of Philadelphia is not identified further.
3. See Polk to Walker, September 17, 1845.

FROM JOHN SLIDELL

My dear Sir, New Orleans, 25 Sept. 1845

I have the honor to acknowledge the reception of your private & confidential letter of the 17 inst. I beg you to receive my sincere thanks for the distinguished mark of confidence which it conveys & should my services be required, be assured that I shall enter on them, with a just

appreciation of the vast interest evident & with a most ardent desire to discharge my duty in a manner that will justify your choice.

We have here no later advice from Mexico than those mentioned in your letter. In fact although news from that quarter generally pass through our city, they come in so vague a shape that little reliance can be placed on them.

I have however always been of opinion, that the warlike menaces of the press & of the government were mainly intended to operate upon the elections & that no administration, whatever may have been the previous declarations of its members, would dare to assume the responsibility of carrying them into effect.

Still, although President Herrera may have decided not to engage in a war so suicidal, he may not feel prepared to encounter the force of public opinion, (if there really be in Mexico, anything like public opinion, in the sense in which we understand it) by receiving from us an accredited agent. But of this, of course, you have much better means of judging, than any one here possesses, & I shall hold myself in readiness, to proceed without delay to Mexico, on the receipt of your instructions. I can do this, with the less inconvenience, inasmuch as I had made my arrangements to leave here for Washington, about the 15 October.

I regret extremely that the emergency of the occasion, will prevent my having the opportunity of that full personal communication, with you & the Secretary of State, which would be so useful to me in the prosecution of my mission. This is a disadvantage which cannot be entirely overcome, but I trust that it will be palliated, as much as possible, by the fulness & minuteness of your instructions. I shall observe in compliance with your injunction, the most absolute silence on the subject of your letter, with a single exception, which I am sure you will not object to. I need scarcely say that I mean Mrs. Slidell,¹ her discretion may be relied on as implicitly as my own. I shall await further advices

JOHN SLIDELL

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. Mathilde Deslonde Slidell.

TO WILLIAM H. POLK

My Dear Sir:

Washington City 27th Sept. 1845

I have received your letter of the 16th August, covering a check, on your Bankers in London payable to J. Knox Walker, and have caused

the proceeds to be applied as directed by you. The check was sold by Walker in the market here and netted \$757.57 which has been applied as follows, viz.

To pay your Debt to James Walker	\$178.31
To pay the debt as [...] ¹ on a Negro woman <i>Dolly</i> for the benefit of Dr. Dickinson's ² estate	150.00
To pay a Debt made by you to J. Knox Walker	50.00
Towards paying balance to Bk. of Tennessee at Columbia, for which the House was sold and on which Dr. Hays and Lucius Polk are bound for you as Endorsers	379.26
	\$757.57

I hope you may be able by strict economy to make some further payments, to satisfy your creditors. If the sums remitted by you shall be small, your creditors will be satisfied because they will see that you are endeavouring to pay. I send you herewith some letters addressed to you, one of which I found open among my papers a few days ago. Another bears a Post Mark of an old date, but was not discovered by me until a day or two ago. The third was enclosed to me by sister Ophelia and was received on yesterday.³

I hope you may be successful in making a Treaty. It is much desired, and if without manifesting undue impatience about it, you could negotiate it, and have it here, early in the Session of Congress, you would receive high credit, for having promptly effected, what your predecessors have in vain attempted to accomplish for several years.

I think we will have no war with Mexico. The presence of our forces, in the Gulf and on the Texan Frontier will prevent it. The country is quiet, and my administration meets with quite as little opposition as I anticipated. The gratifying result of the Tennessee elections, you have of course learned. Who will be the Democratic Senator is uncertain. *Nicholson* is probably the most prominent candidate, though he will encounter formidable opposition, from other aspirants of the Democratic party, some eight or ten of whom are candidates. I have nothing of general interest to communicate further than you could find in the American papers. I directed the Washington Union, some time ago, to be forwarded to you regularly. I write in haste, as I was not apprized until an hour ago, that this was the last day I could write & be in time for the next steamer.

JAMES K. POLK

P.S. The debt to J. Knox Walker for \$50 is one which he says he paid, shortly before leaving Tennessee in an execution of *Sellers*⁴ against you. J.K.P.

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Naples.

1. Faint ink transfers render word or words illegible.
2. Born and educated in New England, William G. Dickinson moved to Franklin in 1816. A prominent surgeon, Dickinson was the father of William H. Polk's first wife, Belinda, who died in March of 1844.
3. See Ophelia C. Hays to James K. Polk, September 18, 1845. ALS. DLC–JKP.
4. Sellers is not identified further.

COURTESY & PROPERTY OF
SUPREME COUNCIL OF
KHMER HELP KHMER (SCKHK)

OCTOBER

FROM DANIEL T. JENKS

My Dear Sir

Philadelphia Octobr 1st 1845

It has been some time since I have written to your excellency, and I began to think you might say to yourself I had forgotten you, but business and other matters has ocupied my time untill the present. Before long however, I trust I shall be able to pay a visit to Washington. In the mean time I take leave to say, there is much angry feeling existing in the Democratic Party here, on account of the indiscreet course of collector Horn. His removeal of men, zealous, active & most important in the late Presidential contest, has given great offense. It is imposible that his continuance If I can see clearly, will sattisfy the outraged feelings of the removed Democrats in Penna. Nor can we think of getting along without sattisfying Judge Sutherland. I find that he has such a great number of devoted friends that will stand by him. I need not tell your Excellency, who he is & what he did for the cause in the late campaign. He headed the great force that came over to your support at the precise moment of time to carry Penna. Indeed it is my firm beleif that if he had not been most active & fearless in leading on the Democrats of Phila. in the campaign of 44 that Mr Clay would have carried Penna. The Whigs say and I beleave I have told you before that he carried the state against them. Go where I will among the Democrats, there seems to be but one opinion here, and that is that,

he ought to be if possible restored. If Mr. Horn should be held from the Senate, or should if sent in to the Senate be rejected, or should be changed before the meeting of congress, Judge Sutherland ought to be reappointed. Justice and sound policy seem to require this course to be adopted by your Excellency. I ought to add, that I dont beleive, that there is one in a thousand of our Democrats, who approve of Mr Roach being retained in the Mint. He is a Whig of the most decided cast.

I write not from any personal considerations but wholly from a desire to see your Excellencys Administration prosperous, & the Democracy successful in 1848 in Penna. We must have the Judge in our next great Presidential contest in 48, or there will be danger in the old Keystone State.

His suport of Harrison & Tyler in 40, for the first time since the days of Jefferson carried Penna. against the Presidential candidate of the Democracy. What has happened may happen again. All attempts at bringing about a harmony in the party, without doing ample Justice to men like Sutherland will prove unavailing. A *change* in Phila. would be of no use, unless it was made to sattisfy the *ejected* Democrats.

Hopeing to see your Excellency soon, I will close this trusting that you will carefully ponder over my suggestions & do me and my motives Justice in sending you this epistle.

DANIEL T. JENKS

P.S. I send you enclosed cut from the Spirit of the Times the correspondence of the friends of Ex President Tyler and his answer to a Public dinner.¹

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked "Private."

1. In a letter dated September 29, 1845, and printed by the Philadelphia *Spirit of the Times*, Tyler declines an invitation from his Philadelphia supporters. PL. DLC-JKP.

FROM LEVI D. SLAMM¹

Dear Sir,

New York Oct 2, 1845

Several of our citizens who contemplate a visit to the country of Calafornia have called upon me within the last few days to enquire whether our government had established a public or private agency for the protection of such as may emigrate there. I am unable to give such information, but from the deep interest evinced in this quarter, cannot but impress upon your Excellency, the importance, unless you have already anticipated it, of such a movement. The importance of that country in a National point of view—the evident design of British

Government to get it within its meshes—would seem to require on the spot an active, discreet and intelligent agent, to protect American citizens and give to our government the earliest information. I doubt not that this suggestion from me is entirely superfluous, but the interest I feel in any matter involving an extension of “the area of freedom” or the curtailment of British power on this continent, is the apology for troubling you.

LEVI D. SLAMM

ALS. DLC–JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City.

1. In the 1830's Slamm represented journeymen locksmiths of New York City in both the General Trades' Union and the National Trades' Union; associated himself with the Locofoco Equal Rights party prior to joining the Tammany Society in 1842; and published the New York *New Era* and the New York *Plebeian* before assuming the editorship of the *New York Globe* in 1845.

FROM JOEL TURRILL

Dear Sir

Norfolk Oct 2d 1845

The officer 2d in command¹ arrived here this morning and seems anxious to make us as comfortable on board the Congress as passengers can be on board a Man of War. I find that on board of such a ship every particle of room is appropriated to some specif purpose, and no portion of it for a single passinger. There seems to have been little or no improvent in the construction of our ships of war for the last fifty years. One important branch of the service and I think I may say *the* important branch of the service is to convey comercial and Diplomatic agents to the different parts of the globe, and wherever it can be, those agents should be accompanied by their families. Still our ships are built without a place to accommodate a single person, who does not belong on board. It may be said they are built for war, but war is a calamity, that will not visit our country once in half a century. And the best way to prevent war, is to send the right men abroad and to send them in a style best calculated to command respect abroad by showing that their Missions are deemed of importance at home. And their passage should be, entirely free from, individual expence, except for such unnecessary, luxuries as they may desire to indulge in. These are general remarks not intended to apply to every case. I have no doubt the officers on board of the Congress will do all in their power to render us comfortable. I understand that Capt Stockton² is to be here tomorrow morning when we shall know more in relation to our accommodations and the time of sailing.

J. TURRILL

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked “*Private.*” Polk’s AE on the cover states that he received this letter on October 6, 1845.

1. Samuel F. DuPont received a midshipman’s appointment in 1815; served in the Mediterranean squadron, 1817–32; rose to the rank of commander in 1842; served on Secretary George Bancroft’s board to organize the naval school at Annapolis; commanded the frigate U.S.S. *Congress*, Stockton’s flagship, on the Sandwich Islands voyage of 1845–46; and led naval forces charged with clearing the Gulf of California of hostile vessels from 1846 to 1848. In 1863, DuPont and his fleet of seven Union monitors engaged the Confederate navy in Charleston Harbor and suffered one of the worst naval defeats of the conflict. He was relieved of command when he rejected presidential orders to re-engage the naval battle at Charleston.

2. Robert F. Stockton received a midshipman’s appointment in 1811; rose to the rank of commander while serving in the Mediterranean squadron, 1816–21; took an extended duty leave from 1828 until 1838; as captain, commanded the U.S.S. *Princeton* when in 1844 its gun, the *Peacemaker*, exploded and killed the secretary of state, Abel P. Upshur, and the secretary of the navy, Thomas W. Gilmer; directed sea and land operations clearing California of Mexican control in 1846–47; resigned from the navy in 1850; and won election as a Democrat to the U.S. Senate in 1851.

TO THOMAS L. HAMER¹

My Dear Sir: Washington City 3rd Oct. 1845

The office of Commissioner of Indian affairs, will be vacant in the course of a few days. It is an important and responsible office, with an annual salary of \$3,000. None but a good lawyer can discharge its duties properly, because questions of the construction of Indian Treaties are constantly arising in their execution. I do not know what your wishes or views may be, but have supposed that a residence at Washington for a time at least might be agreeable to you, and have therefore determined to tender the office to you. This I do not on the application of any of your friends, but on my personal knowledge of you. I remember our association in Congress with great pleasure, and would be gratified to have you near me, and hope it may be agreeable to you to accept the office now tendered to you. The labours of the office are not great, and its duties will be readily mastered, by a man of well disciplined legal mind, such as I know you possess. The Secretary of War,² with whose Department, it is connected, and with whom I have consulted, prefers you, to any other person within his knowledge. If you accept you will find the Secretary, a systematic hard working man, of sound mind, and your intercourse with him I am sure, would be of an agreeable character. I mentioned to *Cave Johnson* a few days ago,

that it was my intention to appoint you, if you would accept, and he informs me that he wrote you on the subject. I mentioned the matter also to *Col. Medill* and *Judge Tappan*, who happened to be here, both of whom decidedly and warmly approved of your appointment. I have mentioned it to one or two others, but it is not public here and will not be until I can hear from you. The present Commissioner³ will retain the office, until I hear from you.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Georgetown, Ohio, and marked “*Private.*”

1. An Ohio lawyer and Democrat, Hamer served three terms in the U.S. House, 1833–39; commissioned a brigadier general in the Mexican War, he died in the service in 1846.

2. William L. Marcy.

3. A lawyer from Chambersburg, Penn., Thomas Hartley Crawford sat in the U.S. House from 1829 until 1833; he served as special Indian commissioner in the 1836 fraud investigation and subsequently as commissioner of Indian affairs from 1839 until 1845.

TO GIDEON J. PILLOW

My Dear Sir: Washington City 3rd Oct. 1845

I have but a moment in the midst of my engagements, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22nd ultimo.¹ I am of course gratified to learn your opinion, that the course of the administration, in relation to our difficulties with Mexico, has met the public approbation. It was a course taken on my own responsibility, from a deep conviction that it was the only effective and proper one, either to prevent a collision or if one came, to be prepared to put a speedy end to it. Our squadron in the Gulf, is the most formidable, we have ever had together since we have been, a nation. *Genl. Taylor* has command of 5000, regular troops, with authority to call for Volunteers from Texas and the adjoining States in case of the invasion, of Texas, by a Mexican army. He will commit no act of aggression by land or sea, unless Mexico, shall either declare war or strike the first blow. In the event she does either we are prepared to drive her back, to Del Norte and take her ports, and in a word, to conduct the war with the greatest possible energy, so as to make its continuance very short. I do not now anticipate that there will be any necessity to call on the States for volunteer aid. The prompt appearance of an army West of the *Nueces*, and the presence of our Naval force before *Vera Cruz*

& in other parts of the gulf, will I have but little doubt deter & prevent Mexico, from making any hostile demonstration. I was amused at your remark, that if any fighting was to start, you hoped it would be a "free thing," and that Tennessee would be allowed to take part in it. In this I think you are right, but as there is no probability of any call being made, on any of the States, they must reserve their patriotic ardour for some future occasion, when their country may call for their services. If contrary to my present expectations any call for a volunteer force should become necessary, you may be assured that Tennessee will not be overlooked, and that you will be early advised of it.

In regard to the ultimate settlement of our difficulties with Mexico, by negotiation, about which you remark, I have only to say, that I agree with you in the main in your views. One thing you may regard as settled, and that is that no inclination or interference on the part of England or any other foreign power will be permitted. Their officious intermeddling to prevent the annexation of Texas, has been signally rebuked. Mr. *Gizot's* doctrine, lately broached of a "balance of power" on this continent,² be adjusted & arranged of course, by the dictation of Foreign governmt Heads, to suit their tastes and interests, is not for a moment to be tolerated. We will manage our own affairs, and will not submit to the national degradation of permitting any foreign powers to interfere with them.

But I find, My Dear Sir, that I am writing such a long letter. I sat down merely to write to you a note, thanking you for your interesting and kind letter, not having as I supposed, time for more. I will only add, that as far as possible, my administration is encountering quite little opposition as I had a right to anticipate. I shall most assuredly, maintain with firmness all the great principles upon which I was elected, and have no fears, while [...]³ but that I shall enjoy the support of the country.

Mrs. Polk joins me in desiring to present our kind regards to *Mrs. Pillow*.⁴ When you see my old friend *Mr Willis*⁵ present my respects to him.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Columbia and marked "*Private*."

1. Letter not found.
2. See John McKeon to Polk, September 19, 1845.
3. Word or words illegible.
4. Mary Martin Pillow.
5. Polk probably refers to Nathaniel Willis, who represented Maury County in the Tennessee House from 1815 until 1819.

TO JOHN SLIDELL

My Dear Sir: Washington City 3rd Oct. 1845

Since my letter of the 17th ultimo, we have intelligence from *Vera Cruz* up to the 13th Sept. brought by the *Princeton*. Mexico still menaces war, though there is but little probability that she will prosecute war. The information is of such a character, as to leave it uncertain what the intentions of the Mexican Government are, and to make it imprudent to take the step contemplated in my letter of the 17th ult., until we can have further information. This we shall undoubtedly have soon, as the vessels of our squadron, will keep us regularly advised and at short intervals from *Vera Cruz*. On the 17th ult. the same day on which I wrote to you, despatches were forwarded to our consuls at *Vera Cruz* & the City of Mexico,¹ instructing the latter to ascertain certainly and officially what the dispositions of the Mexican Government were, and to convey the intelligence, through the consul at *Vera Cruz* at the earliest practicable period. We hope to have information sufficiently authentic to justify the step contemplated, without waiting for an answer to these despatches. If however we should not receive such information we must delay action, until we can hear from our consul at Mexico.

You shall be notified at the earliest moment after we are prepared to act.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to New Orleans and marked as "Confidential."

1. Francis M. Dimond and John Black.

TO JOHN CATRON

My Dear Sir: Washington City [October 4, 1845]¹

I have received several letters from you since you left Washington the [...] ² of the 16th ultimo, for which I thank you. As I have failed to answer them, I know you will attribute it to the proper cause. I had no adequate conception of the constant, and [...] duties of my station. My time has been so constantly taken up with my public duties that I have been compelled almost entirely to neglect my correspondence with my friends. I have scarcely written a dozen letters in that many weeks. I am glad to learn that you think my administration is getting on well. That seems to be the appearance on the surface, and I know

nothing to the contrary. I know however how easy, it is for a President to be deceived, from the utter impossibility, for the want of time of viewing the whole ground. [...] first few months of his term especially to be surrounded by crowds of courtiers and office-seekers, who are constantly flattering [...], if he is weak enough to permit it [...]³

[...] As far as I am resolved to [...], my administration encounters quite as little opposition as I had any reason to anticipate. It has been highly gratifying to me to perceive, that the country, with some exceptions, approve the prompt and energetic measures, which I thought it my duty to adopt in relation to Mexico. It was a policy adopted on my own of strictly from a thorough conviction that it was the only [...], to prevent collision with Mexico. The appearance of our squadron in the Gulf which is the largest and most formidable one that we have ever had together since we have been a nation and our forces on the frontier, I have no doubt has deterred and prevented any hostile demonstration on the part of Mexico. We will not commit an act of aggression unless Mexico shall strike the first blow, and in that event we will go offensive & make a short war of it.

[...] my responsibilities will increase [...] we shall however be prepared for them. My path is plainly marked before me, and I shall pursue it, without turning to the right or to the left. My political principles, and opinions are all the great questions now before the country, and I shall firmly adhere to them.

With the kind regards of Mrs. P. and myself to Mrs. Catron

JAMES K. POLK

P.S. When you come on in December, bring with you my notes, which you hold, as it is full time they were paid off. J.K.P.

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Nashville and marked "Private."

1. Date identified through content analysis.
2. Blurred ink transfers render word or words, here and below, illegible.
3. Seven lines illegible.
4. Two lines illegible.

FROM CHARLES A. DAVIS

My Dr Sir

New York Saturday 4 Oct 1845

I arrived here last evg. from London and brought with me as far as Boston, the dispatches to Gov't which I rec'd from Mr. McLane as I left. The steamer I came in was not able immediately to reach the wharf at Boston for want of *tide water* and the *mails* were sent in a transient boat in which I also proceeded with the dispatches to Boston and gave

them in charge of the agent (Mr. Hubbard's son¹) on Thursday evg. I hope they will have gone forward at once to Wash'n. at evg. rate or same as any other Letters, and if that is not the case, I can only say it is not my fault.

I took the liberty whilst in England to address you some impressions of my own which liberty I hope you will have overlooked and attributed exclusively to the right motive on my part.² If I could well leave here I sh'd have proceeded to Wash'n. and asked the honor of a personal interview and related my views and the impressions made on me in regard to such matters as are of national interest. A great question is about being solved between the two nations. In this solution much will depend on the simple fact (in my judgment) of both parties clearly understanding each other, and both being equally impressed with the certainty, that they are acting on the principles of asking nothing that is unjust and submitting to nothing unjust.³ If this principle be acted upon we shall get along well.

I am happy to say that up to the last hour of my being in England I saw nothing to change my contention that no party or administration can hold power one hour *there*, that sh'd be found hazzarding the peace nor exacting ...⁴ on us tintured by the least injustice. They dont desire war with us or even angry discussions, and will submit to much before changing existing relations, but I hope also our people will avoid *unnecessary* taunt, or boasting. We can afford to get along without it. Mr McLane continues to meet as he merits, increasing respect and regard in all quarters & from all parties there. And is just the man to be where he is. Everything seems going on well in all branches as well in England as in France. The alarm and activity in the English Dock Yards is entirely in regard to the dynasty of Louis Phillipe.⁵ Sh'd any thing occur to that resilyant and able and cunning King—the “Element” in France being of such a character as to be “dangerous neighbors” unless controled—the fact is England stands No. 1. now on that side, as we stand No. 1. on this side.

CH. A. DAVIS

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on October 6, 1845.

1. A son of Governor Henry Hubbard of New Hampshire, Nathaniel D. Hubbard served as forwarder of despatches during Polk's administration.

2. See Davis to Polk, July 18, 1845.

3. Paraphrase of “Seeking nothing that is not right and determined to submit to nothing that is wrong....” Andrew Jackson's fifth Annual Message, December 3, 1833.

4. Two words rendered illegible by ink runs.

5. Louis Philippe, King of France, 1830–48. Hailed as the “citizen king” after the Revolution of 1830, Louis Philippe subsequently lost the support of the French people for muzzling the press and refusing to broaden the suffrage to include working-class citizens. In the February Revolution of 1848 angry Paris crowds prompted Louis Philippe’s abdication and English exile.

FROM DANIEL GRAHAM

4 Oclock P M.

Dear Sir,

Nashville Tennessee 6 Oct 45

The Senate met at 9 Oclock this morn and have just adjourned after some 50 ineffectual ballotings for Speaker, Gardner 12 Maury 11 Tyler 1, Gardner not voting and Maury voting for Tyler to prevent an election.¹ The demos had agreed on saturday night to postpone the claims of Turney,² Thomas & Watterson & give the place to Gardner. The object of the Whigs is to compel the demos to take Turney. A Whig told me that Gov Jones had said they should do so.

The H. Reps by the arrangement of saturday night put Brookins Campbell in the chair by a party vote all being present except McFarland of Henry³ who will probably die. Guild wished to be speaker. They elected Bunch, a son of Genl Sam, chief clerk & Guild’s man from Sumner⁴ second clerk, and are now balloting for third clerk. No bad feeling has yet been manifested on account of any result, and we apprehend that the course of the Whig Senate will injure them before the public, at all counts it will tend to confirm the demos in adhering to themselves.

Nothing transpiring yet about U.S. Senator. Turney⁵ is here & seems to be operating. The Et. Tennesseans came here favourably inclined to Nicholson. I have met no demo yet who is not favourably inclined to my restoration.⁶ A few are a little close, not knowing but they may be required to support some other friend.

DANIEL GRAHAM

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked “Private.” Polk’s AE states that he received this letter on October 14, 1845.

1. John A. Gardner, Abram P. Maury, Jr., and John Duke Tyler. Gardner, an attorney from Weakley County, served three terms as a Democrat in the Tennessee Senate, 1841–47, and a single term in the Tennessee House, 1879–81. A Williamson County lawyer and Whig, Maury served in the Tennessee House, 1831–33 and 1843–45; in the Tennessee Senate, 1845–47; and in the U.S. House, 1835–39. A teacher and farmer from Montgomery County, Tyler served as a Whig in the Tennessee House, 1843–45, and in the Tennessee Senate, 1845–1849.

2. Samuel Turney.
3. A Henry County physician, John B. McFarland won election as a Democrat to the Tennessee House in 1845 but died before taking his seat.
4. McDonough J. Bunch, Samuel Bunch, and E. S. Charlton. A Claiborne County attorney, McDonough J. Bunch was elected principal clerk of the Tennessee House in 1845. Sheriff of Grainger County from 1821 until 1836, Samuel Bunch also sat in the Tennessee Senate, 1819–25, and in the U.S. House, 1833–37; he supported Hugh L. White's presidential bid in 1836 and subsequently lost his seat in the U.S. House to a Democrat, Abraham McClellan. Charlton, a protégé of Josephus C. Guild, won election as first assistant clerk, or engrossing clerk, of the Tennessee House in 1845.
5. Hopkins L. Turney.
6. Graham refers to his possible return to the state comptroller's office, which he had held from 1836 until 1843.

TO JOHN C. HENNICK¹

Dear Sir:

Washington City 6th Oct. [1845]

Capt. M. C. Young has presented to me, in your name, a carved *Hickory Cane*, "cut on the spot where the citizens of Baltimore stood, who defended that City in 1814, and near the spot where General Ross fell."²

I accept it with pleasure, and beg to assure you that I prize it as an appropriate memorial of the patriotism and valor which animated the Citizen soldiery of Baltimore who so gallantly perilled their lives in defense of our Country on that memorable occasion. It is the more natural because you have selected as the wood on which are carved reminiscences of this national event, the "*Hickory*," which has become intimately associated with the name of the man, who pre-eminent for his patriotism and unbending will, a few months after the battle of Baltimore, concluded the war, most happily for his Country, by the brilliant Victory of New Orleans.

Thanking you for this evidence of your regard . . .

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Baltimore.

1. Hennick is not identified further.
2. McClintock Young and Robert Ross. First appointed by Andrew Jackson as chief clerk in the Treasury Department, Young served until his removal in 1849. Killed in the unsuccessful assault on Baltimore, Ross commanded British land forces during the attack and burning of Washington City in 1814.

FROM AARON V. BROWN

Dear Sir

Octr. 7th 1845

Our friend Mr Overton (son of Dr. Overton)¹ desires to be Marshall for Middle Tennessee & I have promised to write to you on this subject. I do not know first whether Sheppard² will be removed or not although I take that for granted. Of his claims when compared with those of others of our friends who are applicants I cannot judge & therefore can give you no assistance in deciding between them. His father & Uncle (A. W. Overton of Carthage)³ take an interest in the matter and would doubtless feel gratified at his success.

Our Legislature commenced yesterday & I have no reason to suppose there will be comparatively any want of Harmony amongst our friends except as to the election of Senator. Turney is here & will go into no caucus consultation & gives as a reason that you have interfered against him & so stacked the cards for Nicholson that he cannot have a fair chance. I have denied all his facts & his proofs consist of nothing you have said or written but letters which Johnson & Laughlin have written. The whole plea is gotten up for the occasion. I do not think he will have many to stand by him in his move & Nicholson will have Whigs enough to supply their place.

Our friend Hopkins⁴ of McMinnville wants an office badly, a clerkship or something worth \$1500 or so & I sincerely wish he could be provided for. But at the same time I am fully aware how difficult finding how impossible it is to provide for all & so you must answer that when I write on behalf of any I do not wish to be importunate.

My inaugural is ready. I do not like it, but it will pass muster I hope. Between resting from the labors of my summer's campaign & passing my honey moon with a lovely young bride⁵ I have not had much leisurous time for inaugurals. She is now standing at my elbow & half spoiling this letter for fear I should put something in it not proper to write to the *President* of the U. States. Tell Mrs P. that she joins me in sending her most cordial respects for the declaration in your last, that she decidedly approved of the arrangement.⁶

AARON V. BROWN

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked as "*Private.*"

1. Waller Overton and James Overton. The son of James Overton, Waller Overton was a recent graduate of the University of Nashville. A Davidson County planter and physician, James Overton practiced medicine in Nashville from 1819 until 1865.

2. Benjamin H. Sheppard served as U.S. marshal for the Middle District of Tennessee from 1842 until 1846.

3. A lawyer and merchant in Carthage before retiring in 1836 and moving to his farm in Smith County, Archibald Waller Overton served in the Tennessee Senate, 1823–25, and House, 1829–31. Overton had run unsuccessfully for Congress in 1815 and 1833, and was a delegate to the Tennessee State Democratic Convention in 1843 and 1845.

4. Thomas H. Hopkins, originally from Mississippi, practiced law in McMinnville and served as a Democrat in the Tennessee House from 1841 until 1843.

5. Cynthia Pillow Saunders Brown.

6. See Polk to Brown, September 15, 1845.

FROM JOHN K. KANE¹

My dear Sir,

Philada. 9 Octr. 1845

I have no copies of my letters to you during the campaign of 1844. I well remember however the tenor of the letter of 30 May, which is referred to in the "*Kane letter*," which you addressed to me on the 19th of June. I expressed my congratulations on the ticket which had been framed the day before at Baltimore, embracing your name and Mr. Wright's, and declared my confidence that it would be elected. I said to you that, I had always been the friend of Mr. Van Buren's re-nomination, and had reluctantly yielded my hope of his success upon the appearance of his Texas letter.² I adverted to the Tariff, as the only topic which could embarrass us as a party in Pennsylvania, and referred the differences of opinion among us on that subject to the want of fearlessness among some of our distinguished public men. I went on to intimate that your views on the question were already so well known as to preclude the necessity of your announcing them over again, and I hinted at least, if I did not declare in terms, my opinion that it was scarcely dignified in a candidate for the Presidency to become a letter writer, as Mr. Clay had done, for all who chose to invite him to a public correspondence.

Your reply to me is dated the 8th June. It alludes, as you will see from the enclosed copy,³ to the topics which were introduced in my letter.

My letter of the 5th of June was intended to procure the material for a biographical sketch of yourself, which had been devolved on me by a committee of our party.

The letter of Gen. Pillow was written I believe on the very day on which I published your's of the 19th June in the *Pennsylvanian*.⁴

I believe this is all that can be necessary to explain the hidden

mysteries of the *Kane letter*. I have never made the explanation before, and the reply with which you honoured my first letter has never been seen except by Mr. Dallas, to whom I think I showed it after you had in your subsequent letters made him a confidential party to our correspondence by express language.⁵ But there is not a single line in any or all your letters to me, which might not be printed in every Whig paper of the country, without detracting from your fame as a frank unequivocal statesman, and without giving cause for a single regret on the part of your most sensitive friend. If I could doubt of this for one moment, I would send you the originals at once; as it is, I desire to retain them, the better to guard against cavil, and as memorials of a confidence which I prize most highly.

J. K. KANE

ALS. DLC–JKP. Marked “Private.” Polk’s AE on the cover states that he received this letter and the enclosed copies on October 11, 1845.

1. A Philadelphia lawyer and an ardent Jackson Democrat, Kane served from 1832 until 1836 as one of the spoliation claims commissioners under the authority of the 1831 convention with France. He opposed rechartering the Bank of the United States, an unpopular position to take in Philadelphia. In 1845 Polk appointed him U.S. attorney for Pennsylvania and the following year named him U.S. judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, a post that he held for twelve years.

2. Reference is to Martin Van Buren’s letter to William H. Hammet of April 20, 1844, in which the former president opposed immediate annexation of Texas. Van Buren’s “Texas Letter” appeared in the *Washington Globe* on April 27, 1844.

3. L, copy. DLC–JKP. Kane also enclosed a copy of Polk’s letter to him of June 19, 1844, and a copy of Gideon J. Pillow’s letter to him and Henry Horn of July 2, 1844. DLC–JKP.

4. *Philadelphia Pennsylvanian*. See Pillow to Polk, July 2, 1844, and Kane to Polk, July 2, 1844. Both are ALS. DLC–JKP.

5. See Kane to Polk, June 29, 1844. ALS. DLC–JKP.

TO WILLIAM W. POLK

Dear Sir:

Washington City 9th Oct. 1845

On yesterday I received your letter of the 18th of September in answer to mine of [the]¹ 18th August. I have thus raised the money here (by a loan) which I owe to you, and have this day se[nt] to *Samuel P. Walker* at Memphis, to pay it over to you and take up my note, on the subject [of] my letter. This I would have done at any mom[ent] if you had intimated to me, that you would need the money, before the note fell due. This I wo[uld] have done at any inconvenience or sacrafice,

because as I have heretofore informed you, the loan was [a] great accommodation to me, when it was ma[de] and for which I felt under obligations to you.

In my letter to you I informed you of what *Mr James Walker* had told me, *viz*, he had told you that I mig[ht] not be able to pay the whole debt until sometime next year. You say he was mistaken, and on learning from you that there was a misunderstanding, I lost no time in sending you your money. The note will not fall due until the 1st of January next, but as I suppose from the tenour of your letter that you want the money, sooner I determined to pay it off at once, & stop the interest. In my letter of the 18th August I informed you that I had sent \$2000, to *Saml. P. Walker* to pay on the note. That in addition to this I had directed my commission merchants (*Pickett & Co.*) to pay more from the proceeds of my cotton crop, and that I would discharge the whole debt, in the course of the spring or early in the summer of the next year. This I could have done out of my own means, without resorting to a new loan to raise the money, and this I supposed, and especially from what I understood *Mr Walker* to say, would be as soon as you would wish it or expect it. In the same letter however I informed you that if you wanted the money sooner, that I would raise it for you, at any sacrifice as I have now done. I have said this much in explanation, and to say that it was not necessary, for you to remind me that "it has been a fixed maxim with you to be punctual yourself and to require punctuality from all others," and that "indulgence after the note becomes due must not be expected."

I have been punctual all my life, and have never within my recollection failed to fail to pay on the day, unless my creditor was willing voluntarily to permit longer. I have been indebted and have obtained indulgence. I was never late on any of my contracts, to pay money in my life. It was only necessary for you to say you wanted the money to get it and [...] written to you a word on the subject, but [...] have made no other calculation but to have paid punctually to the day. The \$2000, was [sent] long before it was due, and I now send the [rest] before it is due. I wish you to send my note to *Memphis*, where the loan was made, if it is not already in the hands of *Mr Howard*, where *S. P. Walker* is living. In your letter you made another remark which it is proper I should notice. You say, "I have large amounts now out well secured at 10 pr Ct. in Arks.: also in Louisiana at 8 pr Ct. I would be a bad financier indeed if money had been my object to take 6 pr Ct. instead of 8 or 10, difference would be \$200 or 300 dollars per annum." The only inference which I can make from this statement is, that you

have lost money by the loan you made to me, at 6 pr Ct. which I consented to pay. Surely I do not wish to avail myself, of the accommodation of your loan if you are to lose a dollar by it. I have not been in the habit of paying more than the legal interest, and certainly would never contract to do so, yet as I do not know for what purpose you made the statement, which I have quoted, unless it was to show that you had lost by the loan to me. I have directed *S. P. Walker* to pay you [...] interest on the note, but at the rate of 8 or 10 pr Ct. as you may require [...] have the money, that brings [...], if you receive on your money loaned in Ark. & Louisiana, as you may require. In a word I wish to do, all I can to satisfy you fully.

In regard to the office, which you desired for your son, and to which you allude, it gave me great pain that it was not possible for me to gratify your wishes consistently with my public duty. It is useless to detail to you all the circumstances which prevented. It is enough to say, that I am sure if you knew them you would be satisfied. You cannot doubt my friendship for him or for yourself, and if it had been an individual wish and not a public duty which I had to perform it would have given me great pleasure, to comply with your wishes. I will only add, that there were several applicants, in the neighbourhood of the office, who were strongly and unanimously recommended, by the citizens of the neighbourhood, and one of those by all the *Missouri* Delegation in Congress, save one or two. The members from that immediate vicinity recommended the person appointed. You can well see that if I had ignored these recommendations & appointed a relative of my own, I would probably, have been charged, with acting on private partialities & not on public considerations, and would have been liberally assailed. I did not know either that you attached much importance to it, until I received your letter on yesterday. It is an office of great responsibility and small compensation. I could not conceive that it was of great importance to *Thomas* whether he received it or not. Certainly it was far from my intention to injure the feelings of either him or yourself by not appointing him.

I have written a longer letter than I intended, but I have found it necessary in order to make a fair and frank answer to your letter.

From my early youth up to the present moment our relations have always been of the most friendly character, and I am sure nothing will ever occur on my part, to make them otherwise. I hope you have recovered from the illness, under which you were labouring when you wrote.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to "Near Helena, Arkansas."

1. Partial or blurred ink transfers at right margins, here and below, render word or words illegible.
2. One line illegible.

TO SAMUEL P. WALKER

My Dear Sir:

Washington City 9th Oct. 1845

When I wrote you on the 18th of August authorizing, and requesting you, to draw on me for \$2000, and apply the proceeds to the payment of my note to *William Polk* of Arkansas, I wrote to him also informing him that I had done so.¹ I informed him as I did you, that I have directed your House at New Orleans to apply the proceeds of my cotton crop towards the further payment of my note. I wrote him that in addition to this, I expected to be able to render an additional payment before the close of this year, and the balance whatever it might be, I would pay in the spring, or early in the summer. I said to him that I supposed these payments would suit his convenience, as your father² who negotiated the loan had informed me, that I had told him at the time, that it might not be convenient for me to pay the *whole debt* this year. This I also mentioned to him, but added that if he wanted the money sooner, I would at my sacrifice raise it for him. On yesterday I received his answer³ in which he says your father was mistaken. It is not necessary [...] in his letter. It is enough [...] wants his money. There is one paragraph [...] letter which I will quote. It is as follows viz. "I have large amounts now out (well secured) at 10 pr. ct. in Arkansas; also in Louisiana at 8 pr. ct. I would be a bad financier indeed, if money had been my object, to take 6 pr. ct. in preference to 8 or 10. Difference would be \$200 or 300 dollars per annum." He is a man of peculiar temperment and great [...] of character. This I have long known, and I do not take offense at any thing he has said. His letter to me however has determined me in my [...] I have written to him to day,⁵ that I would [...] you to pay off the *whole note*, as I desire [...] to do, on receiving this letter, without [...]ting for the sale of my cotton, or for the [...] to fall due, which will not be until the [...] of January next. I wish you to calculate the interest for the time I have had the money, [...] draw a Bill on me, at one day after sight [...] amount as will meet the sum due. [...] I suppose you will have no difficulty in [...] such a Bill in the market at a small premium. Apply the [...] to the payment of the note. Be certain to [...] up the note when you pay it, erase my name, [...] off its face that it is paid and enclose it [...]. I wish it paid off, and the transaction [...] I wish you to tender to him the 8 or 10 pr. ct. [...] bears, as referred to in the extract of his letter

to me as quoted above. If he accepts it, pay it. If he declines taking it, pay the note and legal interest. I have written to him that I would instruct you to do so. I have written to him that the only inference I can draw from this statement in his letter is that he had lost by the loan to me, the difference between 6 pr. ct., and 8 or 10 pr. ct. which he was receiving on other loaned money, that I did not wish to avail myself of his accommodation if he lost a dollar by it. I have said to him that I was not in the habit of paying more than legal interest and certainly would never contract to do so, that yet, as I did not know for what purposes he had made the statement unless it was to show that he had lost money by the loan to me, that I would direct you to pay to him the excess of interest *if he desired it*, and that I had done this because I wished him to be fully satisfied.

It has put me to considerable inconvenience, to borrow the money here to pay off the note at once, but I have done so, and desire now to have an end of it. This change of arrangement makes it necessary for me, to countermand the order to your House at New Orleans, to pay over the proceeds of my cotton crop to *Wm. Polk*. I will need the money at Washington, and as soon as the cotton is sold, [...] to have it remitted to me here in a Bill on one of the Eastern Cities. As soon as you take up the note, will you write to your House at New Orleans, giving directions accordingly. I know that my cotton crops will be an important item, in paying the numerous expenses, to which I am subjected here, and hope that the crop of the present year will have sold well. I apprehend that the source of the old gentleman's [...] to me, is that he has become [...], because I found it impossible, consistently with my public duty, to appoint his son *Thomas* to the office which he desired. He alludes to this in his letter, and I have explained to him, some of the reasons which prevented it, which I knew [...] to be, and I hope will be satisfactory to him. When the money is paid the matter will be settled. It would be well to say nothing about its disposition to me, [...], or anyone else. You can pay the note quietly and without notice. Will you acknowledge the receipt of this letter.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Memphis.

1. See Polk to William W. Polk, August 18, 1845.
2. James Walker.
3. See William W. Polk to Polk, September 18, 1845.
4. Partial or blurred ink transfers render words and short phrases of the text illegible here and below.
5. See Polk to William W. Polk, October 9, 1845.

FROM CHARLES J. INGERSOLL

Dear Sir

Foresthill Philad Octob. 10. '45

In the Washington Union of Monday October 4,¹ which I have just got, there is a letter from Jos. Rodney Croskey American Consul at Cowes dated there the 2. of Sepr. 1845, addressed to A D Mann and published by him in a letter to the Post M. G. concerning mails abroad which repeats substantially what I have been so long troubling, I fear in vain, successive presidents about, viz, the obvious and immense importance of greater developement of our cotton exports, both raw and manufactured.² In a view of this subject submitted to the public thro' the medium of a speech in the house of representatives last Feby I tried to get it considered, but I believe to little purpose.³ No doubt the steammail communication with Europe will be highly beneficial.

But Mr. Croskey's *incidental* argument for that discloses *other* advantages for the U.S. which if your administration gains them, as it easily may, will redound as much to your honor and to the benefit of the U.S. as Jefferson's acquisition of Louisiana. Next Tuesday will determine whether I return to Congress. If there is a sufficient majority of votes then polled to secure my District, I have long waited for that sanction to withdrawing from scenes of anxious labor in which I have never been able to make either Legislative or Executive see what has always appeared very clear to me, and nothing more so than the prodigious development of which the commerce of this country, especially by cotton, is capable, thereby settling the Tariff controversy & conquering Great Britain without striking a blow.

C. J. INGERSOLL

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. Ingersoll mistakenly wrote Monday instead of Saturday.

2. Joseph R. Croskey served as U.S. consul at Cowes from 1844 until 1850. U.S. consul at Bremen from 1842 until 1845, Ambrose D. Mann served briefly as consul at Trieste, 1845, as a special agent to Hungary in 1849, and as assistant secretary of state, 1853-56. During the Civil War he represented the Confederate States as a special agent in Europe. Croskey's letter to Mann appeared in the Washington *Union* on October 3, 1845. Published in a series of correspondence to Cave Johnson urging development of a line of mail steamers to Europe, Croskey's letter recommended Bremen as the best port for continental mail. He also noted that encouragement of direct trade with the continent would provide Europe a means to "shake off her commercial dependence on Great Britain" and allow the United States to challenge British commercial power. On October 4, the *Union* carried Johnson's specifications for new contracts on mail service to European and other ports.

3. Addressing the House on February 19, 1845, Ingersoll warned that he had seen U.S. Treasury Department statistics showing that U.S. shipping capacity had decreased by approximately 700,000 tons from 1827 to 1843, while British tonnage had increased by 600,000. Citing the significance of cotton exports to the American economy, he urged greater assistance for the cotton trade. In addition, Ingersoll noted that he favored the protection of domestic manufactures through tariffs, without regard to revenues, and wished to encourage the extension of U.S. commerce in Europe at the expense of Great Britain.

FROM ANDREW JACKSON, JR.

Dear Sir,

Hermitage Oct 10h 1845

I take pleasure in writing you a few lines to enclose the long (as supposed) lost and last letter of my dear venerated Father, and also to explain how the detention and mistake occurred.¹ I was sure at first, and even when I last wrote you that the letter in question had been mailed or purloined, but I am happy it has turned out otherwise.

Father had just written a letter on Thursday to Genl Plauche and on Friday the 6th June to you (his last letter to any one).

I had also a day or two before written to my Brother John.² They were all left on his table for his Frank, and yours without. Our servant George, coming in, Father as was his habit told George to tie up his loose letters in small bundles with his other letters. George seeing the two fresh franked letters leaves them and of course ties yours up as the superscription was not in Fathers hand (for George knew his hand & Frank). Well late Friday night, Father being quite unwell & I, in a hurry takes the letters and roll them up in a small bit of paper ready to be handed to our boy Tom next morning, very early by day light for Nashville, which I gave him, and at the time was firmly of the opinion that your letter was among them, even so sure was I of it that afterwards I believe I would have sworn to it. Well sir, in the confusion of Fathers great & final illness on Sunday morning, the bundles of letters & papers were taken & put I hardly knew where, and it seems the bundle containing that letter was put in to an old buareau draw with other old letters & papers. When I rec'd your letter³ requesting me to look for it I did so, among all his as I supposed last letters & even of an older date. It could not then be found. A few days ago, on arranging and getting ready all his papers for Messrs. Blair & Bancroft, I found the letter.⁴ Again I say I am happy it has so turned out and you will find as I said in a former letter, that it is strictly private & confidential.

You will at once perceive the contents could not well go to the world. The information contained in it, was given by other persons of high standing &c. But sir, you are the best judge & know what to do in the matter.

Our old friend Majr Lewis has completely killed himself here, & I expect elsewhere by his imprudent publications. He is now very sick of it, and well he may be &c.

Nothing new here, all well, & going well with Democracy. The poor Whigs are done, & used up. I refer you to the papers for all other information of the Legislature &c.

Please present our kind regards to Mrs. Polk, and accept for yourself the assurance of my friendship & esteem.

A. JACKSON

PS Be kind enough to let me have a few lines from you when you get this. A.J.

ALS. DLC-AJ. Addressed to Washington City and marked as "*Private.*" Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter and enclosure on October 24, 1845.

1. See Andrew Jackson to Polk, June 6, 1845. ALS. DLC-JKP.
2. John Donelson.
3. Polk's letter has not been found.
4. Reference is to the disposition of Andrew Jackson's papers at the Hermitage in 1845.

TO AARON V. BROWN

My Dear Sir: Washington City 11th Oct. 1845

The latest dates received here from Nashville are to the 4th Instant. Of course we have heard nothing of the organization of the Legislature. I hope the Democratic party were united, and that harmony prevailed. Upon the harmonious action of our party during their present session, in my judgment, depends their future ascendancy in the State. We have been struggling in a violent and bitter contest with our political opponents in the State, for the last ten years, and now that success has crowned our efforts, we have fought the battle in vain, if we suffer ourselves to be disunited & divided and not upon principle, but in reference to one and be thereby overthrown. The people who elected you, and a majority of the Legislature, will expect, their agents to carry out their will. I am led to make these remarks, in consequence of information received to day, that certain leading Whigs are candidates before the Legislature, and with some

prospects of success, for Judgeships, Attorney General of the State, and other offices. The Democratic majority, though small, is divided, and the fact, that, leading Whigs who have slandered & calumniated the Democracy, and all the leading men belonging to it, for years, are candidates for important offices before them, proves that a bad state of things exists. This calculation must be to get *some* Democratic votes or they would not be candidates. I hope my information may be incorrect and that my apprehensions are unfounded. The information which I have received, of the probable state of things, but confirms me in the correctness of the views which I gave you in a former letter.¹ I hope you may exert all your influence, and be able to produce harmony. I think it important that the Senator should be elected at the earliest practicable period, for until that election is over some excitement will prevail, and it is probable that an effort will be made by the Whigs to make other important elections depend upon it. The Senator elected *must* be here at the meeting of Congress. Our majority in the Senate, when it is full is 6, but there are vacancies in *Indiana, Virginia, Mississippi, Tennessee* and *New Hampshire*, of one in each, and all Democrats. This would leave us a majority of *one* only. We have information which makes it probable that one if not both the Alabama Senators will be at Tuscaloosa until after the meeting of the Legislature of that State, which convenes on the same day Congress does, as it is said the Senatorial election in place of *Lewis*² whose time will expire on the 3rd of March 1847 will be brought on. If they are absent, and the five vacancies remain unfilled, we will be left in minority in the Senate at the meeting of Congress. This would be most unfortunate, because, the election of printer would be lost, and because it is important that Texas should be admitted as a State, within the first few days of the session. Nothing therefore should prevent the Tennessee Senator from being here on the first day of the session. I wish to call your attention also to the propriety of electing a democrat to succeed *Jarnagin*, whose term I believe expires on the 3rd of March 1847. It will be the last regular session which will convene before that time. The present Legislature possesses the undoubted power to elect the Senator, and I am clear in my opinion that they should do so. A failure to choose under like circumstances in 1837, left the State with but one Senator at the Extra-Session of Congress of 1841. I am so clear on the question that not a doubt rests on my mind, & I hope you will take the same view, and urge its propriety [. . .]³ our Democratic friends in the Legislature. Will you present the respectful salutations of *Mrs. Polk* and myself to *Mrs. Brown*, and say to her that *Mrs P.* [. . .] calculated to see her at

Washington the next winter, until she heard that your *annexation* policy had prevented it.

You must write me occasionally, as your leisure may permit.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Nashville; marked “*Confidential*.”

1. See Polk to Brown, September 15, 1845.
2. A Montgomery lawyer and member of the Alabama House, 1825–27, Dixon H. Lewis sat in the U.S. House from 1829 until 1844, when he resigned to fill the U.S. Senate seat vacated by William R. King. Lewis was reelected and served until his death in 1848.
3. Partial ink transfers render word or words illegible.

TO ROBERT CAMPBELL, JR.

My Dear Sir:

Washington City 11th Oct. 1845

I have received your letter written at my plantation on the 24th of September. I regretted to hear of the death of the *girl Eliza*, but was gratified to learn that all my other people were well, and that my business on the plantation had been well managed. I am glad that you employed *Mr Mairs* for another year. From what I learn of him, I could not have a more faithful or better manager. An additional recommendation to him is, that the hands are pleased with him, and he with them. As long as he conducts himself as well as he has done, I desire to keep him in my employment.

You propose to place a hand of your own on the plantation until I return in place of *Caroline*, the girl you took down with you. I would be glad to accommodate you, but one of the conditions on which *Mrs. Childress* desired me to take her was, that I would put her on my plantation in Mississippi. She desired to send her out of the state, but as she was a family negro, and she had desired her in her own family, she disliked to sell her to a stranger. She is young and had been guilty of some indiscretion which induced the old lady, to think this step necessary. I feel bound under the circumstances to keep her at the plantation.

I request that you will order the cotton-bagging, rope and other articles needed at the plantation soon. I have directed Pickett of New Orleans to fill any order you may send to them for me, and to ship the articles you may order to *Troy*. You have nothing to do, but to write to them what is wanted. You will of course draw on them also for the overseer's wages, for this year. *Harry's* hire if punctually paid may be applied in that way.¹ You inform me that two [...] mules will be

needed, to supply the place of two that are broken down. I trust you to buy them for me, and let *Mairs* dispose of the old ones. At the close of the year and when you have leisure I wish you to forward to me a statement of my expenses at the plantation, and of all payments made for me, over and above what is paid by property sold off the place. My Taxes of course must be paid.

I am at some loss to know whether to address this letter to you at your plantation in Mississippi or to Columbia as you do not say in your letter how soon you will return to Tennessee. I conclude to address it to you at your place in Mississippi.

I shall be glad to hear from you when you return to Tennessee.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Noxubee County, Miss.

1. One of Polk's duties as executor of Samuel W. Polk's estate was the oversight of Harry, a slave who was hired out as a blacksmith in Carrollton, Miss. Polk's youngest brother, Samuel, died of tuberculosis on February 24, 1839, at twenty-one years of age.

2. Partial ink transfers render word or words illegible.

FROM J. G. M. RAMSEY¹

My Dear Sir

Mecklenburg T. Oct. 11. 1845

It was due to you that I should have expressed earlier my gratification at the appointments conferred upon my two friends A. R. Crozier & Mr. Talman.² That gratification is not confined to myself, it reaches a large circle of attached friends in Tennessee & South Carolina, who while they concur as I know they do in acknowledgments to the appointing power for an act of kindness to their friends indulge in the assurance that the interests of the Government & the country will be advanced by them as public officers.

But I have a further & a higher gratification to express, & I do it with a patriotic exultation unmingled with the least desire of insincere eulogy or flattering commendation. I mean not to weary you but I must be permitted to say that without a specific reference to the various points of your administration, its entire policy thus far commands the approval, indeed the admiration of its friends as it has certainly disappointed the expectations & defeated the wishes of its enemies. To say nothing of other subjects the successful issue of Annexation, the wise & prompt measures to secure its entire consummation & to meet any contingency that may arise from it, will in all future time signalise 1845 as a most fortunate & remarkable epoch in the history of the United States. I never realized the importance of that great

measure (so fearlessly avowed by you in Apl. 1844)³ as fully nor appreciated so highly its bearings upon all the interests of the country as I have done since I have seen the results of the experiments made by the British Government to introduce the culture of cotton in their Asiatic possessions. That has demonstrated that the country between the Potomac & the Rio Grande monopolising as it may the exclusive growth of that invaluable staple may thereby control the commerce of the world & secure thereby to the American Union inappreciable political & commercial advantage. We can conceive them partly now, but it will require a half century to develop their extent & fully enable us to estimate their value & importance.

I hope the Oregon negotiation may terminate alike favorably & gloriously. I cannot be supposed to look far into that subject, but as I informed you in a former off-hand suggestion the policy of Mr. Monroe not to allow European colonization or interference in American affairs appears to me to be right & I think has the sanction of enlightened sentiment every where among our people. I doubt not your course on that subject will be such as the true interests of the country will demand. But a remaining source not only of eclat to your administration but of unequalled benefit to our own country & to the great interests of the human family is the modification of the present Tariff. The whole restrictive system is destined in my opinion to a speedy downfall, in Europe perhaps first but in time every where. There may be, there doubtless is an ultraism in the free-trade doctrine as entertained by some but my deep conviction is that except for the purposes of revenue & that not always & every where no restrictions should be laid upon commerce for the purposes of protecting one interest over another, especially one section over another—it is artificial, unnatural, & therefore injurious to the body politic. Health (if you will excuse a professional illustration) in the human body I define to be *the preservation of an exact ballance between & among its several systems (viz the nervous, muscular, circulatory, respiratory, digestive &c systems) & whatever disturbs that due ballance produces disease or an approach to it & must therefore be injurious & detrimental to the vital principle.* I cure disease by restoring this equilibrium where it is lost. I preserve health or prevent disease by promoting or preserving that equilibrium where it still exists, & I practice successfully. It is the true theory & as it is sustained by practice & observation I must think it correct. Your message is looked for with great anxiety, especially on this point. I have no doubt myself what it will be. The chart of the (1844) Baltimore Convention, your inaugural at Nashville & Washington, your former votes, & your sectional feelings if you have any, your

past associations, the spirit of the age, the tendency & the sentiments of the times in this country & in Europe & the world all assure me that it will be political orthodoxy itself. But I trespass upon your patience. I only add further, that harmony is likely to continue among the Dem. party at Nashville. I have advised a short session, no increase of State liabilities, no innovation upon State policy, a reform in the Banks, & in the officers of State to be elected this year, reform out the reformers, &c. &c. I hear such is the determination of our friends. Wisdom, vigilance & caution will make our revolution a permanent one. I have not before I believe congratulated you upon the political regeneration of Tennessee. The vote shews that fraud was practiced last November. Knox County the citadel of Whigery yielded at last—we gained about 200. The out-posts will fall next & if the present session terminates well the State will be easily carried hereafter. The health throughout the country is bad, here quite so, crops good & abundant, times easier & business of every kind more brisk. I know these minor details must still interest you some. I need not therefore ask you to excuse me for giving them.

J. G. M. RAMSEY

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on October 19, 1845.

1. A Knoxville physician, railroad promoter, and banker, Ramsey played a key role in the 1844 campaign by refuting charges that Ezekiel Polk, James K. Polk's grandfather, had been a Tory during the Revolutionary War. Ramsey also wrote one of the early landmarks in Tennessee historiography, *The Annals of Tennessee to the End of the Eighteenth Century* (1853). During the Civil War, Union troops burned Ramsey's residence and thus destroyed materials for a sequel to his history of Tennessee.

2. Ramsey's reference is to Henry A. Talman. Talman accepted appointment as an inspector in the New York City Customs House in 1845.

3. See Polk to Salmon P. Chase et al., April 23, 1844.

TO JAMES H. THOMAS

My Dear Sir: Washington City 11th Oct. 1845

I have received your letter of the 1st Inst.¹ informing me that on a resurvey of the land sold by *Marshall T. Polk* to *Thomas Gregory*, there was found to be a deficiency of 20 acres, and that a decree had been ordered up in the Chancery Court at Columbia against *M. T. Polk's Heirs* for \$274.40 and \$20.32 1/2 court costs. Request the Clerk & Master not to issue an execution, as I will forward the money to you, before the next term of the Court. I am glad that you have paid my taxes for

this year, and also those of my mother and of *M. T. Polk's Heirs*. The Receipts for the last letter, should shew that the payment, was made by me, to enable me to settle with the parties hereafter. All payments made for mother are a part of her legacy under the *will* of my deceased brother *Saml. W. Polk*, and all payments made for *M. T. Polk's Heirs*, are made by me as guardian. You can enclose the receipts you have taken, except the one for my individual taxes, that I may, file them as vouchers and enter them in my book. About the close of the year my mother will probably need some money to close up her year's accounts. You will probably have some of my money in your hands, and I request that you will pay over to her whatever amount she may need, taking a receipt for it, as so much of her legacy, under the *will* of *Saml. W. Polk*, deceased, paid to her by me as his Executor. She will not need a large amount, but whatever it may be, let her have it, and if it is more than you have collected, inform me of it, and I will remit it to you.

I am desirous to sell my House and lot and other property at Columbia. Can it be sold on agreeable terms, over long time?

My administration as far as I am able to judge, is encountering quite as little opposition as I had a right to anticipate. [...] ² After Congress meets we will be better able to judge. I have nothing of interest to communicate other than what you see in the newspapers.

I continue to be constantly and incessantly engaged in my office. You know that I am a hard working man, and I can truly say that I have never in my life been so constantly engaged as I have been for the last several months. I am compelled to neglect almost entirely my correspondence with my friends. I hope you will write to me occasionally and give me the local & home news.

JAMES K. POLK

P.S. Will you do me the favour to call upon mother and inform her that you will pay her what money she may need at *Christmas* or sooner if she desires it. J.K.P.

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Columbia.

1. Thomas to Polk, October 1, 1845. DLC-JKP.
2. Partial ink transfers render one line of text illegible.

FROM MORRIS LONGSTRETH¹

Dear Sir,

Valley Green. Oct. 12th 1845

Though I have not the honor of much personal acquaintance with you, yet as a Pennsylvanian, who feels a deep interest in her fame

and welfare, I beg leave to submit to you the following observations, in relation to the nomination to the bench of the Supreme Court.

Upon the demise of the lamented Justice Baldwin,² several individuals were spoken of to fill the vacancy in that tribunal. But about the time your Excellency was inducted into the eminent station you now hold, with so much dignity; public sentiment had been narrowed down, and concentrated upon the Honorable John M. Read,³ who was finally nominated to the Senate by Mr Tyler.

His friends ardently desired that his nomination would have been renewed by you, and it is with the hope that you may see the propriety of that step, that I now beg leave to add my testimony to the qualifications of Mr Read to fill that station. Descended from the Revolutionary stock, his moral and social standing have never been impeached; his manner is that of a polished Gentleman; his legal qualifications are admitted by the entire Bar; his fidelity and efficiency as a Republican are attested by the fact, that in all the political struggles that have convulsed Pennsylvania, during the last fifteen years, no man has done more to guide, to encourage and invigorate the party, than this distinguished Gentleman. I speak with the greater confidence, from the circumstance that I was myself a resident of Philadelphia during a great portion of that period, was associated on the Congressional Ticket with Mr Read in 1836, and although now a resident of Montgomery County, I am intimately connected with, and cognizant of the movements of the Bank-ridden, humiliated, but at length I trust, triumphant Democracy of Philadelphia.

I may be permitted to add the acknowledgement of my thanks for the kind invitation extended by yourself and Mrs Polk, to my son⁴ and myself, to visit the White House, on the occasion of his receiving the Three Medals, at the late commencement of Georgetown College.⁵ That invitation would have been accepted, but in consequence of our immediate departure from Washington it only reached us through the medium of Mr. Buchanan on our return home.

In conclusion, I may state the gratification I experienced, on receiving the information from a younger son,⁶ whom I have sent with his brother to Georgetown, that you had entrusted your Nephew⁷ to the charge of that faculty.

It confirms the opinion I had adopted, after much enquiry, that for the attainment of a guarded, and thorough education, Georgetown stands pre-eminent.

MORRIS LONGSTRETH

ALS. DLC-JKP. Marked "Private."

1. A Democratic party leader in Montgomery County, Penn., Longstreth

served his state as canal commissioner in 1847. He unsuccessfully ran for governor of Pennsylvania in 1848, losing to his Whig opponent, William F. Johnston, by less than 300 votes.

2. A Pennsylvanian known for his independent thinking in politics and jurisprudence, Henry Baldwin served in the U.S. House, 1816-22, and on the U.S. Supreme Court, 1830-44.

3. A lawyer from Philadelphia, John Meredith Read held a seat in the Pennsylvania House, 1823-25; served as U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, 1837-41; and won election to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, 1858-72. In 1844 John Tyler nominated Read to replace Baldwin on the U.S. Supreme Court, but the Senate never confirmed him. Polk refused to renominate him, in part because of the candidate's past connections to the old Federalist party, but also on account of his pronounced anti-slavery sentiments.

4. John C. Longstreth won awards in math and philosophy before receiving his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1847.

5. A Roman Catholic institution, Georgetown College was founded in 1789, chartered in 1815, and incorporated in 1844.

6. Charles Longstreth attended Georgetown College, 1845-47, but did not graduate.

7. Marshall Tate Polk left Georgetown College in 1847 to accept an appointment at the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, N.Y.

FROM J. GEORGE HARRIS

Dear Sir, Nashville Te. Oct. 13. 1845

The votes for Governor were counted to-day. Gov. Brown's exact majority is 1623. He will be inaugurated on the 16th.

You have undoubtedly seen the organization of the two Houses—*Watterson* Speaker of Senate, *Campbell* of Washington Speaker of House. The democrats elected all clerks, doorkeepers, &c.

Mr. *Nicholson* and *H. L. Turney* are the only two prominent candidates for U.S. Senate. They had an interview yesterday. The election is expected to take place next Saturday the 19th. The saying is that Gov. Jones wants his whig friends to cast their votes for him as a candidate for U.S. Senator, that they decline the *endorsement* which would place him in advance of Messrs. Bell & Foster, and that they have resolved *not to vote at all*, but to sit in the chamber and let the democrats make their own choice. I know not that this is a reliable rumor. It would seem from all I can learn that Mr. Nicholson will be elected on the 4th to the 6th ballot, yet it may not be so.

Maj. Graham was, until Saturday, a prominent candidate for re-election as Comptroller. I learn to-day that for certain reasons he is

withdrawn, and that Col. Powell of E. Tenn is to be run for that office. I also understand that Col. Childress¹ of Williamson is a candidate, and will be supported for that office. I have not the means of knowing which stands the best chance of success.

Hon Mr. Blackwell, Nicholas Fain,² and a son of old Mr. Thos Brown³ of E Tenn, Mr Currin of Rutherford (formerly Sup of Pub. Instruction) and Joel M. Smith are candidates for Treasurer. I know nothing of either's prospects. No doubt there will be a compromise.

Col. E. A. Keeble of Rutherford opposes W. H. Humpreys for Reporter. Our friend R. B. Reynolds⁴ is here as candidate for Judge.

Thus far there seems to be a good deal of *unanimity* when our friends come to balloting. I trust it may continue.

The capitol on Campbell's hill⁵ progresses freely and it is believed the Legislature will make liberal appropriations for its completion. Members seem to be pleased. You may not be astonished to see a Monument to Jackson erected here by the State.

Mr. Nichol Pres of State Bank made a long report to Legislature to-day. He recommends that the institution be *wound up* forthwith. There is a good deal of talk about it.

I have not the means of knowing to what extent my information is reliable. I give it as I get it from members who I have every reason to believe know as much of the matters to which they refer as any in the Legislature.

I saw Mr. Walker of Columbia here to-day. He and his family are very well.

I send these notes, supposing that they may not be entirely destitute of interest to you who know the persons &c being mentioned.

J. GEO. HARRIS

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked "*Private.*" Enclosed in Harris to Polk, October 13, 1845. ALS. DLC-JKP. Polk's AE on the cover letter states that he received these letters on October 22, 1845.

1. A resident of Williamson County and a cousin to Sarah Childress Polk, William G. Childress served one term as a Democratic member of the Tennessee House, 1835-37, and ran unsuccessfully for the U.S. House in 1839.

2. A Rogersville merchant and postmaster, 1823-39, Fain won election to the Tennessee House for two terms, 1839-43.

3. The son of Thomas Brown of Roane County is not identified.

4. A lawyer and key member of the Knoxville Democratic Central Committee, Robert B. Reynolds served as attorney general for Tennessee's Second Judicial District from 1839 until 1845.

5. Designed by William Strickland, the new state capitol's cornerstone was laid on July 4, 1845.

TO WILLIAM H. POLK

My Dear Sir: Washington City 13th Oct. 1845

Your letter of the 7th ultimo covering a Duplicate of your draft in favour of J. Knox Walker came safely to hand. In my last I acknowledged the receipt of the original draft, and informed you of the manner in which it had been appropriated by J. Knox Walker.¹ I omitted to state to you, that he had written to *Mr. Miller* the Executor of *Dr Dickinson* urging him to take immediate steps to recover your Tanner debt.² In order to make [...] ³ he made the offer to him which you authorized of the surplus, after paying the Bank debt. *Mr Miller* has not yet been heard from. Steps will also be taken to bring your Western District lands into market, to meet the claims for which they are pledged. I hope your creditors, seeing that you are making an effort to pay, will be better satisfied.

I hear almost every mail from Nashville or Columbia. Mother and all our relations were in usual health at my last dates. Nothing had occurred of an unusual character.

We have no war yet, and I think there is no prospect of one with Mexico. She continues to menace war, but, commits no hostile act. Our forces by land and sea, are still kept on her border, ready, to meet any emergency. We will commit no act of aggression unless Mexico strikes the first blow, but in the event, she does strike we are prepared to blockade her ports, and make a short war of it.

I have not time to give you an account of the Oregon negotiation, further than to say, to you *confidentially*, that there is I think no prospect that it can be settled. I will probably present the whole subject to Congress, and will, as you know, occupy the high American ground.

I hope you may be able to make a Treaty. From the last despatch of your predecessor,⁴ as well as from your own communications public and private, I have a strong hope that you may succeed. It is important for the country as well as for your own reputation that you should. I hope you will devote yourself to that object & accomplish it, if possible, early in the session of Congress.

I am beginning to prepare to meet Congress. The swarm of office seekers have to some extent passed off, but still I am kept constantly and laboriously employed. I have not been absent from Washington a single day, since I entered on the duties of my office. Great harmony continues to prevail in my Cabinet, and as far as I can judge, the country is satisfied with the course of my administration.

My health was never better.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Naples and marked “*Private*.”

1. See Polk to William H. Polk, September 27, 1845.
2. John Miller and John A. Tanner are not identified further.
3. Faint ink transfers render five words illegible.
4. William Boulware, a native of Virginia, served as chargé d’affaires to the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies from 1841 to 1845.

FROM HENRY HORN

My Dear Sir,

Philadelphia 15th Octor 1845

Our election which was held yesterday for city and county officers Canal Commissioner members of the Legislature &c was conducted in the most peaceable and orderly manner, and has resulted most gloriously for our Democracy. We have gained all and more than we lost last year. The Whigs and natives notwithstanding their desperate efforts have signally failed of success. The municipal officers of our *city proper* which we did not entertain any hope of carrying is the only trophy with which the Whigs can console themselves. All the county officers who are chosen by the county (including the city) are Ours, and the high hopes of the poor natives have been effectually prostrated. What will be the precise amount of our majority in the whole county is not yet ascertained but it is supposed to be from 1000 to 1500. Is not this a wonderful change in a single year when there was in the same district a majority of more than 5000 against us? This is truly an auspicious beginning for the new administration of the General government. It augurs well for its future success and popularity, and is especially gratifying to myself under the many troubles and difficulties with which I have had to contend in the dispensation of my official patronage.

A few days ago the American Sentinel a paper under the control and management of Doctr Frick¹ one of my dismissed officers and Doctr Sutherland one of yours, asserted that if the democrats were defeated here at this election, the defeat would be chargeable to the collector.² Now as we have been signally successful that paper ought to be just or generous enough to give the credit of our success to that officer. But its managers are incapable of anything either just or generous. Nor is it in reality a matter of much consequence what course is taken by a paper so notoriously profligate and so destitute of influence either for good or for evil. It has long since like its publishers ceased to be regarded as having any affinity to the Democratic party, and the editors of the

Washington Union should be aware of this, that they may not by an undue notice of any of its croakings give it a consequence to which it is by no means entitled. At all events it cannot much longer continue its existence with a subscription list as I am credibly informed that does not exceed three hundred, especially if the government patronage obtained through the influence of Sutherland which I believe it still retains be withdrawn from it.

Our Friend the Hon. C. J. Ingersoll appears to be displeased about something, and talks of resigning his seat in congress.³ Perhaps it may only be a peak that will pass off upon more mature reflection.

HENRY HORN

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked "Private."

1. John H. Frick, editor of the Philadelphia *American Sentinel*, is not identified further.
2. Horn held a recess appointment as collector of customs at Philadelphia.
3. See Ingersoll to Polk, October 10, 1845.

FROM AARON V. BROWN

Dear Sir

Nashville Oct. 16. 1845

The Union of this morning will furnish you with my inaugural.¹ My friends here flatter me both as to matter and the manner of its delivery. I hope neither will bring discredit to our cause. We are in great trouble about all our elections. Turney breaks us up as to Senator. Keeble as to the Atto Genl. The rumor & suspicion is that to secure these to the two gentlemen named that the Comptroller & Treasurer will be given to the Whigs & certain facts look very strongly that way. T still breathes nothing but complaints against your *declaration*.² It is said Fulton of Fayetteville is greatly incensed for the want of an answer to some letter which he wrote you.³ I desire you to look to that & if practicable write *now* something that will satisfy him. He is too valuable a man to be neglected & has rendered too many services in times past to be lost for want of an answer to his communications. He is one of the first men of the state.

I hear too some rumors that Coe in the district is gloomy & dissatisfied about something I know not what. The state of things here is growing evidently more & more embarrassing. Guild's loss of the speakership (from Sumner) has made him rather cold & I am trying to reconcile him by a pair of *Epaulettes*. The Whig party is evidently trying to concentrate on one set of Democratic candidates in order to defeat another, *on the condition*, that Zollicoffer should be continued as Comptroller and each set is suspicious that the arrangement will

be consummated at its expense & therefore regard it not in the light of a *bargain* but a measure of necessary *self defense*. If Humphres⁴ & Nicholson will go into the arrangement they can be elected Atto Genl. & Senator. If they refuse & Turney & Keeble do it, they will be elected. The member from Henry is absent & probably dead⁵ which is a serious loss to our majority & so increases our embarrassment. What to do under such circumstances is trying enough to our friends. My own course is onward, to compound with none but to Win a democratic victory throughout or not at all. This is my humor rather than my policy.

All these things I write for your own eye & then for the destruction of my letter. With more leisure now than I have had lately I shall write you more frequently, not however following in that respect any example which you have lately set me.

AARON V. BROWN

N.B. I promised to write you for a clerkship for young Mr. McEwen of Franklin son of Maj McEwen the brother of C. E. McEwen.⁶ Some 1200 clerkship would be very gratifying. He is any way worthy & qualified. A.V.B.

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked "*Confidential*." Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on October 24, 1845, and answered it on the same day.

1. See the *Nashville Union*, October 16, 1845.
2. Hopkins L. Turney complained that Polk had used his influence to promote the candidacy of A. O. P. Nicholson.
3. Fulton's letter to Polk has not been found. A prominent Fayetteville lawyer, James Fulton served one term as attorney general of Tennessee's Eighth Judicial District, 1824-27.
4. West H. Humphreys.
5. John B. McFarland died before taking his seat in the Tennessee House.
6. James McEwen, John L. McEwen, and Christopher E. McEwen. John L. and Christopher E. McEwen were wealthy Williamson County planters and prominent Democrats. John L. McEwen served in the War of 1812 and later held the rank of major in the Tennessee militia. James McEwen fought for the Confederacy in the Civil War. After the war he took over the management of his father's plantation and became a prosperous farmer.

FROM THOMAS H. BRADLEY¹

President Polk

Franklin Tenn Oct 17 1845

On my return I found Mr Childress absent, which accounts for my not writing earlier. When he returned I had an interview with him and

related to him in substance the conversation I had with you relative to the appointment of Marshal. He told me he could not then give me an answer, but would in a few days. I saw him a few days since in Nashville. He is (as perhaps you know) a candidate for Comptroller, an office he thinks preferable in a pecuniary point of view to that of Marshal. His election is exceedingly doubtful & I fear he is not the favourite of the Democratic party. Col. Powell is also a candidate who is (you know) one of the immortal 13 which gives him standing with the Democrats but detracts from him with the Whigs. A rumour was in circulation when I left Nashville that the friends of Turney had made overtures to the Whigs, saying if they would vote for Turney, for Senator, his friends would vote for Zollicoffer for Comptroller. Should this collision take place Turney & Zollicoffer will be elected. I am satisfied there is no earthly chance for the election of Nicholson. Trousdale is spoken of favourably amongst the Whigs. I am impressed with the belief the Senator will come from the District. Doubtless you are better informed on this point than myself. Such material as the Democratic party are composed of, never met at Nashville, and I am persuaded, no man living could unite them on any one man for Senator. Childress requested me to say he could not accept the Marshal's place, and that he declined it out of no disrespect to you, but in the event you had or would have during your Administration an other appointment that was a little more lucrative he would accept with pleasure.

[THOMAS H. BRADLEY]

AL. DLC—JKP. Polk's AE on the cover states: "Genl. Thos. H. Bradley, Ten. Recd. 26th Oct. 1845. I know from the contents of this letter, that it is from Genl. Bradley, although he has forgotten to sign his name."

1. A Williamson County Democrat, Bradley held the rank of major general in the Tennessee militia.

FROM ELIHU PEDRICK

Sir,

New York Oct. 17. 1845

I have the honor to enclose herein a letter received late this afternoon from my friend in Vera Cruz.¹ Affairs in that country are conducted in great secrecy by the Government and as my friend ere this has no doubt become a Mexican citizen I must request that whatever news I communicate may be considered in confidence. I am still of the opinion that *secret agents* of Great Britain are instigating the Mexicans to carry on the War. Where has this \$60,000 come from unless the Loan has been taken by European agents.

ELIHU PEDRICK

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked as “Private.” Polk’s AE on the cover states that he received this letter and enclosure on October 21, 1845.

1. On September 25, 1845, E. H. Saulmier wrote Pedrick emphasizing the likelihood of war between Mexico and the United States. He noted that the Mexican government had paid Mariano Paredes \$60,000 to move his division of 5,000 men to the Rio Grande and place them under the command of Mariano Arista. Saulmier also reported that the Department of Puebla had offered its troops to the federal government and that Mexican naval forces had been ordered to the Alvarado River near Veracruz. Saulmier concluded that “public feeling is very much in favour of war” and predicted that the Mexican government would “be compelled to such a step in self defence.” ALS. DLC–JKP.

FROM MOSES G. REEVES¹

Murfreesboro, Tennessee

October 17th. 1845

Dear Sir;

There now exists at Nashville a very bad state of affairs. It seems that every body wants office and most of them willing to receive it in almost any way either from friends or otherwise.

For Senator, Nicholson & Turney, Humphreys & Keeble for Atto. Genl., for Comptroller Powell & W. G. Childress, for Treasurer, Joel M. Smith, Robt. P. Currin and some other old worn out man.² Our people have got all wrong will create divisions amongst themselves and in the end the Whigs will be able to elect Zollicoffer. They would rather have him than any of the rest of their men.

The way matters are now going on, with the large emigration to Texas (two thirds of them Democrats) will tell a bad tale in 1847 & 8 in Tennessee.

I do not set up to be a *Huntsman*, Prophet or the son of one,³ but one thing is certain some of our men are acting very badly, and I fear it will produce much mischief in future elections in our state.

MOSES G. REEVES

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk’s AE on the cover states that he received this letter on October 27, 1845.

1. Appointed as register of Rutherford County in 1826, Reeves served in that post for at least fourteen years.

2. Reference probably is to Nicholas Fain.

3. Reference probably is to Adam Huntsman. Here Reeves paraphrases Amos 7:14.

FROM HUGH WADDELL¹

My dear Sir!

Hillsboro N.C. Octr. 18. 1845

Will you forgive me, if I honestly acknowledge that nothing but a foolish awkwardness arising from the difference of our political opinions, has prevented me from writing you long since & hailing your elevation to the Presidency as an event as *grateful* to my personal feelings, towards you, as it was *ungrateful* to my political. I doubt not you can appreciate these feelings or I should not now express them, with the frankness of our boyhood.

I sent you a Message last summer by Mr. Lucius Polk which I hope he delivered.² It was in substance this: "That I deeply regretted that you should desire any thing on this Earth, that I could not aid you in obtaining *heart & hand*. Yet such was then my situation, but that he might also say that there was no man in America, if the Whig Candidate was to be defeated, whom I had so soon see in his party elevated to the Presidency as yourself." Indeed such was the strength of these personal feelings, that I was actually rebuked publickly by zealous Whig friends, for speaking of you, when canvassing Orange for a seat in the Senate, in the terms which our long continued friendship required at my hands. I beg you will understand me, as not in any manner claiming to have abated my opposition to the party whose head you are & then were, but that I would suffer myself in discussing public measures, on no occasion to speak of you personally, but with the respect & esteem I had always felt for you.

I rejoice to find however that these feelings are reciprocated on yr. part, as I judge they are by several kind messages which you have done me the honor to send me first by my personal friend Col. John D. Hawkins³ & secondly by my kinsman Judge Ogden⁴ of New Orleans who was with me a day or two since. I need not say how grateful to me these kind remembrances of me, coming as they did, from one whose situation might very well have excused some obliviousness, especially of one who had no particular claims on his *present* memory.

I was gratified in common with all your old friends in Carolina, at the intelligence I recd. through Col Hawkins, that you would visit our Alma Mater, at the next Commencement. I shall be pleased once more to tread the Halls where our boyhood mimicked in miniature, the stirring scenes of mental conflict in which so much of *yr. riper years* have been passed. We can recall many a face amid those scenes which we shall never see again & thus for such a visit will be sad, but there are those still living who will aid us in conjuring up a thousand incidents

of the gay & the ludicrous which will never cease to be remembered with pleasure.

Pray present me most kindly to Mrs. Polk *if she remembers me*, & say that I have never forgotten her marked kindness in Washington when I met you there & also that I must insist she will accompany you in yr. expected visit.

I would here close this desultory letter, but that an appeal has just been made to me which I cannot resist & which I think you will pardon me for mentioning. Among many others who removed to the South some years since, from N. Carolina, were my brothers & owing to a series of disasters they have been ruined, altho. they left this State with large property. The eldest Col. Haynes Waddell,⁵ is now in N.C. with a large family & absolutely without means. To justify me in alluding to his case I must state that, his brother in law, Revd. Wm. M. Green,⁶ our old friend, seemed to think that if I would appeal to you in his behalf you would give him some appointment by which he might not only support his family, but thereby advance his two sons who are fine young men. In the first place then, he is & has always been a firm & steady *Democrat* & the only one of the family, was an officer though young in the late War, is educated & capable of filling any place in which general intelligence in business is required. Now as you may suppose I should not make this application even for a brother to any other but an old friend & more over unless the applicant could with propriety be numbered among the friends politically of the President. Having said this much for him it might perhaps be expected that I should indicate *some place*. But this I cannot undertake to do. His poverty would prevent his entering into Bonds in large sums & I must therefore leave the whole matter to yr. discretion & kindness.

It is a source of chagrin to me, that my first attempt at renewal of our ancient intimacy should be clogged by such an unwelcome application as this must needs be to him who has the Power, but my sympathy for a brother in such circumstances must be my apology.

With my kindest & most respectful salutations to Mrs. Polk . . .

HUGH WADDELL

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on October 21, 1845, and answered it on December 15, 1845.

1. A classmate of Polk at the University of North Carolina, Waddell served as a Whig in the North Carolina House of Commons, 1828–29 and 1835, and in the Senate, 1836–37, 1840–41, and 1844–48; he was elected speaker during his first senatorial term.

2. Letter not found.

3. Probably one of Polk's classmates at the University of North Carolina, Hawkins served in the North Carolina House of Commons, 1821–22, and in the Senate, 1834–41.

4. Robert N. Ogden served as a Louisiana district judge.

5. Haynes Waddell is not identified further.

6. One of Polk's classmates at the University of North Carolina, William M. Green was ordained an Episcopal clergyman in 1821; accepted the chaplaincy of the University of North Carolina in 1837; and was elected as the first Episcopal Bishop of Mississippi in 1849. He helped found the University of the South and served as its chancellor from 1867 until his death in 1887.

FROM SAMUEL P. WALKER

Dear Sir,

Memphis Ten. Oct 18th 1845

I have been here three or four days. On my arrival I find your letters, of 17th Sept., directed to Columbia and forwarded to this place, and of 24th Sept., directed to this place. I wrote you¹ that I had remitted the proceeds of my Dft on you, here to be paid to Howard on your note. Then I find the money here to my credit and learn from Howard that Uncle Wm Polk declines to receive any part of it until the whole of the note is paid. Under the circumstances I dont know how to act and must ask you to let me know your wishes. If you desire it we can pay the note and for whatever portion your crop does not pay you can either remit us your Bill, to be paid from the next crop or authorize us to draw on you at the close of the season. Understanding the facts you will be the best judge of what you want done and can advise me of your wishes.

In reference to the contents of your letter of the 17th I was fully convinced even before its receipt, that your action had been governed by a sense of public duty and believed you were willing to advance our interest as far as you could with propriety. I confess however that I was at the time much disappointed and mortified. The nomination of Mr. Pickett by Mr. Tyler had created a very general impression among our friends and acquaintances that he would either receive that appointment or some other, and the resignation by Mr. Pickett of the Agency for the Insurance Company not only confirmed that impression, but resulted in a loss to our house of from \$2.000 to \$3.000 pr annum. It is much to be regretted that your letter to Mr. Pickett² had not been more promptly forwarded from New Orleans. That may have been owing to the fact that the mail from N.O. to Ten. in the summer, is very slow. But it is unnecessary to regret that which has happened and which cannot now be repaired, and we are therefore resolved to be the more industrious energetic and attentive in our business at New Orleans, in

which we hope to succeed. It is no doubt true, as you remark, that our interest would incline us to take a one sided view of the matter and it is most likely that we did so. At any rate I can say to you (and I would not say it unless I felt it) that I am satisfied that our disappointment was caused by circumstances which you did not feel justified in disregarding, and that the injury which we have sustained was the result of accident, and that I entertain towards you no bad feelings on account of it.

Father's letter to you³ was written just after he had heard of Mr. Pickett's inability to recover the Agency he had given up (another Agt. having been appointed) and while he felt deeply mortified because *he had advised* Mr. Pickett to pursue the course he did, relying on what he believed, to be your promises, and knowing Father as well as you do I only deem it necessary to mention the circumstances under which he wrote.

The cotton crop will probably be about as large as that of last year's. The increased receipts at N.O. will about equal the deficiency at the other Cotton Ports. I hope the increased consumption (which is considerable) will enable us to maintain present prices. I understand you have a good crop. My estimate is partly based upon the very favourable season we have had thus far, for gathering the crop; any unfavourable change, in which, may and most likely would reduce that estimate. Considerable activity now prevails in the market, which may result in speculation to an extent injurious to the consumption & thereby affect the value of the raw material.

SAML. P. WALKER

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on November 1, 1845, and answered it the same day.

1. See Walker to Polk, September 11, 1845. ALS. DLC-JKP.
2. See Polk to William S. Pickett, June 26, 1845.
3. See James Walker to Polk, August 23, 1845.

FROM ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Dear Sir

Liverpool 19th Octo 1845

I take the liberty of enclosing some letters for my children. If they have passed on home please direct them to Nashville. If they have not arrived at Washington please retain them untill you see them.

I have nothing of importance to say to you further than it is now well known that this Kingdom will not House or Save a half crop of *grain*

and that saved is verry Inferior. In England & Ireland the potatoe crop is verry short and also on the continent.

I must call your attention to an article in the London *Times* which I send you.¹ These English are so enraged and dissatisfied at the annexation of Texas that they are urging *Spain* to attempt a reconquest of Mexico. Spain who is in a more helpless condition than even Mexico. I suppose the Crown Heads would make a family affair of it and take part.

I wish you had a pretext to annex Cuba as a beginning.

With Respects to Mrs Polk Mr & Mrs Walker

R. ARMSTRONG

[P.S.] I received letter a few days ago from your Brother William. He was in fine health and spirits and satisfied. From travellers I have frequently received the most favorable accounts of his attentions &c &c.

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on November 5, 1845.

1. Enclosure not found.

FROM CORNELIUS CONNOR¹

Dear Sir

Nashville Oct 22d 1845

I am sorry to inform you our victory in Tennessee will result in no good to the Democracy. This I had feared for some time, and the result of the Election for Senator will prove my fears well grounded. Nearly all the Democratic members came here in favour of Nicholson, some five or six Turney men. Those latter with *Sam*² at their head would not go into any mutual arrangmt with the other Democratic members. Consequently the Election came on without any concert amongst the Democratic members. At the commencement of the balloting many of the Whig members declared openly they would in no event vote for Turney. *Foster & Jones* were very busy yesterday trying to Elect *Turney*. The consequence is, to day nearly all the Whigs are voting for him. There was a bargain last night (I have no doubt) between Turneys friends and the Whigs. The consequence will be, no Democrat will be elected to any office during the remainder of the session. Our friends fully understand this but can do nothing to prevent it. H L Turney is gone to the Whigs I have no doubt. He has already been denouncing *you* amongst the Whigs (this I have from five or six Whigs). His excuse is that you have interfered with his election (which is news to us here). This is a bad state of affairs, and I trust and hope something may yet

turn up to prevent a rupture amongst our friends. As the case now stands *I would* greatly prefer Jno Bell to Turney. I always prefer an open Enemy to a secret foe.

C. CONNOR

ALS. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. A native of Pennsylvania, Connor was a businessman and party operative in Nashville.
2. Samuel Turney.

FROM MORVEN M. JONES¹

Dear Sir

City of Utica N.Y. Oct. 22. 1845

Some of the papers of the day have brought the singular and astonishing intelligence that John Hogan² of this city is probably to receive the appointment of Minister to St. Petersburg! Our community generally look upon this as all a hoax, but having in view the old adage of "fools for luck"³ and the fact of his appointment to some office in St Domingo by Mr Tyler I cannot divest myself of some fears that some strange infatuation has siezed upon persons at Washington, that some evil star is somewhere in the ascendant, that there is blind ignorance of the man which will result in his appointment to a responsible station & the consequent disgrace of our government.

Asking nothing myself, occupying an independent position, with no private enmity to gratify, and as a member of the great democratic family I cannot, will not, withhold my warning voice. Without talents equal to the station of a 4th rate country pettifogger, without a single moral principle, with a reputation stained with felony, never having gained a respectable friend, having last fall voted and used the few mean exertions in his power, for the election of Henry Clay, Mr Hogan where he is known will never receive any marks of favor from a democratic administration. I record nothing but the universal sentiment of every man who knows him whether friend or foe, Whig or Democrat. Every prominent man in this section has heard of John Hogan either as a criminal at the bar, as the dishonest man or as the mere drivelling tool of dishonest men. His very name in this community is an epithet of reproach & contempt. His goings out & comings in, here, are heeded as the prowlings of blacklegs from their den. Send him to Russia & he would borrow a never-to-be-repaid ruble from the poorest serf in the street. I know what I have written, & which never would have been written had not a highly respectable paper in N.Y. City cast this scandal upon humanity forth upon the world.

We all know that an unbounded stock of impudence and effrontery with the aid of a large body of corporeal putridity give Mr H. an importance with the casual or superficial observer, but I do hope that Prest. Polk & Mr Buchanan will ask somebody, (any body who has *known* him) before entailing such a disgrace upon us. If any man has recommended him, an investigation would show that man a creditor who would thus steal from our government or else a man as bad as I have painted H. himself. It is well known that his creditors here & at Washington teased his St Domingo appointment from Prest. Tyler with the hope (and probably a vain one too) of thus obtaining payment of their debts. If the office of Minister to Russia is to go a begging, we have in this city 500 honest mechanics and day laborers, infinitely more competent who would accept the appointment.

Nothing disrespectful is intended but this is the simple ebullition of my feelings as they spontaneously arose after reading the statement referred to. It may be all a groundless alarm but my conscience as a professed believer in the religion of the Saviour of Mankind, my every manful feeling and as an honest member of the democratic party I could not withhold what I have written.

MORVEN M. JONES

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover reads in part, "It is he says reported at Utica that he [John Hogan] is to be minister to Russia. *Note* the Report is unfounded."

1. A Utica lawyer and Democrat, Jones served as justice of the peace in Oneida County for nearly 33 years.

2. John Tyler appointed Hogan, a Utica attorney and Democrat, as special commissioner to Santo Domingo in February 1845.

3. Paraphrase of "You fools of fortune." William Shakespeare, *Timon of Athens*, act 3, scene 5, line 3.

TO JOHN W. CHILDRESS

My Dear Sir: Washington City 23d Oct. 1845

I have received your letter,¹ enclosing the Bill of sale, and my note, to your mother.² Your Bill for \$1305. in full payment, for both was presented to me on yesterday, and was paid. The last credit which you entered on my note in December last is for \$200. My impression is that the sum paid at that time was \$250. Sarah's³ recollection agrees, with mine, though possibly we may both be mistaken. On my return home I entered the sum paid in my book, but have not the book with me. The credit was not entered on the note, at the time I handed the money to your mother, and I afterwards requested you to enter it. I

know I had \$250 ready to pay over, and was sure I had done so. It may be possible however when I came to hand it to your mother that she only wanted the \$200. If there has been a mistake of the \$50. it can be corrected hereafter.

We would be pleased to see you at Washington this winter. I believe you have never been North and I am sure you would spend a few weeks here pleasantly. The travelling expenses would be trifling & that is all it would cost you, as we would expect you to say with us at the President's Mansion. Your sister requests me say, that she is anxious for you to come, and that she knows you would be pleased with the visit.

*Johanna Rucker*⁴ is very well, except a slight cough proceeding from cold taken on her journey. She appears to be enjoying herself very well.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Murfreesboro.

1. See Childress to Polk, October 8, 1845.
2. Elizabeth Whitsett Childress.
3. Sarah C. Polk.
4. The daughter of Susan Childress and William B. Rucker. Johanna visited the Polks in Washington City that fall.

FROM DANIEL GRAHAM

Dear Sir,

Nashville, Tenne
Thursday 23d Oct 45

Things are in a mortifying state of confusion here, and have been ever since the meeting. They went into the election of Senator as you see from the papers on tuesday. Nicholson got his supposed strength of 40 Bell 35 Whigs & Turney 11 mixed. They continued about that all day except that portions of Bells 35 fell off generally to Turney & Wm Dunlap¹ and they closed with Nicholson 37 & Turney 17. After night both parties had meetings at which they agreed to nothing except to adhere to their respective positions as manifested by the votes of yesterday previous. In the course of the day an idea got out that an understanding had taken place between Turney, Gov Jones & other Whigs that Turney should go for the Tariff of 42, for distribution and against the President generally. I was not informed of the character of the proof which was relied on in support of such charge or suspicion and maintained that the thing was too monstrous to be possible, & that it would be unsafe to make public mention of it without substantial proofs.

When they met after dinner Guild, Glenn & others got into a general debate on questions of order & no vote was taken till they adjourned at sundown. Before they adjourned, Watterson made occasion to put a direct question to Cullom² whether a letter had not been addressed to him by Turney making such overtures. Cullom made denial, but when further asked about such letter being addressed to the Whigs, he waived a direct answer, and I doubt whether Watterson made any advantage from opening the matter at that time and in that way.

Both parties had meetings last night. Turneys democrats attending neither, and it is said this morning that only four democrats will adhere to him. Whilst on the other hand it is said that the Whigs will go in for him unanimously & elect him at once. An hour hence they will meet in convention again and I will give you the result before I close this letter.

Guild is strongly advocating Trousdale's claims & Glenn is steadily pressing for Dunlap or some district man. Several Lincoln men are here advocating Fulton and the out-door talk this morning is that Trousdale could be easily elected. The evidences at the adjournment last evening, however, seemed to be that the majority of democrats adhere still more closely to Nicholson, and that the Whigs were the more determined to defeat him. It is stated with much confidence & pretty openly that the Whigs are to have all the coming elections and appointments even down to the rejection of any Board of Bank directors except such as may suit them. This may lead to a continuation of the old Board as happened in 1842. If the democrats succeed today, as was agreed last night, to stave off the election until tomorrow they intend to feel about whether Fulton could not be taken up and unanimously elected at the first vote on Friday morning. It is believed that Turneys friends would be willing, rather than push matters to extremes, to compromise on Fulton, & I think that Guild would give up Trousdale. The chief difficulty would be from the Western district where Dunlap is supported by a mixed party. Nicholson too, is receiving the support of a large majority of his own party & has had great anxiety individually for his own election.

After the August elections I had a wish to run for my former place and so notified many of the democratic members elect. When they met a large majority of them expressed more than a willingness to support me; but W. G. Childress came out for the same place, and was not willing to leave it to a caucus. To prevent collisions and bargainings which I foresaw, I immediately withdrew but Maj Powell is now running and nothing is saved by my declining. It is now believed, on conjecture merely, that in the Senatorial and other elections of democrat against democrat, a sufficient number have been secured to elect Zollicoffer

against Childress & Powell or any one democrat. It is also said that Gen. McCoin³ a Whig from Sumner is to be Treasurer.

In all this family strife I see no evidence whatever of want of cordiality in support of the President & his administration, and I do not believe for a moment that any one elected, even Turney, would fail to give zealous support. Public feeling would soon correct any casual rasping which might seem to be inflicted in fitting up family affairs. (I will go up to the Court House to learn what they are doing.)

Upon going to the Court House I find matters growing worse instead of better. A charge is made, more specifically stating, that the Whigs have a paper from Turney that he will if elected by them support their cause unreservedly. Gordon has asked for a committee of investigation & pledges himself to make good the charge if furnished with the Committee and with power to send for persons and papers. How it will end, or what will be the effect of the step no one can see. They certainly cannot question Turney except upon his political faith and they have no power to inquire about his letter writing. 'Tis said that he refuses to respond to some legitimate interrogatories about his orthodoxy. If they should fasten the charge on him, or if he should repel all reasonable investigation, it will be fatal to him now & in all time to come. My own opinion is, that there are some impracticable Whigs who will not vote for him at any time. Some 5 or 6 democrats adhere to him, Fletcher, Garner,⁴ S Turney, H Turney, Roberts & Northcutt. Fifty votes will elect him, so that 44 of the 48 Whigs will be sufficient.

They are still debating with much asperity, & will not meet in convention tonight. I will go home to the Country.

Friday 24th. Upon coming to town found the H Reps on the question of sending for the Senate in convention. Guild making a strong forcible speech for postponement and investigation. The Senate adjourned to dinner, having voted themselves ready to repair to the House when asked. The out-door talk is, (but without authentication) that Turney has withdrawn his letter to the Whigs, and has furnished them with another, which may bear publication and satisfy them also, declaring that he will adhere to the principles of Genl Jacksons Coleman letter⁵ and to your Tariff position of 32. The majority do not seem as sanguine as they were yesterday of drawing out the original letter conclusively before the public and very little is said about substituting another in place of Nicholson nor about any ulterior movements. It is rumored in town that Col Laughlin has arrived here, or at McMinnville, and the Whigs as usual can see the object of his mission at this precise juncture. They have gone to debating after dinner & I now go to the Country.

Saturday 25. Nothing was done last evening. In the course of the night Nicholson withdrew and so came out in the Union this morning & in a letter to Thomas which was read at the meeting of the Convention. It was at first thought that all the Whigs would not vote for Turney & that there would be several votes taken without a choice but on the first trial Turney got all the Whigs except Sneed⁶ of Memphis and the six demos named at the bottom of the other page, in all 53. Dunlap got 46. So that Turney is the Senator for six years.

During the vote there were several explanations by Whigs *and* democrats. The Whigs denying all knowledge of bargain. Watterson charged Jones, Foster & Bell by name with attending the Whig caucuses and participation in the arrangements.

Tur[ney]⁷ is now the Senator, and my own opinion is as stated in the first part of this letter that he will *not play you false* if met by some of your friends here in the spirit of conciliation. I have not spoken to him since the canvass commenced on any subject connected with it, and am in an attitude to confer with him, which I shall do when a fit occasion offers.

It is sacrament time here and I must go with my wife⁸ to church this afternoon.

DANIEL GRAHAM

[P.S.] It is spun out much longer than I intended.⁹

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked as "Private." Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on November 2, 1845.

1. A lawyer from Bolivar, Tenn., William C. Dunlap served two terms as a Democratic congressman, 1833-37, prior to his election as a state judge in 1840.

2. A lawyer at Carthage and Alvin Cullom's brother, William Cullom served two terms as a Whig in the Tennessee Senate, 1843-47, and two terms in the U.S. House, 1851-55; he won election to one term as clerk of the U.S. House in 1856.

3. A Gallatin cabinetmaker and Whig, James L. McKoin held a number of municipal positions, including several terms as mayor; served as brigadier general of the militia, and sat one term in the Tennessee Senate representing Sumner and Smith counties, 1847-49.

4. John D. Fletcher and Thomas H. Garner. A farmer and Democrat, Fletcher sat for Rutherford County in the Tennessee House, 1839-43, and for Franklin and Lincoln counties in the Senate, 1845-47. A farmer and Democrat, Garner represented Franklin County in the Tennessee House, 1843-47.

5. Andrew Jackson's published letter to Littleton H. Coleman of April 26, 1824, represented Jackson's campaign position on the tariff. See *Niles Register*, June 12, 1824. PL.

6. A Memphis lawyer and Whig, John L.T. Sneed served in the Tennessee House, 1845–47; as captain of a volunteer company in 1846; as western district attorney general, 1851–54; as state attorney general in 1854; as a justice on the state supreme court, 1870–78; as a justice of the Court of Arbitrations in 1878; and as Chancellor at Memphis, 1894–99.

7. Manuscript torn.

8. Maria M'Iver Graham.

9. The postscript was written at the top of the first page.

TO ANN PHILLIPS ROGERS GRUNDY¹

My Dear Madam

Washington City 23rd Oct. 1845

I have the pleasure to transmit to you herewith, a letter of appointment from the Secretary of the Navy for your Grand-son *Felix Grundy jr.* as a Midshipman in the Navy of the United States.² You will perceive that he is required to proceed to Annapolis and report himself to the Superintendent of the Naval School³ at that place. He will remain at the school until he is sufficiently instructed in his duties to be prepared to go to sea. I desire that he will call on me on his way to Annapolis, when I will give him a letter of introduction to the Superintendent. I will take special interest in his welfare. When he is ready to go to sea, I will commend him to the kind attention and care of his commander.

I received some months ago, an application on behalf of your Grand-son, *Felix Grundy Mason*,⁴ for a Lieutenancy in the Marine Corps, and it is my intention to appoint him to the first vacancy which may occur, none having taken place since his wishes were made known to me.

I have not before written to you, because I have been overwhelmed with public cares and duties, but in the midst of these, I beg to assure you, that I have not for a moment forgotten, the duty I owe to the family of my early and constant patron and friend.⁵ The place which I offered to *Mr Ramsay L. Mason*,⁶ was the best and the only one of the kind he wished, then or now at my disposal. I hope hereafter to be able to gratify his wishes.

Mrs. Polk desires to be kindly remembered to you.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Nashville. Enclosed in Polk to John M. Bass, October 23, 1845. ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP.

1. The wife of Felix Grundy, Ann Phillips Rogers Grundy helped to establish the first Sunday school in Nashville in 1820.

2. George Bancroft and Felix Grundy, Jr. Grundy served as a midshipman until 1851.

3. A native of Maryland, Franklin Buchanan entered into service in the U.S. Navy in 1815. He achieved the rank of commander in 1841 after many years of service. Buchanan submitted the plans for the organization of the Naval Academy and became its first superintendent in 1845. He commanded the flagship of Oliver Hazard Perry's squadron that opened relations between the U.S. and Japan in 1853. In 1861 Buchanan was appointed commander in the Confederate navy; was promoted to admiral in 1862; and was captured during combat in Mobile Bay in 1864.

4. The son of Ramsay L. and Eliza Grundy Mayson, young Mayson was commissioned a second lieutenant in November 1845.

5. Mentor for Polk's legal training and early political career, Felix Grundy served as chief justice of Kentucky's Supreme Court prior to moving to Nashville in 1807. He won election as a War Democrat to two terms in the U.S. House, 1811-14; sat in the Tennessee House two terms, 1815-19; and served in the U.S. Senate from 1829 until 1838, when he resigned to become U.S. attorney general. Grundy returned in 1839 to the U.S. Senate and served until his death in December 1840.

6. Ramsay L. Mayson married Eliza Grundy, daughter of Felix and Ann Phillips Rogers Grundy. Mayson had declined to accept a position as subagent for Indian affairs at Council Bluffs. See Ramsay L. Mayson to Polk, August 6, 1845. ALS. DLC-JKP.

FROM JOHN McKEON

New York, N.Y. October 23, 1845

McKeon asserts that in the aftermath of Texas annexation, "The European Powers began to dread our advancing power and would unquestionably interfere with the republics of Mexico & South America." McKeon urges Polk to appoint "men of the highest intellect and patriotism" as ministers to the South American republics to "sustain correct principles without violating at the same time any of our principles." He praises Polk's determination to prevent European intervention in the Western Hemisphere and concludes "all parties in this country will sustain the administration in the re-proclamation of Mr Monroes famous policy." McKeon calls for continued American expansion, including the purchase of Canada. He believes that, as long as the national government refrains from adopting "federal doctrines," territorial expansion poses no danger to the Union. Regarding the tariff, McKeon proclaims, "Let us have a tariff the sole object of which shall be revenue."

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked as "*Private*." Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on October 27, 1845.

FROM GIDEON J. PILLOW

My Dear Sir,

Columbia Octr 23rd 1845

I returned from Nashville a few days after spending two weeks there engaged in a hard struggle to re-elect Humphreys. I succeeded, but not without much previous hard work which was necessary to defeat the schemes and brake up the vilanous combination with the Whigs.

I was much pained at the *bad faith & acrimony* of feeling which existed in our party. I wrote you a long letter while there giving an account of the intrigues & movements of Turney & the Whigs, but I know you would hear the news from other quarters & I concluded not to send it. I trusted too that a reconciliation among our friends would take place which would settle all their present difficulties. Turney was then openly engaged electioneering for Whig support and was denouncing you most *bitterly*, charging you with *interfering* in the election of Senator, and with *ingratitude* to him, and denouncing your appointments of Lewis Harris &c others.¹ I myself had 3 or 4 long conversations with him in which I endeavored to pacify his feelings, assuring him that you were his friend & that I *knew* you had not interfered &c & portraying to him to the disastrous consequences to our party of his course &c.

I soon became satisfied that he *did not wish* to be *satisfied*, that he had thrown himself into an antagonistic position to you and your administration to induce the Whigs to take him up for Senator. The Whigs have taken him in a body and in all human probability before this reaches you, they will have elected him. This is the prevailing opinion now at Nashville. I trust not myself unless our party are madly determined by their *stubbornness & blindness* as a party, to stick to a given course of action until the Whigs reward the Traitor for his Treason to his own party. They could defeat him if they would act *sensibly yet*. Turney was not the only source from whence proceeded loud murmurs of disaffection towards you. There were others (*whom you would not suspect*) secretly encouraging him & lending their influence to form an anti-Polk party in the state.

You must doubtless have heard of Turney's *defection* before this, but I felt it my duty as your friend to give you reliable information of the fact.

If he should be elected, he will doubtless oppose your administration. He is openly charged with a corrupt co-alition and bargains with the Whigs, and the charge is believed by the Country to be true. He has succeeded better by his perfidy in uniting the Whigs than any one

supposed he could have done. I know you will be *pained* at this instance of treachery as one of our party, but, though Turney has in times past, been so much a party man, I myself am not deceived in the *materials* of which he is composed. I have never had much confidence in his *devotions to principle*, or his political integrity.

You will see that all is confusion and uncertainty at Nashville.

GIDEON J. PILLOW

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked “Confidential.” Polk’s AE on the cover states that he received this letter on November 3, 1845, and answered it on November 6, 1845.

1. Micajah G. Lewis and J. George Harris.

TO AARON V. BROWN

My Dear Sir:

Washington City 24th Oct. 1845

I received your letter of the 16th instant this morning, and though it always gives me pleasure to hear from you, I confess I read the account you give of the division and distraction of our political friends in the Legislature, with the greatest pain. Unless these divisions are speedily healed, nothing but disaster to our cause in the State can follow, and it will have been in vain, that the Democracy after a struggle of two years, of almost unexampled violence, at last achieved a brilliant triumph at the late election. Is there no appeal which can be made to our friends to induce them to harmonize, and save the State from passing, irrecoverably I fear, into the hands of our adversaries? Can they not be induced, in view of the danger to which the whole party is exposed, to adopt in practice the Democratic maxim “measures not men.”¹ Of what avail can it be, to any one who may aspire to any of the public stations in the gift of the Legislature, if in consequence of internal divisions and rivalries, our adversaries in the short span of two years, shall come again into power. The greatest possible injustice is done to me, in attributing to me, any, the slightest interference in any election pending, or to be pending, before the Legislature. I have stood perfectly aloof from them all, have not written a line or lisped, a syllable for any one of my political friends over another, for any office in the gift of the Legislature, and this you are authorized to state if you deem it proper. How could I have taken any other course? When it was ascertained that you had carried the State, and that a Democratic majority were returned to the Legislature, no one was more rejoiced than I was. I looked with unspeakable pleasure to the fact, that my own State, in which I had so long laboured

was redeemed, and would return a Senator to Congress who would support my administration. Who he was to be my Democratic friends in the Legislature were the most competent to decide. Shortly after the election in August, I observed, from the newspapers and letters received, from the State, that several of my leading friends were spoken of for the Senate. Of those that I now remember, were *Turney, Nicholson, Coe, Huntsman, Judge Turley, Fitzgerald, Judge Brown*. They were all my political friends, and occupying the position I do, it would have been highly improper for me to have taken any part between them, and I was careful neither to write or speak on the subject. With what astonishment, is it therefore that I learn that, the charge is circulated at Nashville, that I am attempting to *dictate*. There never was a more groundless charge. If I had been even willing to depart from the line of strict neutrality between friends, I could not have failed to see, that any such attempted interference on my part, would have been charged to *dictation*, and would have injured no one so much as the individual in whose favour it was supposed I had interfered. I hope you will put this matter right, by stating the facts as I give them to you. If there has been a motive in circulating such a rumour, unfounded in truth as it is, it is due to me that it should be corrected. I remember the outcry which was raised, when the charge of *dictation* was made by our political opponents, against *Genl. Jackson* in former years, and the effect which was most unjustly attempted to be produced by it. As for the reasons I have given I have taken no part in the Senatorial election, I will take none. My ardent desire is, that our friends, when they come to consider the ruinous consequences of their divisions may yet be re-united and that harmony may prevail in their councils.

I regret exceedingly to learn from you, that my old friend *Fulton* is dissatisfied, at not receiving an answer, to his letter to me.² I know he will not be so, when he learns my explanation. So overwhelming are my indispensable public duties, and so constantly has my time been occupied, that I have scarcely written a dozen letters in that many weeks. No President, ever has, or ever will be able to keep up his correspondence with his friends. So numerous are my letters daily, that it often happens that I can scarcely have time in the day & night to read them, much less to answer. If you see my friend *Fulton*, tell him from me, that it would give me sincere pain to learn that he thought me capable of intentionally neglecting him. There is no man living for whom I entertain a higher respect, and I know he has no better friend.

The Nashville Union failed to come to day, and I have not yet seen

your Inaugural Address. With kind regards of Mrs. Polk and myself to Mrs. Brown

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Nashville and marked “*Private*.”

1. Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, *Letters*, March 6, 1742.
2. Letter not found.

TO ANDREW JACKSON, JR.

My Dear Sir:

Washington City 24th Oct. 1845

I was exceedingly gratified to receive to day, your letter of the 10th and Post Marked on the 16th Instant, enclosing the letter written to me by *General Jackson* on the 6th of June last, but two days before his death, and being as you informed me in a former letter,¹ the last which he ever wrote to any one. I esteem it above all price, and will preserve it as a memorial of the friendship of the dying patriot, a friendship which had never for a moment been broken from my early youth till the day of his death. It breathes, the most ardent friendship for me personally, and for the success of my administration. The moment I learned from my friends in Tennessee, and from the Nashville Union, that such a letter had been written, and that it was the last from his pen, you know the anxiety I felt to receive it. Your explanation, of the manner in which it was by accident, thrown aside, with other papers on his table, in the midst of the confusion of the dying scene is perfectly satisfactory, and is as you will remember, precisely what I conjectured, might have happened, in my letter to you, making inquiry concerning it.² The whole mystery which rested over its supposed loss, or miscarriage, is now solved and satisfactorily. It is marked “*Confidential*,” and the principal subject to which it relates is of a highly delicate and confidential character. The suggestions which it conveys, are very important, and shall as he desired them to be, remain locked in my own bosom. It is most remarkable with what clearness, he retained his intellect to the close of life, and with what interest he viewed every thing connected with his political principles and the welfare of his country.

Will you be so kind as to present the salutations of Mrs. Polk and myself to *Mrs. Jackson*, and believe me to be

JAMES K. POLK

ALS. DLC–AJ. Addressed to The Hermitage.

1. See Andrew Jackson, Jr., to Polk, June 30, 1845.
2. Letter not found.

FROM WILLIAM W. POLK

Dr Sir,

Octr. 24th 1845

I have this day Received yours of the 9th of this Inst. My first Intention after Reading was to let it pass as all things in this World has to do into oblivion without further Notice. But after Reconsidering parts of It I deem It unjust to myself to do So. You quote from mine of Sepr. Something about 8 & 10 per Ct.¹ (I write now from Recollection without Refference to Yours which I have hastily glanced over but once for It is Rather unpleasant to me to Read Such Sentiments.) You appear to have misunderstood me & with all your well known Accuteness It is Somewhat Surprising that you Should have done So. I did think I Stated plainly that money was not my Object. But I will tell you in Some plainer language. It was my desire to accommodate You. I suppose you are apprized that the Int. 8 & 10 per Ct. is the Lawful Int. in Louisiana & Arks. when impressed on the face of the Note. But it was unnecessary unjust uncalled for unworthy of Yourself & me to propose to pay me ² 8 or 10 per Ct. when I agreed to take 6 & did take your Not bearing 6 per Ct. Int. & I suppose I think you Said you had Instructed Your agent³ to do So. If you were *Sincere* you must have a far more contemptable Opinion of me than I ever had of myself or ever deserved from any Man In Country that I have always lived in. I have ever thought that the highest Officer of our Governmt was Not placed beyond the Reach of Reproach even from the lowest Individuals In it. I need tell you that I am & always have been a plain Honest farmer & Never desired to be any thing Else. Permit me here to use the Language of an eminent Poet.

If ever ambition did my fancy Cheat
 With an wish So mean as to be Great
 Continue Heaven Still from me to Remove
 the humble Blessings which in this life I Love⁴

I have had Chills & fever about 5 or 6 Weeks & am now obliged to Stop writing & I suppose you may congratulate yourself on your Escape from a longer letter. But I will add that I believe Great Briton can Run their armed Steam Ship up into N. Orleans whenever they chose to do So & Sack the City of every thing they might want Supply their Cotton factorys free of Cost & with that Nation it has ever been a word & blow & the blow Somtimes first as Old Spain well knows. N Orleans Should be more Strongly fortified below the town.

I think in all probability this is the last letter You will ever See written by me. I dont expect any answer. Neither do I want any more

especially Such as Your last. There were Some expressions in mine of Sepr. that was Unnecessary but when in bad health I have Grown Very Peccish & I dont know that this will please you any Better for my health is Now Very delicate.

WILL. POLK

N.B. I have paused before inserting the following Sentiment. Such a proposition as the hand points to I would *Spurn* from me with the contempt it deserves coming from any Man now living on this Globe or that ever did live on It. W.P.

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on November 9, 1845, and answered it on December 13, 1845.

1. See William Wilson Polk to Polk, September 18, 1845.
2. At this place in the manuscript William Wilson Polk drew an index character pointing to the number "8."
3. Samuel P. Walker.
4. Poem not identified.

FROM CORNELIUS CONNOR

Dear Sir

Nashville October 25 1845

My letter of the 22d informed you of the situation of affairs in our Legislature, since which time the Democratic members have been fighting for a propinet of the Election of senator. This morning the baloting was resumed. On the 2d Ballot H L Turney was Elected receiving 35* Whig votes in the house 12 Whig votes in the senate & 6 Democratic votes (53). The latter 6 were Sam Turney & Fletcher of the senate, Northcut of Warren, Roberts of Coffee, Turney of Lincoln, Garner of Franklin. He was Elected with a clear understanding he was to be a Whig, and go for Whig principles. This I had from Dr. Jennings.¹ A leading Whig told me to day he had pledged himself to the Whigs to vote for a distribution of the proceeds of the public lands, against a repeal of the tariff of 42 and against the constitution of Texas, &c &c. The bargin further stipulates that Zollicoffer is to be Elected Comptroler, and Nelson Treasurer.² The six democrats who voted for Turney would make no compromise on any other man. They were determined to rule or ruin. So our victory last august is a barren one. I have been fighting in the cause of Democracy for the last ten years and had hoped that last Election would settled the complection of the state for ever, and that some respite would be the result, but it is now otherwise. I for

one am determined to go at it again with an energy and perserverance which nothing can abate.

(* 1 Whig in the house *Etheridge of Weakley* would not vote for Turney)³

C. CONNOR

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on November 2, 1845.

1. A Nashville physician and member of the medical department of the University of Nashville, Thomas R. Jennings served as a Whig member of the Tennessee Senate from 1839 until 1845. In 1844 he won election as a Whig presidential elector for Tennessee's Eighth Congressional District.

2. Matthew Nelson represented Roane County for one term in the Tennessee House, 1813–14; he served as treasurer for East Tennessee, 1815–27, and as state treasurer, 1843–45.

3. Connor penned this parenthetical notation at the bottom of his first page. A Weakley County lawyer, Henry E. Etheridge won election to a single term in the Tennessee House in 1845. Subsequently, he served three terms as a Whig and American Party representative in the U.S. House, 1853–57 and 1859–61; he became clerk of that body in 1861. In 1869 Etheridge won election to a single term in the Tennessee Senate.

FROM ANDREW J. DONELSON

My dear Sir, Nashville Oct. 25h 1845

I passed thr Nashville on my way home, but found our friends so far disunited that no advice from me would avail any thing.

Since the election of Turney I have called upon him and he has authorised me to say that all the reports of his having made concessions to the Whigs, or of his having abandoned a Democratic principle are false. He will be out with a publication in a few days vindicating his conduct.

He has certainly erred in not yielding to the voice of a majority of our friends in the Legislature. But it is perhaps too much to expect all in our ranks to look alone at the public interest, or to be controlled by the ordinary usages of party when there is such an office as that of Senator at stake.

It is said Turney has complained bitterly of you for not answering his letter.¹ I told him he had done you injustice, that your course in regard to him was what it was in regard to others, that it was necessary for you to be silent or otherwise incur the imputation of interfering with the election.

Our true course is not to treat Turney with severity. He is in for 6 years, and if he dodges in none of the essentials of our creed, the best policy is to *seem to forget* that he has done wrong.

I have seen Childress. In his case it is better to stand still awhile. He is a candidate for the office of Controller. He does not want the other office, but would doubtless take it if desired, with the understanding that the door was not thereby closed for something better.²

I shall be off in a few days, will deliver your message to your Mother, and see Pillow.

The aspect of popular feeling & opinion where I have travelled is as favorable to your administration as could be wished.

Preserve the key of your inaugural in the Foreign relations and you have nothing to dread.

Tomorrow is Sunday, and I will devote it to a more formal letter. In the meantime present my grateful remembrance to Mrs. Polk whose kindness and hospitality will never be forgotten.

A. J. DONELSON

ALS. Polk Memorial Association, Columbia. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on November 2, 1845.

1. Letter not found.
2. William G. Childress declined Polk's offer to appoint him U.S. marshal for Middle Tennessee.

FROM AARON V. BROWN

Dear Sir

Nashville Octr. 27h. 1845

You see the result. Turney recd 53 votes. Nothing could prevent it. Appeals to *him* & to his *friends* were all in vain. Rumors prevailed & I do not doubt them that he had given the whigs written pledges of some sort (satisfactory to them) which embodied the whole party in his favor. Jones, Foster & Bell are said to have met their party & exhorted them to sustain him. Both parties however (Turney & the whigs) becoming alarmed lest the letter should be [for]ced¹ out; it is said agreed to the destruction of the paper & the belief now is that it has no present existence. After his election (same day) T. denied to many democrats that he had surrendered one iota of his Democracy & spoke to G. W. Jones² to select him a seal amongst the Democrats & that he had no doubt a reconciliation would take place between you & him on his arrival at Washington. On the whole I incline to think that he has playd off a trick on the whigs at the same moment that he forfeited & lost all the confidence of his own party. The District Democrats (several of them at least) behaved nearly as bad as the Six

Turney men in holding on to Dunlap *after* the Democratic nomination. They intended however *finally* to do right. The Turney men never.

My impression is that we can give *instruction* on all the points of Federal politics behind which Mr T. will step & support your administration throughout. I know not however whether to urge him to be there *at the first of the Session*. Our friends are mainly opposed to bringing on the East Tennessee Senatorial election³ & from our *little talents* in that way I think it had better be waived for the present. I do not believe any thing has happend yet which will weaken us hereafter in the state, but rather the contrary.

Mrs B⁴ is standing now at my chair (in my office) & desires to be kindly mentioned to Mrs Polk, in which request I most heartily concur.

A. V. BROWN

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on November 4, 1845.

1. Manuscript torn.

2. A native of Virginia and saddler by trade from Fayetteville, Tenn., George W. Jones won two terms in the Tennessee House, 1835–39, and sat one term in the Tennessee Senate, 1839–41. An unsuccessful candidate for presidential elector on the Van Buren ticket in 1840, Jones first won election to the U.S. House in 1843 and served as congressman until 1859.

3. Since the mid-1820's leaders of both parties in Tennessee had considered that one of the state's U.S. Senate seats belonged to Middle Tennessee and the other to East Tennessee. That tradition ended in 1847 with the election of John Bell, a Middle Tennessean, to the seat belonging to East Tennessee.

4. Cynthia Pillow Saunders Brown.

FROM PAUL K. HUBBS

New York, N.Y. October 27, 1845

Hubbs encourages Polk to employ more consular and diplomatic agents to "Extend at the same time the *productive* Industry and the *commerce* of the country." He thinks that effective agents can negotiate beneficial reciprocal trade agreements. Hubbs urges that certain "sinecure *drones*" be replaced by agents who "blend courtesy with discretion and maintain abiding *Industry* with knowledge of the matter in hand." He warns Polk that Great Britain and France plan to exclude American influence from South America. In a postscript, Hubbs recommends that James Buchanan be appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court, and that Andrew Stevenson¹ replace him as secretary of State.

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked "*Private & Confidential*." Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on November 1, 1845.

1. Stevenson, a lawyer, served several terms in Virginia's House of Delegates before winning election to the U.S. House, where he served from 1821 to 1834. He presided as Speaker of that body during his last four terms and went to Great Britain as U.S. minister from 1836 until 1841.

TO LOUIS McLANE

My Dear Sir:

Washington City Oct. 29th 1845

I had intended to write you a letter of some length by the next steamer, touching our Foreign Relations and especially in relation to the *Oregon question*, but my time has been unexpectedly occupied to day (the last one which I can write by the Boston Steamer of the 1st proximo) until within less than one hour of the closing of the mail in this City. I must therefore content myself, with a brief statement of what has transpired on the *Oregon question* since the receipt of your last despatch, and private letter to *Mr Buchanan*.¹ *Mr Pakenham* as I learn from *Mr Buchanan* has called several times at the Department of State, and has manifested great uneasiness on the subject, as well as expressed an anxiety to renew the negotiations. *Mr Buchanan* has informed him, more than once that if the British Government had any proposition to submit, it would be respectfully considered by this Government. With this he does not seem to have been satisfied, and on Monday, the 27th Instant, delivered to *Mr Buchanan* a formal note dated on the 25th and in the close of their conversation, remarked that it might be regarded as official or not as, might be afterwards determined on. I gave to this note much consideration, and an answer was prepared, but not be delivered unless *Mr Pakenham*, first elected to have his note regarded as official and placed on the files of the Department. *Mr Buchanan* informs me that the note has just been withdrawn by *Mr Pakenham*, who preferred to consider it as unofficial. Of course he has not seen the answer which had been prepared, or been informed of its contents further than he might infer them, from a remark of *Mr Buchanan*, which he informs me he made to him, to the effect, that in the present state of the negotiation we could not be expected to abandon the position we had taken. It was this remark I incline to think which induced him to withdraw his note, and to consider it unofficial. *Mr Buchanan* will forward to you for your *private information* a copy of his note, and of the answer which had been prepared, but which was not delivered.² From the answer you will be able to understand fully, the ground which this Government will continue to occupy. The more I have reflected on the subject, the more doubt I have had, whether the

administration could have been sustained by the constitutional majority of the Senate, or by the country, if our proposition, as made in Mr Buchanan's note of the 12th of July, had been accepted.³ It is at all events certain that Great Britain will make no other proposition more favourable to the U. States than that which was so promptly rejected by *Mr Pakenham*, and in the existing state of things it is equally certain that we could not accept one less favourable if indeed we should *now* agree to the original proposition. *Mr Pakenham's* object seems to be, to receive something from the Government, here, which will deliver her Majesty's Government, from the embarrassment, produced by the rejection of our proposition, and its subsequent withdrawal by us. In this he will not be gratified. There is nothing to prevent him from making any proposition, he may think proper to make, and when made, he has been informally informed that it would receive respectful consideration. He can have no assurances in advance what answer we would make to any proposition he may think proper to make. I am satisfied with our present position, which will be unchanged until the meeting of Congress unless, *Mr Pakenham*, shall address some other communication to this Government. If he does this, he must act voluntarily as he has a perfect right to do, and without waiting for an invitation from the U. States, or receiving any assurances of what the answer would be. I can form no opinion whether the negotiation will be closed where it now stands or whether, the discussion will be continued. That will depend altogether on the British Government. In either event, with my present views I shall probably consider it to be my duty to lay the whole subject before Congress in my annual Message. I shall of course recommend nothing which would violate the Convention of the 6th of August [...] ⁴ may give my views strongly as I entertain [...] of our rights in the Oregon territory. [...] much more to say, but am [...] I have but a few minutes to close in time for the mail. I have written in great haste, & have no time to revise, but as my letter is *private & unofficial*, it is not necessary, [...] I should revise. I thought it proper to place you in possession of the facts here stated, & having done this my object is accomplished.

Will you present the kind salutations of Mrs. Polk and myself to Mrs. McLane⁵ and believe me to be with

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to London and marked "*Private & unofficial*."

1. McLane to James Buchanan, September 18, 1845. LS. DNA-RG 59; and see also his private letter to Buchanan of September 18, 1845. ALS. PHI.

McLane's despatches reviewed the substance of his first interview with Lord Aberdeen, the British Foreign Secretary.

2. On October 28, 1845, Joseph Knox Walker copied both letters, Sir Richard Pakenham to James Buchanan of October 25 and the proposed reply of October 28, for Polk's files. L, copy. DLC-JKP. Pakenham had asked for a renewal of negotiations based on the July 12 proposal and denied rejecting that proposal as the basis for negotiation. The reply states that the U.S. "cannot renew the former offer, nor submit any new proposition," although Pakenham is invited "to decide what other or further steps if any he may think proper to take in the negotiation." Walker notes that this section of the reply was in Polk's hand.

3. On July 12, 1845, Buchanan transmitted to Pakenham a proposal to divide Oregon at the 49th parallel and to grant Britain free access to ports on Vancouver Island located south of that boundary. On July 29, Pakenham rejected the proposal without referring it to London for consideration. On August 30, Buchanan withdrew the proposal from consideration.

4. Faint ink transfers render word or words illegible here and below.

5. Catherine Mary Milligan McLane.

TO WILLIAM H. POLK

My Dear Sir:

Washington City 29th Oct. 1845

Your letter of the 17th of Sept was received by the last Steamer enclosing a draft on *Baring Brothers & Co*, for £77.9s. It has been cashed by J. Knox Walker, and the proceeds being in our currency \$377, will be applied by him to the payment of your debts. A part of it \$200, will be paid to Mr Hunt of¹ and the balance to your creditors at Columbia. I have an impression that you owe a debt to *Maj. Gamlin*,² for money loaned shortly before you left Tennessee, and if so, it is a debt of honor, which you are under peculiar obligations to pay. If the debt to *Gamlin* is still due, as I suppose it is, the balance after paying \$200 to Hunt will be paid to him. Mr Hunt will be assured by J. Knox Walker, that the balance of his debt will be paid out of the remittance which you promise to make next spring.

I am happy to inform you, that the former remittance which you made and which was paid out in Tennessee has had a good effect, in quietting the complaints of your creditors. They are now satisfied that you are making efforts to pay, and that you will, by economy save all you can, and pay as fast as your means will permit. This will satisfy them, and save your reputation from the injury, which threatened it. I am heartily rejoiced that this is so, first

because it is what you ought to have done, and secondly because it will relieve you from the pain, which the clamour of your creditors was well calculated to produce. I will only add while on the subject of your private affairs, that I hope by the time you come home you may be entirely unembarrassed, and feel again that you are a free man. If your debt to *Gamlin* has been paid, the balance after making the payment to Hunt, will be paid out to your small creditors about Columbia.

I am sorry to say to you, that great confusion exists among our Democratic friends in the Legislature at Nashville, in relation to all the pending Elections, before them, and especially in the Senatorial election. Nine ballotings took place on the 21st Instant without a choice, when the Convention of the two Houses adjourned until the next day, and so the matter stood at my latest dates. *Nicholson* on each ballot received about 40 votes; *H. L. Turney* 12 votes, the body of the Whigs scattering their votes. How it will result, it is impossible to foretell.

I always, postpone writing to you until the last hour that will enable me to mail my letter by the next Steamer. This is the case to day. I intended to write you a long letter on public affairs, but have not time to do it before the mail closes. I will only say, that the Mexican Question stands in *status quo*, nothing of importance having occurred since my last. On the Oregon question I can only add that there is no probability, that the pending negotiation will result, in any settlement of the question. When Congress meets if the matter rests where it now does, I shall probably lay the whole subject before them. Of this however you will say nothing in your intercourse with the Diplomatic or other circles at Naples.

All our relations in Tennessee were well at my last dates. *Sarah* received a letter from Sister *Eliza*³ a few days, ago: all well.

Write me by every packet. The public despatch referred to in your letter to me, has not been received at the Department of State. If you sent it off, it has been lost on the way. You had better forward a Duplicate. I enclose to you herewith two letters which have been entrusted to my care.⁴

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Naples and marked "*Private & unofficial.*"

1. Polk left a blank space at this point in the manuscript.
2. A Columbia baker, James W. Gamblin served as Maury County jailer and was active in the militia before his death in 1849.
3. Sarah C. Polk and Lydia Eliza Polk Caldwell.
4. Enclosures not found.

FROM JOHN H. BILLS AND EZEKIEL P. McNEAL

Dear Sir Bolivar Tennessee October 30. 1845

We have heard that Uncle William is disappointed & displeased that his Son Thomas did not receive the appointment of Receiver at Springfield Mo. And that he had directed his Son-in-law Dr. Kent¹ t[o] call for the whole amount of your note to him when due. We hope this may not be so, but from the source we heard it, there is but little room to doubt. Knowing also that you only intended paying half at the end of 12ms, we are apprehensive that the call if made may put you to some inconvenience and to enable you to meet an emergency of the kind without difficulty, we now address you for the purpose of saying, that we can without inconvenience let you have in Philadelphia on the 1st January next four or five thousand Dollars. The funds are now there at interest but we have intimated to the Houses that hold them we would not draw before the 1st of next year. If you see proper to use the means proffered we doubt not that an arrangement Can be made with one of the Memphis Banks to furnish the *hard money* for Exch on Phila.

BILLS & McNEAL

LS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on November 14, 1845, and that he answered it on November 17, 1845.

1. A former Baltimore physician, Joseph Kent of Hardeman County married Sarah Roach Polk, daughter of William Wilson and Elizabeth Dodd Polk, in 1843.

NOVEMBER

TO WILLIAM G. CHILDRESS

My Dear Sir:

Washington City Novr. 1st 1845

I see from the Nashville papers that no election of Senator, has been made up to the 20th ultimo. I most deeply deplore the division, and I fear excitement among our political friends in the Legislature, growing out of that election. A most unfounded rumour I learn prevails at Nashville, that I have taken part, or indicated a preference as between the aspirants, for that station. You may be assured, and may assure others, if you think it necessary, that the rumour is wholly without the slightest foundation. I have taken no part directly or indirectly between the aspirants. I could not do so with any propriety. I have not written a line to any one, or in any other manner expressed a preference. Shortly after it was ascertained that the Democratic party had succeeded in the election, in August, I saw from newspapers, and learned from correspondents, that several of my leading, personal and political friends, were aspirants, or were spoken of, for the place, and among them were, *Coe, Huntsman, Turney, Nicholson, Judge Turley, Fitzgerald, Judge Dunlap, Trousdale, &c.* They had all been my fast friends, and it was impossible occupying the position I do, that I could with any propriety, have interfered between them. I talked with *Cave Johnson* on the subject, and he knows that such were my views and [...]¹ I was astonished therefore, when I heard of the rumour at

Nashville, that I had attempted to *dictate* to the Legislature. The election will no doubt be over long before you receive this, but still I wish to stand right with my political friends, and I hope you will in a proper way, correct the rumour.

Genl. Bradley has doubtless communicated to you, what I said to him concerning yourself, when he was here, and explained to you the difficulties which have surrounded me.² I need scarcely add, that I take a deep interest in your prosperity and welfare, and hope and believe it may be in my power to give you substantial evidence of it, during my term. *Genl. Bradley* mentioned to me that you desired to have one of your sons appointed a *Cadet* at West Point.³ There are but 10, at large within the appointment of the President or Secretary of War; all the rest are nominated, by the member of Congress, each being entitled to one, and are when nominated appointed as a matter of course. Of the 10 at large I had personally promised one to a friend in Tennessee, and may have some embarrassment in taking another from the same State. Of this I cannot judge until the time approaches. Already I have many applications from leading men in different states, for their friends. I wish you however to forward to the Secretary of War, the application for your son, that it may be placed on file. It will be necessary to give his age, his physical constitution and health, and a letter or statement from his last teacher, of the progress he has made in learning, and of his moral character. Let his application be placed on file, and if when the time comes to act, I find it can be done with propriety, it will give me pleasure to appoint him. It is proper I should add that at present I am unable to speak with certainty. I have another suggestion to make to you, which if it meets your approbation I will *certainly* be able to serve you & him. It is, that if your son would be willing to enter the *Naval service*, instead of the *army*. I can very soon appoint him a *midshipman*, provided his age does not exceed *eighteen years*. None can be appointed who are over that age. If appointed a *midshipman* he would be placed at the *Naval School* at Annapolis in Maryland for a few months, perhaps a year, until he was sufficiently instructed in his duties to be prepared to go to sea. If he will accept a *midshipman's* warrant, he will be within *forty miles* of Washington, while at the school at Annapolis, and when ordered to sea I would take special care to have him placed under a Commander who would treat him kindly. I would myself advise, him to accept it, but still this will be a matter of taste with him, and for your own judgement. Vacancies of *midshipmen* are constantly occurring. Tennessee has less than her proportion in the service, and I could probably appoint him, in the course of a few weeks, if he decides to accept it. I would myself prefer a *midshipman's* warrant, to a *cadet's*

warrant, but I merely give you the information, and leave you to decide. *Sarah* joins me in desiring to be remembered to *Mrs. Childress*.⁴

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to “Near Nashville” and marked “*Private*.”

1. Word illegible.
2. See Thomas H. Bradley to Polk, October 17, 1845.
3. Either Thomas B. or William James Childress, twin sons of Childress.
4. Sarah C. Polk and Mary Berkley Childress.

TO EDWIN F. POLK¹

My Dear Sir:

Washington City Novr. 1st 1845

My time has been so constantly occupied with my public duties, that for eight months I have had scarcely a moment to devote to correspondence with my friends. I have intended several times to write to you, simply to say, that I think you would be gratified, if not profitted, by a visit to Washington, during the approaching winter. The early part of the Session of Congress, is usually the most interesting to strangers. You can well spare the time, and it will give me pleasure, to see you here, and to have you an inmate of my family at the President’s mansion, during your visit.

I have no time to write you concerning public matters. As far as I can judge my administration has encountered thus far, quite as little opposition as I had any right to anticipate.

Make my kind regards to your mother.²

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Bolivar, Tenn.

1. A Hardeman County lawyer and farmer, Edwin F. Polk was the youngest child of Ezekiel Polk and was twenty-two years younger than his nephew, James K. Polk.

2. Sophia Neely Lennard Polk.

TO SAMUEL P. WALKER

My Dear Sir:

Washington City Novr. 1st 1845

I received this morning your two letters of the 18th and 21st ultimo, and hope my note to uncle *William Polk* has been paid off in pursuance of my instructions, before this time. He is a man of much uncertainty, and his refusal to receive a part, until the whole was paid, is in full character, with many other of the acts of his past life. I will not permit

myself to indulge a single unkind feeling towards him, but hope he will be satisfied when the whole note is paid off. If you have not paid it, when you receive this letter, I hope you will do so, at the earliest practicable period, pursuing my instructions in my letter to you of the 9th ultimo. I addressed a letter on the 9th ultimo to him (*Wm Polk*) to *Helena* Arkansas, and hope when he receives it he will be satisfied, not only that I pay *punctually*, but before the note is due. I hope he will be further satisfied that it was impossible for me, to gratify his wishes in the appointment of his son,¹ to the Land office in Missouri, without violating all propriety, as well as disregarding the expressed wishes in favour of another,² of a majority of the Democratic members of Congress, from that State, and of the leading Democratic citizens, in the immediate vicinity of the office. That his son is worthy I have no doubt, and that he may be qualified I think probable, but he was not the person recommended for the office, either by the public men, or people of Missouri. Had I disregarded *their will* and appointed him, simply because he was my relation, and because his father wished it, I should have been subjected to severe censure and attack. Because I did not appoint him, the old gentleman has taken offence. I am sorry he has done so, but I cannot help it. He rendered me a personal favour when he loaned me the money last January, but I can never consent, to repay the favour, by performing a *public act* which would be wrong. My public conduct must be governed by higher considerations, than by my personal obligations to him. When my note to him is paid the pecuniary obligations to him will be liquidated, and then let the matter rest. If he becomes satisfied at his son's failure to get an office, well: if not I shall give myself no further concern about the matter.

I am glad that you fully appreciate my situation and the reasons which induced my course towards *Mr Pickett*. As to your father's letter written in a moment of excitement,³ I care nothing about it, will pass it by, and never think of it. For your prosperity in life, I feel a deep interest, and hope it may be in my power, *with propriety*, to give some substantial evidence of it during my term. I admire *Mr Pickett's* manly course, who instead of indulging in complaints, has taken a reasonable view, of my situation, and of my public duty.

I may hereafter write to you more fully in regard to these matters.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Memphis and marked "*Private*."

1. Thomas M. Polk.

2. Nicholas R. Smith served as receiver of public money in the land office at Springfield, Mo., 1842-44 and 1845-49.

3. See James Walker to Polk, August 23, 1845.

FROM RICHARD M. JOHNSON

My Dear Sir,

White Sulphur. Ky. Nov 2d 1845

Yours has been recd respecting the salary of Mr Vanderslice.¹ You are the exclusive judge of all such cases, and I have no opposition to make to it.

I am under very great personal obligations to you which time cannot cancel for your kindness towards this school here,² in which I am so deeply interested but not as much as the tribes who send Boys here & the government who are much benefitted by its influence upon them. If a Treaty should be made with the Pottawattimy & other indians who have gone to the City³ from Council Bluffs I hope you will not forget that they send some 16 Boys here & I hope this fund will not be diverted for some few years & perhaps more could be sent for that time. The last letter from Col Wheeler⁴ was filled with great expressions towards you for his prospects in getting a place at the City. If Mr Crawford should be appointed judge as I see intimated, no man in the nation would fill his place with more integrity & industry than Col Wheeler. I feel anxious for the appointment of Col Wheeler as he would carry with him more power to concentrate the Democratic feelings towards the administration & no man with the same power to counteract & conciliate disaffection from the South. I am gratified that you have a man so wise, so prudent, so conciliatory, so firm & so consistent as Thomas Ritchie near you. I am corresponding with my Democratic friends to unite upon & sustain this noble & able patriot & Editor, who has sacrificed so much for his party & his Country.

I am devoted every day in the week to hard labour & management of my affairs except Sunday, when I keep up my correspondence before & after hearing a good Sermon & of nights I read the newspapers. I can see nothing to condemn & much to approve in your course & that of the administration, so far as I can see it. You have immense power to do good & I wish you to pursue your straight forward & correct course regardless of those who think the Country was made for them & the administration also & not for the people; what presumption, what arrogance, what unholy ambition! From these good Lord deliver us. We have had & passed our difficulties with Mexico. Our next trouble I see will be with our old dissatisfied & unnatural Mother.⁵ Very well, I am ready to stand by you in case of great need & extremity. It is then you will want friends. If I thought I could be of vital & essential service I would go to the City to serve Mr Ritchie.

I have read with astonishment letters & comments from the Charles-

ton Mercury.⁶ It is not common to see a leading Journal of the South so reckless & perfidious! But his course has been unmasked and his unjust suspicions & accusations have been nailed to the counter as base money not only by Thomas Ritchie but denounced & disapproved by the leading democrats of the South.

I am enjoying health & reasonable happiness in my daily labours & my prospect of soon being on my feet under your patronage of this school & the blessings of kind Heaven.

That you & Mrs Polk may enjoy health & prosperity is the fervent wish of yours most

RH. M. JOHNSON

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. Polk's letter has not been found. D. Vanderslice was the superintendent of the Choctaw Academy in 1845.

2. The Choctaw Academy, which received funding from the proceeds of treaties with many Indian tribes and from an annual Congressional "Civilization Fund," operated under Johnson's sponsorship from 1825 until the 1840's. Beginning in 1842, many Indian tribes and the Office of Indian Affairs promoted tribal schools at the expense of the Academy.

3. Washington City. The Pottawatomie, Ottawa, and Chippewa Indians concluded a treaty with the United States in June 1846.

4. A lawyer, diplomat, and historian, John H. Wheeler served five terms in the North Carolina House, 1827–30 and 1852. He also served as superintendent of the Charlotte branch of the U.S. Mint, 1837–41; North Carolina state treasurer, 1842–44; and U.S. minister to Nicaragua, 1854–56.

5. Great Britain.

6. An extreme advocate of states' rights and a South Carolinian loyal to John C. Calhoun, Robert B. Rhett served in the U.S. House from 1837 until 1849. During the summer of 1844, he defied Calhoun's wishes and launched the "Bluffton" movement for separate state action on the tariff. Rhett succeeded Calhoun in the U.S. Senate in 1850, but resigned his seat two years later. Through his newspaper, the *Charleston Mercury*, he espoused the right of secession and inveighed against the South's reliance upon the Democratic party; he lead South Carolina out of the Union in late 1860.

FROM JOHN M. BASS

Dr Sir

Nashville Novr 3 1845

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter covering one to Mrs Grundy enclosing a midshipmans commission for her grandson Felix Grundy.¹ Being unable to write without inconvenience from a late attack of illness from which she has not yet recovered she charges me to express to you the many obligations she feels to you for

this manifestation of your kindness, while she indulges the hope that her grandson will by his future good service to it, repay the debt of gratitude to his country for his education & support and that he will do no discredit to the good name which he bears.

We were fortunate in finding at so early a day so good an opportunity of sending him on as is afforded by the departure tomorrow of Col S H Laughlin & daughter Mrs Kezer² for Washington the former of whom will present him to you with this letter.

We shall feel much indebted for the letter to Commander Buchanan of which you propose to make him the bearer and for any supervision of him which it may be in your power hereafter to bestow. Col. Laughlin has kindly undertaken to put him in charge of someone going to Annapolis & to commend him to the kind attention of Dr Duberry.³ Mrs Grundy & Mrs Bass desire to be presented to Mrs Polk.

JNO M. BASS

ALS. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE states that he received it on November 17, 1845.

1. See Polk to John M. Bass, October 23, 1845, and Polk to Ann Phillips Rogers Grundy of the same date.

2. Ellen Laughlin Kezer, wife of Timothy Kezer.

3. Edmund L. Dubarry served as a surgeon at the Marine Barracks in Washington City.

TO DANIEL GRAHAM

My Dear Sir: Washington City Novr. 3rd 1845

Your letter commenced on the 23rd and closed on the 25th ultimo, was received this morning. The history which you give of the collision and excitement among our political friends in the Legislature, pending the Senatorial election, gives me great pain. I deeply regret that harmony and good feeling could not have prevailed. The rumour or story which I learn from you and others, was circulated at Nashville, that I had interfered or in any manner expressed a preference as between the Democratic aspirants to the Senate, is without the slightest foundation in truth. I wrote not a word to any human being, on the subject, nor did I in any manner direct or indirect express an opinion or a preference. Occupying the position I do I could not have done so with propriety, and if I had I know it would be charged as *dictation* on my part, and would have done more injury, among our political opponents, to the individual, indicated as my choice, than to, any one else. Soon after the result of the August election was known, I learned from the Tennessee

newspapers, and from correspondents, that a number of the prominent men of the Democratic party were aspirants, or were spoken of by their friends for the place, and among them, were *Turney, Nicholson, Trousdale, Coe, Judge Dunlap, Judge Turley, Fitzgerald, Huntsman, & Judge Wm T. Brown*. They had all been my personal and political friends. Each of them had a right to believe that I was personally friendly to him, and between them I could take no part. I stood aloof, and took not the slightest part, leaving it to my Democratic friends in the Legislature to select between them. I conversed with *Cave Johnson* on the subject who knows, that such was my course. My astonishment was therefore the greater, when I learned, that, the story was circulated at Nashville, that I had attempted to *dictate* to the Legislature whom they should choose.

I think you are right in the opinion that a conciliatory course should be pursued towards *Mr Turney*. In times past I never had a better friend, personal or political. There has been no man more decided in his political course than he has been and unless he is harshly treated by excited and indiscreet friends I have no doubt he will support my administration. We have thought alike and acted alike on all the great questions before the country.

I have My Dear Sir: received several letters from you which I have not answered, and for which I thank you. My time has been so constantly occupied for eight months, with my public duties, that I have had scarcely a moment to devote to correspondence with my friends. I know you will properly appreciate the cause of my silence. I have been desirous ever since, I have occupied my present position to have you near me in some position which you could with propriety accept. You have no conception however of the pressure which has been made upon me, and of the embarrassments which have surrounded me, not the least of which has grown out of geographical considerations, and the charge (unjustly made) in certain quarters and Democratic newspapers, that too much had been done for Tennessee. I still hope in the course of a few months, to offer you such a position as may be acceptable to you. I make these remarks to you voluntarily, because you have never intimated to me, your desires on the subject. *Mrs. Polk* would be delighted to have *Mrs Graham*¹ here. Will you present the kind regards of Mrs. P. and myself to Mrs. Graham and be assured that I am Your friend.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Nashville and marked "Private."

1. Maria M'Iver Graham.

FROM HARVEY M. WATTERSON

Dear Sir,

Nashville Nov. 3d 1845

I have not written to you for some length of time, presuming that other friends would keep you informed of all that was passing of an interesting character.

I have sat myself down this evening to give you some particulars of one of the foulest transactions which stain the political annals of Tennessee, or of the Union. I desire to be brief and to the point.

1. All of a sudden Hop Turney was seized with a very great aversion to Caucuses, which astonished many but not me; for I knew the motive and the aim.

2. When the Legislature met he refused to submit his claims to the Democratic members, and openly denounced you, on the pretense that you had *dictated* to your friends in the Legislature to elect Nicholson. His evidence was that he had written you a letter *asking if you had dictated!* and you had not responded.

3. Thirty nine Democrats met in Caucus, of whom thirty two voted for Nicholson, four for Dunlap and three for Turney. Those who voted for Turney were Robertson Anderson¹ and myself, neither Sam Turney, Henry Turney, Fletcher, Garner, Northcut or Roberts being present. Under the circumstances could my vote have given him the nomination, I would have seen him at the D. _ _ 1 before he should have received it.

4. About the 15th Oct I saw Dr. Boyd McNairy in frequent private conversations with Turney, and I told A V Brown that the symptoms looked unfavorable. "O said he, the Whigs will never unite upon him in the world." I told him I had no faith in Whiggery, and as to Turney my firm and settled opinion was, that he would dissolve the Union to be elected to the Senate of the United States!

5. The balloting commenced on the 21st Oct. On the 22d when we adjourned for dinner, Nicholson told Aaron V. Brown, Guild, Gardner and myself that he had had a full, free and confidential conversation with James A. Whitesides,² in which Whitesides gave him all the facts in reference to the bargain which was going on between Turney and the Whigs—that Turney had written a letter pledging himself that he would oppose a modification of the Tariff, advocate the distribution of the proceeds of the public Lands, and denounce the head of the National Administration. When the two Houses again met, Col. Guild & Gardner made speeches in favor of the postponement of the election for ten days, but neither of them, as I expected, alluded by *way of rumor*

to the existence of the letter referred to. I called Jonas E. Thomas to the chair, and made a few remarks defining my *position* on the Senatorial election at the close of which I spoke of *rumors* meeting me on every corner that Mr Turney had made concessions to the Whigs, and called upon Cullom of Smith to state what he knew about the matter. He arose and said, that *he* had received no such letter, that *he* had no such letter in *his* possession. I then asked him if he had *seen* or heard such a letter *read*. He replied that he would not be catechised in so extraordinary a manner by no gentleman, and proceeded, for some minutes, to tell the Convention that I was for White³ and he hoped I would turn back to the *Whig* faith &c. This proceeding astounded every body, and that is only half—it satisfied all present that the rumor was too true to make a joke of. Next came Gordons resolutions, the delay, and then the election.

6. In the meantime from Venable⁴ of Williamson, and Whitesides, I learned the truth of all the charges which had been preferred against Turney, and I took occasion when my name was called on the ballot, which consummated the corrupt and infamous bargain, to speak some plain truths, and declare eternal war against *Hop Turneyism*.

7. *Items*, which were communicated to me by Whitesides, & not only to me, but to at least one dozen of Democrats.

Item No 1. He says that Gov Jones acted as the organ of communication between the Whigs and Turney—that when the vote was first taken in the Whig Caucus, will you support Turney, there were but five members who said *Aye!*

Item No. 2. The next Caucus Jones again made his appearance and said, "Gentlemen, Mr Turney is now in the Hotel. I have just come from the room where he is. We have had much conversation, and he is willing to sign a letter making these *pledges*, (reading a memorandum which he said he had made of their conversation in Turneys presence and read it to him). How many of you will support him, if he will write you such a letter?" The vote was taken and thirty eight agreed to "go it," but eight or ten swore they never would support the d — d traitor.

Item No. 3. A meeting of the *impracticables* was subsequently called, Jones still urging the election of Turney by every argument in his power, and exhibiting the *Knockdown* argument of a letter! But they still swore they couldnt and they *would'nt*. Foster begged them, Bell persuaded them. At length one gave way, then another, and finally all "*caved in*," save poor Etheridge of Weakly.

8. On yesterday I met Venable. He is in great distress. He was elected by the Democrats and a few Whigs, and they are all mad. He says if Turney does show his hand at the expiration of the ten days he

asked he intends to go home, address the people, and lay before them the reasons why he had supported Turney, which were because he had made the pledges specified.

9. Judge Ridley informed me to day that his brother in Law Dr Crosthwait⁵ (a Whig) says that Turney told Gov Jones, that he (Jones) was the man to run against Brown at the next election, and with an oath, that the Mountain District would give him a larger majority than it ever gave to any man! Is not this too bad?

10. Aside from all this positive testimony, if Turney was not guilty, why did he refuse to answer the interrogations which were put to him as to his *present* political opinions? Why did his friends combined with the Whigs stifle investigation? There is but one opinion on the subject here & the democracy will denounce him from one end of the state to the other. He has no escape. The brand is upon him. Such barefaced Treachery is unparalleled in the history of Traitors. What he redeems his promises to the Whigs or not is wholly immaterial. In his election the popular will has been violated, principle has been sacrificed, decency has been outraged, the integrity of the party has been assailed, and honor, honesty, and every thing which makes a party respectable, has been trampled under foot. No body but a Turney could look an honest man in the face, after such deliberate villany.

I understand that Col. Donelson has written to you, that Turney said after his election that he was still a good Democrat.⁶ No doubt but he said so. But you may rest perfectly assured, that such a blaze of indignation is getting up against him, that it will be almost unsafe for him to show himself in some parts of the country. And the excitement has but commenced. The democratic members will publish an address to the people in a few days giving a history of the whole transaction, and eternal destruction awaits the politician who has the madness to defend him. The traitor Arnold, if he were alive now, would not be half so odious, as Hop Turney will be made by future developments.

I ask your power for the length of this letter, and assure you in conclusion I express but the feelings & opinions of every Democrat who has *clean hands* and a *clear conscience*.

H. M. WATTERSON

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on November 11, 1845.

1. Isaac Roberson and Pierce B. Anderson. A Bledsoe County farmer, Roberson served as a Democrat in the Tennessee Senate, 1845-47. He helped to establish Sequatchie College and served as its president. An Athens lawyer, Anderson represented McMinn County as a Democrat in the Tennessee House from 1843 to 1847.

2. A Chattanooga lawyer, manufacturer, and railroad promoter, James A. Whiteside served as a Whig in the Tennessee House, 1835–37 and 1845–49, and in the Tennessee Senate, 1837–39.

3. William Cullom's reference is to the 1836 presidential election, in which Hugh Lawson White broke with Andrew Jackson because of Jackson's insistence that Martin Van Buren succeed him as president. In the election White carried Tennessee, receiving the support of many Tennessee Democrats, who held an unfavorable opinion of Van Buren. White's campaign helped to lay the foundation for the Whig party in Tennessee.

4. A Franklin attorney, Simon Venable represented Williamson County as a Whig in the Tennessee House from 1845 until 1847.

5. Bromfield L. Ridley and George D. Crosthwait. A lawyer and Democrat, Ridley represented Warren County for one term in the Tennessee House, 1835–37. He moved to Rutherford County in 1840 and served as judge of the Chancery Court from 1840 until 1861. A Rutherford County physician and Whig, Crosthwait served as clerk and master of the chancery court at Murfreesboro, 1844–49; won election to one term in the Tennessee House, 1849–51; removed to Iowa City, Iowa; and sat in the Iowa Senate in 1852.

6. See Andrew Jackson Donelson to Polk, October 25, 1845.

FROM ROBERT ARMSTRONG

My dear Sir Consulate U States
Liverpool 4th Novemr. [1845]¹

The people of this Country both high and low are in great alarm at the prospect of a Scarcity of bread. The grain Crop is greatly injured and the Potato Crop almost a failure. The Ports of the Kingdom will I have no doubt be opened in a few days for the admission of grain free of duty. The trade now in *Bread* is Large.

Mr McLane and Lady are spending this week with Sir Robert and Lady Peel at Drayton Manor.² I learn Sir Roberts note of Invitation was Couched in the most cordial and gratifying terms.

The war preparation goes on with great Activity. It is Strange that the Government are expending so much in the Improveing of *their Coasts* fortification.

If the Preparations are for us The Government here expect a *Short* war. They cannot exist with out us—they may open their ports and get in a Stock of grain that will last them a *year*, but our Embargo would whip them. Withhold The Cotton and they would soon be in trouble. In a short war they would think to cripple us, take our Navy, burn some of our towns and get us in *debt* &c &c. and keep down our rapid advancement of which they are very Jealous.

I hope I may here from by the Next Steamer and I further hope that

you will not say or do any thing that will tend to raise Majr Lewis *out* of the depth that he is now consigned to by the Publication of Genl Jacksons private letters. I have Letters from home on this subject and his Conduct is properly understood by the *family* and all others there.

Present me to Mrs Polk Mr & Mrs Walker. I send a letter enclosed to Betty.³ Please give her address, she May have remained in Philad.

R. ARMSTRONG

ALS. DLC–JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City. E on verso of page 3 states that this letter was received on November 22, 1845.

1. Year identified through content analysis.
2. Julia Floyd Peel. Drayton was the Peel family estate in Staffordshire.
3. Elizabeth Armstrong.

FROM ANDREW J. DONELSON

Dr Sir,

Nashville Novr. 4h 1845

I left here a few days ago intending to have gone on to Mississippi, but some private business requiring me at home, my journey has been postponed until now.

You will see from the papers that the division among our friends in the Legislature, on the choice of a Senator, is felt in the smaller elections, so much so that it is now even doubtful whether a Democrat can be chosen to any office. Your county-man, Gordon, has voted for Zollicoffer, thereby electing him, and defeating Mr Childress.

Looking upon things as not to be mended by any means in my power to apply, since I passed thro Nashville on my way from Washington, I have not interfered with them. It was evident from the moment that prominent members of the party rejected the usual modes of consultation in securing unity of action, that the Whigs possessed the power of deciding all elections. The only remedy is time and a resort to the people who will not fail to call to account those who have derived their authority from them.

Since my last note to you¹ circumstances lead to the suspicion that Mr Turney's defense will not be satisfactory to our friends. Huntsman was his endorser to me, in strong assurance that he had made no concessions to the Whigs, and that he would entirely exculpate himself after the election. As yet, however, Mr Turney has made no publication, and some of the most sagacious members of the Legislature think that, when made, it will make his case no better.

I scarcely know what to say to you in the case of the Marshal, since Mr Childress seems so indifferent about its acceptance. He seems to consider that in a pecuniary point of view it can be of little aid to him.

Mr Sheppard is anxious to retain it until the commission expires, and he has some Democratic friends who would prefer to see this indulgence extended to him. Under all circumstances unless Mr Childress writes to you that he *himself* is now willing to take it, I think your safest course would be to let the nomination be to the vacancy occasioned by the expiration of the term of office. I have explained to Mr Childress your kind intentions towards him, and your determination to aid him more effectually whenever you can with propriety.

My steps are taken with a view to the trip across the Atlantic, as quietly and silently as I can make them.² As they involve however new dispositions of my private affairs, it is possible that they may be understood by those who are in the habit of watching public movements. I hope to return to this place in three weeks by which time I suppose I can have disposed of my Mississippi interest. It is important to me that the nomination should be made as soon as you receive the answer of Mr Wheaton,³ or as early as you can with propriety after the meeting of Congress.

It is expected by your friends that on the Oregon question the tone of your message will be a firm adherence to the entire claim of the United States, yielding nothing from the apprehension of war to the policy of Great Britain. The doing this and maintaining a judicious ground on the subject of the Tariff will place you beyond the reach of your enemies. All candid and observing men admit that the present Tariff should be reduced on many articles in order to make it just to all sections of the Union, and that this can be done without lessening materially the amount of Revenue thus raised. But whilst this is true it is nevertheless as obvious in the present state of public opinion that we cannot discard altogether the principle of discrimination, so applied as to protect our home productions against the destructive and selfish legislation of other nations. Time is doubtless bringing us nearer to the free trade standard, because it is witnessing our rapid march to the point at which we can compete successfully with even Great Britain in all the branches of manufactures. There must be, however, an entire change in the legislation of the world before we can expect that happy period to come when there will be no necessity for discrimination in our Tariff.

The old maxim that truth is generally to be found between extremes,⁴ may well be applied to the divisions in our country on the subject of the Tariff. The manufacturers want too much, the planting interest excited by a long depression in the price of their leading staples would yield too little. In striking the balance between them, it is fortunate that the condition of the country will enable you to advance

a step nearer to the expectations of the latter than did Genl Jackson or Mr Van Buren. This much at least has been gained by time, and by the development of the resources of the country.

You spoke to me of a paragraph in your message referring to the loss sustained by the death of Genl Jackson. I have attempted several times to write something on the subject, but could not please myself, and have therefore abandoned it, concluding that I could say nothing half so good as what had already occurred to you. Having sustained the relation of a son to a Father, towards him, what I could say would be but the weakness of such feelings.

Mr Walker is here and tells me your mother is well, but I shall call upon her tomorrow and deliver your message. Pillow has gone to the south.

Remember me gratefully to Mrs Polk and also present my kind regards to Mr & Mrs Walker.

A. J. DONELSON

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on November 14, 1845.

1. See Donelson to Polk, October 25, 1845.
2. Donelson's reference is to Polk's intention to appoint him minister to Prussia.
3. A jurist and historian, Henry Wheaton received an appointment as chargé d'affaires to Denmark in 1827, and in 1830 he secured a treaty of indemnity for American ships seized by Denmark during the Napoleonic period. Wheaton also wrote essays on Danish law and literature along with his *History of the Northmen* and began work on his *History of Scandinavia*. In 1836 Wheaton published *Elements of International Law* which aided in his promotion in 1837 to the post of U.S. minister to Prussia. In 1844 Wheaton negotiated with the German states of the *Zollverein* an agreement providing for the reduction of duties on American tobacco and rice and the free admission of cotton. He also arranged a series of treaties with various German states securing the rights of German emigrants who had become citizens of the United States. In 1846, Polk recalled Wheaton from Prussia.
4. Oblique reference to the classical concept of the golden mean, "Moderation is best," Cleobulus of Lindus.

TO GIDEON J. PILLOW

My Dear Sir:

Washington City Nov. 6th 1845

I received three or four days ago your letter of the 23rd ultimo, and was pained to learn from yourself and others, that much division and excitement has prevailed among our political friends at Nashville in relation to the Senatorial election. The rumour which you state was

circulated, that I had interfered in that election, is without the slightest foundation. I wrote no letter on the subject, to any human being in the State, nor did I in my answers directly or indirectly indicate a preference among the aspirants. *Gov. Brown* was the only person, to whom I wrote, after the August elections, in relation to public affairs in the state, and to him I simply expressed the hope and specially urged, that harmony might prevail among our political friends, in all elections and other matters which might come before the Legislature. Occupying the position I do, it was impossible that I could with propriety interfere with the Senatorial or any other election. I saw from the newspapers and learned from other sources, that a number of my political friends were aspirants to the Senate, or were spoken of by their friends, & among them were *Nicholson, Trousdale, Coe, Huntsman, Fitzgerald, Judge Dunlap, Judge Turley, & Judge Wm. T. Brown*. They had all been my friends and the only course of propriety left for me to pursue, was to stand aloof leaving our party in the Legislature to decide between them. I did so, and was astonished when I learned that a different course had been attributed to me. As to the occurrences of dissatisfaction towards the administration which you heard and of which you informed me, all I can say is, that time will show, that they remark without sufficient [. . .]¹ As to the appointments which you inform me were condemned by some who profess to be my friends all I have to say is, that *Harris* was the only applicant from the State for a Pursurship in the Navy. I had no knowledge of any other human being in the State, who either desired or would have accepted it. *Lewis* has no office, but a temporary employment only. He was qualified, was very poor, and I thought deserved it. The truth is all the trouble I have had in my administration thus far, has grown out of appointments to office. The applicants are vastly more numerous than the places to be filled. It is impossible to gratify all, and those who are disappointed usually murmur, and find fault with the administration, but take care not to avow the real cause of their griefs. You would be astonished to know the number of those in Tennessee who have desired office. You have not given me the names of those, whom you heard indulge, in these rumours at Nashville, but I venture the opinion, that when known, they will be found among those who have been disappointed in their applications for office. I have one happy consolation, however, which is, that so far as principle and measures are concerned my path is plainly marked before me, and I shall steadily pursue it, without turning to the right or to the left. I shall firmly maintain the political faith which I have ever professed, will have great confidence that I will be sustained by the great body of the party and by the country. The doctrines

which were proclaimed by yourself and others at Baltimore as the political creed of the party; will be strongly maintained. I shall appeal, from the judgment of those of our party who seem to regard office as the chief end of Government, to the great body of the people, who [...] to the public good & are satisfied, if they see their principles and their policy maintained. I forebear to make any remarks, in regard to the result of the Senatorial election, further than to express, the hope that the consequences may not be so disastrous as you predict. I thank you My Dear Sir for the information which you give me, in your very kind letter, and beg to assure you that I will ever take a deep interest in your prosperity and happiness. Will you make the kind regards of Mrs Polk and myself to Mrs Pillow and believe me to be

JAMES K. POLK

P.S. I am preparing to meet Congress and hope you may be satisfied with what I may say to them when you see it. J.K.P.

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Columbia and marked "Private."

1. Word illegible.
2. Two words illegible.

TO JOHN SLIDELL

My Dear Sir: Washington City Novr. 6th 1845

I have delayed answering your letter of the 14th ultimo,¹ in the daily expectation of receiving further intelligence from Mexico. The *Princeton* which was expected to return to *Pensacola* at furthest by the 20th Oct., no doubt remains at Vera Cruz, waiting an answer from our consul at Mexico,² to the despatches, which she carried out for him. I infer from the delay, that the Mexican Government, have taken time to deliberate, whether they can safely renew diplomatic intercourse with the United States. I have reason to believe, that the judgement of *Herrera* and his advisors, is favourable, to an amiable adjustment of pending difficulties between the two countries, but in their present weak position, they probably fear to encounter the popular opposition which might be made to such a step. We have no assurance when we may expect to hear from Mexico, and I cannot ask that you will longer delay your departure for Washington. Unless, we shall hear within a day or two (in which event I will write to you), you need not remain longer at New Orleans unless you choose to do so. I regret that you have been put to inconvenience, in coming with your family to Washington, as you mention it had been your intention to do, at an earlier period. The cause of it, however, could not have been foreseen

or anticipated. My intention is still to avail myself of your services, in the manner mentioned in my first letter to you,³ at the earliest moment it can be done with propriety. In the present state of my information, I would desire to see you here at the meeting of Congress, and as it is probable that the event contemplated may happen shortly after that time,⁴ I submit it to your better judgment whether you will bring your family with you or not. I mention this because when it does happen, it may be desirable for you to proceed, with the least possible delay. It is desirable on other accounts, that you should be here at the organization of Congress, for though we have a large majority in the House, there should be full attendance of the Republican members, to guard against any, possible embarrassment or difficulty which may arise, but which I hope there is no ground to apprehend.

When you reach here I can have a more full conference, with you, than could be had by correspondence, upon the important matter, about which I have heretofore written to you. I have consulted with *Mr Buchanan* who concurs with me in these views.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to New Orleans and marked as “*Confidential*”.

1. Letter not found.
2. John Black.
3. See Polk to John Slidell, September 17, 1845.
4. Polk refers to the impending appointment of Slidell as U.S. minister to Mexico.

TO JOHN SLIDELL

10. OClock P.M.

My Dear Sir: Washington City Novr. 6th 1845

I wrote to you this morning.¹ The mail of to night, brings, intelligences from Mexico, to the effect that, that Government, is ready to receive a Minister from the United States, and to treat concerning the pending differences between the two countries. I write you this hasty note, to give you the information, and to recall what I said in my letter of this morning, in relation to your departure from New Orleans for Washington. I will write more fully on tomorrow, and will only now add that the earlier you can be at your post, after receiving your instructions the better. I still deem it very important, for the reasons stated in my first letter to you,² that your appointment shall not become public, until after you leave for Mexico.

JAMES K. POLK

[P.S.] Your instructions will be forwarded as soon as they can be prepared, which will be in two or three days. Your commission will of course accompany them. J.K.P.

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to New Orleans.

1. See Polk to Slidell, November 6, 1845.
2. See Polk to Slidell, September 17, 1845.

FROM JESSE MILLER¹

My Dear Sir

Harrisburg Nov. 7th 1845

I trust you will pardon the freedom I take in troubling you with this communication. I feel myself [as] if it was some what presumtuous to say any thing to you on a subject with which you are so much better acquainted than I am myself and on which you have the benefit of much abler advisers. The tariff question is the one from which democracy has more to apprehend in Penna. than any other and as I apprehend the ascendancy of the democratic party in the Union depends upon the maintaine of our position in this state it renders every movement that will affect us here one of no ordinary consequence to the whole nation. The great increase of the manufacturing interests and population, epecially in the Iron business, and the great extension of the coal business are rendering us every day more and more of a Tariff state. Whether the notions of our people are right or wrong matters not. I feel persuaded that we must yield to them to a great extent or give Whiggery the ascendancy. Some of our democratic friends about Pittsburg and else where seem to have become so alarm'd on the subject that they are about to hold a Tariff convention² without respect to party at which I suppose strong resolutions will be passed against any alteration of the Tariff of 1842. Some of us here have endeavored to discountenance this amalgamation and have advised the democrats to keep out of it as it is only an admission of the Whig arguments during the Presidential Election. But some of our friends think they are playing a strong game by trying to take the lead and showing more zeal in the cause than the Whigs. The Iron interest has rec'd a most extra ordinary impetus from the increased demand in Europe and New Furnaces are being erected in great numbers in almost every part of the State where Iron ore is found and those that had ceased are being put in blast. The Whigs use all their ingenuity to keep out of view the real cause of the increased demand and advance of prices, and try to impress upon the people that this as well as every other business that is prospering is indebted to the Tariff of 1842. And the fact that

the Country is in a highly prosperous condition compared with what it was in 1839 & 40 & 41 gives them a most decided advantage in the argument with the less informed portion of the community. My own opinion is that but a few years will elapse until there will be a reaction in the Iron business and we will probably have more failures in the business than we have ever yet experienced, whether the duty on it is modified or not. But if it should be reduced all the failures will be attributed to that cause.

The opinion I entertain of a reaction is founded on the supposition that the present demand in Europe will increase the manufacture there so much as to supply the demand and produce a surplus for exportation to this country which with the extraordinary increase of production here cannot fail to reduce the price and break down all but the most favorably located establishments. Should this State of things come upon us under a reduced tariff at our next Gubernatorial Election in this State or at our next Presidential Election I doubt much whatever the democracy of Penna. can be sustained.

I take the liberty of sending you a Penna Reporter³ The first editorial article in which contains some of my notions as to the general policy of the country.

I know that Penna. is but one State of 28 but she is an important State to the democracy of the Union and however we may some times have faction at home we generally are able to unite our strength in the Presidential Elections and it therefore is important that such a course of policy should be pursued as will enable us to maintain our position. During the late contests we took advantage of Mr Clay's compromise act & his letters to different parts of the Union and contended that you were a better tariff man for the interests of the Country than he was.

Had it not been for his vacillation and inconsistencies I verily believe we could not have carried the State. Now my dear Sir cannot you treat the subject on general principles and in such general terms maintaining the necessity in levying a Tariff for revenue of making such discriminations for the protection of the industry of our own country as will give your friends in Penna. the means of maintaining their ground. Mr Walker I trust will recollect his native State and take care of her interest in his report. He understands them well but after all it is hardly possible for any man who is not living amongst our people and in daily intercourse with the masses fully to realize the importance of this question in a political point of view.

No man regrets more sincerely than I do that this question should be made to bear so directly on the politics of the Country. It is most unfavorable to its proper adjustment. The Whigs know that a protective

tariff is popular in Penna. and hence they make a hobby of it and the opposite extreme is taken in the South. Hence the difficulty of doing what would be just to the whole nation.

Will you my dear Sir pardon me for this intrusion on your time at this period when I know every moment of it is required for important purposes.

J. MILLER

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. Miller sat in both the Pennsylvania House and Senate prior to his election as a Democrat to the U.S. House, where he served from 1833 until 1836. He held the post of first auditor of the Treasury from 1836 until 1842; subsequently he received appointments as canal commissioner of Pennsylvania in 1844 and then as secretary of the commonwealth in 1845.

2. Former Democratic governor David R. Porter chaired the meeting in Hollidaysburg, Penn., on November 12.

3. Miller's article, entitled "The Tariff and the Sub Treasury," appeared in the Harrisburg *Pennsylvania Reporter*; date of issue has not been identified.

TO JAMES E. SAUNDERS

My Dear Sir:

Washington City Novr. 7th 1845

You will I know properly appreciate the friendly motive which induces me to write this note. *Gov. Bagby* called on me this morning, and in the course of conversation, remarked that he was happy to learn that your appointment was satisfactory, to our friends generally in Alabama, and that all was quiet in reference to it, at *Mobile*. He added however that it was apprehended by some of our friends at *Mobile*, that the subordinate places in the custom house, would be conferred by you, on your friends in the Tennessee valley, or North Alabama, and that if such should be the case, it would produce excitement and great dissatisfaction. I have thought it proper to communicate this information to you, and to express the opinion, that as a general rule, it would be advisable, to make your appointments, in such a manner as to avoid such an objection.

Since I have been President, I have been careful not, to interfere with collectors in their appointments to office, and you are the first to whom I have written a line on the subject. I was applied to, by *Col Childress* of Alabama, to interfere in his behalf, with the collector who might be appointed. I wrote to him, assigning the reasons why I declined to do so.¹ I must add however that I was much gratified to learn from your last letter, that you had given him an appointment.² I hope he will prove to be faithful and competent.

In justice to *Gov. Bagby* I must add that his remarks, to me this morning, were made in no unfriendly feeling towards you. On the contrary all he has, at any time said to me concerning you, was of a friendly character.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Mobile and marked “*Private & unofficial*”.

1. See Polk to Thomas B. Childress, September 17, 1845.
2. See Saunders to Polk, October 13, 1845. ALS. Polk Memorial Association, Columbia.

TO JOHN SLIDELL

My Dear Sir:

Washington City Novr. 7th 1845

My letter of last night, will place you in possession of the information received from Mexico.¹ It comes from the commander of our squadron in the Gulf, who transmits a copy of the answer of the Mexican Government, to a note addressed by our consul at Mexico, to the Secretary of Foreign affairs.² The original, which was entrusted to a special messenger, has not yet been received. The copy however transmitted by *Commodore Conner*, is deemed to be sufficiently authentic to justify our action here. Accordingly your instructions are in course of preparation, and will be ready to be transmitted by a special messenger, who will leave here for *Pensacola*, on the evening of the 9th or at furthest the 10th Instant. A duplicate will be transmitted by mail, addressed under cover, to the Commander of the Naval Station at *Pensacola*.³ Orders have been issued to day, and forwarded to *Pensacola*, to have the *Princeton*, or if she is not there, some other vessel ready to sail in an hour's notice. I desire therefore that you will proceed to *Pensacola* with as little delay, as possible, and take passage, in such of our armed vessels as may be ready to take you to *Vera Cruz*. It is deemed important that nothing should be known of your official character, until you reach *Vera Cruz*. The success of your mission, may, depend, on with-holding the knowledge of the fact of your appointment, from the Representatives of Foreign Governments here, and especially those of England and France, until after you reach the Mexican Capital. There will of course be rumours and speculations at *Pensacola* after it becomes known that you have taken passage in one of our armed vessels, for *Vera Cruz*, but before those can reach here, you will be nearly, if not just at the City of Mexico. I suggest that your resignation as a Representative in Congress, may be forwarded to the Governor of Louisiana,⁴ by the return of the Vessel, which may take you to *Vera*

Cruz. The vessel will return forthwith to *Pensacola*. *Mr Buchanan* will write you in relation to your outfit, and salary, by the messenger who, will bear your instructions to you at *Pensacola*. I may also write you a private letter, through the same channel. I will thank you to acknowledge the receipt of this letter.

JAMES K. POLK

P.S. Your commission will of course accompany your instructions. J.K.P.

P.S. Mr. Parrott, our able faithful & efficient private agent in Mexico has been offered the Situation of Secretary of Legation. It is doubtful however whether he will accept it. Should he refuse, I feel inclined to consult your own wishes on this subject. He could at once place you in possession of the present State of affairs in Mexico & render you much assistance.

[P.S.] The above Post Script was written by *Mr Buchanan*, to whom I showed this letter. Should you desire to take *Mrs S*⁵ with you, as I think probable, I have no doubt, there will be ample accommodation on board the *Princeton*, or any other of our armed vessels on which you may take passage. J.K.P.

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to New Orleans and marked as "Confidential."

1. See Polk to Slidell, November 6, 1845.
2. David Conner, John Black, and Manuel de la Peña y Peña. A Mexican jurist, Peña y Peña served as a judge and president of the supreme court beginning in 1824; became minister of foreign affairs in 1845; and served as provisional president in 1847 and 1848.
3. A Maryland native, William K. Latimer received appointment as a midshipman in 1809; served as captain from 1843 until his retirement in 1862; and commanded the Pensacola navy yard during the Polk administration.
4. Born in the Attakapas district, now Jefferson Parish, Alexander Mouton served several terms in the Louisiana House, 1826–32 and 1836–37. A Democratic presidential elector in 1828, 1832, and 1836, Mouton won election to the U.S. Senate in 1837, resigned his seat in 1842 to run for the Louisiana governorship, and served in that post from 1842 until 1846.
5. Mathilda Deslonde Slidell.

FROM FITZWILLIAM BYRDSALL

[Dear Sir,]

New York Novr. 9th 1845

It was the vote of the progressive Democracy of the City of New York that gave the Electoral vote of the State to James K Polk in Novr. 1844,

independently of the five thousand democrats who voted for Wright, but not for the nominee of the Baltimore Convention; and it *is* the vote of the same portion of the Democracy that in Novr. 1845 gives a majority to the party in the legislature of the State, in support of the Resolutions adopted in Tammany hall on the 30th of October last.¹ In the former case, the candidate was supported, in the latter, the measures of his administration.

But why is it difficult to understand New York politicks and politicians? Because a revolution has been going on *within* the party for some years past, while the great men of other States have been only communing with those of this State, against whom the revolution has been progressing. Even he who got the nomination at Baltimore in consequence of that internal revolution, has not shewn that he understood its cause or tendencies, for if he had, would he have bestowed all his Executive patronage in this city, upon men who are known here as having acted and spoken in favor of the nomination of Mr. Van Buren? Was it not part of the progress of that revolution that placed him in the highest station of christendom, instead of the chosen one of State Conventions? Is it not part of the progress of the same revolution that declares for the measures of his administration in defiance of those who contrroll as yet the mere organization of the party? If he had understood a revolution so favorable to himself, would he have left himself destitute of the means of doing any thing for those to whom he owes so much, and who are now the enthusiastic supporters of the measures of his administration?

The revolution has overthrown Van Buren and it is grappling with and overthrowing Silas Wright. Even Samuel Young² who a few years ago stood so high with the progressive Democracy, has lost his popularity since he became a partizan of the ex President. The tendencies of the times are against all of them, the people every where have become restive under the leaders that rode them for so many years; they will not be led by those who look one way while going another, who will not speak in downright Anglo Saxon, that all can understand, but always patter in a double sense. Although they have assumed the most flaming term of English radicalism, "Barn Burners," yet it will not save them.

The Resolutions of the Tammany hall meeting were a true expression of the popular mind upon the Oregon question. The "Union" responds to it in coming out for the *whole* of that territory. We go also for the whole of Texas, and here again the popular instinct goes the whole length & breadth. Politicians should bear in mind that the acquisition

of territory is always as popular with the people, as the acquisition of wealth is to him who acquires it.

The New York Globe is quite a different paper from the late Plebeian, though under the charge of the same man, who in the last named paper recommended in 1843 that the line be drawn to cut off the revolutionizers of the party from the democratic party.³ He has now come with us, and some of his best articles are written by our men, and hence the contrast in spirit and scope between the Plebeian and Globe. It was myself that organized in this city in 1842 and 3 a party in opposition to the nomination of Mr. Van Buren, and I was its corresponding Secretary. It was our addresses, correspondence and movements, that brought about that state of feeling which led to your elevation. If this feeling had not been in existence when Mr. Van Buren's Texas letter came out, that letter, (as artfully constructed to please all sections of the democratic party, as any double tongued letter he ever wrote) would have been applauded all over the Union, and given eclat to his nomination.

A mighty spirit is at work in our State, which the Morning News calls treachery and treason to the party, a spirit which Mr. Wright cannot control or guide, for he has not the direct mind to do it, and it is opposed to him and his. But it is in favor of your measures and administration, and those whom it animates, are almost the only supporters you have in this state whose hearts are with you, though none of them have received any thing at your hands; but it must be admitted as a good defence, that with the exception of John McKeon, most of them are personally unknown to you, and many of them in circumstances beyond the reach of Government patronage, and *but few of them infest Washington.*

I have written this letter to congratulate you on the result of the late election, which by the success of the democratic Ticket in this city, gives a majority in the legislature in support of the character of your administration, and also to inform you of such circumstances as may enable you to understand New York politicks and politicians.

F. W. BYRDSALL

[P.S.] The democratic vote in our city is fully one third of a decrease chiefly V.B. malcontents and many Calhoun democrats who imagine the administration sanctions the spirit of proscription evidenced by its officers [...] towards them. The three heads of [...] belong to the Bourbon order of politicians. *They Wont Learn.*

ALS. DLC-JKP. Marked "For the President Only" on the cover.

1. The New York state elections were held November 4, 1845. Polk received

a printed copy of the Tammany Hall resolutions published in the *New York Globe* on October 31, 1845. DLC–JKP.

2. A lawyer and political supporter of Martin Van Buren, Samuel L. Young held numerous positions in state government, including service as a member of the New York Senate and as secretary of state.

3. Levi D. Slamm.

4. Words here and below obliterated by a tear in the manuscript.

FROM JAMES G. BENNETT¹

Sir

New York 10 Novr 1845

Apprehending that from appearances and signs throughout the country, that a combination of your secret foes in your own party, with the remains of the Whigs intend to make an assault upon your administration at the opening of Congress—and believing further, that your policy is right and proper, particularly on Texas and Oregon, I have had several conversations with C. Edwards Lester Esq on these points, and have come to the determination to give you a support thus far and to assist in defeating the opposition if possible on these questions.² Mr Lester goes to Washington for a few weeks. His views in these matters correspond with mine, and we have agreed upon a plan of operations that may have some effect. He will express them to you in person. I have also written to Mr Ritchie on the same subject. I should be sorry to see your secret foes and your open antagonists succeed in the first movement they intend to try, and if Mr Lester can assist, through the columns of the *Herald*, with my efforts in waking up your real friends, we will be most happy to do so.

JAMES G. BENNETT

ALS. DLC–JKP. Marked “Confidential.” Polk’s AE on the cover reads: “Handed to me by J. Edwards Lester, Novr. 13th 1845. No answer required.”

1. Bennett established the *New York Herald* in 1835. One of the first penny presses, the *Herald* opposed the renomination of Martin Van Buren in 1840 and supported the election of Polk in 1844. Although considered non-partisan, the *Herald* generally sided with the Democratic party until the 1856 elections.

2. A noted author of many popular books, Charles Edwards Lester served as U.S. consul at Genoa, 1842–47.

FROM WILLIAM BRIGGS¹

Sir

Allegheny City Pa November the 10, 1845

Excuse my abruptness of sending youre honor these few lines. If you pleas, I hope you may receive them Cordially and honer me with the

favor I request of you. As I all ways were a strong advocate for youre party and youre Election I canot help writing to you. I attended two Elections One at Lewis Vill one at Cincinati. I do expect that I asisted some in youre Election. How ever my Father and uncles faught in the Reverlutionary war and they all ways suported the Democratic ticket and cause so his sons folow the same course good and strong. I now wish to in forme you of my request. I am a man forty two yeares oald a horse Farrier by Ocapation have been Married twenty one years last January and never have been Honored with an hair untill since youre Election. I lay it to Polk times for on the six of October my wife were delivered of as fine a little daughter as there is in ten towns. Me and my wife request of you or youre lady to honor us with presenting her with a name by letter. This is from a poor man but an honest friend. I write this my self. I hope youre honor will excuse me and answer this if you pleas. I am told you are the poor mans friend as well as the rich.

WILLIAM BRIGGS

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. Briggs is not further identified.

FROM AARON V. BROWN

Dear Sir

Nashville Novr 10th 1845

I take leave only to say that Colo. Fulton has been here & that I showd him your letter.¹ He instantly declared that there was no foundation for the rumor of his having become alienated from you. None whatever & that he was as sincerely your friend as at any period of his life. All quiet here waiting for Turney's expose. Every day confirms the suspicion of T's guilt.

A. V. BROWN

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on November 17, 1845.

1. James Fulton. See Polk to Brown, October 24, 1845.

FROM THOMAS L. HAMER

Dr Sir:

Georgetown O. Nov. 10th 1845

It is due to you & to my self that I should write you again, as I promised, in regard to the office of Comr. of Indian Affairs.¹

I could not accept the office for two reasons, if no more. First, The salary is but \$3000 & my income from the practice of the law is from

five to six thousand annually. In a pecuniary point of view therefore the sacrifice is too great. Secondly, I do not desire any Executive appointment; but if I took one, I could not consent to accept one of a secondary grade. As a man, a lawyer & a statesman, I have a reputation for talents acquirements & integrity, in all the country North West of the Ohio, if no further, which forbids it. In accepting such an appointment, I should neither do justice to my own feelings, nor to those of my numerous friends, who take an interest in my movements & welfare.

Now, although I deeply sympathize with you in your troubles & perplexities, for I am aware that you have many; although I know I could often be of service to you, in cases where the advice & assistance of a *true friend* is invaluable, and notwithstanding my friendship for you *personally*, is ardent & unabated, & will continue so through life, yet I could not consent to come to Washington on the terms proposed. I regret it exceedingly; but the issue was unavoidable.

It is highly probable my name will be used next summer as a Candidate for Congress. If I run, I shall be elected without difficulty. In that event, I hope to be with you, & you may expect me to stand by you "in six troubles & not desert you in the seventh."²

I sincerely hope the present divisions in the Party may become healed, & that your Administration may result in promoting the permanent interests of the country, and in securing to yourself a rank among our Great National Benefactors.

Present me kindly to Mrs. P. & say to her that my poor child, who was sick when I wrote last, finally died of Congestive fever. She was a most promising & brilliant daughter of 16 years of age. It is not quite a year since I lost her dear mother.³ Providence has laid His hand heavily upon me within the last twelve months. But His will be done & not mine.

TH. L. HAMER

P.S. Tell Mrs. P. that I do not *look* a day older than when she saw me last, & I am sure I do not *feel* any older! H.

ALS. DLC–JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City; and marked as "*Private*."

1. See Hamer to Polk, October 13, 1845. ALS. DLC–JKP.
2. Paraphrase of Job 5:19, "He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee."
3. Lydia Higgins Hamer died earlier that year. Hamer's daughter is not identified further.

TO JOSE JOAQUIN HERRERA

Great and Good Friend! [Washington City, November 10, 1845]¹

I have made choice of John Slidell one of our distinguished citizens, to reside near the Mexican Government, in the quality of Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States of America. He is well informed of the relative interests of the two Countries, and of our sincere desire to restore, cultivate and strengthen friendship and good correspondence between us; and from a knowledge of his fidelity and good conduct, I have entire confidence that he will render himself acceptable to the Government of Mexico, by his constant endeavors to preserve and advance the interest and happiness of both Nations. I therefore request Your Excellency to receive him favorably, and to give full credence to whatever he shall say on the part of the United States. And I pray God to have you in His safe and holy keeping.

JAMES K. POLK

L. DLC-FP. Counter signed, "James Buchanan/Secretary of State."

1. Place and date determined by content analysis

TO JOHN SLIDELL

My Dear Sir: Washington City Novr. 10th 1845

The bearer of this letter will convey to you, your commission and instructions as Minister to Mexico. *Dr. Parrott* the special messenger, bearing despatches from Mexico, did not arrive at Washington until last night. The despatches which he brings, copies of which are forwarded to you, confirm the intelligence which we had received at the date of my letter to you of the 7th Instant. It is probably known or suspected here, that *Dr. Parrott* bore despatches to the Government, but it is not known what they contain: nor is it known that a minister has been appointed to Mexico. I think it important, that this fact should not be made public until the meeting of Congress, by which time I hope you will be in the Mexican capital, ready to pursue the object of your mission, without being threatened and embarrassed, by the interference or influence of the foreign representatives here which they would undoubtedly exert, if they were apprised of your appointment. Your instructions have been very carefully considered, and have received the united approbation of the cabinet, and I have but little to add to them. I will say however, that I am exceedingly desirous to acquire *California*, and am ready to take the whole responsibility, if it

cannot be had for less, of paying the whole amount authorized by your instructions. If you can acquire both *New Mexico* and *California*, for the sum authorized, the nation I have no doubt will approve the act. I have not communicated to *Dr. Parrott*, what your instructions are, but in conversation with him this morning, I learned his opinion, based on an intimate knowledge, of the public men and people of Mexico, that both *New Mexico* and *California* could be had, for \$15,000,000. This however was a mere opinion. He concurs in the opinion which I have previously entertained, that whatever you may be able to effect, must be effected speedily. I hope therefore that you will lose no time, after your arrival at Mexico, in starting on the negotiations. It is important that it should be brought to a conclusion at the earliest practicable period, and the result communicated to the Government here. I desire to make known to Congress, the result, in time to enable that body to take such action as may be proper before the adjournment of the next session. If unfortunately, you shall fail to effect a satisfactory adjustment, of the pending differences between the two countries (which I will not anticipate) we must take redress for the wrongs and injuries we have suffered into our own hands, and I will call on Congress to provide the proper remedies. If on the other hand a Treaty should be made, it should be here in time, to receive the ratification of the Senate, and for the necessary legislative action to be had to carry it into effect.

In consideration of *Dr. Parrott's* long residence in Mexico, his familiarity with the language of the country, and his intimate knowledge of and acquaintance with the public men, and people, I have deemed best to appoint him your Secretary of Legation. He can be eminently useful to you, at least, at the commencement of your mission. You are perhaps not informed of the fact, that he has been the confidential agent of this Government in Mexico, for the last five months, and has performed his duties satisfactorily. He had no anxiety to accept the place, but has consented to do so. He will leave here for *Pensacola*, in two days from this time, will be taken from that place in one of our steamers or public armed vessels, to *Vera Cruz*, and will be in *Mexico* very shortly after your arrival there. I hope you will keep the Government advised at short intervals of the progress, of the negotiation. One of our steamers, or one of our other armed vessels will be kept constantly at *Vera Cruz* to bear your despatches.

Wishing you a safe journey and a successful mission

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Pensacola, Fla., and marked as "Confidential."

FROM CAMPBELL P. WHITE¹

My Dear Sir,

New York 10th November 1845

The enclosed statement will show you the result of our recent Election.² It proves conclusively that the factious opposition of the Barnburners and Conservatives as they are significantly termed and who are nearly equally culpable on this occasion had well nigh ended in the inglorious defeat of the Democratic party. Another such victory, and it will be defeated. There are those in the Party who are animated by higher and nobler motives and will be found ranging themselves under your Banners in despite of these selfish and disgraceful controversies. You hold the patronage of the General Government as a high and sacred trust for the benefit of the *whole* Democratic party. May we not hope in the distribution of that patronage hereafter, you will frown indignantly on those members and sections of the Party, who seem regardless of its supremacy; if they can only succeed in destroying each other? I trust the Party will rise in its strength and shake off this Incubus which threatens its dissolution?

CAMPBELL P. WHITE

ALS. DLC-JKP. Marked "*Private.*"

1. A New York merchant, White emigrated from Ireland to the United States in 1816 and won election as a Democrat to the U.S. House, where he served from 1829 until his resignation and subsequent retirement in 1835.
2. Enclosure not found.

FROM SAMUEL H. LAUGHLIN

My dear Sir,

Steamer Palestine, Ohio river
Near Wheeling, Va. Nov. 11, 1845

When I got to McMinnville on my visit to Tennessee via Richmond, Lynchburg, Abingdon, Knoxville, &c, I met the news of the dissensions which had arisen at Nashville in the Senatorial election. At Sparta I parted with the younger Col. Wm Byars¹ of Washington Co. Va. who went on to Nashville by Lebanon. As he was going to Nashville where he was a total stranger on business of importance, in which he might need the advice of friends, I had given him letters to Col. L. P. Cheatham, Col. Temple &c.² His business was to sell a lot of negroes he had sent out a few weeks before. As soon as he got to Nashville, it being in the heat of the contest for Senator, it became known that I was in

the country. I had said in my letters of introduction, which were mere brief notes, that I would be in Nashville in a few days on my return to Washington by the river. A friend who came to McMinnville, and left Nashville after it was known there that I was in Warren, informed me that it was lucky I had not come out by that city, that one party in the contest had already charged that I had come out to interfere in the election, and that, no doubt, I knew and would make your private wishes known in regard to the result, and which would amount to direct dictation. As I had never written to any one a single word which could be known to members in regard to the election of Senator except a letter to Mr. Turney, after the state election was over, and that having been just such a letter as I would have written to a brother; exhorting him to lend all his aid and personal influence to prevent any split or collision in the party, and being advised that some of Turney's friends had been censuring me for even writing that letter, and imputing it to a wish on my part to dictate to him, and also that it was doubtless written by your knowledge with a view to persuade Turney to make too great concessions, I determined not to go near, not to write a line, not to send a single word of message to any human being at Nashville till the contest should be over. I was perfectly aware from facts known to John Ford, Dr. Smartt, Maj. Mercer³ and others, that the contest had assumed a character which could not be changed by any intreaties of mine. I was determined that not a color should be afforded by any act of mine upon which whigs or discontented democrats could found a suspicion of interference against you through me. After the state election was over in August, I had written to Dr. Smartt, Gen. Smartt,⁴ and other friends to intreat and instruct their members to unite in harmony in making a choice, but had never dropt a hint of preference for any man. To members elect, I had not written on the subject. Standing thus clear of having interfered, and only having written the letter of friendly advice to Turney, in which I assured him of what he did know to be true, that you had not, and could not interfere between men who had been alike your faithful in late contests in Tennessee. I had distinctly assured him that I did not write at your instance, or pretend to speak or know your sentiments further than both him and myself, from our long knowledge of your course and character, must know what your course would be in such a contingency, that you had not, and could not interfere.

In this state of the case, although it delayed my departure for Washington three or four days, a thing I deeply regretted from the approach of the session of Congress, I determined to keep away and be silent. I knew if I went to Nashville, it would be impossible by any protesta-

tion of mine to avoid imputations of interference, and misrepresentations of all sorts, from which harm and mischief in some unavoidable shape might arise. I therefore awaited the result in silence, and left McMinnville on the next day after the Nashville papers said it would be over. I met the result in Cannon by Old Squire Dougan of Grundy⁵ who was returning, and at Murfreesboro I met the vote. Turney had left Nashville and passed through Murfreesboro on his way to court at Manchester and home the day before I got there, so I have not seen him at all.

When I went to Nashville I found many democratic members in exceedingly bad temper, others hoping that in the end the injury to the party would not be so bad as some seemed to apprehend. I took especial pains to satisfy all old true friends that it was grossly false from first to last that you had in any way ever interfered in the slightest manner. All the more sober minded men, such as Voorhies, Gardner, Dr. Martin, &c,⁶ had from the first contradicted and disbelieved it. The charge of your interference had been made when the Assembly first met, and had having been made before, my arrival had only been stated to be confirmation. I took care to make several of our friends who had deemed it natural and even proper that you should have felt, and even expressed a preference proper in itself, satisfied that you never had. I took leave to say that at no past time, much less lately, had I ever heard you express, nor had I ever heard of your expressing a preference between Messr. Nicholson and Turney. I think there is not one democrat in the Assembly that now thinks you ever interfered or intended to interfere. I have had a distinct disavowal of any such present belief from each of Turney's "Immortal Six."⁷

Mr Turney had promised in a card to make an explanation. Everybody was looking for it with anxiety. Waterson who had been outrageous in his abuse, and some others were for collecting proofs of Turney's pledges to the Whigs, and publishing the whole with comments. I begged him and others to wait for Turney's expose, and in whatever they did in self-justification to observe a dignified moderation. Some thought no such publication necessary. I thought so myself, and I intreated many of our best friends, to do no act which would shut the door against Turney's acting fully and heartily with the democratic party on all questions in the Senate. Waterson's purpose is, to put Turney, and Sam Turney down in our Congressional district, that *he*, and not Sam may succeed Mr. Cullom.⁸ It is Harvey Waterson he is fighting for, more than to restore peace to the democratic party in the district.

The affair is bad enough, but I know Turney must go into the Senate

and be ultra in his democracy to reinstate himself as best he may. I put Ford upon a moderate course, and even sent him an Editorial to soften matters in the mountain country, and hold Turney to his faith.⁹ His vote in the Senate is of more importance than that any man should rise to a seat in Congress by driving him out of the party. I understand that he said in a speech at Manchester, that he was more fixed and settled in his democracy, than at any former time of his life.

I think a bitter publication against him by a large number of democratic members of Assembly might do harm, would destroy whatever little of weight he may bring into the Senate, and do no possible good to the party. It would look like a war of many upon one, and would enable him, if driven out of the party by it, to take friends with him. If he chooses to damn himself by *going out*, in pursuance of pledges to the Whigs, or of his own accord, he can take not one man in the state over with him, not one even in his old district.

As I learn, when the Assembly first met, some of Mr. Nicholson's over zealous friends, in confidentially electioneering for him, gave out in hints and words, that they were sure or knew that you preferred him.¹⁰ This, when it came out [...] ¹¹ Turney's friends caused them to retaliate and charge you were [...] The matter is now over, and I hope the best. Of the affair, and other matters I can tell you more when I reach the city. I send this from Wheeling. I go round by Brownsville.

S. H. LAUGHLIN

ALS. DLC-JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City; and marked as "Private."

1. Not identified further.

2. Leonard P. Cheatham and Lucien M. Temple. A Nashville lawyer, Temple served as justice of the peace, deputy clerk of the circuit court, district attorney general from 1862 until 1865, and member of the Tennessee House representing Davidson County, 1855-57.

3. John N. Ford, Thomas C. Smartt, and L. D. Mercer. Ford edited the McMinnville *Central Gazette* from 1835 until 1842; he served as postmaster at McMinnville during that same period. A McMinnville physician, Smartt married Laughlin's daughter, Sarah Louise. A McMinnville merchant, Mercer took an active part in Democratic party affairs in Warren County.

4. A farmer in Warren County since 1806, William C. Smartt attained the rank of brigadier general in the militia following the War of 1812; he served one term in the Tennessee House, 1817-19, and two terms in the Tennessee Senate, 1821-23 and 1825-27. He was the father of Thomas C. Smartt.

5. Not identified further.

6. Jacob Voorhies, John A. Gardner, and Alfred Martin.

7. Reference is to the six Democrats who supported Turney's election: John

D. Fletcher, Thomas H. Garner, Henry Turney, Samuel Turney, Isaac H. Roberts, and Adrian Northcutt.

8. Harvey M. Watterson, Hopkins L. Turney, Samuel Turney, and Alvin Cullom. A lawyer and Democrat from Overton County, Cullom served one term in the Tennessee House, 1835–37, and two terms in the U.S. House, 1843–47; he sat on Tennessee's Fourth Judicial Circuit Court from 1850 until 1852.

9. Leonidas N. Ford edited the McMinnville *Central Gazette*. Laughlin's reference is probably to the editorial of the November 7, 1845, issue.

10. Laughlin continued writing this paragraph in the right margin of the fourth page and then in the left margin of the first page.

11. Words here and below obscured by binding tape.

FROM ANSON JONES

Sir, Executive Department
City of Austin Novr 12th 1845

I have the honor to transmit you herewith a copy of the "Constitution of the State of Texas," with the proper evidence of its adoption by the people of this Republic, to be laid before the Congress of the United States for its final action, in accordance with the provisions of the "Joint Resolution for annexing Texas to the United States."¹

ANSON JONES

ALS. Tx.

1. Polk submitted the Texas state constitution on December 9, 1845.

FROM ANSON JONES

Sir, Executive Department
Austin, Novr 12th 1845

By request, I have the honor to transmit to your Excellency a recommendation by the Members of the recent convention, held at Austin, in favor of the officers of the Army and Navy of Texas, whose commissions will be vacated upon Texas becoming a State of the Union and those who have been honorably discharged for want of funds to keep them in Commission.¹

Confident that your Excellency will readily appreciate the superiority of a recommendation upon principle, like this, by those who are in the performance of an implied duty, to one of a private and personal character, obtained by individuals whose signatures are easily

obtained; and feeling assured that your Excellency will give the subject that deliberation and decision it merits

ANSON JONES

ALS. Tx.

1. Enclosure not found.

FROM SAMUEL P. WALKER

Dear Sir.

Memphis Ten. Nov. 12th 1845

I received your letter of the 1st inst on yesterday. I have delayed writing to you for several days, desiring when I did write, to be able to inform you that I had complied with your wishes in regard to the payment of your note to Wm Polk. I have been waiting to hear from him. Howard received a letter from him a few days ago, in which he said, he would send the note up by the first *Safe* opportunity. He evidently does not wish to receive the money until the note is due. He mentions that the note is not due, but that he will receive the money if offered to him. He will receive but *six* per cent interest, but wants the *specie*. I hope the note will be here in a few days. I will pay it on the day it is received, *precisely as he wishes it*. As soon as the note is recd. I will write you again on this subject.

The Great South Western Convention meets here to day.¹ A very large number of deligates are in attendance. Twelve states are represented (*Texas included*). Among the deligates are Gov. C. C. Clay of Ala,² Jno. Bell, E. H Foster, Gov. Jones &c &c. Mr Calhoun has arrived. His reception was magnificent. I am glad he is here. His presence will probably keep down any effort to get the public lands for Internal improvements. I will write Knox in a day or two and in the mean time may be able to form an opinion, as to whether there is any thing *political* in the meeting or not. If we get up a considerable Rail Road fever *Iron* will need no protection.

SAML P. WALKER

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on November 25, 1845.

1. The Memphis Convention of South and Western States met for four days; John C. Calhoun served as its chairman. The convention passed a series of resolutions recommending federal funding of numerous internal improvements designed to foster transportation and commercial development in the South and West.

2. A lawyer and Alabama state legislator, Clement Comer Clay won three terms as a Democrat in the U.S. House, 1829-35; he also served as governor of Alabama, 1835-37, and as U.S. Senator, 1837-41.

FROM HENDERSON K. YOAKUM

Huntsville, Montgomery County Texas

November 13, 1845

Dear Sir,

It has been some months since I had the pleasure of writing you a letter, more because I know your duties would prevent you from reading such things, than for any other cause. This country is rapidly rising into notice, and is improving in wealth and population. After the hard struggle we had to obtain it, it would be a pity now to neglect or postpone any public measure that would retard its growth. The happiness and comfort of more people are suspended upon the admission of this state into the Union than upon any public measure that has been before Congress in many a day. The people here await the event with great anxiety, those intending to come here, are ready, packed & harnessed to move. The whole judiciary is suspended, the price of property is fluctuating, the people are standing on tiptoe as if waiting for a crisis. They wish to say & to feel that they are legally, equitable, soul and body in the Union. What they most devoutly wish then is that congress may admit them speedily, that they may have all their fears removed and go to work. I do not know that I can do any good, or that you even can much advance this great measure; but we all feel & know that you are a faithful friend to this country, & are willing to do all you can to consummate her happiness.

Every month of delay is the loss of a million to the people here. The elections come on for Legislature & Governor the first of next month, no excitement, but few candidates out. Pinkney Henderson will be Governor, Houston &, I think, Rusk will be senators.¹ The Legislature when called together will adopt the plan suggested through Mr Donelson, for disposing of the public lands.

Mail facilities are awful, postage ditto. Gen Green, who wrote that Mier expedition, is said by the people here, to be a great humbug.² Houston is omnipotent with the majority in Texas. I saw him the other day in Houston. A razor has had no intercourse with his face in some weeks. There will not be a handful of Whigs in Texas. I have seen but one, & he came over the gulph with us. The anti annexationists here went for *free* trade, which will prevent the most of them from joining the whig ranks.

You will find many applicants for promotion here. I had not been two hours in Galveston, before Anthony B. Shelby (brother of the doctor)³ handed me a petition to sign for him to be federal judge. I signed it, of

course. Some of them are afraid you will give the offices to the people of New Orleans.

Mr League, one of the leading anti annexationists, told me that Elliot⁴ was sincere in the proposition to buy up the slaves in Texas, and that he consulted many of the Leading men (supposed to favor the scheme) upon the subject, & told League himself "that, if, he could accomplish it, he would be a greater man than the duke of Wellington."

You will please give my respects to Miss Johanna,⁵ & tell her we are living here near this very young town of Huntsville, surrounded by rich prairies & cane brakes, & poor piney woods, enjoying many of God's blessings, and that poverty which has been a good friend to us through life.

My regards to Madam Polk, with my best wishes for your welfare, and the success of your administration.

H. YOAKUM

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. James Pinckney Henderson, Sam Houston, and Thomas J. Rusk. A brigadier general in the Texas army and an experienced lawyer, Henderson served as attorney general, secretary of state, and agent to England and France for the Republic of Texas prior to his appointment in 1844 as special minister to negotiate a treaty of annexation with the United States. Elected governor of Texas in 1846, he fought in the Mexican War with the rank of major general; later he served part of one term in the U.S. Senate, 1857-58. A successful Georgia lawyer, Rusk moved to Texas in 1835; organized a company of volunteers for the Texas revolution; and served as inspector general of the Texas army from 1835 to 1836. A signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence, he served briefly as the Republic's first secretary of war in 1836; sat for one term in the Texas Congress, 1837-38; and served as chief justice of the Texas Supreme Court, 1838-42. He served in the U.S. Senate from 1846 until his death in 1857.

2. A native of North Carolina and a graduate of West Point, Thomas Jefferson Green served in the legislatures of North Carolina and Florida before removing to Texas in 1836. Commissioned a brigadier general in the Texas army, he recruited volunteers in the United States before winning election to terms in the Texas House and Senate. He published his *Journal of the Texian Expedition Against Mier* in 1845; four years later he moved to California, accepted a commission as a major general of the state militia, and served one term in the California Senate.

3. Shelby served as a circuit court clerk in Nashville before removing to Texas, where he served as a district court judge in the Republic of Texas; he was the brother of John Shelby, a Nashville physician.

4. Charles Elliot served as British chargé d'affaires to the Republic of Texas from 1842 until 1845. League is not identified further.

5. Johanna Rucker.

FROM HARVEY M. WATTERSON

Dear Sir, Nashville Nov 14th 1845

What think you of Turneys letter?¹ Is it not a confirmation of every charge made against him?

My object in writing you this note is to assure you *again*, that Turney is eternally lost to the Democracy of Tennessee, by which I mean that he never will be taken into their *confidence* any more. He has disgraced himself with every true Democrat, and with every *honorable* man.

So far as I am concerned, *my flag is up*. Eternal war upon all such rascals is my motto. There is no man on earth who can change my course. It is a question of *honor*, which I can not pass over without making myself as *infamous* as Turney has proven himself to be.

Two years ago, in the election between Long & Jones,² he acted as unprincipled as he has in the late *case*. Consequently, (being the second offence) I say *again & again* that with *me* all the waters in the Atlantic can never rub out the *stain*.

This Legislature will not accomplish any thing that is desirable, and the sooner they adjourn the better. The truth is I feel disgusted, and unless I change my mind I am done with politics.

H. M. WATTERSON

ALS. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on November 22, 1845.

1. Hopkins L. Turney's letter "To the Public" appeared in the *Nashville Union*, November 13, 1845.

2. Reference is to the 1843 race for the Fifth Congressional District seat between Medicus A. Long and George W. Jones. A lawyer from Nashville, Long published several newspapers, including the *Nashville Union* from 1835 until 1836. He won election to one term in the Tennessee House as a Democrat in 1841. Long moved to Florida in 1843 and married Ellen Call, the daughter of Richard K. Call.

FROM SAMUEL P. WALKER

Dear Sir, Memphis Ten. Nov. 15th 1845

Your note to Wm Polk Esq. has been received by W. Howard Esq. I will pay it to day *in specie*. The amount of the note with interest to this day is \$9472.50. I dont know what the specie will cost. I may have to get it from one of the Banks until I can buy it.

I have drawn on you this day for Seven thousand five hundred (\$7500.) at one day after sight, in favor of C. Lofland Cashier.¹ There

will be a small balance, either to be charged to your account or to be passed to your credit with our house at New Orleans.²

I will write you by the next mail & will enclose your note (after marking *paid* across the face of it) with a statement of the account &c.

SAML P. WALKER

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on November 25, 1845.

1. A Shelby County farmer, Charles Lofland was the cashier at the Farmers and Merchants Bank in Memphis.
2. William S. Pickett & Co.

FROM JOHN SLIDELL

My dear Sir,

New Orleans, 16 Novr. 1845

I have barely time by this days mail to acknowledge the reception yesterday of your communication of 6 inst & to day of those of the evening of the 6th & of the 7 inst. I shall leave tomorrow for Pensacola. Were I to go to day, I should be detained at Mobile, as I could find no conveyance thence to Pensacola until Tuesday.

It will be supposed here that I have proceeded to Washington, but it will be scarcely possible to prevent my embarkation being known at Pensacola.

I shall conform to your suggestion of not sending my resignation to the Governor of Louisiana¹ until my arrival at Vera Cruz. I shall have the honor of again addressing you before sailing & in the mean time, remain with the greatest respect ...

JOHN SLIDELL

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. Alexandre Mouton.

TO JOHN H. BILLS AND EZEKIEL P. McNEAL

My Dear Sir:

Washington City Novr. 17th 1845

I thank you most sincerely for your letter of 30th ultimo, but am fortunately in a condition not to make it necessary for me to avail myself of your kind offer. I have made a moneyed arrangement here, and some weeks ago directed *Samuel P. Walker* of Memphis, to draw on me, and apply the proceeds to the payment of the *whole amount* of my note held by *Uncle William Polk*.¹ The draft has not yet been presented, but I have written to *Walker* a second letter,² and urged him to pay off the note without delay, and hope he has done so.

I have always been on good terms with *Uncle Wm Polk*, and knowing him, as I do, to be a man of many peculiarities and eccentricities, I do not now, and never shall entertain an unkind feeling towards him. I do not know whether the rumour you had heard be true or not, but from other information which I received, I was inclined promptly to make an arrangement, though at some inconvenience to make the payment immediately, and without waiting for the note to fall due. This I have done, and am quite as much indebted to you for your offer, as if I had accepted it. I will add that it was impossible for me with any propriety to have appointed *Thomas Polk* to the Land office in Missouri. I could not have done so without wholly disregarding the wishes and recommendations, of a majority of the Congressional Delegation from the State, and many other citizens in the vicinity of the office. To have disregarded their wishes and appointed a relation of my own, would have subjected me to severe censure. In a word I could not, do so, consistently with my own sense of my public duty. This I have explained to his father, for I sincerely desired to avoid his displeasure, as I know I have not deserved it, and hope he may be satisfied.³ At all events, the money due his father I hope is paid before this time. It was a great accommodation to me when the loan was made, and I felt as I still do the obligation. In the discharge of my public duties I *must* be governed by public considerations, and cannot permit, myself to be influenced in any degree, by any others of a personal or private nature. The transaction with *Uncle William* is now passed, and let it sleep. I shall never speak of it. He is the nearest surviving male relative of my father.⁴ I have a sincere regard for him, and hope if we shall ever again meet, that our relations will be as they have been, from my youth to the present time, of the most friendly character.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy: DLC-JKP. Addressed to Bolivar, Tenn.

1. See Polk to Samuel P. Walker, October 9, 1845.

2. See Polk to Samuel P. Walker, November 1, 1845.

3. See Polk to William Wilson Polk, October 9, 1845.

4. Samuel Polk was four years older than William Wilson Polk, who was born in 1776 and died in 1848.

TO ROBERT CAMPBELL, JR.

My Dear Sir:

Washington City Novr. 17th 1845

I have received your letter of the 4th Instant, and thank you for your attention to my business. You inform me that you will buy two mules, which are needed at my plantation, and take them down with you,

when you visit Mississippi about the end of the year. I left with *James H. Thomas* a number of notes for collection. You can procure from him the amount to pay for them. If he has not collected the money he can let you have some of the notes. I will not take \$3,000 the price which you say *Mr R. M. Houston*¹ offers at one two and three years for my dwelling house and stable lots. I now hold his rent notes for the property for the next three years, for \$175. pr. year amounting to \$525., which if deducted from the price he offers, the property would only nett me \$2475., which is considerably less than I will take for it. I wish to sell it but will not do so, unless I can get a better price. I would take \$4,000, on the payments which he proposes, and perhaps \$3750. If he will not give the latter sum, I will hold the property at least for the present. I suppose as you say nothing about it, that you have had no offer for my store house and small piece of land near town. I wish to sell both, if I can do so at a fair price. I shall of course desire that you will rent them out for me for the next year for what they will bring. I forgot whether I requested yourself or *James H. Thomas* to attend to the hiring of *Elias* and *Matilda*.² *D. Campbell*³ I believe was to keep *Matilda* for the next year, but he will know how this is.

In regard to the Agency, for *Live Oak Timber* in *Florida* which you mention *Mr Bryant T. Williams*⁴ of Mississippi, desires, I can only say, that I shall probably consider it my duty to appoint some citizen of Florida. The Citizens of *Florida* in numerous letters which I have received in relation to this and other affairs, in that new State, insist that they have inhabitants of the State who are qualified to fill the offices in the State, and they protest, against having persons from other States, sent among them, as public officers. It is upon this ground that I have refused several applications from Georgia & elsewhere, for offices in Florida. I would be pleased to gratify *Mr Williams* and his friends, but do not see how I can do so with propriety. I write in haste.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Columbia.

1. Russell M. Houston rented Polk's property in Columbia.
2. Polk rented his slaves Elias and Matilda to local employers.
3. David Campbell repaired Polk's property in Columbia in 1845.
4. Not identified further.

FROM WILLIAM H. POLK

Dear Sir,

Naples November 17th 1845

I this evening received your two letters bearing date the 27th Sept. and 13th Oct. in which you acknowledge the receipt of the 1st and

2d of Bill of Exchange drawn by me, to the Order of J. Knox Walker, on the Messers Barrings at London. I am entirely satisfied with the disposition Knox made of the fund, and do sincerely hope that it will tend to relieve you of all disagreeable annoyance on my account, and in some measure check the angry flood of complaint against me. In my last letter I enclosed you a Bill drawn on the Messers Barrings, to the order of J. Knox Walker, for \$375, to be appropriated to the payment of Messers Hunt & Co of Baltimore, which I hope you have received and applyd.¹ This last draft upon my salary, has narrowed my expenditures for the present, to the closest limit of self-denying economy. But what is there that one will not do, to what hard denial will he not subject himself, when his pride is assailed, his reputation made food for foul mouthed slanderers, and even his *honor* subjected to the square of a Tailors false measurement. But I will stop, lest you think I am exposing my scars and bruises, "like the beggar his blindness"² to win pity and elicit sympathy. In my last letter I assured you, that I would remit you \$500. in April and \$500. in September. At that time I did not doubt my ability to do so; but as the winter season advances, I find my expences necessisarily increase, and even with a half mock maintainence of the dignity of my position, I fear I will not be able to save so much, but such amount as can be spared shall be forwarded.

I have been closely engaged for the last few weeks with the Treaty negotiation, and would probably have concluded it before this time, but for the inopportune (for me) arrival of the Emperor and Emperess of Russia³ in this Kingdom, which proved the signal for the surpression of all public business. I sincerely believe, if the very safety of this Kingdom was seriously threatened, that attention to its preservation would be defered for pleasure and amusement. This is a new song for me to sing, ain't it? Complaining of the want of attention of any living man to business. But the Treaty! I this day received a note from the Minister of Foreign Affairs,⁴ informing me that His Majesty's Commissions, would be prepared to renew the negotiation on the 18th (to-morrow) and I think I may safely express the opinion that the negotiation will be successfully concluded in a week or two. The Treaty when settled will not differ in any material point from the English Treaty recently negotiated with this Kingdom, a copy of which I forwarded to Mr Buchanan with my Dispatch No. 1, by refference to which, you can form a distinct idea of our Treaty when concluded. We of course enjoying the full benifit of the ten-per-cent reduction, heretofore enjoyed exclusively by England, France and Spain, and grant nothing in return except the benifits to be derived from the

6th Article of the English Treaty, which will form the 1st Article of our Treaty.⁵ I think under the decision of the Secretary of the Treasury of July 1844, relative to the rate of duties to be exacted on the wines of Portugal, under the Treaty between the United States and Portugal, that this Country would enjoy the same advantages for her wines by the 1st Article of our proposed Treaty.⁶ I have not deemed it necessary to write to the Department since my Dispatch No 2, which contained a short synopsis of the correspondence preceding the opening of the negotiation, together with my first quarter accounts, except the postage account due in London, which I had not at the time received, with the hope every day of being able to renew the negotiation and communicate something definite. When the Treaty is concluded, and safely dispatched to the United States I respectfully request of you and Mr Buchanan to permit me to make a trip to some of the neighbouring Countries, as there will be nothing of importance to do here, until the Treaty is ratified by the President and Senate and returned to Naples. There is another consideration. I can travel much cheaper than I can live here, by cutting off the expence of my House rent and Servants hire. If I go on such a trip, for instance to see Stiles at Vienna and Wickliffe at Turin, (neither of which is more than five or six days travel from Naples, I will move of course as a private gentleman.

The result of the recent elections give the most uncontestable proof of the popularity of your Administration, and having settled the Texas question, and by maintaining the strong and unqualified position on the Oregon question, your Administration will form one of the most distinctive features in the history of our Country. Write me occassionally! I receive the "Union" every month, which is some gratification. My health is good. Let Mother know you have heard from me.

WILLIAM H. POLK

[P.S.] After Congress meets ask Heiss to send me at least one number of the "Union" by every Steamer.⁸

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Joseph Knox Walker, Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received his brother William's letter on December 22, 1845.

1. See William H. Polk to Polk, September 17, 1845.
2. Possible reference to Mark 10:46-52.
3. Czar Nicholas I Romanov and Czarina Charlotte Hohenzollern.
4. D. Foules Ruffo de Calabria.
5. The Treaty with the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, dated December 1, 1845, and proclaimed July 24, 1846, required each nation to provide the lowest

customs duties and equal access for each other's goods, ships, and persons; this reciprocity between nations is also referred to as "most favored nation" status.

6. George M. Bibb. Article Eleven of the Sicilian Treaty specifically mentioned "most favored nation" status regarding trade in Sicilian wines and American cotton goods.

7. William H. Stiles and Robert Wickliffe, Jr. A lawyer from Savannah, Ga., Stiles served as solicitor general for the Eastern District of Georgia, 1833–36; as a Democrat in the U.S. House, 1843–45; and as chargé d'affaires to Austria, 1845–49. Wickliffe served as chargé d'affaires to Sardinia from 1843 until 1847.

8. Polk's postscript appeared at the head of the first page of text. A native of Bucks County, Penn., John P. Heiss formed a partnership with Thomas W. Hogan in 1842 to publish the *Nashville Union*; he became the business manager of the *Washington Union* in May 1845.

FROM SAMUEL P. WALKER

Dear Sir,

Memphis Ten. Nov. 17th 1845

I wrote you a day or two since, advising you of my draft for \$7.500 at one day after sight.¹ I now enclose you your note to *Wm Polk* for nine thousand dollars (\$9.000).²

Mr. Howard informed me on Friday night at 9 O'clock that he had received the note & I paid it *in specie* on Saturday morning. I hand you below a statement of the settlement.³ *I must say here* that Mr. Lofland of the Farmers & Merchants Bank was very clever in furnishing me the specie without hesitation or delay. I did not explain to him any of the circumstances, but told him I wanted \$9472.50 *in spece*. If he had not furnished me, I would have had to have ordered *the specie* from New Orleans. The Ten. Banks except the F. & M have depreciated their currency here by making *everything* payable *in the mountains*⁴ so that speci is very high & a large amount cant be bought for any reasonable price. Howard remembers the agreement between him & myself at the time their money was recd. & did not like to settle in any other way. But *I* insisted that it should be paid *precisely* as the Old Man wanted it, without any regard to a previous agreement. You will please acknowledge the receipt of the note.

I understand the Old Man is not so much dissatisfied as he was when he wrote you.⁵ In enclosing the note however he says, "it is payable in specie (& nothing else will do)." He must at least be satisfied that you have paid him promptly.

The Great So Western Convention is over, & Mr. Calhoun has returned home, to go into the Senate. He repudiates⁶ any newspaper as his organ. He was very much pleased with his reception &

entertainment here and our friends are satisfied from his conversations, that he will, when he goes to Washington sustain & support the Administration.

SAML P. WALKER

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AEI on the cover states that he paid the enclosed \$7,500 bill on December 1, 1845.

1. D. DLC–JKP. See Walker to Polk, November 15, 1845.
2. DS. DLC–JKP.
3. ADS. DLC–JKP.
4. Context unclear.
5. William Wilson Polk to Polk, September 18, 1845.
6. Here Walker cancelled "the Charleston Mer."

FROM JAMES A. CARUTHERS¹

Dear Sir

Nashville Nov 19. 1845

The two houses of the Legislature have just passed resolutions, with a memorial to Congress asking a cession of the vacant lands in the W. Dist., and a compliance with that section of the Bank Charter that provided for forty thousand dollars to a College in the Western Dist.² A copy of the memorial will be forwarded to you by Gov Brown, with whom I have just consulted, and we think it not improper to ask you to *present* a draft on the fund here, in the State Bank, untill Congress may have disposed of the memorial.

JAS. CARUTHERS

[P.S.] In the above suggestions I most heartily concur.

AARON V. BROWN

LS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. Caruthers served as a Democrat for one term in the Tennessee Senate, 1837–39. A resident of Lincoln County and a large landholder in West Tennessee, he later removed to Mississippi.
2. References are to the Bank of Tennessee, chartered in 1838, and West Tennessee College in Jackson. Funds from the sale of federal lands in West Tennessee were deposited in the Bank of Tennessee. For the text of the memorial, see House Document No. 36, 29th Congress, 1st Session.

FROM WILLIAM C. DUNLAP

Dear Sir

Nashville Novr 19th 1845

H. L. Turney left this city for Washington this evening. I had a conversation with him in relation to the course he would pursue at

Washington; he says he desires to be on friendly terms with you and that he was too hasty in his course towards you but that in no event can he be forced to oppose your administration but will give it his warm and candid support. On the distribution question he is only for distributing the proceeds of the sales of the lands ceded by the states and is opposed to the distribution of the sales of the lands purchased by the U.S.

I have taken the liberty of making the above communication to you believing you would like to know Turney's feelings towards your administration and by your sending for him when he arrives at Washington you can make him as warm a friend as ever he was.

I still have chills & fevers and left Memphis on the 6th Inst and came here to try what this climate & water would do to restore my health. I will go from here to Knoxville & exchange Circuits with Judge Alexander¹ and by spring I hope to be perfectly well.

Give my respects to Mrs Polk and accept for yourself my best wishes for your future prosperity.

W. C. DUNLAP

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on November 27, 1845.

1. A Knoxville lawyer, Ebenezer Alexander served as attorney general for the Second Circuit in 1838 and as circuit court judge from 1844 until his death in 1857.

FROM JAMES H. THOMAS

My Dear Sir, Columbia Tenn. Nov. 19th 1845

Your favor of 7th inst. is recd. I have seen your mother. She is well & it is arranged that I buy her groceries next month when I buy mine. Col. Campbell has written you since his return but he desires me to write you that the *wife* of your blacksmith is dead & that he will probably not wish to stay with Hammons longer, & Col. C. thinks you had better send him to your plantation.¹ Mr. Houston has had your house recovered & other repairs amounting to about \$65 & the repairs on your mother's house amount to about \$20 more than you paid Campbell for. I have some fears that you will be cheated in this business but I will do the best I can & send you the bills when I settle so that you may see what is done. There is now a new roof on the entire house, porches & all.

David Campbell spoke to me about hiring Matilda for next year, but you said nothing to me about your negroes & I knew not who to refer

him to. Campbell has got to drinking again & I doubt the propriety of hiring negroes to him, at least without security.

I never have seen a more indignant people than ours at Gordon on account of his vote for Zollicoffer. Before our convention last spring, believing that Gordon was our best man & knowing that he could not be nominated without a pledge upon this subject, I went to him & he promised me that he would not vote for Zollicoffer. He did the same to others & upon this he was nominated. He then made the same pledge publicly to the convention & afterwards in a dozen speeches in the county, & then to vote for *Zollicoffer* against three such Democrats as Powel Childress & Barry.² I feel exceedingly mortified. It has bruited the character Maury county democracy throughout the state. But it is done.

I spent last week in Huntsville. While there I saw Senator Bagby's letter. You probably have seen it. Lest you may not I enclose it from the Huntsville Democrat of 27 ult and also a view of the Texas question.³

Our Alabama friends say that the late difficulties have not weakened the party there, but that all is sound. McClung says we have nothing to fear from the new Governor.⁴ That if Bagby is got out of the way, that the Legislature or the Governor in vacation will send you a reliable man in his stead. Our people have acted so badly that I have nothing good to say for Tennessee. Can only hope for better luck hereafter.

JAMES H. THOMAS

P.S. When you send funds to pay the Gregory decree If convenient to send a draft on N. York I will pay you the current rate of exchange for it. J. H. T.

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on November 27, 1845.

1. Harry's wife and Hammons of Carrollton, Miss., are not identified further.
2. Felix K. Zollicoffer, Robert W. Powell, William G. Childress, and Thomas R. Barry competed for the post of state comptroller. A Democrat and lawyer from Sumner County, Barry served in the Tennessee House, 1839-42 and 1851-53, and ran unsuccessfully for Congress in 1849 and 1853.
3. PL. DLC-JKP. Thomas enclosed extracts of Bagby's September 24, 1845, letter explaining his position on the annexation of Texas; he also enclosed an October 28, 1845, editorial from the *Mobile Herald and Tribune* that was critical of Bagby's position.
4. James W. McClung and Joshua L. Martin. Nephew of Hugh L. White and native of Knoxville, McClung practiced law in Huntsville; served in the Alabama House as its Speaker in 1835, 1837, and 1838; failed to win the governorship in 1841 as an independent; but won election in 1845 to the Alabama Senate and served until his death in 1848.

FROM THOMAS J. GREEN

Sir: Washington City Novr. 24th 1845
Being compelled to go immediately to New York upon indispensable business, I find it out of my power to keep my engagement to see you the last of this week. Therefore, I take this means of making the following suggestions concerning the public lands of Texas.

Four weeks previous to his death Genl. Jackson, said to me that, "*it will be imposible for the U.S. government to control the Indians and Texas to hold the public lands. We must have them.*" The emphatic earnestness with which this great man spoke these words deeply impressed me with the strength of the argument. Since which time I have conversed with many leading men of both political parties who not only concur in the wisdom of this remark, but they say further, and I think truly, that it would be highly prejudicial to the U.S. land system for Texas to come into the market as a competitor and under-bidder with her 180.000.000, of acres. These with other arguments unnecessary at present to dwell upon, will in the opinion of leading politicians influence your Excellency in recommending to the U.S. government the policy of procureing those lands. To suggest, according to my judgement, the most practicable & least objectionable mode of procureing them is the object of this letter. This plan is,

That the government of the U.S. agree to pay Texas a stated price per acre, say ten cents, that so much of this amount be paid over to Texas at short payments as will meet her public debt, and the ballance be issued in long bonds at a reasonable interest, which interest shall be annually paid over for the support or disposition of her government. The following are the reasons in favour of this plan.

1st, That it will best quiet the objections of leading men of both parties against the assumption of an *unknown* debt.

2ndly, That from the best information, Texas will be unwilling at present to surrender her 180.000.000. of acres for the *simple* payment of her public debt.

When the people of Texas evinced such willingness to assent to the "*Tyler Treaty*," which proposed the assumption of her debt for the surrender of her public lands, that proposition was coupled with *annexation*. They would have taken almost any terms with *annexation*. How altered is the case! Annexation is complete, and Texas stands now before you as a free agent, upon a simple question of *bargain*. If she believes that her 180.000.000 of acres, with her immense mineral wealth and free control over the boundry of her own & future states to

be carved out of her, is worth no more than her public debt, then she will doubtless agree to such a bargain, but, my information leads me to believe that she will be far from so thinking.

Besides, a specific price per acre may be calculated to a dollar and thereby silence the objection to an "unknown debt." While on the other hand the assumption of the Texas debt would serve as a precedent for the assumption of the debts of any other states.

With these suggestions I most respectfully submit to your Excellency the propriety of confining your recommendation to the *assumption of the Texas debt* for her public domain, or for a *valuable consideration therefor in some other shape*.

THOS. J. GREEN

L, copy. NcU. Addressed locally.

FROM JOHN HOGAN

My dear Sir

Utica N. York Nov 25th 1845

I know from the kindness of your feelings towards me that you will be gratified to learn that since my return to my Family my health has improved and continues to improve from day to day. I am now only waiting the arrival of that commission of Minister to Russia when I will be ready to take up my line of march for St Petersburg. My reason for taking the matter so easy at present is that I am aware of the constant and important calls that are made on you from day to day.

I am now attacked on all sides by the Abolitionists. It would seem really that they are puzzled to find cause for attack on me but we must only bear their assaults for a while.

I see by the papers that you are placing yourself on high ground on the Oregon question. *That is the true ground* and the ground that the American People will sustain. Let me here say that all will be *right* and the Administration will come off triumphant.

Mexico too seems to give ground a *Great Victory* to the Administration. Now your usual prudent course will settle the whole matter in a short time as to Mexico.

Oregon will follow for rest assured that England with her embarrassments with short crops the approach of the disolution of Louis Phillip (as he is now another man) her troubles with Ireland is like a chain & ball to her foot that binds her to keep the Peace.

Then comes the Boundrys question that will settle itself too. Then comes my question which for importance is second to none. The Recognition of the Dominican Republic gives us the whole West India Control

in a military & commercial point of view. It is the first question of importance before our Government *as you said*. There is another point in that matter. The State of New York has called a convention to meet in April next for the purpose of forming a new constitution for the State of N.Y. The principal question between the two parties and the question to be met is whether the Negroes should be permitted to vote. The Whigs contend that the Blacks should be entitled to the right of voting. The Democrats are opposed to their vote. Consequently the Democrats must sustain their position by their showing the utter incapacity of the Blacks for self Government. Therefore you see that my report must be the principal weapon of defence by the Democratic party at the coming Election.¹ All the papers in this State are in anticipation discussing the merits & demerits of my report. Therefore I have made up my mind that I will be most thoroughly *cat hauled* until after our Election for delegates to the State convention. The Boston Abolition paper the Liberator says that I am an Excommunicated Catholic Priest. They do not know what to say that is bitter & malignant enough of my humble self to gratify their spite toward me.

I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you the latter part of next week say the 6 Dec. I hope Mrs Polk continues to enjoy her usual good health as well as your kind & friendly private Secy Mr Walker. Let me here say that I hope too that your *children* are able to eat their allowance. Can you tell me the difference between a *church without a Bishop* or a President of the United States without *children*. Now I will stop.

JOHN HOGAN

P.S. I am going to Washington to fight for my rights for Buchanan did me great injustice.²

ALS. DLC-JKP.

1. Reference is to Hogan's report on the state of Santo Domingo presented to the State Department on October 4, 1845, which he expected to become public.

2. Hogan wrote his postscript in the left margin of his third page.

FROM WILLIAM D. MOSELEY

Tallahassee, Fla. November 25, 1845

Moseley provides Polk a detailed evaluation of each member of Florida's congressional delegation. Moseley reports that Senators David Levy Yulee¹ and James D. Westcott, Jr., are talented and dedicated Democrats. Florida's representative will be decided by the U.S. House between Edward C. Cabell and William H. Brockenbrough.² Moseley notes that Dillon Jordan, Jr., "feels very grateful for the appointment of Collector." Moseley recommends Isaac H.

Bronson for U.S. district judge, Charles C. Yonge for U.S. attorney, and Robert Myers for U.S. marshal.³ Moseley doubts whether Yulee and Westcott share his views on every issue, but recommends them “because I believe them to be ‘honest, & capable’; of sound political principles, and *with all*, appointments acceptable to the *majority of the Democracy*.” Moseley points out some divisions in the Florida Democracy: “They all supported Levy & me, ardently and *still do so*. They all support *you*, with equal zeal, and will doubtless continue to do so.” Regarding these Democratic factions, Moseley mentions that he is trying to “reconcile this unkind feeling, and bring them together.” Moseley closes by pledging: “heretofore, I have stood up for you, through all weather, rain, as well as sunshine; I intend to do so, *while life lasts*, because, I know you.”

ALS. DLC–JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City and marked as “*Private*.”

1. A St. Augustine lawyer, Yulee served as Florida’s territorial delegate, 1841–45; as a member of the state constitutional convention in 1845; and as U.S. senator for two terms, 1845–51 and 1855–61.

2. A Virginia native and lawyer, Cabell moved to Florida in 1837; he served three terms as a Whig in the U.S. House, 1847–53. Brockenbrough served as a member of the Florida territorial legislature and as U.S. district attorney, 1841–43; he sat one term in the U.S. House as a Democrat, 1846–47. The contested election was resolved on January 24, 1846, when Brockenbrough replaced Cabell as Florida’s elected representative.

3. A New York native and lawyer, Bronson served one term in the U.S. House from that state, 1837–39; he received appointment as U.S. judge for the eastern district of Florida in 1840 and presided as U.S. district judge for Florida, 1846–55. Yonge received appointment as U.S. attorney for the western district of Florida in 1845; Myers received appointment as U.S. marshal for the northern district of Florida in 1845.

FROM JOHN SLIDELL

My dear Sir,

U.S. Ship St. Marys
At Sea, 26 Novr. 1845

Will you permit me to intrude for a very few moments on your valuable time, to address you on a subject in which I feel the deepest personal interest. It is that of my brother A Slidell Mackenzie¹ a Commander in the Navy. You will probably recollect that he commanded the U.S. Brig Somers,² when a mutiny occurred on board of that vessel under circumstances which in his opinion called for the exercise of a most high & painful responsibility. The affair at the time created so much excitement & was so much discussed in the public prints, that it can scarcely have failed to attract in some degree your attention.

I will not enter upon any statement of the case. The records of the

Navy Department present it in all its details, but they are so voluminous that it can not be expected that you will find leisure to examine it minutely, but Mr. Mason who had occasion in his official capacity to investigate it thoroughly, can give you every information. Suffice it for me to say, that a Court of Inquiry, composed of three of the most distinguished officers of the Navy, Commodores Stewart, Jones & Dallas,³ not only absolved him from all censure, but passed the most flattering encomium upon his conduct in the whole affair. A Court Martial composed of twelve officers of high rank, after the fullest & most searching investigation, confirmed by their judgement the opinion of the Court of Inquiry. A vast majority of all that is respectable in the Navy, has expressed its admiration of his course & this opinion of his fellow officers is confirmed & sanctioned by an overwhelming public opinion. Mr Bancroft, unfortunately, before he became officially connected with the naval service, imbibed a prejudice, which I fear he still entertains. He has assured me that this opinion should not weigh with him, against the recorded opinions, of those who have been called upon, in conformity with the rules of the service, to press definitively on my brothers case. But without intending to impugn in the remotest degree the good faith of Mr Bancroft in giving me these assurances, I cannot but feel that unfavorable opinions once formed, may even without his being conscious of its influence on him, in considering my brothers claims to service. He asks for no employment, out of his regular turn & to which he is not entitled by his rank & standing in the navy, but he is markedly sensitive on all points connected with his profession & thinks that he stands in an equivocal position, until he receives some evidence that he has not forfeited the confidence of his Commander in Chief.

I am aware that in speaking of him, I may be suspected of a natural & pardonable partiality, but knowing him, as I do, I may be permitted to say, that while his reputation as an officer is a most enviable one, in his qualities of head & heart, he has no superiors & few equals in the navy. I will not longer trespass on your patience, but will only add, that there is no favor which you have already conferred upon or may hereafter extend to me, that can commend my more grateful consideration than your attention to this appeal of....

JOHN SLIDELL

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on December 21, 1845.

1. Author and naval officer, Alexander S. Mackenzie assumed the last name of his maternal uncle in 1838. He wrote a number of popular books, including travelogues and naval biographies. In 1846, Polk sent him on a special mission to Havana, where Mackenzie was to ascertain Santa Anna's predilections for

peace with the United States should he return to power in Mexico. Mackenzie figured prominently in naval action in the Mexican War before his death in 1848.

2. While returning from the African coast in command of a training mission in November 1842, Mackenzie learned of plans for an attempted mutiny. He ordered the summary courts martial and execution of three crewmen, including Midshipman Philip Spencer, son of Secretary of War John C. Spencer. The *Somers* incident served as a focus of personal and party conflict during the Tyler administration.

3. Charles Stewart, Jacob Jones, and Alexander J. Dallas. Stewart commanded the U.S.S. *Constitution* during the War of 1812 and attracted minor support for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1844. Son of the statesman of the same name and brother of George M. Dallas, Dallas joined the navy in 1805; served in the War of 1812 and in the suppression of Mediterranean piracy; and commanded the fleet supporting the Seminole campaign in Florida. He established and commanded the Pensacola naval station. Dallas died awaiting command of the Pacific squadron at Callao, Peru, in June 1844.

TO WILLIAM H. POLK

My Dear Sir:

Washington City Novr. 27th 1845

I enclose to you two letters which have been forwarded under envelopes to me.¹ J Knox Walker has attended to the application of the proceeds of your last draft to the payment of your debts as I wrote to you he would do.² Your Baltimore creditor (*Hunt*) was tolerably well satisfied with the two hundred dollars which was paid to him, especially under the assurance that the balance would be remitted as soon as your means would permit.

Our party in the Tennessee Legislature have been greatly disturbed and divided, and I fear will continue to be so, during their Session. Half a dozen democratic members were impracticable, refused to go into caucus on the Senatorial election, and by their votes, with all the Whigs except one, elected *H.L. Turney* to the Senate of the U. States. *Turney* has not yet reached Washington, but his friends confidently affirm that he will support the administration. One of the consequences of this State of things at Nashville, has been the election of *Zollicofer* as Comptroller. *Powhatan Gordon* again voted for him, and by his vote elected him. So you see, we are not likely to profit much by our victory in the State.

It is a matter of surprise that your despatch which you informed me in one of your letters you had forwarded to *Mr Buchanan*, has not been received.³ Mr B. expresses his astonishment at its failure to reach the Department. I requested you in my last to forward a duplicate,

and hope you will do so. By the last Steamer, two weeks ago, special instructions were forwarded to you concerning the Treaty, which it is hoped you may be able to negotiate.⁴ You will of course acknowledge its receipt, and keep the Department advised of the progress you have made in the negotiation. If you have not done so before, I think you will have no difficulty in concluding a Treaty after you receive your instructions.

Congress will meet on the 1st proximo. More than half the members are said to be in the City. As far as I have seen them, they come together in great harmony and fine spirits. After Congress organize however, we may expect the usual agitation to commence. My message⁵ I understand is looked for with unusual anxiety throughout the country. It will not be delivered until the 2nd day of the Session which will be the day after the Steamer leaves Boston. The exciting topics are *Oregon* and the tariff. On the former I shall take firm and bold ground. On the latter, you know my opinions and it is enough to say they are unchanged. I am satisfied that no compromise of the *Oregon* question which the United States ought to accept can be affected, and with this conviction I shall lay the whole subject before Congress, accompanied with such recommendations for the protection of our citizens in that distant region, as they have a right to claim at the hands of their Government. This is the only course left unless we abandon our clear territorial rights which is not for a moment to be thought of. My position in the message may produce some anxiety on both sides of the Atlantic, lest the peace between the two countries may be disturbed. It is however right in itself and I am fully satisfied with it. I have no doubt I shall be sustained in it by a large majority of the country. I do not believe there is any real danger of its leading to war, but if it were, I act upon Genl. Jackson's maxim in conducting our Foreign affairs, to "ask nothing that is not right and submit to nothing that is wrong."⁶

There will be no war with Mexico. Preliminary steps have already been taken, with the assent of Mexico, for renewing diplomatic relations between the two countries.

I hear from Tennessee through the newspapers or otherwise almost every day. Mother is enjoying usual health. *Sally Walker* and *Johanna Rucker* are here and will spend the winter with us. *Marshall* is at the Georgetown College and is very well. He was too wild and fond of his amusements whilst he remained at the President's mansion to do any good. He is well satisfied and is becoming more studious.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Naples and marked "*Private*."

1. Enclosures not found.
2. See Polk to William H. Polk, October 29, 1845.
3. See William H. Polk to Polk, September 17, 1845.
4. Buchanan's special instructions were drawn up on November 12, 1845.
5. First Annual Message to Congress, December 2, 1845.
6. Paraphrase from Andrew Jackson's Fifth Annual Message to Congress, December 3, 1833: "Seeking nothing that is not right and determined to submit to nothing that is wrong . . ." Richardson, ed., *Compilation*, III, pp. 19–20.

FROM REBEKAH CROWELL¹

Townn of Coles Ville Broom C O State of N Y
Harpers Ville P O November the 30 1845

Sir

Will you feel willing to help a poor aged a widow lady one that has suferd more than toungue can express & i have sufferd all the soros of the revolutionary war. I have laid out in the woods many a week to save my Life. I had to run 12 miles to keep out the way of the enemy. My father was killed in the battle of oriskney & my mother was crazy & my husband was with general gates & arnold & clinton when Burgoine was takeing at saratoga.² They took me away from home & took me to sand flats 12 miles from where I lived and a short time after I went away from home. Johnstownn cattawaugna & sand flats was a burnt out & now I am poor & I have been verry sick and I am nott abel to help myselfe. Yet sir if you ples to help me a little i Shall be verry thankful. There is a great many people that are more able to help themselves than i am that draws pinchen now. I have a bill of continental money wich contains 40 Dollars & I thought perhaps you would be as kind as to help the poor & helpless as any other man & if you will be so kind & help me a little I will thank you for it sir & so I will close this letter. Answer this leter if you please.

REBEKAH CROWELL

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. Crowell and her family have not been identified further.
2. Horatio Gates, Benedict Arnold, Henry Clinton, and John Burgoyne. The Mohawk Valley of New York witnessed extensive fighting and destruction during the Revolutionary War.

FROM NICHOLAS P. TRIST¹

My dear Sir, Sunday evening Nov. 30. '45
Your statement on this point is right.² The very next despatch from Majr. Donelson, to the one I had reached when your messenger came,

transmits a Resolution of the *Convention*, dated July 7th, asking the President of the U.S. to occupy the territory of Texas with their troops.

N. P. TRIST

[P.S.] Before I forget it, I will mention that, as I stepped out of your gate this forenoon I met a western-country man,³ dressed in homespun, who said "I wonder if a body could see Colo Polk this morning." We had some talk together, in the course of which I learnt that he used to live in Tennessee, where he knew you and you knew his wife; that he has come here, under the auspices of Mr. Crittenden, to get his pension, which business is to be got through with tomorrow, and that he starts for home on tuesday. I told him I knew it was impossible you should see any body to-day, or until your message should be sent in to Congress, but perhaps if he were to call tomorrow, about 12 o'clock, you might be able to see him for a few minutes. He has no business with you, but he is the sort of man to be neighbourly with. If you describe him to Martin,⁴ he can't fail to recognize him.

ALS. DLC-JKP. Probably addressed locally. Polk's AE states that he received this letter on the evening of November 30, 1845.

1. Trist married Virginia Jefferson Randolph, a granddaughter of Thomas Jefferson and daughter of Thomas Mann and Martha Jefferson Randolph; studied law under his father-in-law; and began his career in public service in 1827 as a clerk in the State Department. Andrew Jackson appointed Trist consul for the port of Havana, Cuba, in 1833; John Tyler recalled him in July 1841; and Polk appointed him chief clerk of the State Department in 1845 and then special agent to negotiate a peace treaty with Mexico in 1847.

2. Reference is to part of Polk's First Annual Message to Congress.
3. Neither man nor wife can be identified further.
4. Martin Renegan served Polk as the White House doorkeeper.

DECEMBER

FROM LOUIS McLANE

My dear Sir,

London 1. December 1845

I return you my thanks for your letter of the 29th October which however arrived too late to enable me to reply to it by the Steamer of the 19th November.

Although you made no allusion to them in your letter I must begin by expressing my mortification at the various surmises in the American papers of my opinions and feelings. I am quite sure that you would not for a moment believe that I had written or said any thing to authorize these speculations, or any of them. I have indeed corresponded with no one in the U.S. upon the "oregon question," excepting with yourself, with Mr. Buchanan, and as far as it was proper to speak at all, with my son Robert.¹ The probability of my return in the spring or summer, provided our public relations here would admit of, appeared to be too public before my departure to require any attempt at concealment, and accordingly I have not affected any; tho' certainly have not made it a subject of letters out of my family; and, except on two occasions in the office of the Legation, I have not referred to my return to the United States with reference particularly to present results of the oregon negotiation. On those occasions, immediately upon learning the turn Mr. Packenham had given the negotiation at Washington, and upon the hypotheses that it would not be resumed, I did not conceal my regret

that I would be obliged to remain so long at a Court not in the best temper with my government or with myself, and without the opportunity of rendering any service whatever. I believe I expressed a similar sentiment in conversation with Genl Armstrong.

I am sorry to think however that a letter I *did* write to "an officer of the Navy" may have afforded a pretense but only a pretense, for one of the reports I had read in the papers. At the request of Lieut. *Tilton* of the Navy, I endorsed to him a letter recommending his brother to the appointment of Purser;² and, refering to a paragraph in his letter informing me that he would probably be settled at the Naval School at Annapolis and avoid another separation from his family, I expressed my gratification at the arrangement, unless indeed he should be sooner called into more active service, in which I looked to him and my own son to emulate each other in maintaining the reputation of their native state. After such a use of my letter, I must hope the brother if he has received an appointment, will have more discretion than the Lieutenant.

I am quite sure that in my letters to Mr. B. I have not contemplated permission to return without reference to the state of the service here, and to your own personal & official responsibility; on the contrary, I feel quite incapable of disregarding either, and it is impossible that by anything I have said or written to any one I could have afforded even a plausible pretense for the newspaper speculations. I have said quite enough, however, upon this head, and indeed I hope too much, when rumours of specific propositions passing between our government and Mr Packenham, having no foundation, I presume, out of the brain of the inventor, are daily announced one more authoritatively than the sentiments attributed to me. I have set the matter right by opining Lord Aberdeen, and all who had spoken to me of the references in the papers to myself, that they are utterly destitute of foundation.

I accompany this letter by the *Standard*, quasi ministerial paper or as we say in Washington "organ," containing a reference to Mr. Webster's Boston speech.³ I am *quite sure* that great expectations were entertained here from the favorable views of, to use the language of the "Chronicle," "the Adamss & Websters" &c. &c, and I cannot help thinking that but for his anti american notion of erecting the territory into an independent State, and the easy *virtue* with which it is apparent from the whole tenor of his remarks, his opinions are guarded, his announcement of the 49th parallel as the fit concession upon our part would have startled *his friends* here. For, if *New England whigs* will not concede anything beyond the 49th parallel to the Pacific, in what quarter can this gov. hope to find any apology for rejecting the

offer lately made? It will not surprise me if Mr. W. made that speech for *home* and not altogether for London; and hearing *intimations* in *Boston* that a modification of the 49th had probably been suggested at Washington, he hoped to be found upon even stronger ground than that occupied by the admn. If such should have formed any part of his motive, no one will regret that he should be caught in his own trap. It is not to be disguised that this question assumes a new form in this quarter, the moment it is certain that neither *party* in the U.S. will concede more than the 49th degree; and I learn today that "the Adamss" i.e. Mr. J.Q.A. has avowed his determination to insist upon 54. 40. of which I will at once make the proper use.

I learn also from excellent authority, to day, that the commercial class of New York, have united in a formal appeal to Mr. Calhoun to return to the Senate for the purpose of occupying the conservative point upon the oregon question, and of preventing war by insisting upon compromise. The fact is stated in a letter from Mr. Bennett of New York, who without indicating the precise ground to be occupied by Mr Calhoun appears to have no doubt that he is altogether conservative upon this question, and ready to return to the Senate in compliance with the appeal which has been made to him. I may say too that in high quarters here, though I cannot *certainly* tell on what specific grounds, reliance is place upon Mr. Calhoun and his friends to favor arbitration which will undoubtedly be proposed. I will add that I know personally from one of Mr Calhoun's particular friends that he will not consent to insist upon 54° , 40 & would most probably acquiesce in the proposition of 49, or arbitration.

It will not escape you that recently the 49th parallel seems to have lost its objectionable features even on this side of the water, so far at least as the public prints are to be regarded; and it is *worthy of your remark*, that the tone taken by the British Press upon that line is simultaneous with the speech in Boston! I need scarcely remind you of the intimate sympathy between the Banking interest of England and the Boston orator. With the Ministry I have not observed the slightest indication that this gov. have contemplated the acceptance of the noted 49th, and I think it entirely certain that if they ultimately assent to this parallel, and it be more acceptable to our government, the result may be attributed altogether to your mode of conducting the late negotiation: and this view I think ought in due time to be presented. Indeed, I think you may be certain that this *government* will be brought, if at all, with great reluctance to adopt the 49th parallel; but unless the public feeling here changes materially it would not dare to venture upon a war against that basis. Already, it is obvious that the

Commercial & Banking interests are at work to advocate an arrangement upon that basis, and, indeed except the "point of honor," of which the government speaks, it will not surprise me if to the end the Hudson Bay Company do not remain the only interest opposed to it. An attempt will probably be made to reconcile that interest as intimated in my first letter to you after my arrival,⁴ by obtaining an extension of their rights south of 49, for the purpose of hunting & trapping for a definite period.

The Ministry here are quite prepared for a reassertion in the Message of your opinions as declared in the Inaugural, and in greater force & detail; and they will not be surprised at a recommendation to terminate the joint occupation of the Territory, by notice according to Treaty; and unless the Message should absolutely discourage and renounce future attempts at negotiation I am inclined to think that a bold and decided tone upon the points already indicated should not only do no harm, but would prove ultimately beneficial. I rather think the whole subject will be more manageable & more susceptible of some practical harmonious result, as it approaches a crisis.

It is difficult to express the mortification an American feels here at the tone and unpatriotic sentiments of a portion of the Press in the United States. They are altogether derogatory to the Country, and unless they can be changed, insignificant as they may be at home, they cannot fail to have a prejudicial influence upon our relations abroad. The British Press, without a solitary exception, affords them a much nobler model; and unless the Public indignation can be sufficiently roused to deny all encouragement to those presses which with the fidelity of mercenary advocates, uniformly argue against their Country in all her disputes with foreign nations, the time is not remote when any American who may travel in a foreign country will feel the effect of such a recusant spirit at home. It is too much the habit of the Press, and of some of our Countrymen to seek favor in countries under a different form of government by undervaluing & deprecating the democratic spirit of their own, and of this I have already seen abundant evidence. I am entirely convinced that we will never have a fair chance abroad until we can have a proper tone & self respect at home; and when the necessity of war may arise, be it where it may, I should regret it less because it will afford an opportunity of effectually repressing the treacherous spirit among ourselves, of which we now have so much reason to complain.

I have written a long and, I fear you will consider a desultory, letter to be read at a time when your public labors will be most onerous. Nevertheless there are points in it which I deemed it material to bring

to your attention, and must on that account hope to be excused for writing so much. As I may not have an opportunity by this Steamer to write to Mr. Buchanan, I will esteem it a favor if you will allow him to read this letter, and a yet greater one if its circulation should have that limitation.

Asking leave to present the kindest regards of Mrs. McLane to yourself and Mrs. Polk, in which I beg to unite

LOUIS McLANE

P.S.

Dec. 2

I have read this morning the *Times* newspaper of to day, which I send,⁵ and to which I venture on one or two points to invite your attention. It may not be amiss to state that the only regular entire ministerial "organ" here, is the *Standard*, an Evening paper, which supports *all* the measures and policy of the Ministry, and *all* the Ministers without exception; and, in most cases, its articles, especially those relating to public affairs, may be regarded as at least *quasi* official. The other papers, singularly enough, are divided among themselves, each one apparently supporting some individual *Minister* or Department of the government, and remaining hostile towards the others. In this way, the *Morning Herald* is the staunch & powerful advocate and defender of the *Premier*, observing all the time, at least a lukewarmness towards most of the other members of the government; so the *Times* may be considered as the advocate of the Foreign Office & Lord Aberdeen, never assaulting and often warmly defending the Secretary, and occasionally as in the article of this morning, *disclosing facts* and speaking in a tone which could only be warranted by official communications, while all the time it is violent in its attacks upon the *Premier* and at least two other members of the Cabinet, a rather novel & *adroit* arrangement of Government organs! In *our* relations with *G.B.* therefore, the tone and facts and indications of policy in the *Standard & Times & Herald* may be regarded as at once significant & important, though unofficial.

With this clue in your hand, it is quite important I think, that you should read & contemplate Mr. *Webster's* recent speech at *Boston*, in connection 1. with the articles in the *Standard* which I send you, 2. with the leading editorial in the *Times* of this morning, and 3. with the article in the *Courier Francais* on the oregon question, to be found, as I have marked it, in the 5th column of the *Times* this morning.

Taking the whole together who can doubt the reliance placed upon *Mr. Webster's capabilities* by men out of, if not in office here? The *Standard* adopting him throughout feels confident that oregon will be settled, because his eloquence must compose the *Rabble* & lead them

into a right direction; and, passing by his ultimate concession on the 49th parallel, presents with great favor & with great adroitness, but as if unimportant, the notion of an *independent territory*. The *Times* this morning, though it adopts Mr. Webster, confesses the aid G.B. derived from him in the N.E. boundary negotiation,⁶ and frets some that if he was *now* Secretary of State *he* would render *them* a similar service, *rejects* the notion of the 49th parallel as utterly impracticable (consequently implying that although he has announced the 49th as his ultimatum he would surrender it to G.B.) and passes to a further reliance upon Mr. Calhoun & the Senate *and to the notion of an independent Territory!* No one who knows Mr. Calhoun, will question *his* patriotism, or doubt what will be *his* course when the honor or rights of his Country are involved, and no one can believe it possible that *he* can be brought to the scheme of an *independent territory*. So far as Mr. Webster is concerned it might well be asked why he did not settle the question when he had the power? And to know the banking influence here that holds him in subjection to the foreign interests. But leaving this to others, I wish to call your attention more particularly to the suggestion now authoritatively made by the *English Advocate*⁷ in the U.S., echoed & adopted by the Ministerial Organ here, and very significantly enforced by the *Ministerial organ in Paris*, of an independent territory in Oregon to which, it is asserted by the latter, that neither G.B. or the U.S. is entitled, a pretty sweeping mode of carrying out Mon. Guizot's balance of power on the American Continent. Now, upon the idea that neither the U.S. nor G.B. has any right to the Territory, and *may be rightfully resisted in any attempt to appropriate it*, G.B. has only to acquiesce in that view, *according to the suggestions of Mr. Webster*, echoed by the Ministerial Press here, and *France & this Government* become *immediately allied to carry out this notion, an alliance or cooperation, be it remembered, upon which G.B. would never calculate upon any other ground*. Might not *Russia* also prefer the idea of a separate independent government in that quarter for the present, taking her chance with all other Nations to cultivate such relations with the new independent and weak government as would ultimately make it a part of her own dominions. Such would undoubtedly become the fate of such new government at no remote day. It would have to fall into the hands of the *U.S., G.B. or Russia*, though the struggle might be long & severe among those powers. And this is the scheme, which an *American Statesman* in the cradle of *American liberty* and in accordance with European hostile policy, gravely producing as the means by which his own government may be cajoled or by a new holy alliance coerced to abandon rights which he himself is obliged to admit as unquestionable

to the 49th parallel of Latitude! Is there no one to be found in the Press, or in the Senate to expose and properly hold up to public scorn and to the indignation of our patriotic countrymen a scheme so full of mischief, so artfully devised to strip his own country of a large portion of her rightful domain? To abandon the territory which even England would be willing to concede to be ours; for the purpose of raising up a rival nation, to hem us in north, west & south by independent rival nations, and create in those vast regions on the Pacific a bone of contention for all the powers of the world to battle for. *Is there no one to expose the mischief & wickedness of a policy of which no one can now foresee the end.*

I am not to be understood as intimating that this *government*, up to this time, has meditated or would be inclined to favor this scheme of an independent government in Oregon. I have reason to think that a part of the Ministers at least would not be disposed at present, to give it much countenance, whatever their opinions might be when the alternative with *us* would be a surrender of the whole up to 54. 40., or War. In that case, they *might* not improbably think of an independent Govt. I rather think the scheme at present may be confined to the *Banking & Commercial* interests of whom Mr. W. is the organ. The future readings may be inferred from the hints I have given, from the article in the *Courier Francais*, and from the temptations held out to *France & Russia*, and, in a certain contingency, to *England*. Allow me to add the [...] ⁸ that in any use that may be made of these observations my name will not appear. A concealment of that is indispensable to any service I may at any time render here.

But what apology can I offer for the intrusion of a letter of such length upon your time & patience? I pretend to offer no other Sir than my love for my Country's interests & honor, for your own fame & success in the administration of the government, and to keep you well informed upon every thing passing within the scope of my observation.

LOUIS McLANE

ALS. DLC-JKP. Marked "*Unofficial & Private.*" Polk's AE states that he received this letter on December 21 and answered it on December 29, 1845.

1. An 1837 graduate of West Point, Robert M. McLane served in the army until 1843, when he resigned to practice law in Baltimore. He won election to four terms in the U.S. House, 1847-51 and 1879-83; served as a Democratic presidential elector, 1852; represented the United States as a commissioner to China, 1853-54; and served as governor of Maryland from 1883 until 1885. Resigning the governorship in 1885, he accepted appointment as U.S. minister to France and held that position until his removal in 1889.

2. Edward G. Tilton was commissioned a lieutenant in 1831. His brother is not identified further.
3. Enclosure not found. Daniel Webster spoke to a Whig mass meeting at Boston's Faneuil Hall on November 7, 1845.
4. See McLane to Polk, August 4, 1845.
5. Enclosures noted here and below not found.
6. McLane's reference is to the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842.
7. Daniel Webster.
8. Word illegible.

FROM JACOB L. MARTIN¹

My dear Sir.

Paris 1 December 1845

There is no private opportunity to day even for London, and at this critical conjuncture, it is hardly safe to trust anything official to the British courier. For this reason there is no despatch by the present steamer, and I prefer to write you a few hasty lines under cover to Mr. Selden.²

There is intense excitement in England & even here, upon the Oregon question. The English papers teem with the most violent articles against us, written in the most aggressive and offensive spirit. Nevertheless, I am persuaded that Great Britain does not want war, and that under this shew of violence, there is more disquietude than defiance. We see many respectable English here, and infer from their tone and conversation that hostilities are earnestly deprecated. Still great preparations are making for such an event, and war is universally believed to be inevitable unless some compromise can be effected. The public mind in England seems to be convinced that the American government will not concede an inch of the territory in dispute, and the violence to which I have referred springs from this conviction. If it turns out that we have offered 49, and that it has been refused I am persuaded that the effervescence on the other side of the Channel will sensibly subside. If it be apparent that England will not consent to this line, I trust that we are preparing for war by collecting material & putting our ports in a state of defence. The first blow of our enemy will be his worst and we should be ready to receive and parry it. It cannot take a long time to put N. York, Phil, Baltimore, Charleston, & N. Orleans in an adequate state of defence. With abundant crews & ammunition and numerous river steamers, which might for the nonce be converted into floating batteries, I think we might defy a British fleet of steamers.

Public sentiment here sympathizes with us, but I am sorry to say

there is no effective opposition to the government, whose *animus* is decidedly adverse to us. All that the diversified and unorganized opposition may be able to do, is to prevent France from taking an active part with England. Whatever is published in the Government or rather ministerial papers, is unfavorable to our cause. Today the leading ministerial paper, the *Journal des Debates* contains an article written with affected moderation, but as unfair and malignant towards the American cause as policy will yet permit. Some effort must be made to counteract its statements which represent us as most unreasonable, and rash and unscrupulous in the Oregon controversy—in substance, at least if these terms are not employed. One would think, that the humiliating issue of French interference in the Texas question, would have indisposed this government to further intermeddling between the U.S. & England. But His Majesty the King of the French sacrifices every other interest to the English alliance, and would if possible cooperate with Great Britain anywhere & for any purpose. It is his fixed idea—Texas, Madagascar, Buenos Ayres it is all the same thing, provided his arms & diplomacy make common cause with England. Besides being a new Monarch with no formidable element to combat against save the republican, he has an instinctive antipathy to or rather, apprehension of, democratic institutions which he deems a seductive and dangerous example.

Permit me to make a suggestion. We should in our papers, carefully distinguish between the French govt & nation lest the latter should participate in the bad feelings of the former, which is just what is desired by our enemies. The French people almost to a man disapprove of the leanings of their government towards England against the U. States; as was proved in the course of the Texan question, where the defeat of the Jones & Elliot intrigue in conjunction with the French representatives in Mexico & Texas,³ was backed with universal pleasure. We should be careful then, because it may become important, to evince the kindest feelings towards our old ally the French people, and by no means confound their sentiment with those of their rulers. Let a war break out, and French sympathy in our favor, will be irrepressible if not from love to us, from incurable hostility to the enemy & rival of centuries.

Be good enough to present my respectful compliments to Mrs. Polk. I trust that the articles from *Paris* suited her though I had no hand in the selection. I shall always be most happy to oblige her in anyway as much for “auld lang syne” as the present. Excuse this hasty message....

J. L. MARTIN

N.B. Read to Mr. King, who desires me to send his particular regards.⁴

ALS. DLC–JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City and delivered by William Selden.

1. A North Carolina physician, Martin served as chief clerk of the State Department, 1840–41, and as secretary of legation at Paris from April 1844 until March 1848, when he was appointed chargé d'affaires to the Papal States. Although he died shortly after taking up his post at the Vatican, Martin earned the distinction of having been the first United States diplomat to be accredited to the Holy See.

2. William Selden of Virginia served as treasurer of the United States from 1840 until 1849.

3. In March 1845, Charles Elliot and Alphonse de Saligny, chargés d'affaires to Texas from Great Britain and France, respectively, presented a secret protocol to Texan President Anson Jones by which Britain and France would persuade Mexico to recognize the independence of Texas. In return, Britain and France would guarantee Texan independence, preventing the annexation of Texas by the United States. Jones delayed convening the Texan Congress until June in order to give Elliot an opportunity to return from Mexico with a signed treaty. Prior to the meeting of the Texan Congress, Jones received the Mexican treaty and announced that he would submit the treaty for congressional approval. However the Texas Congress voted unanimously to accept the annexation proposal, rejected the Mexican treaty, and called for a constitutional convention to meet on July 4, 1845.

4. William Rufus King. Martin wrote his postscript at the head of his first page.

FROM FITZWILLIAM BYRDSALL

[Dear Sir:]

New York Decr. 3d 1845

I have just read the Message,⁴ in the N.Y. Sun of this morning, and without having seen the opinion of a single press upon its merits, or heard the impression made by it on any one, I shall express my own.

It is a sensible patriotic Document, necessarily lengthy from the great number of National and domestic topics of which it treats, but clear and concise upon each. Its views in relation to Texas, as well as our difficulties with Mexico, are judicious, while peculiarly happy and appropriate in its sentiments and language upon the European policy of the balance of Power. Here it will be universally sustained by every right minded American, against foreign interference. The subject of Oregon is well treated and our claim to the whole territory will place the patriotism of the present administration upon high ground. Our interests in the fisheries on the coast of the *whole of Oregon* are as important, if not more than any other consideration.

The difficult subject of the tarriff is ably elucidated as regards the precise demarkation between the Revenue Standard and the protective principle, so as to be perfectly comprehensible by the popular mind. Never has the Constitutional Treasury been better or more clearly set forth in its whole character. It would seem to be a matter of wonder that we should have had a contest of some years with many volumes of speeches and arguments upon a subject so simple and conclusive when calmly and properly presented.

I like the views on the tariff, on the public Lands being graduated in price, on preemption rights, because they are promotive of the interests and welfare of the masses. I like the style, the tone, the temper of the message, its truly democratic character throughout.

F. W. BYRDSALL

P.S. Since writing the above hurried remarks, I have seen a great number of persons who without a single exception expressed their warm approval of the Message.

ALS. DLC-JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City; marked "For the President Only."

1. For the text of Polk's First Annual Message to Congress on December 2, 1845, see James D. Richardson, ed., *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1902* (10 vols.; Washington, D.C.: Bureau of National Literature and Art, 1903), IV, pp. 385-416.

FROM HENRY HORN

My Dear Sir, Philadelphia 3d Decemr 1845

Without entertaining the slightest doubt of the favourable action of the Senate upon my nomination I was nevertheless induced to visit Washington with the view of ascertaining whether there was Really any foundation for the various adverse rumors which were set afloat by some of my reckless enemies. As I anticipated however opposition to myself was no where to be found except among some few debased bar room politicians, who could assign no reason for it that would weigh a feather with the Senate. I visited many of the members of that body with whom I have long been on terms of personal and political friendship. Not for the purpose however of importuning them in reference to myself. This I considered undignified and inconsistent with the position I have always held both morally and politically. Several of them however expressed *spontaneously* their gratification with my appointment and their conviction that there would not be the least difficulty in its ratification by the Senate. Doctr Sturgeon¹ of

our State was especially clear upon that point and exceedingly cordial in his expressions of friendship. Mr. Dallas is also *warmly* my friend and I think I may safely say so are a very large majority of the Senators. Under these circumstances I feel that I have nothing to fear from the action of that body.

I was present last evening at the reading of your excellent and patriotic message at our exchange. The hall was crowded to excess and although the great majority present was made up of our political opponents yet whenever the reader finished those strong and energetic remarks in reference to Oregon and Texas, breathing nothing but American feeling there was one general shout of applause.

There was a little fluttering among the whigs upon the subject of the Tariff. But as their regard for high protective duties was more assumed than real they will soon become very gentle and amiable especially as they are much pleased with the fostering care and attention you have manifested in favour of our Navy. The Independent treasury is by no means as unpalatable to them as formerly, and I am really inclined [to] believe that many of the whigs will soon become Democrats.

HENRY HORN

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed "To the President" and marked as "*Private.*" Polk's AE on the cover reads, "Reception of the Message in Phila. Recd. Decr. 4th 1845."

1. A Uniontown physician, Daniel Sturgeon won election to several terms in both the Pennsylvania House and Senate, 1818–30; served as state auditor general, 1830–36, and as state treasurer, 1838–39; and sat two terms in the U.S. Senate, 1839–51.

FROM ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Dear Sir Liverpool 4th Decemr. 1845

You have no idea of the interest manifested in this country to see your message. I hope Boston steamer of 1s Int has been delayed to bring it out.

The modification of our Tariff will have a good effect here on the mercantile and manufacturing interests in this country.

The repeal of the corn laws here on the *admission* of our *Indian corn free* should give great satisfaction to the *North West & Western Corn* growing states. A powerfull effort is now making to effect this and it is though with the aid at present given by the *failure* of the *grain* and *Potato* crop that it will succeed.

The war preparations goes on with great energy. It may be to employ

the starving or arouse the people. They are the most arrogant proud self conceited people on Earth and want a drubbing. I hope and trust the message may contain that which will let them see that we are not intimidated by their preparations and blustering and that the action of Congress will be prompt on the recommendations.

I hope you will have a strong support in Congress on every thing or measure proposed.

I see Turney is elected to the Senate from Tennessee. The place was *earlier assigned* to Nicholson, but I would have as much confidence in Turney if Nicholson had have been elected. He no doubt would have given you his support as far as he could but not *in his heart*. You can do more with Turney than any other man. Send for him and give him a *talk* if he is at all off or wavering. It will settle him. I regret that he received it from Whig *hands* or by Whig *votes*. Harris writes me that he may apply for appointment of pay master. His education is of the army school. He is of Arkansas and will discharge his duties faithfully.

No one says how Mrs. Polk likes the Paris goods or if they were received.

I am just going in to a splendid new office *The Washington buildings* which will be an improvement. Mr Buchanan should allow the rent. It has cost me a £100 to make the change of furniture &c. With kind respects to Mrs. Polk Mr & Mrs. Walker . . .

R. ARMSTRONG

[P.S.] You recollect Doct Alexr Jones who writes for the Union some times, (Morgan)¹ He wants some place. Says he is poor and feels as if he had some claims for his efforts in the cause, &c &c. He wrote me a few days ago on other matters & mentioned his wishes. I know but little of him but if he is deserving of a place you will no *doubt remember him* when the time and opportunity offers. R. A.

ALS. DLC–JKP Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on December 21, 1845, and answered it on December 29, 1845.

1. A native of North Carolina, Alexander Jones practiced medicine in Mississippi before removing permanently in 1840 to New York City, where he wrote regularly for the *New York Journal of Commerce*. Quick to grasp the use of the telegraph in news distribution, Jones organized a cooperative press among several American cities and served as the first general agent of the New York Associated Press. Armstrong's reference to "Morgan" is not identified further.

FROM LEVI LINCOLN¹

Sir

Worcester Massts. Decr. 5. 1845

By the last Mail, I had the honor to receive, under your frank, a copy of your late Message to Congress. For this testimonial of your kind remembrance and attention, I pray you to accept my most cordial acknowledgments. Altho' I cannot concur in all the views and sentiments, which you are pleased to express, yet I greatly honor the explicitness, the frankness, and the ability, which characterize this interesting Document, and I earnestly hope, that your Administration, which opens upon the Country in the enjoyment of unexampled prosperity, may be auspicious to its highest destiny, and conducive to your own exalted and enduring fame.

Among the most grateful recollections of my public life, is the very fresh remembrance of the courtesies and kindness which I received from you, while you administered the Chair of the House of Representatives. In the excitement of party contests, I have never permitted my heart to be cold to a sense of personal obligations, nor shall my tongue ever refuse the tribute of Justice to fidelity and ability in the discharge of difficult and arduous official duties. I retired from Congress, after seven years of opportunity for observation and acquaintance with public men, in the National Councils, and for many of those with whom I greatly differed on measures of public policy, I nevertheless cherish sentiments of the most entire respect for their integrity, and the purest esteem for their personal character. May I be permitted to add, Sir, that for none do I entertain higher regard than for yourself, and there is none whose acquaintance I recal to mind with more satisfaction.

If the assurance of recollection and profound respect will be acceptable to Mrs. Polk I pray you do me the favor to offer it, and to accept for yourself the expression of the high consideration

LEVI LINCOLN

ALS. DLC-JKP. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on December 8, 1845.

1. A Worcester lawyer and Whig, Lincoln served numerous terms as a member of the Massachusetts House and Senate; as governor of Massachusetts from 1825 until 1834; and as a U.S. Congressman for parts of four terms, 1834-41. In 1841 he received appointment as collector of the port of Boston and, in 1848, won the first mayoral election for Worcester.

FROM HAMPTON C. WILLIAMS¹

Dr. Sir.

Annapolis 5th Decr. 1845

I find that Felix² is recovering as fast as could be expected. He had a severe attack of inflammatory Rheumatism. He is now free from pain, has had no fever for a day or two. This morning he made a hearty breakfast, and amused himself by reading during the day.

Capt. Buchanan and his lady³ show him every attention. In short he has had every kindness shown him which his situation required. Doct. Lockwood,⁴ who attends him is a very able physician. I shall remain for a day. With out a relapse he will be well in a few days.

H. C. WILLIAMS

ALS. DLC—JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. A native of Georgia, Williams served several years as a clerk in the Office of the Fourth Auditor and as a justice of the peace in the District of Columbia prior to his appointment in 1844 to a clerkship in the Navy Department's construction bureau.

2. Felix Grundy, Jr.

3. Franklin and Ann Catharine Lloyd Buchanan.

4. John A. Lockwood received an appointment as assistant surgeon in the navy in 1832.

FROM THOMAS FITNAM¹

Sir.

8th Street near Penn Avenue

Washington Decr. 6. 1845

Enclosed I send you a letter which I have received from an old and influential democrat of Phila.² It contains much information which you may wish to know on matters and things there.

Being no applicant for office, I have no other object in view in sending it to you than the promotion of your interests and the success of your administration. Although in business for myself, I am the *confidential* correspondent of the *New York Herald*, and reporter in the H. Rep. for the Balt. *Constitution*; and was, during the years 43–44, the *official* correspondent of Mr. Tyler's organ in N.Y., the *Aurora*. It is my desire, if agreeable to you, to aid you through the columns of the Herald, without either Mr. Bennett or any one else being aware of it.

I had the honor of an introduction to you by *Judge Savage*³ of N.Y. soon after your inauguration; and, although recommended by him for a situation here, I feel more independent as I am, and perhaps

more able to defend the principles of the administration than if I were in office.

THOS. FITNAM

ALS. DLC–JKP. Probably addressed locally; marked “*Confidential*.”

1. Fitnam claimed to be the correspondent “Ariel” for the *New York Herald*.
2. John Fegan to Thomas Fitnam, December 1, 1845. ALS. DLC–JKP. Fegan complains that Henry Horn has proscribed Democrats who opposed Martin Van Buren in 1844 and has appointed Van Burenites, Nativists, and Whigs to positions in the Philadelphia Customs House.
3. A New York lawyer, John Savage held various state offices prior to his election to the U.S. House, 1815–19; he presided over the state supreme court from 1823 until 1836; and in 1844 he served as a presidential elector for Polk and Dallas.

FROM ROMULUS M. SAUNDERS

My dear Sir,

Raleigh Decr. 6th 1845

I thank you for your attention in forwarding the Message, which I read with deep interest & great satisfaction. It has been received by our democratic friends with the highest gratification & has silenced the clamours of the Whigs. The latter in the Country will wait to exercise their cause from their city organs. But I feel well satisfied your sentiments both in regard to Oregon & the Tariff will make a favorable impression upon our people. The renewal of the proposition to compromise on your part, the refusal by the other party & his extravagant offer, places you in the right & cannot fail to give satisfaction to every cause of the Country. The tone of the Message is less belligerent than I had been led to fear, and is at the same time sufficiently firm & manly.

We have a Convention on the 8th for the nomination of our Candidate for Governor, where we shall respond to it in the strongest terms. Fisher is likely to be our candidate, and should our friends in Congress carry out your recommendations, I feel great confidence in our carrying the State. I feel so well pleased with the Message, that I am more than ever proud of the humble part I took in your election, and should our brother State¹ be brought back within the democratic ranks, I am frank to say, this document will have contributed largely to the result. God grant that it may be so.

I beg to tender my congratulations on your present position & the bright prospects before you. I repeat the sentiments of the Message is exactly the thing for our people.

R. M. SAUNDERS

ALS. DLC–JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on December 10, 1845.

1. Tennessee.

FROM JAMES K. PAULDING¹

Dear Sir,

Hyde Park 7th Decr. 1845

I had the pleasure of receiving yesterday a copy of your Message which coming under your Frank, I am willing to believe was transmitted by yourself as from one old acquaintance to another. If such is the case I thank you for this proof of your remembrance.

I have still more to thank you for. I thank you for the stand you have taken on the Oregon question, and the manly dignified manner in which you have announced it to the world. It is I think time, and high time that the Government of the United States, constituting the greatest Empire in extent the world ever saw; the richest in soil, the most fortunate in its position with respect the other quarters of the globe, and the strongest in a population, mingling together a degree of hardihood, enterprize, and intelligence, of physical and moral energy never yet existed to such an extent in any people under the Sun—it was indeed high time, for the Young Giant of this western world to put forward his foot, and set bounds to the pretensions and occupations of superannuated Europe and her pettifogging Statesmen, who talk of arresting the progress of a deluge of men driven forward by the hands of God.

The moment in which Columbus first caught sight of this continent was fraught [with] consequences greater and more lasting than ever emanated from any act of any human being since the fall of Adam. It was the discovery of the lost child of the world destined in process of time to grow up into a lusty Scorpion possessing with all the activity of youth, all the energies of ripened manhood, and all the sagacity and experience of a green old age. It gave a new impulse to human action and enterprize; it provided a refuge from civil oppression and religious persecution; it offered a boundless sphere for the cramped energies of the mind and the fettered activity of the body; it held out such rewards to courage and genius; it promised to enterprize wealth, to industry competence, food for the hungry and freedom to the oppressed. America is the poor man's inheritance. It is the great point of attraction to the industry, talent & enterprize of the old world, which is quietly and silently pouring its arts, and wealth and energies into the New. We must shortly be a new Balance of Power in the world, and the United States will ere long turn the Scale in spite of the eminent ministerial

Pedant Monsieur Guizot who seems to think the Statesmen of Europe can pluck the Balance from the hand of Providence, which has put into operation great universal causes that in their happy combination, will make a jest of all the puny efforts of men to resist their inevitable consequences. It was indeed time for our Statesmen & Rulers, to assume a part and standing communicate with the power and destinies of this corporation of Empires. I rejoice that you have done so, and do not doubt for a moment that you will be sustained by every man of Spirit and Patriotism in resisting the pretensions not only of England but all the world besides. We want to be sensible of our glorious destiny—we require a stronger concert of national glory to knit us together; and in addition to our recollections of the past, need that glowing anticipation of the future, to make us what we ought to be, the greatest people the world ever saw.

Such at least are my convictions, in the retirement to which I have consigned myself for the rest of my Life, not because I have ought to say against the world, but because I have all my life had the preference for the country. You Sir, now occupy a noble position. You have no occasion to lash the steeds that draw the chariot of the Sun, it is only necessary not to hold the reins too tight, & let them go.

With my best regards to Mrs Polk, I am

J. K. PAULDING

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City; Polk's AE states that he received this letter on December 15, 1845.

1. A native of a prominent Revolutionary War family from Putnam County, N.Y., Paulding contributed five satirical and political works, 1812–25, in the so-called literary war provoked by British ridicule of American literary efforts; his brother William, sometime mayor of New York City and U.S. congressman, provided valuable political connections for his acquiring appointments as secretary of the Board of Navy Commissioners, 1818–23, as navy agent for New York, 1824–38, and as navy secretary, 1838–41. Author of some sixty short stories and five realistic novels, he achieved measured literary distinction for his interpretations of the New York Dutch.

TO JAMES BUCHANAN

Sir:

Washington 8th Decr. 1845

I received by the mail of Saturday evening, the accompanying papers, containing the official announcement by the President of Texas, that the Constitution, a copy of which he transmits, had been "ratified confirmed and adopted by the people of Texas themselves, in accordance with the joint Resolution for annexing Texas to the United

States.”¹ I deem it proper to communicate to both Houses of Congress, copies of these papers, as also of the Constitution, and desire that you will order two copies to be made to day, for that purpose. I desire to make the communication to day.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS. DNA-RG 59.

1. See Anson Jones to Polk, November 12, 1845.

FROM ALEXANDER H. EVERETT¹

Dear Sir

Boston. Decr. 8. 1845

Permit me to thank you for the copy of the Message, which you kindly transmitted to me and for the friendly terms, in which you allude to the circumstances of my return from Rio.² I am happy to say that my health is constantly improving; and I hope to have the pleasure very soon of paying my respects to you at Washington.

I avail myself of the occasion to express to you the great satisfaction with which I have read the message. The spectacle of national progress and prosperity presented by it is truly magnificent; and, in spite of all that rival interests or party prejudices can do to misrepresent and disguise it, will be viewed with delight and admiration by the friends of Liberty throughout the civilised world. No political document, that comes out in the course of the year, is now read, even in Europe, with so much interest as the message of the President of the United States; and the present one will, on various accounts, excite at least as much, if not more attention than any of its predecessors, although it will, of course, call forth a fresh burst of ambiguity and venom from the British press.

The successful result of the negotiations for the admission of Texas into the Union is a fit subject for national congratulation, and will throw a brilliant light upon this and the preceding administration. I was particularly pleased with the allusion in the message to the evidence of France on this matter. Though delicate & even friendly in its terms, it is precise, pointed and full of significance. Its justice will be seen and felt by such men as Louis Philippe and Mon. Guizot.

The apprehensions, real or pretended, of foreign wars that were to result from the “annexation” have already gone off in smoke. It is rather singular that the representatives of British interests in this country are not prevented by this prompt *de facto* refutation of their dismal prophecies from indulging in another Jeremiade of the same kind upon the supposed danger of war with England about Oregon.

The danger is just as great in this case as it was in the other. The same considerations, which have compelled Great Britain to acquiesce, very much against her will, in the "annexation," will also compel her to consent to an equitable adjustment of the Oregon question by direct negotiation. It is now, and has been ever since the close of the war of 1812, her stated policy never to permit herself, in any way, to be drawn into another. The basis of her foreign policy is trade; and her trade with us, which is already worth to her all the rest of her foreign commerce put together, is rising with unparalleled capacity to an importance altogether incalculable. Although the British press in all its departments, thinks it polite to court the basest passions and narrowest prejudices of the multitude by constant abuse of the United States, the government is aware of the importance, or rather absolute political necessity, of entertaining friendly intercourse with us. They will bully & plunder us as long as we choose to endure their insolence and no longer. When they find us firmly taking ground they will yield, as they have heretofore done, without going to war, or permitting us to go to war with them.

I am very glad to find the establishment of an Independent Treasury recommended with so much decision in the message and the Secretary's Report.³ It will do all that can be done by the general government towards the introduction of a sounder state of the currency: and this, in turn, will contribute very powerfully towards a satisfactory solution of the vexed question of the Tariff. A thorough reform in the state of the currency, taken in connexion with our favorable geographical position & characteristic national activity, would deliver the home-market to our own manufactures, wherever they are able to supply it, and then put an end in the most agreeable manner to all controversy on the expediency of protection.

A. H. EVERETT

ALS. DLC—JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City.

1. A Boston author and diplomat, Everett wrote extensively and edited the *North American Review* from 1830 until 1835; served a number of terms as a Whig in the Massachusetts legislature before becoming a Democrat in the 1830's. Everett served as secretary to the Russian legation under John Q. Adams, 1809–11; as attaché, 1815–16, and chargé d'affaires to the Netherlands, 1818–24; minister to Spain, 1825–29; and as commissioner to China from 1845 until his death at Canton in 1847.

2. Everett fell ill on the passage to China and returned to Boston to recover.

3. *Report from the Secretary of the Treasury*, House Executive Document No. 6, 29th Congress, 1st Session.

FROM FRANCIS W. PICKENS¹

My dear Sir

Senate Chamber
Columbia 8 Decr. 1845

Considering the *peculiar circumstances* under which I have been placed in this State ever since I saw you at home, I cannot refrain from returning you my thanks for your *noble and lofty* message. I most cordially approve its doctrines and positions in relation to the Tariff and others are exactly such as I pledged myself to, and I knew your integrity and moral courage would sustain you in adhering to truth and justice. I approve also of its tone and principles in relation to Oregon, and you have uttered sentiments which will find a glorious response in the heart of every freeman in this Republic. The whole document is such as to do immortal honor to your head and to your heart. You will recollect the Resolutions I had passed in this Legislature last year which created great bitterness & ill feeling towards me.² I feel now relieved, & thank God I took the responsibilities that I did.

Those were the circumstances that induced me to refuse the mission you so kindly tendered me.³ I wrote Mr. Buchanan in relation to it and requested him to show you the letter which I hope he did.⁴ You will therefore pardon me now in trespassing upon your time, as it was nothing but due to you that I should let you know that I approve of your course and your principles, & every feeling of my heart is with you.

There is no division here as to your message, and So. Carolina will stand by you as one man in any emergency that may arise. No document ever issued from Washington, in my opinion, ever produced as profound an impression upon the world as your *noble* message is calculated to do. I could not suppress my feelings on this occasion, and to say less would not be just to you, and I trust our former intimacy will justify my writing thus freely.

F. W. PICKENS

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City and marked as "Private." Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on December 12, 1845.

1. A South Carolina lawyer and planter, Pickens first won election to Congress as a nullifier and sat from 1834 until 1843; a member of the S.C. Senate, 1844–46, and a delegate to Nashville Convention of 1850, he served as governor of South Carolina from 1860 until 1863.

2. Pickens' reference is to resolutions proposed in response to Governor James H. Hammond's message to the legislature of South Carolina on November 26, 1844. Hammond's message contained militant states-rights'

positions regarding tariff revision, Texas annexation, and abolitionist activities. Pickens' resolutions advocated allowing the new administration and Congress a chance to adjust these issues before any unilateral activity by South Carolina. The resolutions passed the state Senate, but not the House. Pickens' course earned him the enmity of the "Bluffton" radicals and the suspicion of John C. Calhoun.

3. Polk offered Pickens the mission to Great Britain on April 21, 1845, and Pickens declined the position a week later.

4. On May 27, 1845, Pickens wrote to James Buchanan that, while he supported the administration, his commitment to South Carolina induced him to refuse the appointment. ALS. PHi.

FROM JAMES E. SAUNDERS

My Dear Sir

Custom House
Mobile 8^h December 1845

My last favor from you was your private note of the 7^h Novr, in which you whispered in my ear the general principles on which I should proceed in distributing the little patronage incident to my office. I could not misunderstand your motive in making these suggestions to me. It must have proceeded from a friendly desire that I should so regulate my appointments as to give satisfaction generally to our friends, and I but regard it as another proof of your much esteemed confidence.

The truth in relation to the impression which prevailed of my intention to crowd my personal friends from a distance into office is that, I kept my own counsel, and conjecture had to be resorted to as to my intentions. I am happy to say to you that my appointment has been well received here and that in relation to my appointments, I expect they will give as much satisfaction as my appointment. I have consulted our friends here not even omitting those who were competitors for the same appointment. We are on the best terms personally. My friends understand that I intend to fill from personal considerations the two places, Weighers. They are satisfied on this point. In all other matters I shall after being satisfied of the fitness of the applicant be much influenced by a desire to keep our friends here united and content. I shall attach myself to no clique, or subdivision of the party but do justice to all.

I have today proposed a few changes to the Secretary of the Treasury. Every man I have nominated is an old citizen of Mobile and respected, and Gen Lang¹ the most popular Democrat in the city without exception I believe.

Capt Childress has gone for his family and will come in about Christmas. The Weighers now in office (Whigs) in consequence of some little indulgence in being suffered to make their back pay will resign in very good temper with us.

Your message is looked for with much interest here and every where.

JAMES E. SAUNDERS

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City; marked as “Private and Unofficial.”

1. James W. Lang received appointment as an inspector at the Mobile Custom House in 1845.

FROM JOHN CATRON

Dr. Sir.

[Washington City, December 9, 1845]¹

He declines writing save to friends.² Is extremely sore about the course towards him; is by silence, seeking a cessation of further reflection on his course. Means by a straight forward vigorous conduct, & by votes, to put down opposition and meet all charges. Declares he feels as he ever did towards the head of the democracy. Suggested all that would be said, if he published the note supposed to be calculated to allay further excitement. Promised to write my frd. & his bro.³ as I desired, & fully. He feels an abhorrence to contend a paper: this is natural, *with the want of skill*, and the press against him. In a speech, and on the first occasion, he will do all desired, & more.

As to votes, there is no danger, or doubt. He is not afraid of either of us. Time, & hardly a word, will by the coming of the leaf, put this matter on the best footing that the circumstances will admit. H is delicate, and words useless and probably dangerous. The intercourse is to be as formerly. Some calculations are made on sympathy at home, & coming to the rescue, on the old people’s ground of persecution. Quere. So things stand. Had a long conversation.

C.

ALI. DLC–JKP. Polk’s AE on the cover reads as follows: “Hon. John Catron. In reference to *H. L. Turney’s* course in the Senate of the U.S. Recd, Decr. 9th 1845.”

1. Place and date of letter determined by content analysis.
2. Reference is to Tennessee’s new Senator, Hopkins L. Turney.
3. Samuel Turney.

FROM FRANKLIN H. ELMORE

My Dear Sir

Columbia Decr. 9, 1845

I seize the first moment in my power to say to you how profoundly gratified I have been with your Message. It has fulfilled all I expected as regards the Tariff, is what it ought to be on the Subtreasury, & as to our Foreign relations is as every man jealous of the honor of his country could wish it. You have put England in the wrong on the Oregon question & if war is necessary, little as I regard Oregon as a possession, were it a barren rock & our honor on it, I would stand by you in asserting & vindicating our right & honor. Such I am sure is the universal feeling here. I have not yet met a dissentient.

We are only afraid you may get into War. We are anxious to avoid it, but we neither shrink from it if necessary, nor would we sacrifice a jot or tittle of self respect to avert it. If therefore your measures do not precipitate this disastrous issue, no people will be more unanimous in sustaining you than ours. Our blood & our treasures are at the disposal of the country, but we should deeply deplore the necessity which would require them. Do therefore My Dear Sir all you can in honor to avoid it, and we will gratefully remember it, & the more warmly support you if it comes.

Mr Calhoun will be with you about the 18th to 20th. I have not seen him, but am to meet him on the 14th when I will endeavor to impress him with the views so universally felt here, if he has not already participated in them, of which I scarcely doubt.

F. H. ELMORE

ALS. DLC—JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City.

FROM AARON VANDERPOEL

My Dear Sir

New York 9 Decr 1845

I have read your message with the highest gratification. It is all, that the Country could desire. The people will sustain you in the ground you have taken on the Oregon question. I hope, the matter will take such a turn as will save the peace of the Country. War with Great Britian would not be a farce. If, however we are to preserve peace at the expense of national honor, then, let war come with all its calamities. This is and must be the feeling of every right-minded man. A war would paralyze every thing, in this City. It would stop all improvements, house

& ship building, throw our mechanics (who are our democratic support) out of employment, and would, I think, have the effect, at first, of throwing us into a minority. But why this speculation? *We shall have no war*. It is against the spirit of the age. Under your auspices the great *vexed* question will be settled, so as to save both the honor and the peace of the Country.

May I ask of you the favor of a pamphlet copy of your message.

A. VANDERPOEL

ALS. DLC–JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City.

TO CLEMENT C. CLAY

My Dear Sir:

Washington City Decr. 10th 1845

It afforded me sincere pleasure to receive your letter of the 27th ultimo,¹ and although I am occupied every moment in my public duties, I take time to acknowledge its receipt. Should the event occur to which you allude, I know of no reason to prevent me from gratifying your wishes. Our intercourse was for many years very intimate, and nothing certainly has occurred to change my friendly regard for you. Indeed it would give me great pleasure, as far as I can consistently with my public duty do so, to give you some substantial evidence of that regard. I have often thought of writing to you, but pressing engagements and want of time have prevented it. Certainly I would in no event, want testimonials in your behalf. I know you as well as any of your friends, and fully appreciate your merits. It has been my settled practice since I entered upon my present duties to make no pledges to my most intimate friends, but these you will not desire when you know that I am as I have been since our first acquaintance your friend. I would be glad to say something of public affairs but have not time. I took the liberty to send you a copy of my message under my frank. With the kind salutations of Mrs. Polk and myself to Mrs. Clay,² and with my best wishes for your prosperity & happiness...

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Huntsville, Ala., and marked “*Private*.”

1. Clay wished to replace William Crawford as U.S. district court judge should Crawford resign the office. See Clay to Polk, November 27, 1845. ALS. DLC–JKP.

2. Susanna Claiborne Withers Clay.

FROM JOHN LAW

My Dear Sir

Indianapolis Decbr 10th 1845

You will have learnt ere this reaches you of the result of the Senatorial Election held on Saturday last. Bright¹ whom you know, was elected on the first ballott by a majority of fourteen votes over the Whig nominee. And if any thing was wanting to convince our democratic friends abroad, of the union harmony concert and correct feeling of the democracy of Indiana, I think this election would prove it. The names presented by their respective friends in the democratic caucus on the night preceeding the election were: Gov Whitcomb, Bright, Robert Dale Owen,² Judge Chamberlain³ from the northern portion of the State, Joseph A Wright, and your humble servant. On the third balloting in Caucus Bright received forty two votes being a majority of the whole, seventy eight in number, and was declared duly nominated. The *whole democratic vote* with one exception in the Legislative Convention next morning confirmed the nomination, not a dissenting voice, not an unkind feeling among the other competitors. Although to my knowledge *more than one* of them could have gotten the *whole Whig vote* in opposition to the *nominee* of our party, and probably enough democratic friends to have elected him. But they to a man spurned all propositions of the kind and Judge Read as you will see by the paper sent,⁴ before the balloting took place, publicly declared that he was authorized by all the gentlemen named, to withdraw their names, and to give their unqualified consent to the nomination made. Is not this a rebuke to some of our sister democratic states?⁵

You will find Bright a warm decided democrat to be relied on in all emergencies, and I trust the administration will find him an active and useful adjunct in the Senate. I have no doubt they will.

The Message has been received. It meets with the *entire* and *cordial* approbation of the democracy here, and should a crisis occur which should require *stout hearts* and *strong arms*, no where will the Government find them more ready to meet any contingency than among the democracy of Indiana.

Present my best regards to Mrs Polk, and with my best wishes personally and politically believe me

JOHN LAW

ALS. DLC–JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City.

1. A lawyer from Madison, Jesse D. Bright served as lieutenant governor of Indiana, 1843–45, before being elected as a Democrat to the U.S. Senate,

in which body he served from 1845 to 1862. Bright's Whig opponent is not identified further.

2. Son of Robert Owen the British industrialist and social reformer, Owen assisted in the founding of the New Harmony community in Indiana in 1826; he served three terms as a Democrat in the state legislature, 1836–38, and two terms in the U.S. House, 1843–47.

3. An Elkhart County lawyer and Democrat, Ebenezer M. Chamberlain served a number of terms in the state legislature; attended the Baltimore National Democratic Convention in 1844; presided over the Ninth Judicial District in 1843 and from 1851 until 1853; and served one term in the U.S. House, 1853–55.

4. Enclosure not found. An Indiana Democrat, James G. Read served in the state legislature for over twenty years. He ran as the Democratic candidate for governor in 1831 and 1834, but lost both races. Read served as a Polk presidential elector in 1844.

5. Law's reference is to the recent Tennessee senatorial election of Hopkins L. Turney, who denounced the caucus system as undemocratic and won his seat with Whig support.

FROM HUGH WADDELL

My dear Sir

Hillsboro Decr. 10. 1845

I cannot resist the opportunity presented by the first mail, of thanking you for the very great pleasure which I have derived from the perusal of yr. *first* message as President of the United States! And if any thing could have added to this pleasure, it is found in the manner in which I received it, *from yr. own hands*.

I have not now the time being much & necessarily engaged to advert to the parts of it which please me most, but will merely remark that its decided ability its lofty spirit, & its liberal tone upon all the great questions of interest to the Country, must & will command for its author, the undivided respect of all parties. It may be truly added that this is no small compliment, if reference be had, to the many difficult complicated & perilous questions on which you were obliged to treat.

I have regarded the Tariff & Oregon questions as of the greatest interest as well as difficulty, but I was indeed gratified to see how they are discussed in the Message in which it is difficult to determine whether the reasoning on the first or the manliness on the last topic is most to be commended. But I must forbear for the present.

I received several messages from you through my friends Col Hawkins of No. Ca. & Judge Ogden of La: which reminded me forcibly of the sunny days of old Chapel Hill. I was so moved by them that I wrote you a long letter in October,¹ Post marked "Greensboro," which

I must suppose has never reached you, as it was in part on a subject of some feeling to me & I was convinced you would not have slighted its requests.

Although we differ on Political subjects I have never felt any diminution of the sincere esteem & respect with which you inspired me when we were boys & unknown to Fame & I assure you, even among your Political friends you have not one who more sincerely congratulates you on the elevation you so handsomely & *without solicitation* received at the hands of the American People than does yr. ancient & constant friend & classmate.

HUGH WADDELL

P.S. Be so Kind as to present me most respectfully to Mrs. Polk to whom I was so much indebted for her many elegant & courteous attentions to me when I was in Washington & say to her we may yet dine together in the *White House* when she will not be a *guest* as she was when we dined with Gen. Jackson. H.W.

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received Waddell's letter on December 14, 1845, and answered it on December 15, 1845.

1. See Waddell to Polk, October 18, 1845.

FROM WILLIAM D. MOSELEY

Dear Sir

Tallahassee Decr. 11. 1845

I send you by Midshipman Westcott¹ (brother of Senator Westcott) a walking cane of Florida-wood; not that I suppose, that the infirmities of age make it necessary to assist you in walking; but merely as a remembrance; and also, as a specimen of one of the products of my beloved Flo. I send also, a specimen of Hemp, made by my respectable competitor, Govr. Call²; and a specimen of Sea Island cotton; such as our uplands in this vicinity produce. After the close of the Genl Assembly, my friend Mr John P Baldwin,³ a member from Dade County, has promised to forward to you in my name, sundry articles, the growth and manufacture of South Florida; which by the bye, is the most desirable spot, in my humble judgmnt, in these U. States. But more of this hereafter. I regret that I had no opportunity of having the stick mounted; with a simple inscription, mentioning the names of the *donor* and *donee*; but you must in this instance, take the wish for the deed. I was very much disappointed this morning, when the mail arrived, that it brought no news from Washington. We are all on

tiptoes here, awaiting the arrival of your Message. For my own part, I feel no uneasiness. I will stake my reputation for a prophet, against the most inconsiderable trifle (which you know, would be venturing much on my part) that it will meet the approbation of the great mass of the real Democracy of the Country. If it does not I either do not know *you*, or, I do not know the people. I think by this time I ought to be pretty well acquainted, not only with them, but with *you*. As Mr Ritchie would say, "nous verrons."⁴ Our Genl Assembly have passed resolutions in relation to the Everglads,⁵ and instructed me to forward copies to yourself, and others at Washington, for the purposes therein mentioned. This shall be done at an early day. In the mean time, I ask permission to remark; that it is to me, a source of deep regret; that Florida and its immense resources are so little known, or appreciated at Washington. Why! the Peninsula of Florida, is more valuable, than the whole of the New England States; and the Everglades alone, if I am rightly informed, with very little labour, would be more valuable, than any two of them; yet I very much doubt, whether they have ever been heard of; except as the retreat of the Seminoles, during the late war. For more satisfactory information on this head, as well as to our immense resources; you are referred, to our very respectable, and intelligent Senators; Messrs Levy and Westcott. If I live till next Spring, I am desirous of then visiting all the Peninsula, as well as the adjacent islands; and will then be enabled to speak more satisfactorily upon these matters.

When our Genl Assembly shall close, I will send you a copy of the laws; so that you may be advised of our actings and doings. Since I last wrote,⁶ I have rec several communications from Col. Pierce; who seems to entertain a very different view, as to the strength and character of the Seminoles, from his late predecessor, Col. Worth.⁷

I really wish that I could see you. I would say many things which I feel anxious to communicate, but which I dislike to trouble you with in writing; as I know the value of your time, particularly at the commencement of the Session of Congress. As a citizen of Florida, and not as its Executive, I do most earnestly hope, that the State of Florida will not be held responsible by the Federal Govmt, for the acts of the territorial authorities. It does seem to me, to be a monstrous outrage upon our rights as a State; equally entitled upon our admission into the Union, to all the rights and privileges of any state, that we should be embarrassed and cramped by the acts (I may say follies) of those, that we had no share in elevating over us. In our territorial state we were but the subjects of the Federal govmt, goverd by its authorities, and there, it would seem to me, the responsibility should rest.

As a private citizen also, I earnestly hope, that more attention will be paid to our defenseless situation. With a seaboard, more extensive than the balance of the Union, in the neighborhood of the emancipated negroes of the West Indies, & with a horde of ruthless savages on the Peninsula, we are without the slightest means of defense.

I have written too much. Excuse and destroy it.

W. D. MOSELEY

PS. I have been requested, by my friends, to recommend as agents for the live oak plantation (west of the Apalachicola) Mr J. M Long, and for that, East of the Suwanee Mr J. A. Goff.⁸ They are both worthy of the confidence of the President. W.D.M.

ALS. DLC–JKP. Delivered by hand and marked “Private.” Polk’s AE on the cover states that he received this letter on December 31, 1845.

1. Bayse N. Westcott retired from the navy as a lieutenant in 1863.

2. Richard K. Call fought as a lieutenant under Andrew Jackson in the War of 1812 and in Florida. A brigadier general of the militia from 1826 until 1842, he served as Florida Territory’s congressional delegate, 1824–25; as receiver of public monies for West Florida, 1829–36; and twice as territorial governor of Florida, 1836–39 and 1841–44. Call split with the Democracy over his replacement as governor in 1839. In elections for state offices on May 26, 1845, Call lost the gubernatorial contest to Moseley.

3. Not identified further.

4. French for “we shall see.”

5. Senate Document No. 35, 29th Congress, 1st Session.

6. See Moseley to Polk, November 25, 1845.

7. Benjamin K. Pierce and William J. Worth. A native of New Hampshire and brother of Franklin Pierce, Pierce served as an officer in the artillery during the War of 1812 and the Second Seminole War; he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel in 1842. A native of New York, Worth served as an infantry officer during the War of 1812; attained the rank of colonel in 1838; was breveted brigadier general in 1842 for service against the Seminoles; and was breveted major general in 1846 for meritorious conduct at the Battle of Monterey.

8. James M. Long and James A. Goff. Long represented Washington County in the first state legislature, and received an appointment as inspector of live oak timber by Polk. Goff represented Hillsborough County in the first state legislature.

FROM ROBERT ARMSTRONG

My dear Sir

Liverpool 13th Decemr. [1845]¹

This country is in a high state of excitement since the Resignation of Sir Robert Peel and his Ministry.² The “Old Iron duke”³ it seems is

too strong yet. The result may be the issueing of writs of Election for a new Parlement.

The Landed Interest and holders are very powerfull and look down all opposition. It is thought to be doubtfull if a new Election would increase their strength in House of Commons.

How the Ministry or party going into power may look on our unsettled affairs is doubtfull. Lord John Russell⁴ it is said has been directed to form a new cabinet. Lords Milburne & Palmerton⁵ are said to be included both unfriendly to the U States, and may deem *War convenient* to *amuse* and *divert* the *starving* and keep down a *revolution* at home.

If a repeal of the corn laws could be effected the next *demand* would be an extention of the right of Suffrage.

Your Message is looked for with great Interest.

Mr McLane is in Paris with Washington Irvin.⁶ I send but a file paper back, by the Garrick & Liberty both sailing in an hour.

R. ARMSTRONG

[P.S.] A bag is just come. Mr Carr⁷ from London for State Dept. I will send it by the *Garrick*. Hope all may reach you before the news by steamer of *4th January*. R.A.

ALS. DLC–JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City.

1. Year identified through content analysis.
2. Peel resigned his ministry on December 6, only to return to head a new ministry on December 20.
3. Arthur Wellesley, First Duke of Wellington, served as commander of British forces during the Napoleonic Wars and commander of allied armies during the Waterloo campaign; headed a Tory ministry from 1828 until 1830; served as foreign minister, 1834–35, and minister without portfolio, 1841–46, under Peel; and was made commander-in-chief for life in 1842.
4. A member of the British House of Commons from 1813–55 and 1859–68, Russell served as prime minister from 1846 until 1851 and from 1865 to 1866. Raised to the peerage in 1861, Russell proved an outspoken proponent for the repeal of the Test and Corporation acts and played a key role in the passage of the Reform Bill of 1832.
5. William Lamb, Lord Melbourne, and Henry John Temple, Lord Palmerston. Melbourne served four years as home secretary before forming his first right-wing Liberal party ministry, which governed from July until November 1834; in 1835 he again rose to the position of prime minister; his ministry lasted five years. Having served as both foreign secretary and as home secretary, Palmerston attained the position of prime minister in 1855; his first ministry lasted three years; and his second extended from 1859 to 1865.
6. Washington Irving spent much of his adulthood living and writing in Europe. In 1842 he became U.S. minister to Spain and served in that post until 1846.

7. A Jacksonian Democrat, Dabney S. Carr served as naval officer for the port of Baltimore from 1829 until 1843 and as minister to Turkey from 1843 until 1850.

TO WILLIAM H. POLK

My Dear Sir: Washington City Decr. 13th 1845
Congress met on the 1st Instant, and on the 2nd I sent in my message, a copy of which will be transmitted to you by the next Steamer. As far as I have learned, it has been well received by the Country, the Democracy giving it a united and enthusiastic support, and many of the Whigs, yielding a tacit assent and making no open opposition. Upon the Oregon question the opposition have been taken all aback and know not what to say. Upon that question the patriotic feeling of the country is much excited & I have no doubt I shall be sustained by Congress and the country. I shall be anxious to know how the message is received in different parts of Europe, and I desire that you will write to me on the subject.

In my letter of the 27th of November no despatch or private letter has been received from you. In that letter I informed you that special instructions had been sent to you concerning the Treaty which you are expected to negotiate, and I might have added that a copy of a Treaty was forwarded to you. The despatch which you informed me in a letter preceeding the date of my last, you had forwarded to the State Department has not yet been received. *Mr Buchanan* expresses great surprise at its failure to reach him, and that he has received none other from you. I requested you to forward a duplicate & hope you have done so.

I write in haste, at the last moment to be in time for the next Steamer, and while members of Congress, are awaiting in the anti-chamber for an audience with me. Nothing from Tennessee of any interest.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Naples and marked "Private."

1. See William H. Polk to Polk, September 17, 1845.

TO WILLIAM W. POLK

Dear Sir: Washington City Decr. 13th 1845
Your letter of the 24th of October reached me more than a month ago, but I was so much engaged at the time, in preparing to meet

Congress, that I had no time to acknowledge its receipt. Since that time my note which you held, as you are no doubt aware, has been paid up, and forwarded to me by my agent at Memphis.¹ It is a source of regret to me, that any unpleasant feeling on your part, should for a moment have grown out of the transaction, and I hope that none such remains; certainly there is none & never has been, on my part. Your letter in reply to my first to you,² was worded in some of its parts in very harsh terms, more so perhaps than you were conscious of at the time or intended to be. Finding from it that *Mr Walker's* understanding of the time payment of the note was expected, differed from yours, I instantly determined to make the payment of the whole, without delay. In writing to you to that effect,³ I necessarily had reference to your letter to me and made from it the quotation in reference to the rate of interest, to which you allude in your last. But for the character of that quotation, I never should have thought of offering to pay you the same rate of interest, which you had stated you received on money loaned in Louisiana and Arkansas. Your last letter explains what your meaning was, in making the remark in reference to the rate of interest; still from the language employed, it left the inference which I drew. I certainly did not intend to wound your feelings by making the offer, and was induced to make it, only because of the language which you had used; and because I desired that you should be fully satisfied. The whole matter is now over: I am satisfied, and hope you may be. Let it pass into oblivion with the assurance on my part, that I entertain for you the same regard that I have ever shone. I will only add that *Mr James Walker* after having seen you, wrote to me about a year ago,⁴ that I could obtain the loan, & he informed me that it would be in *specie*, and that my note should be made payable in *specie*. I accordingly drew it payable in *specie*, and after having sent it to Bolivar for the signature of *Bills & McNeal* as security, it was forwarded to *Saml. P. Walker* at Memphis, to receive the money, and deliver the note to *Mr Howard*. He received the money in Tennessee Bank paper, *Mr Howard* as he informed me having no instructions to pay it in *specie*, and the *Tennessee Bank* paper, which was 2. per cent below *specie*, was the kind of funds which I received. When the note was paid to *Mr Howard* a few weeks ago, *Mr Walker* bought *specie* at a premium, with which to do it. This he did, because, the note called for *specie*, and because he understood that you expected the payment to be made in that kind of funds. *Mr Howard* understands the transaction, but *Mr Walker* paid off the note according to its face, because he, as well as myself, desired that you should be fully satisfied. I think it probable that you did not know that the money had been loaned to me in *Bank paper*, instead

of specie, but as Mr Howard transacted the business, I think it likely that you supposed the loan had been made in *specie*. I mention these facts to you simply that you understand them as they are, and not with the slightest desire that any thing further should be done in the matter, my only object being to assure you that I have done all in my power to satisfy you. I am myself entirely satisfied with these statements, because I supposed that you had not before been informed of the fact that the loan was made to me in *paper*, and the payment back in specie.

I hope, if we both live until the close of my term to see you again, and I assure you that there is no man living whom I would be more pleased to see. I am sorry to learn from you that your health was bad, but hope you have been restored.

I sent you a copy of my message to Congress in which you will find a recommendation among other things, for the increase of our Steam Navy, for the better protection of our commerce & the defense of our coast, and have made special reference to the exposed condition of New Orleans and the valley of the Mississippi, to which you alluded in your last letter.

Congress have been in Session two weeks, but have not as yet entered on any important business. How far they will sustain the recommendations of the message remains to be seen. As far as I have yet learned however, the message seems to have been well received.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to "Near Helena, Arkansas."

1. See Samuel P. Walker to Polk, November 17, 1845.
2. See William W. Polk to Polk, September 18, 1845, and Polk to William W. Polk, August 18, 1845.
3. See Polk to William W. Polk, October 9, 1845.
4. James Walker to Polk, December 17, 1844. ALS. DLC-JKP.

TO SAMUEL P. WALKER

My Dear Sir: Washington City Decr. 13th 1845

I received some days ago your letter¹ inclosing to me my note to *William Polk* of Arkansas for \$9.000. which had been paid according to my directions. The Bill for \$7.500 which you drew on me, the proceeds of which were applied to the payment of the note, has been presented to me and paid. This together with the \$2.000 for which you had previously drawn on me, liquidated the note and, as you inform me left a small balance in my favour, which you would place to my credit with your House at New Orleans. You did right under the circumstances

to pay *specie*, although as you know I received *Tennessee paper* which was 2. per cent below the par of *specie*. I remember you informed me at the time you received the money for me, in January last, that *Mr Howard*, sold the *specie* at 2. per cent premium. The understanding of your father² who negotiated the loan with *Wm. Polk* for me, was, that I was to receive *specie* and pay *specie*. My note executed at Columbia and forwarded to you at Memphis was made payable in *specie*, with the full understanding that I was to receive *specie*. As the matter has been settled I have lost the 2. per cent, on \$9,000. which amounts to \$180. You inform me that *Mr Howard* remembered the understanding which you had with him at the time, and when the note was paid desired to settle accordingly, but that you declined to receive the \$180, as *Wm. Polk* had written to *Howard* that nothing but *specie* would do, and that you were determined to satisfy him. In this I repeat you did right, considering the peculiar temperment of the old man, but still I have lost \$180. by the transaction. I do not now desire that you shall make any difficulty about it. I am however satisfied that the old gentleman did not understand that *Howard* had loaned me *Tennessee paper*, which was 2. per cent below par, when he wrote to him to receive in payment of the note nothing but *specie*. I think if *Mr Howard* would voluntarily explain this to him, he would at once correct the error. I merely suggest this to you, that you may or not in your discretion, mention it to *Howard*. I wish to be understood. I am satisfied as the matter stands, but am sure if the old gentleman understood it, he would direct the \$180. to be paid back to me. All I wish is that *Howard* should make him distinctly understand it, and then let him act as he pleases. Whether he does or not, I am highly gratified that the note is paid. In a letter received from *Wm. Polk* about the time yours was received,³ he refused to receive any thing more than legal interest, which I had preferred to pay, in consequence of his first letter to me, an extract of which I gave you in a former letter.⁴ If he was unwilling to do this, I am sure he would not have received the 2. per cent excess over the legal interest, if he had understood the transaction. You can, if you have not done so, hold a conversation with *Howard* on the subject, without saying to him, that you do so, at my suggestion and then let the matter rest, unless he chooses to write to the old gentleman. If the \$180. is refunded to you, place it to my credit with your House at New Orleans.

I would have answered your letter earlier, but that I have not had a moment of time since its receipt. Since Congress met I have been perfectly overwhelmed with company and business. My message seems to have been well received by Congress and the country.

Your sister⁵ is with us, and is very well. With my kind regards, to *Ellen*⁶....

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Memphis and marked “*Private*.”

1. See Walker to Polk, November 17, 1845.
2. James Walker.
3. See William Wilson Polk to Polk, October 24, 1845.
4. See William Wilson Polk to Polk, September 18, 1845; and Polk to Samuel P. Walker, October 9, 1845.
5. Sarah Naomi Walker.
6. Eleanor Wormeley Walker.

FROM HARVEY M. WATTERSON

Dear Sir,

Nashville Dec. 13th 1845

I have just finished the reading of your message, and I can truly say that I never read any document with more pleasure. I am willing to battle for the principles which it contains, on all occasions, and this is the universal sentiment here amongst the Democracy.

I believe it will greatly strengthen us in Tennessee. I have heard a number of Whigs say it is a most admirable message.

I fear we will not adjourn before the last of February.

On next Tuesday an address from thirty two Democratic members of the Legislature in reference to the late Senatorial election will make its appearance.¹ It is temperate, but decided. In my Senatorial District there [is] scarcely a Turney man left to tell the tale. The Democracy are indignant & the Whigs disgusted.

H. M. WATTERSON

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk’s AE states that he received this letter on December 21, 1845.

1. The text of “An Address of thirty-one Democratic members of the Legislature to their Constituents in reference to the late Senatorial Election” was published in the *Nashville Union* of December 20, 1845.

FROM ALFRED BALCH

Dear Sir,

Nashville 14th Decr '45

I approve with all my heart of the principles and policy embodied in the Message. If the difficulty about our title to Oregon shall become

serious and war shall be ever feared the administration will be sustained in Ten by a decided, and possibly by an overwhelming majority. The present party organization will be wholly broken up and thousands now opposed to each other, will be found fighting in the same ranks.

A whig who has made some figure in politics in our state said to me yesterday I have read the Message and if G. Britain presses her claim to our property any farther I cannot falter for an instant. I must support the President and I know that large numbers of my whig brethren will do the same.

Some of the professing members of the Democratic party in our Legislature have been acting badly and have done much mischief. It is very certain that Mr Turney averred to the whigs that you were opposed to his election to the Senate but that he would not be put down by Executive dictation and would be a candidate altho he expected to be beaten. The whigs instantly accepted this cunning invitation to support Mr T and he was elected. Some of the candidates of our party behaved as illy as they could in loud canvassing for the different offices required to be filled. Their selfishness was much stronger than their patriotism and they were ready for all kinds of bargains. Mr Powhatan Gordon who was loud and bitter in his denunciation of Mr T. voted for Zollicoffer and violated his solemn pledges to the people. For all these proceedings I hold the most profound disgust.

The gossips here have it that Austin Miller wishes to marry Caledonia Brown.¹ It seems to me that she does not fight very shy and therefore they may make a bargain.

Rumor has it that Mrs Govr already finds herself "as women wish to be who love their Lords."² Upon this momentous question his Excellency obstinately refuses to make any answer altho I have frequently pressed him with becoming delicacy. He only smiles and looks quite proud and lofty.

With respect to Mrs P....

ALFRED BALCH

ALS. DLC-JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE states that he received this letter on December 24, 1845.

1. A lawyer from Bolivar, Tenn., Miller served as judge of Tennessee's Eleventh Circuit Court from 1836 until 1838, and won election as a Democrat to three terms in the Tennessee House, 1843-47 and 1861-63. Brown is not identified further.

2. References are to Cynthia Pillow Saunders Brown and to John Home, *Douglas* [1756], act I, scene 1.

FROM JOHN CATRON

Dr. Sir.

Monday, Decr 15, 45

Immediately after our conversation on the 26th ult. in regard to the action of the Memphis convention on the subject of Internal improvements, I wrote (that day) to Mr. Stevenson,¹ and next day again. This morning I recd. his answer, dated 5th & post marked 7th inst. He says, the convention refused to act on anything having a tendency to a party measure, or to consider any report of the kind. A committee was appointed to examine the reports; and in place of adopting them as coming from the Convention, they were severally recommended to the public for its consideration; that is, left to pass for what they were worth. The Arkansas People were clamorous about their road,² until Mr. Guthrie³ spoke it out of countenance. This is a great common sense man, & I felt very sure he was not to be caught in any trap, & I knew furthermore, he would from necessity lead. From the movements of the convention there is nothing, not the least, to be apprehended.

Luckily my letter reached Mr. Stevenson in regard to the Election for Congress in time. On reaching home from Memphis Doct Peyton⁴ was dead, Ewing was out, Barrow &c. Then Bell was brought up to rule all off. Trousdale was out. All the Whigs seemed willing to give way to Bell; Ewing was induced to hold on, and promised no doubt if he did, and had Whig opposition, Trousdale would be dropped, say in Davidson, & he Ewing be supported by the democrats. Ewing agreed to hold on against Mr. Bell, & all comers, published a card for Davidson, and went to speech making in Sumner & Smith. Such a thing could of course not be kept under a bushel, and I daresay was not very carefully concealed. The effect was certain. Ewing could have beaten any Whig, and no one came forward. Trousdale cannot command the demo. party strength & never has, out of his own county and any Whig can beat him. Ewing is elected of course. Stevenson says your friends were determined you should not be annoyed by Bell, Jarnagin, or the like; and used the best means to accomplish a contrary result.

Do not understand me to say that a word had ever been heard from *you* by me, on the subject. I advised my younger kinsman, for myself, without knowing whether Gnl. Trousdale would run in the end, nor much caring for such a ceremony. It could be nothing more.

J. CATRON

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed locally.

1. A wealthy merchant and railroad promoter from Nashville, Vernon K. Stevenson proved very instrumental in raising individual and institutional

subscriptions for a Nashville railway line. In 1848 he became president of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railway Company and held that post until the end of the Civil War.

2. One of the resolutions of the Memphis convention supported a federally-funded military road across Arkansas to the western frontier.

3. A lawyer from Louisville, James Guthrie sat in the Kentucky House, 1827–29, and Senate, 1831–40; from 1853 until 1857 he served as secretary of the Treasury in the cabinet of Franklin Pierce; in 1865 he won election to the U.S. Senate and served until 1868.

4. Joseph H. Peyton, a Sumner County physician and Whig, served one term in the Tennessee Senate, 1841–43, before winning election to the U.S. House in 1843. Although Peyton was elected to a second term, he died on November 11, 1845. In a special election held on December 11, 1845, Edwin H. Ewing was chosen to fill Peyton's vacant seat in the Eighth Congressional District.

TO HUGH WADDELL

My Dear Sir:

Washington City Decr. 15th 1845

I thank you for your kind letter of the 10th Instant. I am much gratified to learn from you, that you entertain opinions so favourable of the Message. It contains my well considered opinions upon the important subjects of which it treats, and of course, I have some solicitude that it shall be well received by the country. Differing as we do on general political subjects, your letter I assure you, is most acceptable to me.

I owe you an apology My Dear Sir: for not having acknowledged the receipt of your letter of the 18th of October. I fully intended to have done so, but the pressure upon my time was so great, and especially as the Session of Congress approached, that I was compelled wholly to neglect my correspondence. Though I receive very large mails every day, I have not written a dozen letters in that many weeks. You will I am sure attribute my failure to answer you, to the true cause. I often recur with pleasure to the scenes of our youth, and can in all sincerity assure you, that there are none with whom I was associated at the University, for whom I retain a higher regard or more sincere friendship than for yourself and our good friend *Wm. M. Green*. You say that *Col. Hawkins* informed you that I contemplated making a visit to our Alma Mater, at the next Commencement. This will be impossible as Congress, will probably be in Session until after that time. The year following, if my official duties shall not prevent it, *Judge Mason* and myself have spoken of making such a visit, and when *Col. Hawkins* was here, some conversation to that effect took place.

In reference to your brother whose wishes you mention, I can only

say that it would give me great pleasure to serve him, if I can do so with propriety. There is no situation such as you intimate would suit him now vacant. I will however confer with our friend *Haywood*, with every disposition to gratify your wishes, and hope it may be in my power to do so during the Session of Congress.

I often hear from our old friend *Moseley*, more familiarly known at College as "*Old Bat*," for you know we all had our nick-names. I remember yours well, as I have no doubt you do mine. *Moseley* you know is now Governor of Florida. He often writes to me, though it has not been in my power to answer more than one or two of his letters.

When you shall next see my friend *Green* make my kind regards to him, and be assured that

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Hillsborough, N.C.

FROM ARCHIBALD YELL

Dear Sir

[Washington City] 15th Decr / 45

I have had a call from *Hop Turney*, who desires me to address some Editor in Tennessee and express my confidence in his Democracy. He no doubt feels that his charges against you of *interfeorence* &c is doing *him* more harm than *you*. Hence he desires me to say that the matter has been *amicably settled between you*? I told him I should like to serve him but not at *your expence*. But he is to draw up a statemt & I will examine it & send it to you for inspection, & will be governed accordingly. I take this method as I find you so much engaged of late that I could not see you, & I am not disposed to act without your approbation & approval. He hesitates & doubts to make this publication, I suggested, over his own signature.

YELL

ALS. DLC-JKP. Probably addressed locally. Polk's AE reads, in part: "I will have nothing to do with the subject matter of this note. Recd. Decr. 16th 1845. *Private*."

FROM AARON V. BROWN

Dear Sir

Nashville Decr. 17th 1845

We are still plodding along in our general assembly, doing but little good & I believe no harm except what may grow out of a session

continued too long for the amount of business done. All our elections are over & party excitement pretty well subsided. The Turney fraction & faction still present difficulties about the public printing & will probably throw it into the hands of Allen A. Hall in the partnership with the Free Press of Shelbyville, the only journal I believe now sustaining T. in the state. (The Standard¹ I consider as having virtually given up his *defence* at least.) I think it likely all our E. Tennessee presses will go down unless they can be amalgamated with one able paper at either Knoxville or Jonesboro. *One* such could better be sustained than so many small ones. But *rivals* in that quarter for *general preeminence* & especially for the Senate next time seem averse to such a measure. The seeds of a contest between the Western District & E. Tennessee in relation to the next Senator seem already to be sewing & may result finally in much difficulty to our party. Time however may bring about more harmony than is now anticipated. Your Message is admirably received in Tennessee. Democrats are perfectly delighted & Whigs now openly award you credit for talents & ability which they discover it is useless longer to endeavor to withhold. It is useless to add my entire & perfect approval of all & every part of it, to the general voice of commendation. The transfer of future negotiations about Oregon to Mr McLean² at London & to some *fresh* negotiator on the part of G.B. I now think very adviseable. It will throw the subject before a new tribunal & surround it by circumstances which will enable G. Britain to take some more favorable position toward an adjustment than she can now do without seeming to *back out*. No one can manage it better doubtless than Mr. Buchanan has done, & I speak only in reference to giving G. B. a more favorable opportunity to *ease off*. I am anxious to see Mr Buchanans correspondence because after a very laborious investigation of my own I could never discover really *any tolerably good pretense* of a title on the part of G. Britain to any of the Territory. But if it were possible in the adjustment of our boundary difficulties with Mexico in connection with our pecuniary claims upon her to get hold of some 4 or 5 degrees of California country, I should not then object to closing the difficulty with G. B. whenever she proposes the 49th degree (clear through). Would not an advance of 5 or 10 million (over what she owes us) tempt Mexico greatly to such an arrangement? On the Tariff, let Pennsylvania if possible be induced to go with us in the reduction. Let her abate as much as she safely can on her Iron & coal, & go with us cheerfully on other points. I know the difficulties well & it will take great patience & good temper to manage her interest so as to keep her fast united to the great mass of Democracy on that subject.

On the Constitutional Treasury I desire to submit a remark & ask

for it your special attention. In the preparation of it, preserve all the substance & strength of the measure *only change the form of it a little* so as to disarm our adversaries in some of their Demagogical attacks upon it. That I may be the better understood, send for Dromgooles bill of last Session,³ change the caption to "A Bill to amend & enlarge the act of 1789 in relation to the collection, &c of the public revenue approved by George Washington on the day of ." Wherever the term Receivers general occurs insert "*Assistant Treasurers*" & so let them be calld. throughout the Bill. On looking over the bill you will be surprised to find how easily & readily you can alter it, so as to shew that you have only adopted the *old* plan of Washington extended & enlarged to suit the altered condition of the country & giving the Treasurer at the seat of government, the proper number of Deputies or assistants. This departure from the *wording* of former Bills is no *humbugery*, it only prevents humbugging *in others* & is therefore more important than you may at first suppose. Besides it will give the Bill or measure that much of improved novelty in your hands & give many an opportunity to come out for *your measure* who offered it in its original shape & all this can be made manifest at an early stage of its discussion so as to strip the subject of some of the embarrassments of former committals against it. An hour spent in looking over that bill & correcting it with your pen in the way I have suggested & a little conversation with the Chairman of the Ways & Means may in my humble opinion be singularly useful every where. Remember that I was never *tender footed* on the question, but allways looked boldly in any form, but I have studied well the probable effect of the slight alterations which I have named.

I cannot fail to take great interest (the greatest) in the discussions of this session especially in the Senate. The positions taken in your Message, will constrain Calhoun & Benton to stand up to you even against their wills & Mr. Webster will be deserted by so many of his Whig friends that he cannot annoy you much. In short I have now lost all my apprehensions about the Success of your administration. The vessel of State under your guidance has now made her first voyage with triumphant success & nothing is to be dreaded in the future. I look back now with an inconsiderable pleasure to the part which I took in advising *the crew* which you should select in her management. All I doubt not have & will behave well under your command.

I discover in the papers of the morning that 31 Democrats of the Legislature have made their publication in relation to the election of Senator. The only part I have taken in relation to it, was to advise its *postponement* until the Senate should be fuller & when no effect it

might produce on T. could effect Ritchie or annoy your administration. Depend upon it he has acted most outrageously & to no one so badly as to you personally. I speak what I *know* on this last point & all that you can now do in my opinion is *to tolerate him* in any advances he may make towards you, barely to tolerate or allow him to make them if he chooses, never to *invite* him to do so.

I have remained at home this day, which has given me the opportunity to *inflict* this long letter upon you.⁴

Present Mrs B & myself both kindly to Mrs Polk and believe me as ever

AARON V. BROWN

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. E states that this letter was received December 27, 1845.

1. *Knoxville Standard*.
2. Louis McLane.
3. George C. Dromgoole's "A bill to provide for the collection, safekeeping, transfer, and disbursement of the Public Revenue." House Resolution No. 216, 28th Congress, 1st Session.
4. Six lines of text hereafter cancelled and rendered illegible.

TO JOHN SLIDELL

My Dear Sir:

Washington City Decr. 17th 1845

Mr Buchanan will forward to you a despatch to day, which will explain itself.¹ I will only add to what is contained in that despatch, that so great is the importance of accomplishing the main object of your Mission, that I again call your attention to it. To that object I specially alluded in my letter of the 10th of November, and in reference to it said "I am ready to take the whole responsibility." I do not repeat a statement of the object referred to, more specifically in this letter, fearing that accident might throw it into the hands of others, before it reaches you. By reference to my letter of the 10th of November however, you will see the object about which I expressed most anxiety. I now add to what I then said that I am ready now to exceed the maximum, of the sum authorized in your instructions, in order to effect it, if it cannot be done for less. My strong impression is that if it can be effected at all, it can be, for the sum authorized in your instructions or less. If however you should find that in this I am mistaken, and that any reasonable additional sum would enable you to succeed in making a Treaty, I would approve a stipulation for the payment of such additional sum. This however is left to your sound discretion. Of course you will effect the object if practicable at all, for the smallest sum in your power, but I

do not desire that you shall feel yourself absolutely restricted to the maximum sum mentioned in your instructions. Such is the prevailing sentiment in this country, that such a Treaty would I have no doubt, be promptly ratified, and provision made for carrying it into effect by Congress. Should you make a Treaty I suggest to you the importance of having it ratified by Mexico, at the earliest practicable period, and if possible let the ratification on the part of that Government, accompany it, so that it may be laid before our Senate with it.

I received your two letters of the 16th and 19th ultimo.² In reference to *Dr. Parrott* I can only say that I have confidence in him, and think that you may safely confide in him. It is proper at the same time to say, that my personal acquaintance with him is of short duration, and but limited. You can if you think it most prudent, pursue the course which you suggest.

In answer to your inquiry in relation to your family, I am requested by the Secretary of the Navy to say, that one of our armed vessels, can convey them from the Balish³ below New Orleans to Vera Cruz, at any time that the Department may be advised that they are ready to embark. I hope you will keep the Department of State, regularly advised and at short intervals of your proceedings. A vessel will be kept constantly at Vera Cruz ready to convey any communication which you may desire to transmit.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Probably despatched to Mexico. Marked "*Private and unofficial.*"

1. James Buchanan's despatch authorized Slidell to offer Mexico up to six million dollars in return for a treaty ceding New Mexico and California to the United States. See Moore, ed., *Works*, VI, pp. 345-46.

2. Slidell's letter to Buchanan of November 19, 1845, questions whether William Parrott, probable secretary of legation in Mexico City, can be trusted with Slidell's confidential instructions. ALS. PHi.

3. Misspelling of "balize," a buoy marking the coastline.

FROM GEORGE W. OWENS¹

My Dear Sir.

Savannah Dec. 19. 1845

You will receive my thanks for your Message which is considered here as every where else as a very able one. It will make more noise in Europe and is well calculated to place this Country in an elevated position in the eyes of the world. The oregon question is certainly a very delicate one, but I trust that can yet be settled by negotiation. A war on that subject would not be popular either at the North or the South,

however well disposed that Western people may be for it. On that question I fear the course Benton will take the war particularly as I see *his friend* Allen as the head of the committee on Foreign Relations. Mr B. I should say from, what I have observed is now in *his heart* in opposition to your administration, and a short time will only be required for him to show his hand. If he should as a Western man assume a decidedly hostile attitude towards England on that subject, it will place the friends of the administration in a dilemma. To resist it will render them in some measure unpopular. To go to war about oregon might be popular at the time of the declaration, but in six months after would be the most unpopular measure ever adopted by the Country, and particularly in the present state of defences. I hope and trust therefore that negotiations will be continued and that no imprudent act of either power will force the subject out of the hands of the Executive. I confess I have many fears on the subject and those arising from the temper of Western men who have but little to lose in the struggle and that I see very clearly it is to be made use of as political capital by the different aspirants and their respective partisans. War I think would certainly not obtain oregon. Negotiation is the safer and likely to be the most successful course to pursue. But I am only one passenger in the ship of State and can only quietly submit to the dangers of the voyage. [...] ² confer a favor on me if there is likely to be hostilities between the two countries if you will give me a private hint in time, so that I may make any arrangements that may be necessary for the protection of my slave property that will be most exposed on the coast to depredations. You have no doubt seen what by the papers what has occurred to Mr Benton. His party without the forms of regret, threw him overboard. They then patched up the quarrel, and after letting him struggle in the water for some time took him in again. And he has returned to Washington a degraded man in public estimation and I believe even in that of his own party. I have been astonished at his conduct. He seems to have made a public recantation of all those ultra doctrines which he had propagated at the hall a year ago. ³ And you and himself I have said to his friends seem now to be in the same [...]. The flaming patriot who so lately scorched us in his meridian sinks temperately to the West and is scarcely felt as he descends. Some of the merchants here have been giving our friend C. Johnson a brush, which I regret, but indeed the change in the transportation of the mail from Charleston is a most serious public evil, and as we of the South have so little of Uncle Sams money I think he would have acted prudently and politically if he had continued the old rates & not changed them. But tho' it might have cost a little more money he ought to recollect we are the 7 port in the

union for exports & imports. You will say I have some prejudice as I belong to Savannah, therefore I am done begging. My best respects to Mrs P.

G. W. OWENS

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City. E states that this letter was received on December 24, 1845.

1. A Savannah native and lawyer, Owens was educated in England at Cambridge University. He served two terms as a Unionist in the U.S. House, 1835–39.

2. Words here and below obliterated by sealing wax oil.

3. Owens reference is to the Democratic National Convention of 1844.

TO JOHN M. BASS

My Dear Sir:

Washington City Decr. 24th 1845

As you have no doubt learned our young friend *Felix Grundy Jr* was taken quite ill, shortly after his arrival at Annapolis. As soon as I heard of his situation I procured *Hampton C. Williams* formerly of Tennessee, to visit him, and afterwards saw Capt. Buchanan, who had been kind enough to take him into his own family, where I have no doubt he received every kind attention that he could have done, if he had been under the immediate care of his mother.¹ To night I received the enclosed letter from *Capt. Buchanan*, from which I am sure the family will be gratified to learn that he is convalescent and out of all danger.² Will you convey the information which it communicates to *Felix's* mother and Grand-mother.³ The family are under many great obligations to *Capt. Buchanan* for his very kind attention to him, during his illness. I returned to him my thanks for interest, which both he and his family have taken in him.⁴ I take the liberty to suggest to you, that I have no doubt it would be grateful to *Capt. Buchanan* to learn from you, that the family of *Felix* duly appreciate these kindnesses. It is scarcely necessary for me to add, that I shall continue to take great interest in the boy, and have no doubt he will be well taken care of, in health and in sickness and that he will do well.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Nashville.

1. Not identified further.

2. Enclosure not found.

3. Ann Phillips Rogers Grundy.

4. Polk's letter of appreciation to Franklin Buchanan has not been found.

FROM JAMES BUCHANAN

Dear Sir, [Washington City, December 24, 1845]¹

From our past relations, it is due both to you & myself, that I should respectfully state, how deeply & painfully I have felt the slight which you offered me yesterday as a member of your Cabinet, in withholding from me all knowledge of the nomination of a Judge of the Supreme Court of the United States for my own Circuit. I venture to say that such an occurrence is unprecedented in the history of the relations between Presidents & their Cabinets. The first authentic information which I have received of the fact came from the Senate, instead of the President.

It is true that when you first went out of your office yesterday, leaving behind Mr. Walker, Governor Marcy & myself, I asked them whom you intended to appoint Judge in Virginia. The Governor answered that you had just read to them before I came in your nomination of Judges. I asked if the Pennsylvania Judge was in the number. He answered yes. I then inquired the name of the individual; but perceiving, I presume, my astonishment from my manner he hesitated for some moments & then informed [me] who it was. But the nomination had not then been sent: and I still felt confident you would not send it without first informing me. In this conviction I was confirmed when I saw Mr. Walker receive some messages from you, convinced that you would not before my face send to the Senate a nomination in which my State was so deeply & peculiarly interested without informing me of it; but in this I was mistaken, & I say it in deep sorrow. What inference I ought to draw from this apparently unequivocal act, I am still at some loss to determine. If the slight were intended for an intimation that my services in the Cabinet are no longer desirable, it is due to our former frank & friendly relations that you should at once state the fact, & your slightest intimation to this effect will be sufficient.

When you first invited me to a seat in your Cabinet, I think I then possessed your confidence. Knowing that I had a small clique of enemies in Philadelphia who were all office hunters, I asked you, not that you would appoint my friends to office; but merely that you should not select my enemies. To this you promptly & cordially acceded. I was both surprised & mortified at the appointment of Mr. Horn; but yet I have remained silent. I saw my friends, no matter what may have been their political merits & services removed from the Custom House one after the other & my enemies substituted in their place. The strange Spectacle is now presented of nearly the whole patronage of your

administration being wielded for the purpose of breaking down a member of your Cabinet. The Custom House force numbering more than one hundred men, with the collector at their head & the Pennsylvanian for their organ are arrayed in open hostility against me; & it is believed by many, however falsely, with your tacit if not open approbation. Such is their hostility to me as even to do you injustice. The Oregon Correspondence has not been republished in the Pennsylvanian nor has any editorial notice of it been taken.

These facts together with the disappointment of poor Brewster² at the request of Mr. Dallas communicated through Mr. Walker, the appointment of Mr. Dawson³ & other circumstances had placed me in the false position before the public of being a member of the Cabinet, with the President using all his official patronage to break me down at home.

The time had arrived, as I fondly imagined, for removing this impression: and convincing the people of Pennsylvania that it is not true, as many of them suppose that without hostility to me there is no passport to office under the Federal Government. Besides I had supposed from circumstances that in this particular appointment my advice would have had some influence. It is well known to all my friends how anxiously I desired to accept it myself. Indeed it had been the sole object of my ambition for many years. I yielded it most reluctantly from a sense of duty to my country in the present crisis of our foreign affairs & from a strong personal regard for yourself & the success of your administration. Under these circumstances, I felt happy in being able to present for the station Mr. Read,⁴ a man so pre-eminent in his political service to yourself, so able a lawyer, so profound a jurist; of such sound & well known constitutional principles, & withal so popular both in Pennsylvania & New Jersey, that I believe in my conscience, if he had not long been an unwavering personal & political friend of my own, he would have stood without a competitor for the place in Pennsylvania, East of the Allegheny Mountains. Had he been selected, in one year, he would have been equal as a Judge to any man upon the Bench. So sensible were the leading friends of Judge Grier⁵ of this fact, that those of them with whom I conversed including his own brother in law Judge Orr⁶ were all anxious for Mr. Read's appointment, in case the Judge should not succeed. I have no right to complain, however, that you did not appoint Mr. Read: and although I preferred him, the people of Penna. would have been satisfied with Judge Grier. The Democracy of the State generally would have acquiesced in the selection of either.

The selection of Judge Woodward,⁷ against whom I have no personal objection, will prove most unfortunate. I already know from letters in

my possession, from friends entirely disinterested, that in Harrisburg the enemies of nativism are already denouncing me in advance in anticipation that it would be made. It is certainly right, that the persons who had sufficient influence to procure this appointment should bear the responsibility as well as enjoy all the benefits of success. I shall, therefore, make known in a prudent manner to different friends throughout the State, that I had warned you against it & had urged the appointment of another. Having to stand alone, without any support from the administration, of which I am a member, I feel confident that you will not deny me the privilege.

I felt it to be my duty to make this communication to you & deemed it best to make it in writing. I am sorry to the very heart, that it has become necessary. I do not propose to leave the Cabinet, before our difficulties with England shall be brought to a close one way or the other, unless I am to infer from your conduct yesterday that such is your desire. Whenever I do leave I wish to part in peace & give your administration the support which I believe it so well deserves.

[JAMES BUCHANAN]

AL, draft. PHi. Buchanan's AE reads: "Letter prepared to be sent to Mr. Polk concerning the nomination of Judge Woodward. The necessity for sending it ceased after a full & free conversation with Mr. P."

1. Place and date determined by content analysis.
2. A Philadelphia lawyer and Democrat, Benjamin H. Brewster served in 1846 on the Cherokee Claims Commission; he subsequently joined the Republican party and served as U.S. attorney general in the cabinet of Chester A. Arthur.
3. A lawyer and Democrat, John L. Dawson was appointed attorney general of Fayette County in 1838; served as U.S. district attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania, 1845–48; and sat four terms as a Democrat in the U.S. House, 1851–55 and 1863–67.
4. John M. Read, a lawyer from Philadelphia, served in the Pennsylvania House for one term, 1823–24; he was appointed U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania and served from 1837 until 1841. John Tyler nominated Read to be associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, but the U.S. Senate refused confirmation. He pursued a private law practice until 1858, when he was elected to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.
5. A Pennsylvania attorney and president judge of the district court of Allegheny County from 1833 until 1846, Robert C. Grier served as an associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court from 1846 until his death in 1870.
6. A Kittanning Democrat, Robert Orr, Jr., was a veteran of the War of 1812 and general of the militia; served in the Pennsylvania House, 1817–20, and Senate, 1821–26; served in the U.S. House, 1825–29; and was appointed an associate judge of Armstrong County. Orr married Martha Grier in 1836.
7. George W. Woodward, a lawyer from Wilkes-Barre, presided over the

Fourth Judicial District of Pennsylvania from 1841 until 1851. Polk nominated Woodward for an associate justiceship on the U.S. Supreme Court in 1845, but the U.S. Senate rejected the nomination.

TO GEORGE M. DALLAS

10 O.Clock P.M.

My Dear Sir: Washington City Decr. 25th 1845

I have this moment learned that you are at Philadelphia, and it is said do not intend to return to Washington until next week, having designated a member of the Senate to preside temporarily in your absence. You are aware that the Joint Resolution to admit Texas into the Union has not been signed by the presiding officers of the two Houses, nor can it be until your return, unless indeed the Senate shall elect a President pro tempore. I thought it proper to communicate this fact to you, supposing it may not have occurred to you, and to say that it is deemed of great importance that the action of our Congress should be made known to the authorities of Texas, at the earliest practicable period. I have a messenger ready to start at an hour's notice. I will approve the Resolution the instant it comes to me & dispatch the messenger. I think it probable that your impression was that the temporary occupant of the chair could sign the Resolution. Such a thing has never been done, nor do I think he has the power. I thought My Dear Sir: that you would be obliged to me for the suggestion, for I know you are as anxious as any one that Texas should come into the Union at the earliest practicable period, and be represented in Congress.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Philadelphia.

FROM GEORGE BANCROFT

Sir: Navy Department December 27. 1845

I have considered the papers referred to this Department relating to the re-instatement of Mr. Wm. D. Hurst¹ to the Navy, and I have caused inquiries to be made respecting the duel in which he was engaged.

Nothing has appeared to change the view of the Department, that Mr. Hurst, while employed as first lieutenant on board the Brig Truxton, took part in a duel with a midshipman under his command. It

appears further, that the challenge was virtually invited by him, and grew out of an affair of discipline on board the ship. The conduct of Mr. Hurst appears, on investigation, in no more favorable light than was represented in the report of Commodore Perry,² which seemed sufficient to require his dismissal.

It is a mitigating fact that Mr. Hurst was conscious of his breach of duty as soon as the challenge was accepted. But he at the same time had the moral weakness to permit the duel which he had invited to proceed, and met his antagonist who is represented to have been his personal friend, as well as his subordinate officer. Taken by itself, there is therefore no ground for a reconsideration of the case, and if the sentence of dismissal be inexorably sustained strict justice could not be approved.

The subject can recur only as an exercise of that clemency which belongs to the pardoning power.

From this point of view it may be observed, that Mr. Hurst has never before been the subject of public censure, but has had honorable testimonials of his worth as an officer. The great body of his former associates, from the consideration of his previous merits, desire to see him once more among their number. The offense for which he was dismissed is of so rare occurrence, this being the first instance of it ever brought to the notice of this Department, and the condemnation of it, by so many of the ablest men in the service has been so distinctly avowed, that there is little danger of its repetition in a generation; and should it be repeated, there can be no fear of a want of warning.

It is further to be considered that the savage practice of duelling should, itself be rooted out of our Navy. To this end the exercise of mercy, in deference to the solicitation of worthy officers, cannot but induce them to second the views of the Department by their reprehension of the vicious practice from which this ill-considered occurrence took its origin. And it is certain, that the influence of the public opinion of the Navy is desirable, and even necessary, to extirpate the custom which as hitherto produced such disastrous consequences to the service.

I would therefore recommend the solemn promulgation of a general order against duelling, to be accompanied with an amnesty of the past—with a distinct expression of the trust, that this act of oblivion done in compliance with the expressed wishes of gallant officers, will persuade them faithfully to obey and enforce the order.

If it should be decided to re-instate Mr. Hurst, he should, with the consent of the Senate, be restored without loss of rank, as a permanent degradation could have no other effect than to impair his

future usefulness, and to inflict on his pride as an officer a never-healing wound.

GEORGE BANCROFT

L. DNA-RG 45.

1. Hurst joined the navy as a midshipman in 1829 and won promotion to lieutenant in 1841. Hurst lost his command of the brig *Truxton* at Polk's direction on April 12, 1845. On January 31, 1846, Hurst wrote Polk explaining his part in the controversy and gained reinstatement in April of that year. ALS. DLC-JKP.

2. Matthew C. Perry entered the navy as a midshipman in 1809; served in the Caribbean, Mediterranean, and African coast squadrons; supervised the New York naval yard from 1833-43, the last two years as commander, where he promoted naval education, training, and advanced technologies; and served as second-in-command and commander-in-chief of the Mediterranean squadron during the Mexican War. In 1852, Perry accepted the diplomatic mission to negotiate a reciprocal trade and peace treaty with Japan, which duty he accomplished in 1854.

FROM ORSON HYDE¹

Sir,

Natvoo Dec. 28. 1845

Your annual message has been received here, and its bold and patriotic tone in relation to Oregon and the west, together with your recommendation to Congress to be liberal in their grants of land to settlers, have induced our people to direct their course to the valley of the "Umqua,"² and neighboring valley and to join heartily in the spirit of your message to carry out the just and bold design. In about nine mos. we hope to be there, notwithstanding the vain and foolish speculations of Genl. James Arlington Bennett³ and some others to the contrary.

ORSON HYDE

ALS. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on January 15, 1846.

1. One of the original Twelve Disciples of the Mormon Church, Hyde spent a number of years in missionary activities in Europe and the Middle East; helped lead the Mormon colonization effort in the 1840's; and served as president of the Twelve Disciples from 1848 until 1875.

2. The Umpqua River valley of south central Oregon.

3. A New York City lawyer, author, and veteran of the War of 1812, Bennet wrote *The American System of Practical Book-keeping*, which went through numerous editions after its original publication in 1820. He also served as U.S. consul at Bogata in the 1850's. Bennet had received appointment from Joseph Smith as commander of the Mormon Legion.

TO ROBERT ARMSTRONG

My Dear Sir: Washington City Decr. 29th 1845

I received your letter of the 4th on the 21st Instant. Before this time you have no doubt read the Message and I hope may approve it. Its tone is that which you expressed the hope it might be, and I need scarcely say that I shall stand firmly and immovably on the ground which I have taken. I have had many gratifying assurances from all quarters of the Union that it has been well received by the country. Our policy is peace and I sincerely desire to preserve it, but it must be an honourable peace and one consistent with the National rights.

Congress has done but little more than organize, and pass one bill to admit the State of Texas into the Union. During the Christmas holidays many members are absent. The Message has been referred to appropriate committees, some of which have already reported, supporting its recommendations, and others will do so soon. There will of course be a great debate as to what is proper to be done on the Oregon question, but whatever measures may be adopted, all the indications are, that if the country should ultimately be involved in war, which I hope may be averted, all parties will be united in its support, to a greater extent than they have ever been on any public question.

I could indulge in long speculations, on the state of affairs here, but I am pressed for time, and I could give you but little information but what you will be able to learn from the American Newspapers. The Democratic party in Congress have been thus far very harmonious, and I hope may continue to be so.

Our political friends in the Legislature of Tennessee, have been distracted by divisions among themselves, and have as I learned been occasionally much excited. Thus far, they have done so, and if any thing can prostrate the Democratic party in the State, their course is well calculated to do it.

Mrs. Polk is well satisfied and pleased with the articles purchased for her by *Mr Harris*.

You must write to me how the Message is received in England.

The enclosed letter¹ to your address, came under an envelope to me some days ago.

JAMES K. POLK

P.S. I have this day approved and signed a Joint Resolution of Congress for the admission of the State of Texas into the Union, and also an act

to extend the laws of the United States over the new State. These are the first Legislative acts which I have been called on to approve, and I need not assure you that no act of my public or private life has ever been performed with more pleasure. I signed these acts, as I did also my Message, with a pen made of an Eagle's quill presented, to me by a Democratic lady of Virginia, whose husband is a Whig.² I state this fact because it may amuse you, if nothing more. J.K.P.

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Liverpool and marked "Private."

1. Enclosure not found.

2. Elizabeth H. Curtis, wife of Robert Curtis of Gloucester, Va., sent Polk a quill which she said was dropped by an eagle flying over her home on the day Henry Clay was nominated for the presidency. Polk made a pen of the quill and used it when he signed the joint resolution admitting Texas of December 29, 1845; the tariff act of July 30, 1846; and the proclamation of peace with Mexico of July 4, 1848. Polk memoranda of August 28, 1845, and agenda of subsequent dates. ADI. TSLA-MS Div.

FROM HENRY HORN

My Dear Sir,

Philadelphia 29th Decemr 1845

I enclose herewith a letter¹ addressed to you which I must have picked up among my own letters which I laid upon your table for a moment on wednesday last.

I send you also by this mail the Pennsylvanian of Saturday last² containing an article on the subject of Judge Woodward's appointment which I am sure (if you have not seen it before) you will read with pleasure.

There is a miserable mercenary paper here called the Spirit of the times managed by persons who though professing to be Democrats are neither your friends nor mine, nor any mans, unless they can use him to their own advantage. This paper as I am informed is sustained by Catholic subscriptions and donations. It has made some violent and abusive attacks upon Judge W. and of course by implication upon you. I need only say in reference to it, that it is labouring in its vocation with a view to convince its employers that it earns the wages it receives. It has no weight of character among the democracy here, and therefore will be found to be harmless, and entitled to no other considerations than those of scorn & contempt.

HENRY HORN

ALS. DLC-JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City. E states that this letter marked "Private" was received on December 31, 1845.

1. Enclosed letter not identified further.
2. Enclosure not found.

TO SAM HOUSTON

My Dear Sir: Washington City Decr. 29th 1845

Your kind letter of the 11th ultimo reached me, in the midst of my preparations to meet Congress, when I had not a moment to devote, to my correspondence with my friends. To day I received your second letter of the 10th Instant.¹ I thank you My Dear Sir: for the kind expressions of personal regard which they convey. It is now twenty years, since I commenced my service in Congress, and when we were inmates of the same boarding House. Our personal friendship early formed, has never for a moment been disturbed and I am sure never will be. I am pleased to learn from you that you have yielded to the wishes of your friends, to become a candidate for the Senate of the United States. From what I learned from some of the citizens of Texas there can be no doubt of your election. I need scarcely add, that I shall be most happy to welcome you to Washington as one of the Representatives of the young State of Texas.

On the 22nd Instant, a joint Resolution which had previously passed the House, passed the Senate to admit Texas as one of the States of our Union upon an equal footing with the original States. The vote in the House was 141, in favour and 58, against the admission, and in the Senate 31, in favour and 13, against it. Some delay has occurred in transmitting an authenticated copy of the act, to *President Jones*, in consequence of the fact, that the two Houses inadvertently adjourned over the Christmas holidays, before the presiding officers had signed it, which can only be done during the Session of each House and in their presence. Both Houses will meet to day, when doubtless it will be signed and presented to me, for my approval, which will be immediately given, and a special messenger despatched, to the Seat of Government of Texas, with the official evidence of the fact. I hope no delay may occur after its receipt by *Prest. Jones* in convening your Legislature, to the end that Senators may be chosen and be here at the earliest practicable day. It is very important that the new State should be represented without delay. I suggest to you, that your Senators should come on immediately, without waiting for the Election of Representatives which will require time. There is an almost total deficiency of knowledge, here of your local interests which will require early legislation, & which information could be supplied by your Senators. As soon as the State is represented, and I can inform myself of

your interests and wishes, I will take sincere pleasure, in presenting and advancing them.

JAMES K. POLK

P.S. Since writing the foregoing the Resolution to admit Texas, into the Union has been approved and signed by me. A special messenger will leave to night bearing an authenticated copy of it to President *Jones*. I have approved and signed also, an act extending the laws of the United States over the State of Texas, an authenticated copy of which will be sent by the messenger to *President Jones*.

I omitted to mention in the foregoing letter that I hope yet to be able to gratify the wishes of your friend *Miller*.² J.K.P.

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Marked "Private."

1. Letters not found.
2. Co-editor and publisher of the *Washington National Register* (Texas) from 1843 until 1845, Washington D. Miller served as Sam Houston's private secretary in 1841; as secretary to the Texas Seventh Congress, 1842-43, and as Texas' secretary of state from 1845 until 1848.

TO LOUIS McLANE

My Dear Sir:

Washington City Decr. 29th 1845

I thank you for your private letter of the 1st Instant. I have, I assure you, paid no sort of attention to the various newspaper speculations, in regard to yourself, and your opinions on the Oregon question, to which you allude. I had full knowledge that they were without the slightest foundation, and constituted but a part of that system of gossip, in which hired letter writers stationed at Washington, have of late years, so recklessly indulged. They have produced not the slightest effect, and no honest man of any party, doubts your position or opinions. The highest evidence of this, is to be found in the prompt and unanimous confirmation by the Senate of your nomination, to your present station. Since the meeting of Congress, I have made a large number of nominations to the Senate, but yours is the only one upon which they have as yet acted. This is highly honorable to you and cannot fail to be most satisfactory to your friends, especially after the ill-natured newspaper paragraphs, which appeared in certain quarters, shortly after your appointment last summer. There is no citizen I am sure in whom the whole country would have more confidence, than in yourself, as their Representative at London, and certainly none with whom I could be more entirely satisfied. With this declaration which I know you will believe sincere, I repeat to you what I said when

you accepted the mission, that its duration would be left very much to your own inclinations and wishes. I know you would not desire it to terminate at a period, when the interests of your country could suffer detriment, from your withdrawal from the British Court. My strong impression is, that it would be altogether desirable that you should remain, at all events until after the close of the present Session of Congress, during which the Oregon question will in all probability have reached a crisis. Whatever your wishes may at any time be, I shall expect you to communicate them, without hesitation or reserve.

You will of course have seen the Message before this letter can reach you, and I need not remark upon it, further than to say, that the actions and opinions set forth in it, will be firmly maintained. I have had most gratifying assurances from all quarters of the Union, that it has been well received by the country.

The information which you gave me in your letter of the probable course of certain distinguished persons in the Senate, on the Oregon question, I am led to believe from what I have learned, will turn out to be correct. They will probably take their stand against giving the Notice, under the Convention of 1827,¹ and may support the other recommendations. A very large majority of Congress, and especially of the House of Representatives, I have reason to think fully accord with me, and will support the recommendations of the Message. If the Whigs act in a body, there may be a sufficient number of the Democratic party of the Senate, uniting with them to constitute a majority of that body. This opinion however rests more on conjecture, founded on what I have heard of the opinions of Senators, than upon any vote or act, in the Senate, and I may be mistaken in it. It is most gratifying to believe, that if the country shall be involved in war, which I hope may be averted, that all parties will be united in its support, to [a] greater extent than they have ever been, at any former period on any public question. Peace is our policy and I most anxiously desire to preserve it, but it must be an honourable peace, and one consistent with our National rights and interests. I have gone [to] great lengths considering my settled opinions on the Oregon question to preserve it.

Mr Buchanan will forward to you a dispatch by the Steamer of the 1st proximo, from which you will learn, that *Mr Pakenham* as you anticipated he would be instructed to do, has proposed *arbitration*, not to settle *title* but to *divide* the Oregon Territory. This proposition will be promptly rejected, for reasons which I need not state, but which will be at once obvious to you. If any further proposition be made, it must come from the British Government. Should such proposition be made, and be of a character, to justify it, I will feel inclined to consult

the Senate *confidentially* and take their advice before acting upon it. As the Senate constitute a part of the Treaty-making power, and are in that respect my Constitutional advisers, and as they constitute also one branch of the war-making power, should the question arrive at the crisis to which I have referred, it might be regarded as my solemn duty to take their advice in advance, upon the decision of a question, upon which may depend the issue of peace or war.

As the question now stands however, I repeat the first movement if any, must be made by the British Government, and I will judge of its character when made, and take action upon it accordingly. If no propositions be made I shall stand immoveably, upon the ground taken in the Message. I have no idea that in the present tone of public opinion in the country and in Congress, that the Senate would if the question was submitted to that body, advise the acceptance of any proposition less favourable to the U.S. than the one which was made & rejected and afterwards withdrawn.² That proposition or one equivalent to it, with perhaps, slight modifications, is one which if submitted to the Senate, they would doubtless gravely consider, before coming to a conclusion upon it. I mark this letter *Private & unofficial*, and it is intended to be strictly so as your private letters to me will be regarded.

With the Respectful salutations of Mrs Polk and myself to Mrs McLane

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to London and marked "*Private & unofficial*."

1. The Convention of 1827 required either side to give twelve months notice to the other of the intention to terminate the joint occupation of Oregon.

2. On July 12, 1845, Polk had offered the 49th parallel as the demarkation line, with all Vancouver Island ports south of the line open to the British. Senate Documents, No. 1, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 163-169.

TO WILLIAM H. POLK

My Dear Sir Washington City Decr. 29th 1845

I have received your letter of the 17th of November. It is strange that your despatch No 2. has never reached the Department. I wrote you in a former letter¹ requesting you to forward a duplicate of it, and hope you have done so. The instructions, in regard to the Treaty which you are expected to negotiate, I hope you have received.

It always seems to be my fortune to postpone writing to you until the last hour to be in time for the mail, which is taken out by the next Steamer. It is literally so to day, as I have but half an hour within

which to write. I have nothing however of importance to communicate. I have had many gratifying assurances from all parts of the Union, that my Message has been well received by the country. In Congress greater harmony prevails than has been usual. There is less partizan bitterness than I have known for twenty years. Should we be forced into a war, which I hope may yet be averted, all parties in this country, judging from present indications will be united. The politicians all remember the fate of those who took ground against their country in the war of 1812.

I have to day performed the pleasing duty of approving and signing the Joint Resolution for the admission of Texas into the Union, so that the great measure of annexation is now consummated.

Mother & all the family were enjoying usual health at my last dates from Tennessee.

I will write you concerning your request for leave of absence, as soon as I learn definitely that you have concluded and signed the Treaty, with which you are charged. In haste.

JAMES K. POLK

ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Addressed to Naples.

1. See Polk to William H. Polk, November 27, 1845.

FROM JOHN SLIDELL

My dear Sir, Mexico, 29 December 1845

My despatches will place you in possession of the situation of affairs here & I have little to add to them. I have endeavored, (& I hope that you will think that I have succeeded) to throw all the responsibility & odium of the failure of negotiations, on the Mexican Government. This will place us upon the strongest possible ground & I have no doubt, that if an appeal be made by you to the country, it will meet with a hearty & unanimous response. A war would probably be the best mode of settling our affairs with Mexico, but the failure of the negotiation will be very disagreeable & mortifying to me. The world generally judges men by results. Not to succeed, even where success is impossible, is a fault, & I have no reason to expect that I shall prove an exception to the rule. My chief reliance must be in your countenance & support. I have already received such strong proofs of your confidence & kindness, that I have no fears of their being withdrawn, but it will be most gratifying to me, in, my present very embarrassing & unpleasant position, to know that my course has been approved by you.

We are looking with great anxiety for your message. If it should be

of such a character, as to present the prospect of serious difficulties with Great Britain, it cannot fail to influence in some degree the course of things here. The hope of being sustained by England, would render the Mexicans less disposed to negotiate on reasonable terms. A portion of the force of General Paredes, is now within three leagues of this city & we may expect the commencement of hostilities tomorrow. I would have prepared to leave for Jalapa immediately on closing my despatches, but I wish, before my departure, to dispose of the business of the disputed instalments.² I am, My dear Sir, with the greatest respect

JOHN SLIDELL

ALS. DLC–JKP. Addressed to Washington City.

1. In his dispatches dated December 17, 27, and 29, 1845, Slidell relates the refusal of Mexican officials to accept his diplomatic credentials or to meet with him concerning his mission. William R. Manning, ed., *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States: Inter-American Affairs, 1831–1860* (12 vols; Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1939), VIII, pp. 777–83, 800–3, 804–5.

2. Slidell was requested to investigate whether Mexico made any payments on U.S. claims, as required by the Convention of 1843, to Emilio Voss. Slidell was instructed to inform Mexico that Voss was not an accredited agent of the United States. Manning, ed., *Diplomatic Correspondence*, VIII, pp. 182–84.

FROM HUGH WADDELL

My dear Sir

Hillsboro. Decr. 31. 1845

I know not when I have been more truly gratified than on the receipt of your much valued favour of the 15 inst. It recalled so many long forgotten thoughts of the days of our youth. I can scarcely yet realize that my old Class-mate should be presiding over the destinies of the greatest nation on Earth—that at *this moment*, the destinies of Nations are held in his hand, & upon his fiat will mainly depend, the question of Peace or War.

Amidst so many wise & patriotic men, you will not want counselors of every kind, yet I feel assured from the tone of yr. message, that the destinies of our glorious Republic will be in safe keeping, notwithstanding the perils by which it is environed on every hand.

The real danger I fear is that the spirit of our people when roused, especially against our old enemy, will be restrained within proper bounds, with great difficulty. To one whose position, not to speak of his qualifications, so much better enables him to judge than myself, I shall not presume to offer an opinion upon the great & all absorbing

questions which agitate the Country. I cannot however suppress the expression of my gratification, at perceiving, that if the Country is to be involved in War, there will *quoad hoc*¹ be but *one* party.

Hearing of the probable acquisition of California & possibly of that of other regions hereafter to be embraced within our wide extending arms, I have wished I could be snugly cornered with you alone, that we might speculate on the probable effects of this spirit of acquisition on the temper of our countrymen. It is opening up a vista to my eyes, through which much of good, but I fear more of evil, may be seen in the dim distant future. I have before me, the “*suis viribus suis*”² of insatiable Rome. But where am I wandering. My purpose when I sat down, was first to thank you sincerely for the very kind & even fraternal letter with which you honored me, & I beg you to believe that every feeling of friendship which you have expressed for me, is ardently reciprocated. And secondly in behalf of my brother to tender to you his profound sense of yr. kindness, & to add that for fear you may have mistaken his wishes in my first letter,³ he did not expect any appointment in N.C. but had hoped that in some of the Southern cities such a place might be had as would suit him. He has mentioned the offices in the *mint* at New Orleans, or others in that City where he has relations & friends who would join him in any Bond which was not too great. This subject is one of such *vital* interest to my brother, that nothing restrains me from pressing its consideration upon yr. goodness except the delicacy of my situation & the dread I have of being supposed *importunate* with one whose situation is rendered painful from this very cause. With assurances of my highest respect I am yr. friend & classmate.

HUGH WADDELL

ALS. DLC-JKP. Probably addressed to Washington City. Polk's AE on the cover states that he received this letter on January 4, 1846.

1. Latin legal phrase for “in this particular item.”
2. Latin phrase for “united by force.”
3. See Waddell to Polk, October 18, 1845.

CALENDAR

N.B. Items entered in *italic* type have been published or briefed in the Correspondence Series.

- 1845
- [July 1845] From Henry Cobee et al. LS. DLC-JKP. Recommend Thomas W. Olcott to be pension agent in Albany, N.Y.
- July 1845 From Rody Patterson. ALS. DLC-JKP. Asks for the return of papers filed in behalf of his application to be appointed postmaster of Pittsburgh, Penn.
- [July 1845] From Catherine W. Polk. ALS. DLC-JKP. Solicits for her brother, Josiah F. Polk, the post of commissioner of public buildings.
- [July 1845] From E. Prescott. AN. DLC-JKP. Regrets that during his visit to Washington City he has not had an opportunity to pay his respects in person.
- 1 July From Henry Addison. ALS. DLC-JKP. States that as mayor of Georgetown, D.C., he is directed to inform Polk that a deputation will call upon him at eleven o'clock to escort him to their city's solemnities.
- 1 July From Edward H. Barton. AN. DLC-JKP. Presents his compliments and requests Polk's "acceptance of a few choice Spanish Sigars."
- 1 July From John H. Campbell. ALS. DLC-JKP. Recommends George W. Williams of Philadelphia to be named commissioner of public buildings; notes that Williams received a severe arm wound at the Philadelphia navy yard while serving on the escort committee for Andrew Jackson's visit in 1833.
- 1 July From P. S. V. Hamot. ALS. DLC-JKP. Urges Polk not to appoint Robert Cochran postmaster of Erie, Penn.;

- recounts party divisions in Erie between the friends of George Wolf and Henry A. P. Muhlenberg.
- 1 July From Cave Johnson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Reviews background of James Hoban’s switch from Whig to Democrat in 1837; says that passing over Hoban’s claims for patronage would be viewed as a Whig victory.
- 1 July From Andrew Morrison. ALS. DLC–JKP. Relates that he is still looking for employment and would appreciate receiving an answer to his earlier letter. (Letter not found.)
To A. O. P. Nicholson.
- 1 July [1 July 1845] From Benjamin Patton. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses clippings from the Pittsburgh *Morning Post* praising his judicial skills; notes that the appointments of Chambers McKibbin and John L. Dawson have met with general favor.
- 1 July From Thomas L. Ragsdale. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits a clerkship in the Navy Department’s Bureau of Construction in place of Hampton C. Williams, who might be moved to the chief clerkship of the 4th Auditor’s Office; states that should this proposal not prove acceptable, he would wish to be appointed to some other office with the understanding that he would decline the favor.
- 2 July To J. Ellis Bonham et al. ALS, draft. DLC–JKP. Regrets that he cannot accept their invitation to attend Independence Day festivities at Carlisle, Penn., the home of his Polk ancestors.
- 2 July From William Curran. ALS. DLC–JKP. Extends on behalf of the members of the Democratic Association of Washington City an invitation to attend the laying of the corner stone for Jackson Hall on July 4th next.
To Abraham P. Eyre et al.
- 2 July From Ransom H. Gillet. ALS. DLC–JKP. Advises that James Chesebro from Canandaigua, N.Y., wishes to be interviewed for a post office appointment.
- 2 July To Henry Horn et al. ALS, draft. DLC–JKP. Regrets that he cannot attend the Independence Day celebration to be held by the Young Man’s Democratic Association of the City and County of Philadelphia; sends the text of a sentiment to be given in his behalf.
- 2 July From Edward J. Rutledge. ALS. DLC–JKP. States that the forthcoming petition in favor of William J. Grayson to be collector of customs at Charleston, S.C., should not be given serious weight, for it is not an expression of true popular will.
From James H. Thomas.
- 2 July [2 July 1845] From Harvey Wright et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Seek a contribution to help build a Presbyterian church at Floyd Court

- House, Va.
 3 July From Aaron V. Brown.
 3 July From Paul Dillingham, Jr.
 [3 July 1845] From David Hoffman. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses printed memorial asserting the claims of Richard S. Hackley heirs to lands in east Florida; requests assistance in getting the U.S. Supreme Court to hear the Hackley case.
- 3 July From Benjamin C. Howard. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Samuel Lucas of Baltimore, a staunch Democrat for the past twenty years.
 [3 July 1845] From Catherine W. Polk. ALS. DLC–JKP. Thanks Polk for the promotion of her brother, Josiah F. Polk; notes that they can attract neither Whigs nor Democrats to their boarding house.
- 3 July From Charles P. Sengstack. ALS. DLC–JKP. Asserts that some candidates for commissioner of public buildings seek the office “merely for its emoluments”; asks if it is true that Cave Johnson has said that the job would go to one of the other applicants.
- 3 July To Egbert Somendike *et al.*
 3 July From John H. Steck.
 4 July From Peter Besançon.
 4 July From John A. Bryan.
 4 July From James Conner.
 4 July From James B. Fullton. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses his poem praising the Bible.
 4 July From J. George Harris.
 4 July From Sackfield Maclin.
 4 July From James Polk. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests information on possible mutual relatives.
- 5 July From William Anderson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Quotes passage from his pro-Texas letter of May 22, 1845, in the Jonesborough *Tennessee Sentinel* of June 21st; states that the day after his letter appeared in the newspaper Brookins Campbell withdrew his bid to replace Andrew Johnson as the party’s candidate for Congress from Tennessee’s First Congressional District.
 5 July From John Catron.
 5 July From John P. Helfenstein. ALS. DLC–JKP. Discusses Wisconsin patronage issues.
 5 July From Charles D. McLean. ALS. DLC–JKP. Reports that the Democratic cause remains strong in West Tennessee and Western Kentucky; notes that all “genuine” Jacksonians approve of Polk’s removal of William B. Lewis.
- 5 July From Charles E. Mix. ALS. DNA–RG 42. Recommends Richard Shekell as warden of the federal penitentiary.
 5 July From John M. Niles. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces William

- 5 July S. Holabird, formerly lieutenant governor of Connecticut. From George T. Raub. ALS. DLC–JKP. Prefers George Plitt over Charles P. Sengstack for commissioner of public buildings; notes that Sengstack is deaf and cannot be confirmed because of his having sent spurious documents to the South in the late presidential election.
- 5 July *From David Vann et al.*
- 5 July From John H. Wheeler. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to be appointed to a position in the general government.
- 6 July From John P. Campbell. ALS. DLC–JKP. Discusses federal patronage in Southwest Missouri; urges the appointment of James H. McBride in place of Joel H. Hayden, Nicholas R. Smith in place of George R. Smith, and Elnathan D. McKinney (Campbell's son-in-law) in place of Abraham Morton.
- 6 July From W. W. Compton. ALS. DLC–JKP. Asks that Polk recommend pensions for the soldiers of the War of 1812; recalls his service as a regular in that war.
- 6 July *From A. O. P. Nicholson.*
- 7 July *To George Bancroft.*
- 7 July From Benjamin Davies. ALS. DLC–JKP. Thanks Polk for his appointment as registrar of public land sales at Palmyra, Mo.
- 7 July From Richard W. Gardner. ALS. DLC–JKP. Seeks an appointment to some federal office in the west.
- 7 July *From J. George Harris.*
- 7 July From James Hoban. ALS. DLC–JKP. Inquires whether or not he should continue providing legal counsel to defendants prosecuted by the United States government; signs his letter as U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia.
- 7 July From Samuel D. Ingham. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces C. L. Daball of New London, Conn.
- 7 July *From Matthias Martin.*
- 7 July From Jesse P. Mitchell et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Recommend the appointment of Watts Sherman as pension agent for Albany, N.Y.
- 7 July *From A. O. P. Nicholson.*
- 7 July From Amasa J. Parker. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Samuel S. Fowler, once an unsuccessful Democratic candidate for Congress from Rensselaer County, N.Y.
- 7 July From Job Pierson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Attests to Samuel S. Fowler's good character and states that Fowler is a close friend of William L. Marcy.
- 7 July From Philip Smith. ALS. DLC–JKP. Complains that Leonard Anderson, a clerk in the General Post Office, owes him tuition fees for services rendered in 1833.
- 7 July From Daniel B. Turner. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces

- Joseph A. J. Acklin, a good friend now serving as U.S. attorney for the northern district of Alabama.
- 7 July From James G. West. ALS. DLC-JKP. Protests against the appointment of J. B. B. Hale in place of George W. Thompson as postmaster of Wheeling, Va.
- 8 July From Lewis Cass. ALS. DLC-JKP. Complains that Michigan has not received its fair share of the patronage; urges the appointment of John B. Palmer of Detroit to a clerkship in Washington City.
- 8 July *From Charles Fletcher.*
- 8 July From Stephen Haynes. ALS. DLC-JKP. Requests a pardon for his crime of wearing "a mexican pirate knife" in his hometown of Knoxville, Tenn.
- 8 July *From Wilson Lumpkin.*
- 8 July *From Charles Manly.*
- 8 July From David Myerle. ALS. DLC-JKP. Expresses his "deep interest" in the success of Polk's administration; announces his departure from Washington City for his trip west.
- 8 July From David Stewart. LS. DLC-JKP. Introduces James W. Dallam, presently a citizen of Texas and formerly a member of the Baltimore bar association.
- 8 July *From Teck-A-To-Ka.*
- 8 July To Robert J. Walker. ALS. IN. Asks Walker to arrange an interview with George W. Briscoe of Maryland.
- 8 July From Silas Wright, Jr. ALS. DLC-JKP. Introduces Samuel S. Fowler, an active party member and businessman in Rensselaer County, N.Y.
- 8 July From Silas Wright, Jr. ALS. DLC-JKP. Introduces "Mr. Forsyth" of Albany, N.Y., a young gentleman who has inherited an ample fortune and who yet ascribes to democratic principles of "the sound, anti-monopolizing and radical school."
- 8 July *To Silas Wright, Jr.*
- 9 July *From John S. Barbour.*
- 9 July From R. R. Collier. ALS. DLC-JKP. Encloses clippings from the *Intelligencer and Petersburg Commercial Advertiser* in which he defends his request that John Minge be retained as postmaster at Petersburg, Va.
- 9 July *From J. George Harris.*
- 9 July From David Hill. ALS. DLC-JKP. States that the bearer, Charles Saxon, will leave the Willamette Valley in Oregon Territory for Washington City with a view of publishing a history of the Oregon Country and a description of a route over the Rocky Mountains.
- 9 July From Archibald Randall and Robert Patterson. LS. DLC-JKP. Recommend George W. Williams for commis-

- 9 July sioner of public buildings in Washington City.
From Thomas J. Read. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces John C. Buckles and recommends him for a postal contract to carry the mail.
- 9 July From Peter Rogerson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Observes that he has just arrived from Newfoundland and requests that he be given an interview.
- 10 July From Alfred Balch. ALS. DLC–JKP. Relates news of personal and political gossip. (Manuscript damaged and partly illegible.)
- 10 July From Owen Barr. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends George W. Williams, a builder by trade and a former commissioner of Philadelphia, for the post of commissioner of public buildings in Washington City.
- 10 July From Lewis Cass. LS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Elon Farnsworth of Michigan.
- 10 July From J. R. Elliott. ALS. DLC–JKP. Urges personnel changes at the customs house in Richmond, Va.; states that Wat Henry Tyler, brother of John Tyler, has complained in public of Polk's having removed some of his predecessor's appointees.
- 10 July From Franklin H. Elmore. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Whitmarsh B. Seabrook from South Carolina.
- 10 July From Joseph Ficklin. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends the appointment of Gabriel C. Smith to the position of storekeeper at Memphis.
- 10 July *From Albert Fitz.*
- 10 July *From Henry Horn.*
- 10 July From D. R. McNair. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to know whom Polk has selected for the appointment to the Indian agency at Council Bluffs.
- 10 July From William L. Marcy. LS. DLC–JKP. Reports list of War Department officers whose accounts have not been rendered for the quarter ending March 31st; recommends suspension of dismissal proceedings pending further communication from the department.
- 10 July From William Patterson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Desires to be named customs collector for the port of Sandusky, Ohio.
- 11 July From William J. Brown. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends Daniel Kelso to be appointed subagent at the Osage River agency in Missouri.
- 11 July From A. W. Burns. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses resolutions of a meeting memorializing Andrew Jackson in Burlington, N.J. LS. DLC–JKP.
- 11 July From Franklin H. Elmore. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces J. N. Cardozo, editor of the *Charleston Southern Patriot*.
- 11 July *From Richard M. Johnson.*

- 11 July From John Norvell. ALS. DLC-JKP. Calls for an inquiry into reported conflicts of interest by federal surveyors working on the south side of Lake Superior, an area rich in copper and other mineral ores.
- 11 July From Peter Rogerson. ALS. DLC-JKP. Wishes Polk to send a government vessel to the coast of Panama to recover a large amount of specie said to have been buried by pirates; Polk's AE reads, "Requires no attention."
- 11 July From James H. Thomas. ALS. DLC-JKP. Relates that Gideon Pillow has agreed to having a survey made with notice of same to Phillip Osborne; reminds Polk to write James Walker about the survey.
- 11 July From Brooke Williams. ALS. DLC-JKP. Solicits appointment to a clerkship in the War Department.
- 12 July *From Aaron V. Brown.*
- 12 July From Samuel Colts. ALS. DLC-JKP. Recommends David W. Frobel for appointment as lieutenant in the marines.
- 12 July From Henry D. Gilpin. ALS. DLC-JKP. Introduces Robert Allen of Philadelphia, Penn.
- 12 July *From Philip B. Glenn.*
- 12 July *From J. George Harris.*
- 12 July From William A. Harris. ALS. DLC-JKP. Recommends David W. Frobel for a marine corps appointment.
- 12 July *From Andrew Jackson, Jr.*
- 12 July *From Anson Jones.*
- 12 July *From Charles S. Jones.*
- 12 July From Anthony Miller et al. LS. DLC-JKP. Withdraw their recommendation of Thomas W. Olcott as pension agent at Albany, N.Y.; urge the appointment of Watts Sherman to the post.
- 12 July From William Radley et al. LS. DLC-JKP. Claim that they mistakenly signed a recommendation for the continuance of Thomas W. Olcott as pension agent at Albany, N.Y.; argue that Watts Sherman deserves the appointment over Olcott, who "deserted the party in the time of need."
- 12 July *From William Tyack.*
- 12 July From Silas Wright, Jr. AL, fragment. DLC-JKP. Reports that Addison Gardiner would refuse appointment as U.S. minister to Russia.
- 13 July From William Burke. ALS. DLC-JKP. Expresses disappointment over his failure to secure reappointment as postmaster at Cincinnati.
- 13 July *From Richard M. Johnson.*
- 13 July *From A. O. P. Nicholson.*
- 14 July From John Arthur. ALS. DLC-JKP. Seeks retention as U.S. consul at Turk's Island, where he owns a mercantile

- establishment; notes that he has served in that post since 1835 excepting a brief period in 1843 when John Wilkeson held the appointment.
- 14 July From George Bancroft. LS. DLC–JKP. Notes that he has received Polk’s communication pertaining to the shipment of stores to the naval squadron in the Pacific, with accompanying papers from Alfred G. Benson, Arthur W. Benson and Moses G. Leonard; encloses a report from W. Branford Shubrick, chief of the bureau of provisions and clothing.
- 14 July From Thomas Barbour. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces A. J. Evans, a physician from St. Louis and “a very warm democratic friend.”
- 14 July From James E. Belser. ALS. DLC–JKP. Presents David Findlay, a minister from Montgomery, Ala.
- 14 July From John W. Campbell. ALS. DLC–JKP. Informs Polk that Benjamin S. Brooks has paid \$51.11 to Polk’s account in the Jackson branch of the Union Bank of Tennessee.
- 14 July From Thomas W. Dorr.
- 14 July From John P. Faherty et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Enclose a petition endorsing Charles P. Sengstack to be named commissioner of public buildings. (Enclosure not found.)
- 14 July From Henry Horn. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Robert Allen, “a highly respectable merchant and an influential democrat” of Philadelphia, Penn.
- 14 July From Cave Johnson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses June attendance reports from the Post Office Department. DLC–JKP.
- 14 July From A. O. P. Nicholson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Communicates copies of his recent correspondence with Andrew Jackson, Jr., regarding Andrew Jackson’s last letter to Polk; states that he has called at the Nashville post office and that no one there recalls seeing the missing letter.
- 14 July From Edward B. Robinson et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Note that prior efforts to secure Charles P. Sengstack’s appointment as commissioner of public buildings have failed; urge that George Plitt be named to the post.
- 14 July From Robert J. Walker. ALS. DLC–JKP. Informs Polk that he has responded to Paxton’s request regarding his Treasury Department account.
- 14 July From Minor Winn. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests a miniature likeness of Polk for his collection.
- 15 July From Daniel I. Baker et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Withdraw their recommendation of Thomas W. Olcott of the Mechanics & Farmers Bank of Albany, N.Y.; prefer the appointment of Watts Sherman to the post of pension agent.

- 15 July From P. B. Cox. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests a copy of Thomas H. Benton’s speech opposing the congressional action to impeach Andrew Jackson.
- 15 July *From J. George Harris.*
- 15 July From William D. Moseley. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces George W. MacRae, U.S. attorney for the Southern District of Florida.
- 15 July From Samuel A. Mulledy. ALS. DLC–JKP. Invites Polk to attend and preside over the commencement ceremonies of Georgetown College; Polk’s AE notes that he accepted the invitation to attend but not to preside over the exercises.
- 15 July *From Charles H. Nelson.*
- 15 July *From Shadrach Penn, Jr.*
- 15 July From Thomas M. Pettit. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends the appointment of George W. Williams of Philadelphia to be commissioner of public buildings in the District of Columbia.
- 15 July From William P. Rowles. ALS. DLC–JKP. Seeks appointment to “some suitable position in the public service”; notes that “if there is to be war,” he wishes “to be sent to the lines.”
- 16 July From Henry D. Gilpin. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Joseph W. Reckless of New Jersey.
- 16 July To Samuel H. Laughlin. ALS. DLC–JKP. Asks Laughlin to “do me the favour to call at my office.”
- 16 July *From John M. McCalla.*
- 16 July From Louis McLane. ALS. DLC–JKP. Urges Polk to “make some suitable provision” for the appointment of John Kettlewell to federal office; advises that he embarks this day for England.
- 16 July From Thomas F. Marshall. ALS. DLC–JKP. Expresses gratitude for Polk’s assistance with the appointment of Charles Field to West Point.
- 16 July From Thomas W. Olcott. ALS. DLC–JKP. Provides a lengthy list of individuals recommending him for retention as pension agent at Albany, N.Y.
- 16 July From George T. Raub et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Recommend George Plitt for appointment as commissioner of public buildings in Washington City.
- 16 July From Preston Starritt et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Request that Polk appoint a new commission to settle outstanding claims arising under the Treaty of New Echota.
- 16 July From Francis Thomas. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces “a respectable and sincere friend of your administration, Mr. Scott, formerly a resident of Maryland and at this time a citizen of Ohio.”
- 16 July From David Levy Yulee. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends

- Nathaniel W. Walker for appointment as customs collector at St. Marks, Fla.
- 17 July From Jacob G. Davies. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces William T. Leonard, Baltimore physician.
- 17 July *To Franklin H. Elmore.*
- 17 July From Jesse Miller. ALS. DLC–JKP. Discusses patronage in the office of First Auditor of the Treasury.
- 17 July *From Elijah F. Purdy.*
- 17 July From Henry W. Rogers. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Alden S. Stevens of Wyoming County, N.Y.
- 17 July *To Romulus M. Saunders.*
- 17 July From Preston Starritt. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests an interview with Polk to discuss settlement of claims under the Treaty of New Echota.
- 17 July *To Silas Wright, Jr.*
- 18 July *From George J. Abbot.*
- 18 July From George J. Abbot. ALS. DLC–JKP. Enumerates textbook and tuition expenses of \$33.37 for instruction of Marshall T. Polk, Jr.; notes that he received payment from Polk.
- 18 July From Harvey Baldwin. ALS. DLC–JKP. Discusses the applicants for the postmastership at Syracuse, N.Y.
- 18 July From John S. Barbour. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Henry Hill, Jr., an applicant for the wardenship at the Washington City penitentiary.
- 18 July *From Charles A. Davis.*
- 18 July *From Daniel Graham.*
- 18 July *From Arnold S. Harris.*
- 18 July From Joshua Herrick. ALS. DLC–JKP. Asks Polk if he has made a decision concerning the removal of James Osborn as collector of customs at Kennebunk, Maine.
- 18 July From John Lynch. ALS. DLC–JKP. States that he has recently acquired a tract of land near Columbia, Tenn., and wishes to know the names of the postmaster at Columbia and clerk of the court for Maury County.
- 18 July From John M. McCalla. ALS. DLC–JKP. Provides a list of Kentucky office seekers, all of whom are “now proscribed in his business and society” by the Whig party.
- [18 July 1845] From Henry C. Pope. ALS. DLC–JKP. Renews his application for the post of U.S. legation secretary “to any court” as “private necessities” prompt him to solicit “some respectable employment.”
- 18 July From John Nelson Waters. ALS. DLC–JKP. Argues against the appointment of James V. Patton, an applicant for office; notes that “if men of his Character can obtain office, I say farewell to Democracy and my Country.”
- 18 July From Nathan Weston. L, copy in the hand of J. Knox

- Walker. DLC–JKP. Defers to Levi Woodbury’s claims for appointment to the Supreme Court upon the resignation of Joseph Story; asks that some public proof be given of the administration’s regard; would decline the offer of minister to Russia or Spain; and notes that such a public notice would be a personal compliment to himself and the people of Maine.
- 19 July *From J. George Harris.*
- 19 July From Francis Leseur. ALS. DLC–JKP. Offers an “earnest appeal” for appointment to federal office; notes that he has deposited letters of recommendation at the office of the Treasury secretary.
- 20 July From Pierce M. Butler. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits reappointment as U.S. agent for the Cherokees.
- 20 July From David T. Disney. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Bela Latham, former postmaster at Columbus, Ohio.
- 20 July From Philip J. Fontane. ALS. DLC–JKP. Seeks assistance in recovering debts owed by naval officers Napoleon L. Coste and Edmund T. Shubrick of Key West, Fla.
- 20 July From James F. Howe. ALS. DLC–JKP. Complains that his removal as measurer in the Philadelphia Customs House has left his family in “indigent circumstances”; solicits appointment to federal office.
- 20 July *From William R. Rucker.*
- 20 July From Willoughby Williams. ALS. DLC–JKP. Supports the application of Dillon Jordan, Jr., for the U.S. district judgeship in Florida; notes that Benjamin H. Sheppard, although a Whig, deserves retention as marshal for the Middle District of Tennessee.
- 21 July From Alexander J. Bergen. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits appointment as U.S. consul to the Sandwich Islands.
- 21 July From [Lewis Cass]. AL, draft. MiU. Lauds the character of Jonathan Kearsley and urges his appointment to an office in the general government.
- 21 July *From John B. Connor.*
- 21 July *From Amos Kendall.*
- 21 July From William C. McCanslen. ALS. DLC–JKP. Renews his application for appointment as commissioner of public buildings in the District of Columbia.
- 21 July From Felix Grundy Mayson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recalls the “long friendship” between his father, Ramsay L. Mayson, and Polk; seeks a commission in the marine corps.
- 21 July From John H. Pennington and Lewis Stirn. LS. DLC–JKP. Offer Polk the opportunity to purchase a piano “of superior tone.”
- 21 July From James M. Porter. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a translation of a letter relative to the Zollverein; urges its

- publication in the *Washington Union*.
- 21 July From James H. Thomas. ALS. DLC–JKP. Relates that Hillary Langtry has left Columbia for Alexandria to seek employment; hopes that Polk can help the elderly gentlemen find something suitable.
- 21 July *From James Walker.*
- 21 July From Joseph Wimsatt. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits appointment to a government office and notes his preference for a position in Washington City.
- 21 July *From Silas Wright, Jr.*
- 22 July From John Anderson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Regrets that he was away when John H. Bills and his daughter, Mary, arrived in Portland last Saturday; recalls the kind attentions received from the Polks on prior occasions; and praises the appointment of Louis McLane to be U.S. minister to Great Britain.
- 22 July From W. W. Cullens. ALS. DLC–JKP. States that he was “agreeably surprised” to have the opportunity “to vote for an old friend and acquaintance”; approves of the “independent course” Polk is “pursuing in reference to publick men and measures.”
- 22 July *From Daniel T. Jenks.*
- 22 July From Richard M. Johnson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a letter from his brother, Henry Johnson, urging the appointment of Claudius M. Johnson to the consulship at Havana; believes Polk’s “course in public affairs is gaining additional confidence daily.”
- 22 July *To Charles Manly.*
- 22 July *From Samuel A. Mulledy.*
- 22 July *From Romulus M. Saunders.*
- [22 July 1845] From Terry Turner. ALS. DLC–JKP. Claims that he enlisted in the army while “partially deranged” and that he subsequently deserted; asks Polk “to clear all the Deserters from our Army.”
- 22 July 1845 From James Webster. ALS. DLC–JKP. Observes that the local Democracy did not consider Henry Campbell a candidate for the postmastership at Rochester; adds that Campbell’s appointment has “given rise to a state of feeling I have never before witnessed in an active political life of twenty years.”
- 22 July From David Levy Yulee. ALS. DLC–JKP. Regards George E. Plitt as a “well suited and qualified” candidate for appointment as commissioner of public buildings.
- 23 July From Anonymous. L. DLC–JKP. Opposes the application of Josiah Colston for “*restoration* as purser in the navy”; states that Colston, an “ardent Federalist,” supported Henry Clay.

- 23 July From John F. Gillespy. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a letter from John H. Eaton in support of a memorial presented by claimants under terms of the Treaty of New Echota; attributes the delayed settlement of claims to the “*supineness, negligence,*” and “*incapacity*” of those “taking charge of the subject.”
- 23 July From Ransom H. Gillet. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Timothy C. Dwight, a “democrat of the old school” from Buffalo, N.Y.
- 23 July From Washington C. Page. ALS. DLC–JKP. States that he has “this day arrived at the age of forty five,” and thus returns his commission as a captain in the militia of the District of Columbia.
- 24 July From George Bancroft. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a report on the case of William P. Zantzinger, a former purser in the navy. Polk’s AEI states that he examined the report and concluded that Zantzinger had “not made a proper case for restoration” to his former office.
- 24 July From James Buchanan. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Stewart Steel of Pennsylvania.
- 24 July *From Franklin H. Elmore.*
- 24 July *From Charles Fletcher.*
- 24 July From John C. McLemore. ALS. DLC–JKP. Accepts appointment as superintendent of mineral lands in Iowa and Wisconsin; expresses disappointment the annual salary of \$1,200 is less than half of what he expected.
- 24 July From William D. Moseley. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Senator Wall, a member of the Florida legislature from Key West.
- 24 July From John A. Rogers. ALS. DLC–JKP. Expresses disappointment over the removal of L. H. Osgood from his position as measurer in the Boston Customs House; suggests Osgood, a veteran of the War of 1812, deserves restoration or appointment to “some other respectable situation which he is qualified to fill.”
- 24 July *From Harvey M. Watterson.*
- 25 July From William C. Dawson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends John H. Shannon of Greensboro, Ga., for an appointment to West Point; notes that he visited Washington City two weeks previously and called on the Polks at Lattimer’s boarding house; regrets that the president was not receiving visitors that evening.
- 25 July From James Webster. ALS. DLC–JKP. Informs Polk that the Democracy of Rochester, N.Y., has “virtually disbanded” in protest to the appointment of Henry Campbell as postmaster; in his autograph endorsement Polk notes that “if the party disbands because they suppose there has

- been a mistake in making one petty appointment, all I have to say is, that there is not much *principle*, in their political creed.”
- 26 July *From Robert Armstrong.*
- 26 July From William Armstrong. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a letter from Pierce M. Butler soliciting reappointment as agent to the Cherokees; characterizes Butler as a “faithful & efficient public officer,” but adds that he has “no wish to press” Butler’s application for office.
- 26 July From Edmund Burke. ALS. DLC–JKP. States that Stephen S. Seavy, an applicant for the postmastership at Lowell, Mass., seeks an interview with the President.
- 26 July From Ulysses F. Doubleday. ALS. DLC–JKP. Shows concern over the appointment of Amos S. Rathbun as postmaster at Auburn, N.Y.; claims a majority of Democratic voters support retention of the incumbent, William C. Beardsley, and they would prefer “almost any respectable citizen” to Mr. Rathbun.
- 26 July *From Thomas B. Drinker.*
- 26 July From John Fairfield. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Charles C. Harmon of Maine.
- 26 July From J. A. Goodhue. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests on behalf of “the good old republican cause” a delay in the appointment of Amos S. Rathbun to the postmastership at Auburn, N.Y.; believes Rathbun “deserves nothing” from Polk.
- 26 July From John Keon. ALS. DLC–JKP. Claims that his “land is mortgaged and the time of redemption is nearly expired”; seeks relief for his family and believes that three hundred dollars would fetch him “out of the scrape.”
- 26 July From John R. Macmurdo. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces John Cottle of New Orleans.
- 26 July From George S. Mann. ALS. DLC–JKP. Urges the appointment of his son-in-law, Thomas H. Jenkins, as sutler to one of the regiments to be posted to Texas; solicits the office for himself if Jenkins cannot be reappointed.
- 26 July From Samuel Martin. ALS. DLC–JKP. Praises Polk’s removal of William B. Lewis; urges the appointment of sober men to office because “a Tippling man is a most detestable creature”; encloses a letter to Cave Johnson arguing against removal of the post office from Campbells Station to Louisville, Tenn., “famed since its first settlement for Drunkenness.”
- 26 July From Samuel Medary. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Bela Latham, former postmaster at Columbus, Ohio.
- 26 July From Samuel Medary and M. J. Gilbert. NS. DLC–JKP. Introduce William Chapin, principal of the Ohio Insti-

- tution for the Blind; request letters of introduction for Chapin, who will visit Europe and seek information "to alleviate the misfortunes of that class of citizens which the noble charity over which he presides is designed to aid and instruct."
- 26 July From Alfred Russell. ALS. DLC-JKP. Complains of the "mortification of seeing another batch of new clerks brot in over my head" and claims that Robert J. Walker assured him of an "early promotion" to a clerkship of a higher rank in the Post Office Department; notes that a position with a higher salary would allow him to move his family to Washington City from Tennessee.
- 26 July From William Smith. ALS. ViU. Solicits a promotion for his brother, James M. Smith; states that he "cannot, without mortification see him, so worthy, and so capable, lingering out his days in an obscure corner of the Treasury."
- 27 July *To Andrew J. Donelson.*
- 27 July From Fernando Wood. ALS. DLC-JKP. Introduces his friend, William C. Beardsley, the postmaster at Auburn, N.Y.; states that Beardsley seeks an interview; discounts rumors that Beardsley will be removed from his post.
- 28 July *To Robert Armstrong.*
- 28 July From Joseph Cowdin. ALS. DLC-JKP. Expresses thanks for the Glasgow consulship; notes that the great fire in New York City on July 19 and 20 has destroyed many of his business papers and that accordingly he must delay his departure for at least three or four weeks.
- 28 July From Marshall Holbert. ALS. DLC-JKP. Claims that William S. Pilcher, a candidate for the postmastership at Louisville, Ky., "keeps a public prostitute" and "has been in the habit of visiting the House from 1 to 3 times" daily.
- 28 July From Aaron B. Howell. ALS. DLC-JKP. Applauds the removal of William B. Lewis and declares "that no man born in this country had a right to any office if he permitted his daughter to marry a foreigner"; concludes he will "oppose whatever party that nominates Daniel Webster" and support "whatever party shall best promote the interests" of the country.
- 28 July *From Daniel T. Jenks.*
- 28 July *From William L. Marcy.*
- 28 July From William H. Merritt. ALS. DLC-JKP. Criticizes the appointment of Henry W. Rogers to the collectorship and Philip Dorsheimer to the postmastership at Buffalo, New York; complains of Rogers' conduct "in the distribution of official patronages."
- 28 July From Andrew Morrison. ALS. DLC-JKP. Forwards the

- request of Elijah F. Purdy that Robert J. Walker write the collector at New York City, Cornelius W. Lawrence, on behalf of Morrison; seeks appointment "to some post as Day Inspector under Mr Purdys Control."
- 28 July From John C. Mullan. ALS. DLC–JKP. Supports request of William E. Kennedy for appointment to government office; discusses upcoming state elections and concludes that "assurances from all of our triumph in Tennessee next week, are strong & reliable."
- 28 July *To A. O. P. Nicholson.*
- 29 July From John M. Bass. ALS. DLC–JKP. States that he visited Ramsay L. Mayson, whom he found unwell; discusses Mayson's apprehension over the salary attached to his appointment and notes Mayson's intention to consult friends before accepting the office.
- 29 July From Alexander H. Evans. ALS. DLC–JKP. Discusses his prospects for promotion; appeals to Polk "to let your wishes in the matter be known" to Robert J. Walker.
- 29 July From Edward Kellogg. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests an interview for purposes of laying out a new plan for creating a stable national currency.
- 29 July From Isaac Lewis. ALS. DLC–JKP. Contemplates leaving Knoxville and standing for election as doorkeeper of the U.S. House.
- 29 July From Levi Tyler. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends Jason Rogers of Louisville, Ky., for reinstatement as an officer in the army should an increase in that branch of the service be made.
- 29 July From John H. Wheeler. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits an appointment to the navy's Bureau of Clothing and Provisions; discusses forthcoming congressional elections in North Carolina.
- 30 July From William C. Beardsley. ALS. DLC–JKP. Believes "perjury of the most positive character" prompted his removal from the postmastership at Auburn, N.Y.; counts himself among Polk's "warmest friends" but expresses hope that Polk will "become convinced that he had (unintentionally) inflicted a blow that was not merited."
- 30 July From Benjamin F. Butler. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Thomas Herring, a candidate for the consulship at Antwerp; believes Herring to be "entirely qualified" for such an appointment.
- 30 July From Thomas J. Hardeman. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits appointment as U.S. marshal for Texas; believes the seat of Texas government "will be left at Austin until 1850."
- [30 July 1845] From Thomas Herring. ALS. DLC–JKP. Discusses factionalism within the New York Democracy; seeks appoint-

- ment as a weigher in the New York City Customs House.
From James S. McFarlane.
- 30 July
 30 July From Preston Starrett. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a statement “of the unexpended ballance of the appropriations made by Congress to pay Commissioners ” under the Treaty of New Echota; believes the remaining balance would settle “*every Just* claim yet pending.”
- 31 July From Peter T. Homer et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Claim criticism of Marcus Morton’s conduct in the collectorship at Boston “is unfounded and must have originated in sinister design”; underscore Morton’s “assiduous devotion to business”; and express approval for his “judicious” removals and appointments.
- 31 July From H. M. Jamison. ALS. DLC–JKP. States that he is a forwarding merchant in Wheeling, Va., and that he “would be happy to receive the benefits” of Polk’s patronage.
- Aug 1845 From Martin Johnson. L. DLC–JKP. Apprises Polk of William J. Brown’s willingness to provide information necessary for the removal of three clerks in the office of the auditor for the Post Office Department.
- 1 Aug From William H. Feild. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits a federal judgeship or other responsible post in Arkansas or elsewhere.
- 1 Aug From Ira S. Fuller et al. LS. DLC–LW. Present William Ferguson, an “unflinching democrat” of Trumbull County, Ohio, who seeks appointment to a clerkship at Washington City, recommend him as being “in every way worthy” of Polk’s confidence and Patronage.”
- 1 Aug From Duff Green. ALS. DLC–JKP. Asks Polk to forward the enclosed letter to John C. McLemore. (Enclosure not found.)
- 1 Aug From John C. Hamilton. ALS. DLC–JKP. Claims to represent “a grate number of Widows” of Revolutionary War veterans; solicits Polk’s support for amending the law to include all widows of Revolutionary War veterans on the pension list.
- 1 Aug From P. S. V. Hamot. ALS. DLC–JKP. Expresses disappointment over the selection of Robert Cochran for the postmastership at Erie, Penn.; chastises Polk for ignoring the advice of “real friends” while giving “credit to intriguing Bank democrats and Rank wigs”; claims the Erie Democracy raised a flag of mourning at half mast from their hickory tree when they learned of Cochran’s appointment.
- 1 Aug
 [1 Aug 1845] *From John Y. Mason.*
 From Jesse Thomas. ALS. DLC–JKP. Predicts that Aaron V. Brown will win the Tennessee gubernatorial

- contest and that Democrats will control the General Assembly; notes that the Whigs are dispirited throughout the state.
- 2 Aug From George W. Barnett. ALS. DLC–JKP. Discusses his role in the Texas struggle for independence and notes his service of six years in the Texas Senate; seeks appointment to federal office in Texas.
- 2 Aug From Franklin H. Elmore. ALS. ScU–SCL. Solicits an appointment to the United States Military Academy for Lyde Wilson, son of former South Carolina Governor John L. Wilson.
- 2 Aug From John Fairfield. ALS. DLC–JKP. Informs Polk that Joseph Story of the U.S. Supreme Court probably will resign from the Court in October; recommends Ether Shepley, a Maine Supreme Judicial Court justice.
- 2 Aug From James S. McFarlane. ALS. DLC–JKP. Warns Polk that a New Orleans office-seeker, visiting Washington City to solicit appointment to a consulship, supported the Whigs in 1840 and published a German Whig newspaper; adds that “Democracy now being in the ascendant,” this individual “once more veers round to the strong side, and seeks office.”
- 2 Aug From James M. Smith. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests the return of his papers that he may file them with the Treasury Department in hopes of securing a clerkship.
- [2 Aug 1845] From Joel B. Sutherland. ALS. DLC–JKP. Certifies that the above text is a true transcription of a letter that he received from Andrew Jackson and that it was written on March 21, 1845.
- 2 Aug From David Levy Yulee. ALS. DLC–JKP. Supports reappointment of William J. Grayson to the collectorship at Charleston, S.C.
- 3 Aug From Sarah B. Seymour. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits appointment for her husband, Horace Seymour, to the collectorship at Bristol, R.I.
- 3 Aug From Benjamin G. Shields.
- 4 Aug From Robert Armstrong.
- 4 Aug From Heber Cowden.
- 4 Aug From Franklin H. Elmore. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces A. G. Summer, printer to the South Carolina House.
- 4 Aug From Thomas Fletcher. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces T. A. S. Doniphan, editor of the *Natchez Mississippi Free Trader*; commends Doniphan as a “zealous democrat” who “rendered the most efficient service” during the 1844 presidential contest.
- 4 Aug From Edward B. Hubley. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces William B. Hull of Schuylkill County, Penn., and asks

- that "some attention is paid to him" during his visit to Washington City.
- 4 Aug From Robert W. Lansing. ALS. DLC-JKP. Wishes to know whether his removal at Mineral Point, Wisc. T., was "for cause founded on any charge or not."
- 4 Aug *From Louis McLane.*
- 4 Aug From William H. Polk. ALS, fragment. DLC-JKP Says that he has been at his Naples post for ten days and has presented his credentials; discusses prospects for concluding a treaty between the United States and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies.
- 4 Aug *To Romulus M. Saunders.*
- 4 Aug *To Silas Wright, Jr.*
- 5 Aug From Mary Berryhill. ALS. DLC-JKP. Offers Polk congratulations and rejoices that one she has "known from a boy and the son of an estimable friend, should be placed in a station where we need justice, integrity and principle"; seeks appointment for her son, John J. Berryhill, of New Madrid, Mo.
- 5 Aug *From Charles Callaghan.*
- 5 Aug From John F. H. Claiborne. ALS. DLC-JKP. Reaffirms his support for retention of David Hayden as surveyor at New Orleans and refutes allegations that Hayden supported the Whig party; describes Hayden as "efficient & uncompromising in advocating democratic men and democratic measures."
- 5 Aug From J. W. Clark. ALS. DLC-JKP. Believes that "God has visited the U.S. with many calamities" because the U.S. House held Sunday sessions in 1837; claims that the nation has "stolen a Holy Sabbath from the Lord" and urges Polk to issue a proclamation for a day of "National Fasting, Prayer and Humiliation."
- 5 Aug *From Edward Devlin.*
- 5 Aug From Timothy C. Dwight. ALS. DLC-JKP. Supports the retention of Thomas W. Olcott, president of Mechanics and Farmers' Bank in Albany, N.Y., as pension agent for Western New York; disapproves of giving such patronage to the "Radical" Democrat officers of Albany City Bank.
- 5 Aug From Henry L. Ellsworth. ALS. DLC-JKP. Informs Polk that John Pettit, a Democrat Congressman from La Fayette, Ind., has won reelection; predicts that the Democratic controlled legislature will elect Jesse D. Bright to Indiana's vacant U.S. Senate seat.
- 5 Aug From John C. LeGrand. ALS. DLC-JKP. Recommends Richard K. Sheckles of Georgetown, D.C., for a general government position; states that such an appointment "would give satisfaction to a large body of the democracy

- of Maryland.”
- 6 Aug From Richard E. Byrd. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes “to expose the true character” of Washington G. Singleton, an applicant for office from Winchester, Va.
- 6 Aug From Henry Cadwell. ALS. DLC–JKP. Objects to the appointment of Robert Cochran as postmaster of Erie, Penn.
- 6 Aug From Timothy C. Dwight. ALS. DLC–JKP. Restates his preference for Thomas W. Olcott to continue as pension agent at Albany, N.Y.; suggests Theodore Olcott, cashier of the Canal Bank, as a compromise choice between the two factions of the party.
- 6 Aug From John F. Gillespy. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests a copy of the attorney general’s report pertaining to the appointment of a new Cherokee commissioner.
- 6 Aug *From S. G. Laws.*
- 6 Aug From William L. Marcy. ALS. DLC–JKP. Submits statements from the Indian, pension, and quartermaster bureaus showing that all the disbursing officers reporting late have now accounted for their delays. (Enclosures not found.)
- 6 Aug From Ramsay L. Mayson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Declines an appointment as subagent at Council Bluffs; cites financial reasons and the inability to take servants “beyond the limits of a slave state” for his decision.
- 6 Aug From William D. Moseley. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces John Beard, a U.S. marshal at St. Augustine, Fla.
- 6 Aug *From James Whitcomb.*
- 6 Aug From Gab. Winter. ALS. DLC–JKP. Seeks assistance in collecting a legal settlement handled by Robert J. Walker.
- 7 Aug From John H. Bills. ALS. DLC–JKP. States that he is en route from Philadelphia to Washington and offers to take Polk’s “servant boy” on the return trip to Tennessee.
- 7 Aug *To James Buchanan.*
- 7 Aug From John F. H. Claiborne. ALS. DLC–JKP. Forwards correspondence apprising Polk that Protestant forces are seeking the resignation of Thomas Barrett, customs collector at the port of New Orleans, on the grounds of Barrett being a Catholic.
- 7 Aug From Daniel T. Jenks. ALS. DLC–JKP. Suggests that a printing contract be given to the Philadelphia *American Sentinel*, thought to be “one of oldest Democratic daily papers in this State.”
- 7 Aug *From Alexander McCall.*
- 7 Aug *To William L. Marcy.*
- 7 Aug From John Markle. ALS. DLC–JKP. Complains of the declining value of Revolutionary War pensioners’ land grants

- in Ohio; wishes that the land warrants could be applied to other public lands.
- 7 Aug From Williams D. Moseley. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends Dillon Jordon, Jr., for a federal judgeship, a place in the Pensacola Customs House, or a foreign assignment.
- 7 Aug *From Thomas L. Ragsdale.*
- 7 Aug From Thomas D. Simpson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Claims G. A. Nicolls, his former employer and superintendent of the Philadelphia, Reading & Pottsville Railroad, stole his invention of a switch designed to prevent train derailments; seeks assistance securing his patent rights.
- 7 Aug From Joseph White. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Samuel C. Donaldson, son of John I. Donaldson of Baltimore.
- 8 Aug *From William S. Colquhoun.*
- 8 Aug From John W. Davis. ALS. DLC–JKP. Notes his victory in Indiana’s congressional elections.
- 8 Aug From Ransom H. Gillet. ALS. DLC–JKP. Forwards Timothy C. Dwight’s letter discussing the retention of the pension agent at Albany, N.Y.
- 8 Aug *From J. George Harris.*
- 8 Aug From James Huie. ALS. DLC–JKP. Writes on behalf of his mother seeking an extension of War of 1812 veterans’ pensions to widows; remarks that his mother “is as much entitled to a small Relief from a Democrat Congress as the Widow Harison was a Large Purse from the Whig.”
- 8 Aug From Augustus A. Parker. ALS. DLC–JKP. States that he intends to name his daughter after Mrs. Polk and wishes to know her Christian name.
- 8 Aug *From Romulus M. Saunders.*
- 8 Aug From Joseph Shillington. ALS. DLC–JKP. Complains that James Maher, public gardener, refuses to pay for an advertisement printed in the *Baltimore Sun*.
- 8 Aug From Thomas Smith and Theron Tims. LS. DLC–JKP. Repudiate allegations that Andrew Beaumont failed to support Polk’s election.
- 8 Aug From Frederick P. Stanton. ALS. DLC–JKP. Delights in carrying Shelby County; pledges support for Polk’s administration; recommends J. N. Bybee for the post of surgeon at the Memphis navy yard.
- 8 Aug From Elisha W. Stewart. ALS. DLC–JKP. States that his “Collegiate course has exhausted” his funds and must “resort to some kind of business for support”; solicits appointment as a surveyor “in the western country.”
- 8 Aug From James H. Thomas. ALS. DLC–JKP. Discusses election results in Maury County; notes that Aaron V. Brown’s majority of 609 in the gubernatorial contest represents a loss of 87 votes from Polk’s majority in 1844.

- 8 Aug *From John Tyler.*
- 8 Aug *From James Walker.*
- 9 Aug From James Buchanan. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Alfred Gillmore, an attorney from Pennsylvania.
- 9 Aug From Randolph D. Casey. ALS. DLC–JKP. Believes the recent Tennessee election “has terminated Gloriously for the Democracy as far as hrd from”; provides returns from several counties.
- 9 Aug From Nicholas Fain. ALS. DLC–JKP. Discusses election results for Hawkins County; recommends Abraham L. Gammon for appointment as marshal in East Tennessee.
- 9 Aug *From J. George Harris.*
- 9 Aug From David Hayden. ALS. DLC–JKP. Claims that his “Brutus” article, published in the *Natchitoches Reporter* of June 20, 1842, influenced voters in his community to vote for a state constitutional convention; offers the article to prove that he is not a Whig. (Enclosure not found.)
- 9 Aug *To William H. Haywood, Jr.*
- 9 Aug From Thomas F. Marshall. ALS. DLC–JKP. States that Charles William Field, a new appointee to West Point, awaits an interview as requested by Polk.
- 9 Aug *From Robert H. Morris.*
- 9 Aug From Elijah F. Purdy. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Moses Y. Beach as “one so well qualified to give correct intelligence of what pertains to our Countrys good.”
- [9 Aug 1845] From Thomas Ritchie. ALS. DLC–JKP. Writes on behalf of Valentine Y. Conway, surveyor-general of Florida, who seeks to retain his position until September.
- 10 Aug From George A. Caldwell. ALS. DLC–JKP. Urges prompt attention to the application for a foreign mission from Nathan Gaither, a physician from Columbia, Ky.
- 10 Aug From John Pettit. ALS. DLC–JKP. Complains that William J. Brown, a former Indiana congressman, deserves a more substantial appointment than that of an auditor’s clerk; notes Indiana’s state and congressional election results.
- 11 Aug *From James Buchanan.*
- 11 Aug From Edmund Burke. ALS. DLC–JKP. Reports that the Patent Office lacks “the power to redress” Thomas D. Simpson’s tardy letters of appeal.
- 11 Aug From Edward Everett. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Henry Holland, a physician from England.
- 11 Aug From J. George Harris. ALS. DLC–JKP. Relates that more recent election returns from East Tennessee are “not so encouraging as heretofore received”; adds that he still expects the Democrats to control the legislature and win the governorship.

- 11 Aug *From John Law.*
- 11 Aug From Cyrus McCormick et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Ask Polk to intervene in the dismissal of William Byrd Page, a clerk in the Treasury office.
- 11 Aug From Henry L. Martin. ALS. DLC–JKP. Asks for the papers that he left with the president concerning the reservation claim of Ho-pe-an-che-hub-bee provided for under the supplementary article to the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek.
- 11 Aug *To James Walker.*
- 11 Aug From William C. Zantzinger. AN. DLC–JKP. States that Cave Johnson has indicated this day the president’s willingness to allow him the “use of the original Report of the 4th Auditor of the Treasury, on his case” that he might reply to it.
- 12 Aug From Elisabeth M. Bovee. ALS. DLC–JKP. Says that her husband, Matthias J. Bovee, is very distressed at not receiving the appointment as register of the land office at Milwaukee.
- 12 Aug From Lewis Cass. ALS. DLC–JKP. Expresses his gratitude for the appointment of John B. Palmer of Detroit as a clerk in the Third Auditor’s Office.
- 12 Aug From William Hunter. ALS. DLC–JKP. States that he has visited Texas since last seeing Polk and found the news of annexation “received with unbounded approbation”; solicits appointment to federal office in Texas.
- 12 Aug *From Amos Kendall.*
- 12 Aug From Thomas P. Moore. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to refute the accusations made against his character and warns that his accuser is a “half crazy, brawling abolitionist” and “the most radical of radicals.”
- 12 Aug *To James E. Saunders.*
- 12 Aug *From Romulus M. Saunders.*
- 12 Aug From Deborah W. Silliman. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits a general government appointment for her son, Charles O. Silliman, an attorney from Warrensburg, Mo.
- 12 Aug From James B. Taggart. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to be informed of any complaints lodged against him concerning outstanding debts.
- 12 Aug From John H. Wheeler. ALS. DLC–JKP. Provides election returns for North Carolina’s Second Congressional District; claims that Whig leaders employed “falsehood,” “Bank influence,” and “fraudulent votes” to secure their majority.
- [13 Aug 1845] From Arthur P. Bagby. AN. DLC–JKP. Accepts an invitation to dine with the President and Mrs. Polk.
- 13 Aug *From J. George Harris.*

- 13 Aug From Pleasant Nelson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Expresses his gratitude for the appointment of Jeremiah Cherry as postmaster of Columbia, Tenn.; asks Polk to confer an appointment on their friend Micajah G. Lewis of Columbia, Tenn.
- 13 Aug From A. O. P. Nicholson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Reports on Tennessee elections and concludes “that altho the signs are fair we are not certain of a Democratic legislature.”
- 13 Aug From Thomas J. Read. ALS. DLC–JKP. Expresses gratitude for his recent appointment as postmaster at Louisville, Ky.
- 13 Aug From David Salomon. N. DLC–JKP. Encloses a letter of introduction from James E. Saunders of Mobile, Ala., and requests an interview with Polk.
- 13 Aug From P. J. Sullivan. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests an interview to discuss “something of great moment.” Polk’s AE notes that “the information given was a secret scheme on foot to establish a paper at Washington to oppose the administration.”
- 14 Aug From T. Hartley Crawford. ALS. DLC–JKP. Reports that papers relating to the Ho-pe-an-che-hub-bee claim are not on file at the Bureau of Indian Affairs.
- 14 Aug From Charles Fletcher. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a petition urging construction of a transcontinental railroad.
- 14 Aug *From J. George Harris.*
- 14 Aug From John H. Lancaster. ALS. DLC–JKP. Copies lines of his poetic eulogy to Andrew Jackson into his letter and dedicates same to Polk.
- 14 Aug From Micajah G. Lewis. ALS. DLC–JKP. Refutes predictions “that the prospect for the Legislature was rather gloomy”; concludes that “information now warrants the belief” that the Democracy will control the legislature in Tennessee.
- 14 Aug *From John A. Mairs.*
- 14 Aug *From Joshua L. Martin.*
- 14 Aug From James S. Mayfield. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends Henry L. Kinney of Corpus Christi for appointment as a “Confidential agent” of the government.
- 14 Aug From Robert J. Walker. ALS. DLC–JKP. Reports that the Treasury Department has not received the resignation letter of Thomas Fitzgerald, a receiver of public monies at Ionia, Mich.
- 14 Aug From W. B. Watkins. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a tribute of the late Kenneth L. Anderson, vice-president of the Republic of Texas; mentions his financial misfortunes.
- 14 Aug From John Wilson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits a contribution for personal traveling expenses.

- 14 Aug From Levi Woodbury. L, copy. DLC–JKP. Recommends the appointment of Silas H. Hill as librarian of the Library of Congress.
- 15 Aug From Samuel R. Anderson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Writes that the Navy Department has rejected his bid to supply pork to ten naval stations; asks for any appointment at Polk’s disposal.
- 15 Aug From C. T. Barton. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces William H. Reese of New Orleans.
- 15 Aug *To Robert Butler.*
- 15 Aug From John H. Cutter. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces John B. Flint, a Louisville, Ky., physician and surgeon.
- 15 Aug From John A. Gardener. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends E. W. Smallwood for appointment as keeper of the penitentiary in Washington City; provides news of Tennessee’s elections and expresses satisfaction over the “redemption” of his “native state from the thralldom of Federal Whigery.”
- 15 Aug From Robert Harris. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests letters of recommendation submitted on his behalf be returned.
- 15 Aug From William H. Haywood, Jr. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a letter of recommendation for Camillus Saunders, son of Romulus M. Saunders, as purser in the navy.
- 15 Aug *From Henry Horn.*
- 15 Aug From David Hubbard. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces his friend, William H. Reese of New Orleans and formerly of Tuscumbia, Ala.
- 15 Aug From James Johnson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to submit a bid for construction of a fireproof building for the War and Navy Departments.
- 15 Aug From William J. Leiper. ALS. DLC–JKP. Asks that the name of George L. Taylor, his nephew, be withdrawn from further consideration for consul at Londonderry, Ireland.
- 15 Aug From Sylvester S. Southworth. ALS. DLC–JKP. Informs Polk of the recent death of Edward N. Cox, a purser in the navy; solicits an appointment for the vacant position.
- 16 Aug *From Aaron V. Brown.*
- 16 Aug From Henry Campbell. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a testimonial signed by prominent citizens of Rochester, N.Y.
- 16 Aug *From John Catron.*
- 16 Aug From John A. Nooe. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces William H. Reese, a New Orleans businessman formerly of Tuscumbia, Ala.
- 16 Aug *From William H. Polk.*
- 16 Aug From William Whitney. ALS. DLC–JKP. Complains that his nephew, Louis F. Whitney, son of Reuben M. Whitney, has not received a clerkship appointment.
- 17 Aug From Matthias J. Bovee. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits an

- appointment as register of the land office at Milwaukee, Wisconsin Territory.
- 17 Aug *From A. O. P. Nicholson.*
- 17 Aug From Hezekiah L. Thistle. ALS. DLC–JKP. Claims David Levy Yulee and his associates conspired to have him removed as agent for the protection of live oaks because he had exposed “illegal surveying” and “plundering” of public lands in eastern Florida.
- [18 Aug 1845] From Anonymous. L. DLC–JKP. Opposes the retention of Thomas Barrett as customs collector for the port of New Orleans; calls for the indictment of Barrett on bank fraud charges and complains that Barrett’s retention of the title, “Consul of Roman states,” is unconstitutional.
- 18 Aug To George Bancroft. ALS. MHi. Wishes to discuss a forthcoming purser appointment.
- 18 Aug From James J. Bell. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces William H. Reese, a New Orleans businessman and son of Solomon Reese of Tuscumbia, Ala.; notes that the Reese family descends from “the old stock of Reeses of Mecklenburg County No. Carolina.”
- 18 Aug From Thomas Claiborne, Jr. ALS. DLC–JKP. Accepts a clerkship in the Treasury Department.
- 18 Aug *From Daniel Graham.*
- 18 Aug From Josephus C. Guild. ALS. DLC–JKP. Announces a Democratic victory in Tennessee’s elections and concludes that “after a 10 years war we have carried the ramparts of Whigery”; urges Polk to adhere to the principles of the “Baltimore Resolutions” and his inaugural address to preserve the safety of his administration.
- 18 Aug From William Gunton. LS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to have an interview with Polk to ascertain the reasons for the dismissal of his brother, Thomas Gunton, as a clerk in the Third Auditor’s Office.
- 18 Aug From Samuel Kemp. ALS. DLC–JKP. Opposes the appointment of Stephen R. Mallory as customs collector for the port of Key West, Fla.; claims that Mallory is no more a friend of the “poor Mechanics” than his predecessor, Adam Gordon.
- 18 Aug From William Lucas. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces John G. Wilson of Harpers Ferry, Va.
- 18 Aug *To Ezekiel P. McNeal.*
- 18 Aug From S. O. Morgan. ALS. DLC–JKP. Reports that fraudulent pension claims are being filed by individuals who performed little or no service in Robert Brown’s Florida regiment.
- 18 Aug *To William S. Pickett and Company.*
- 18 Aug *To William W. Polk.*

- 18 Aug To Samuel P. Walker.
- 18 Aug From Reuel Williams. ALS. DNA-RG 45. Recommends Charles Weston for an appointment in the marines.
- 18 Aug From Alen Wilson. ALS. DLC-JKP. Encloses a reprint of two newspaper articles, "How to Rebuild Quebec" and "The Uses and Action of Symbolic Money"; claims the philosophy of his organization, the Society for the Emancipation of Industry of London, England, can be applied in the restoration of New York City's east side business district destroyed by fire.
- 19 Aug From George Bancroft. LS. DLC-JKP. Submits a commission for J. George Harris as purser in the navy.
- 19 Aug From George R. Collier.
- 19 Aug From Thomas Copeland. ALS. DLC-JKP. Encloses a letter from Edward Lucas of Harpers Ferry, Va., explaining his delay in coming to Washington City and speaking with Polk in Copeland's behalf. (Enclosure not found.)
- 19 Aug From J. George Harris. ALS. DLC-JKP. Accepts the appointment as purser in the navy.
- 19 Aug From Henry Horn. ALS. DLC-JKP. Acknowledges receipt of Polk's check for \$72; states that he will forward the portrait and frame to Polk in a week.
- 19 Aug From Charles S. Jones. ALS. DLC-JKP. Wishes to secure a clerkship in the Treasury Department.
- 19 Aug From George Loyall. ALS. DLC-JKP. Expresses an inability to comment on the potential effect of removing Thomas Gatewood as naval officer at Norfolk, Va.; attests to the good character of C. C. Robinson, an applicant for Gatewood's office.
- 19 Aug From William Smith. ALS. DLC-JKP. Introduces Jackson Coons, a physician from St. Louis, Mo.
- 20 Aug From John M. Bass.
- 20 Aug From John W. Childress. ALS. DLC-JKP. Discusses details of Polk's purchase of Caroline, a slave, for \$450, and notes that Robert Campbell, Jr., will deliver her to Polk's plantation; requests payment of the balance of Polk's note for money loaned in 1841.
- 20 Aug From Sarah Yorke Jackson. ALS. DLC-JKP. Encloses a letter from Sarah H. Hebb asking help in obtaining a clerkship for her son, George; notes that the family has had no means of support since the dismissal of William Hebb from his post as keeper of the navy yard magazine at Washington City.
- 20 Aug From George McDonald. ALS. DLC-JKP. Requests that interest be paid on his claim against the government.
- 20 Aug From Louis McLane. ALS. DLC-JKP. Introduces Christopher Hughes, retiring U.S. chargé d'affaires to

- the Netherlands.
- [20 Aug 1845] From Thomas Ritchie. ALS. DLC–JKP. Urges Polk to receive James McDowell, governor of Virginia.
- 20 Aug From John W. Ward. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests a War of 1812 veteran’s pension.
- 21 Aug From George Bancroft. LS. DLC–JKP. Requests Polk to sign a replacement commission for Thomas T. Hunter as a lieutenant in the navy; notes that Hunter’s original commission was destroyed in the fire that occurred aboard the U.S.S. *Missouri*.
- 21 Aug From William J. Brown. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends Martin Johnson for a clerkship and suggests the removal of several Whig clerks from the Treasury Department.
- 21 Aug *From Stephen A. Douglas.*
- 21 Aug From Robert J. Ker. ALS. DLC–JKP. Transmits enclosed documents at the direction of Alexandre Mouton, governor of Louisiana. (Enclosures include communications between Mouton, John S. Armant, and Edmund P. Gaines concerning the mustering of two volunteer artillery companies for Texas and the raising of four regiments of infantrymen and riflemen in reserve.)
- 21 Aug From Robert Mills. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to submit architectural plans for War and Navy Department buildings for consideration.
- 21 Aug From William E. Owen. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends William G. Childress for a lucrative position in the government; notes that Childress has served the Tennessee Democracy as well as any; explains that Childress is poor but able; offers to take an army commission in the conflict with Mexico, reports of which are circulating widely.
- 21 Aug From Lorain T. Pease. ALS. DLC–JKP. Congratulates Polk on his conduct of foreign relations and the public’s approval of same.
- 21 Aug From Thomas J. Perry. ALS. DLC–JKP. Asks Polk to delay the appointment of postmaster for Cumberland, Md., until after the Maryland congressional elections.
- 21 Aug From James Walker. ALS. Polk Memorial Association, Columbia. Reponds to Polk’s letter of August 10; notes that he is having the land in question resurveyed; expresses concern and anxiety over the delay in the appointment of William S. Pickett to a consular post.
- 22 Aug From Clark Burnham et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Withdraw their support of Thomas W. Olcott to remain as pension agent for Albany, N.Y.
- 22 Aug From Augustus C. Hand et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Recommend Watts Sherman, “a consistent democrat,” to replace Thomas W. Olcott as pension agent for Albany, N.Y.

- 22 Aug *From Alexander McCall.*
- 22 Aug From William S. Plumer. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests payment for Polk’s three-year subscription to the *American Presbyterian*, the subscription list of which was transferred to the *Watchman of the South*.
- 22 Aug From John F. Schermerhorn. ALS. DLC–JKP. Offers his services to settle Cherokee grievances.
- [22 Aug 1845] From Jane B. Taliferro. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits a general government appointment for her husband, James L. Taliferro of Stafford, Va.
- 23 Aug From E. A. Barrabino. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a circular stating his views on the annexation of Texas.
- 23 Aug *From H. Campbell.*
- 23 Aug From Margaret Amanda Childs. ALS. DNA–RG 156. Encloses documents relating to an “Infantry Gun” invented by her father, Thomas Childs; wishes to offer the government an opportunity to purchase the invention.
- [23 Aug 1845] From E. Dale. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests an interview with the president.
- 23 Aug *To George M. Dallas.*
- 23 Aug From Daniel S. Dickinson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces George R. Parburt of Canandaigua, N.Y.
- 23 Aug From Vespasian Ellis. ALS. DLC–JKP. Will remain in Philadelphia for two or three days recovering from his voyage from Caracas; encloses a letter from Benjamin G. Shields, chargé d’affaires at Venezuela.
- 23 Aug From David Francis Lamot. ALS. DLC–JKP. Claims to have invented a perpetual motion machine, which he would like to demonstrate to Polk, members of his cabinet, congressmen, and any other responsible number of scientific gentlemen.
- 23 Aug From Robert Lowrey. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests an interview to discuss his removal as customs inspector at Portland, Maine.
- 23 Aug From Thomas F. Marshall. L, copy. ICU. Wishes to introduce Joel Tanner Hart, an inspiring sculptor from Kentucky, to George Bancroft; claims G. P. A. Healy has “pronounced some of Mr Hart’s Busts the finest he had ever seen.”
- 23 Aug *From Barkly Martin.*
- 23 Aug *From William S. Pickett.*
- 23 Aug From W. Simons. ALS. DLC–JKP. Writes on behalf of a committee of arrangements for the Rhode Island Democracy inviting Polk to attend a “Liberation Fete” to honor Thomas W. Dorr.
- 23 Aug *From James Walker.*
- 24 Aug From James Hoban. ALS. DLC–JKP. Issues a statement

- in defense of midshipman Albert G. Cook, a former legal client charged with passing a counterfeit bank note; Polk notes that upon review of the case that Cook, cashiered by a court martial, will not be reinstated to his post without further evidence.
- 24 Aug From George W. Hopkins. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends that Lilburn H. Trigg be retained in his position as postmaster at Lynchburg, Virginia.
- [24 Aug 1845] From Thomas Ritchie. ALS. DLC–JKP. Warns Polk not to accept the advice of James M. Porter of Pennsylvania.
- 25 Aug From Seth Barton. ALS. DLC–JKP. Reports that he has been asked to represent John Y. Mason “officially” in his absence.
- 25 Aug From LeGrand Capers. ALS. DNA–RG 99. Solicits an appointment as paymaster in the army.
- 25 Aug From Hugh Carlisle. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to enlist in the army; explains that he is imprisoned at Frederick, Md., on charges of “being an Imposter”; thinks that his future in the ministry ended with his “being found in a house of ill fame”; states that he was “imprisoned by a few individuals of the Protestant Episcopal Church.”
- 25 Aug *From George M. Dallas.*
- 25 Aug *From Stephen A. Douglas.*
- 25 Aug From E. H. Eastabrooks. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits an appointment in the general government; notes that the Polk administration’s foreign policy “has met the approval of the Democracy” of New York but that “many of the well-meaning whigs of western New York” would choose “an honorable settlement of all our foreign affairs, even at the expense of war with Great Britain.”
- 25 Aug From John Fairfield. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends the retention of James Osborne as collector of customs at Kennebunk, Maine., and the removal of Oliver Walker, a deputy collector and inspector.
- 25 Aug *From William H. Haywood, Jr.*
- 25 Aug *From James L. Homer.*
- 25 Aug From John Syvret. ALS. DLC–JKP. Claims his father, Philippe Syvret emigrated from Jersey to the United States and served in the military; seeks information of his father’s estate.
- 25 Aug From Robert J. Walker. ALS. DLC–JKP. Informs Polk that John Y. Mason requested Seth Barton to serve as interim attorney general during his temporary absence.
- 26 Aug From Seth Barton. ALS. DLC–JKP. Communicates information from Vera Cruz, Mexico, extracted from a letter received by Edward H. Barton from Robert B. Campbell, U.S. consul at Havana, Cuba.

- 26 Aug *From David Craighead.*
- 26 Aug From Levi Hurdle. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to know if the secretary of the navy has considered his petition for appointment as master painter at the Washington navy yard.
- 26 Aug *From Charles J. Ingersoll.*
- 26 Aug *From Elihu Pedrick.*
- 27 Aug From John D. Kellogg. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a copy of the proceedings from a public meeting of “friends of the administration” in New York City. (Enclosure not found.)
- 27 Aug From Arnold Plumer. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends John W. Shugert, former sheriff of Venango County, Penn., for a government office.
- 27 Aug From William P. Rowles. ALS. DLC–JKP. Asks Polk to review several pending pension applications of Middle and West Tennessee citizens.
- 28 Aug *To George M. Dallas.*
- 28 Aug From William Gunton. ALS. DLC–JKP. Complains that no response has been given to his previous request for an interview; believes only “gross misrepresentations” could have occasioned the dismissal of his brother, Thomas, a veteran clerk in the Third Auditor’s Office.
- 28 Aug From James S. Holman. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces John C. Watrous, former attorney general for the Republic of Texas.
- 28 Aug From Andrew A. Kincannon. ALS. DLC–JKP. Maintains that John F. Wray, the receiver of public monies at Pontotac, Miss., is a habitual drunkard and recommends his removal; suggests William S. Taylor of Tippah County, Miss., for the position.
- 28 Aug From Cornelius W. Lawrence and William F. Havemeyer. LS. NN–Emmett. Recommend John V. B. Bleecker for purser in the navy.
- 28 Aug *From George Plitt.*
- 28 Aug From William S. Plumer. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a receipt for Polk’s subscription to the *Watchman of the South*. (Enclosure not found.)
- 28 Aug From Thomas J. Read. ALS. DLC–JKP. Asserts that Major Edward R. Tillotson, a Democrat from Cincinnati, Ohio, is worthy of Polk’s full confidence.
- 28 Aug From Vernon K. Stevenson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Complains that Joseph S. Watkins, navy agent at Memphis, Tenn., transferred public funds from the Union Bank, the “only bank in the State that has a sprinkling of Democracy,” to the rival Farmers’ & Merchants’ Bank; confides that Aaron V. Brown will marry the widow Saunders.
- 29 Aug From John M. Bass. ALS. Polk Memorial Association,

- Columbia. Questions whether disbursing agents have the individual authority to designate specific banks for public funds deposits; asks that his Union Bank branch at Memphis be considered for such designation by the appropriate governmental authority.
- 29 Aug From John Blair. ALS. DLC–JKP. Discusses Tennessee politics and predicts that “the prospects of the Whig party are gone forever if our leaders will do *half right*”; states he “would be pleased to hear” Polk’s views “as to what would most strengthen our cause in Tennessee.”
- 29 Aug From Thomas Copeland. L. DLC–JKP. Encloses letter from his son, William D. Copeland, stating that Edward Lucas will write Polk in behalf of Copeland’s retention in office; inquires if Polk has received a letter from Lucas.
- 29 Aug From Susan (Mrs. George) Graham. N. DLC–JKP. Asks for an interview with Polk.
- 29 Aug *To William H. Haywood, Jr.*
- 29 Aug From Charles Morgan. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits Polk’s assistance to obtain several new varieties of sugar cane for cultivation in Louisiana.
- [29 Aug 1846] From William J. Phillips. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits an appointment to “some profitable office”; explains that his income as a teacher proves insufficient to support his family.
- 29 Aug *To Isaac Toucey.*
- 30 Aug *To Aaron V. Brown.*
- 30 Aug From Robert Butler. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses letters pertaining to the relocation of the surveyor-general’s office from St. Augustine to Tallahassee, Fla.
- 30 Aug From Alfred G. Hall. ALS. DLC–JKP. Notes that he has presented Sarah Polk with a copy of his “valuable female work of some repute called *Womanhood*.”
- 30 Aug From James E. Saunders. ALS. DLC–JKP. Accepts appointment as customs collector at Mobile; says that he will be delayed in taking up his duties there as he must travel from Courtland by land; remarks that a summer residency in the upcountry is a common practice among Mobile’s merchant class.
- 31 Aug From Anonymous. L. DLC–JKP. Complains that Robert B. Turner of Nashville has not been appointed to a federal office.
- 31 Aug From Leonard P. Cheatham. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends the appointment of Aris Brown as U.S. marshal for the Middle District of Tennessee; notes that Robert B. Turner will remove to Texas unless appointed state treasurer; and adds “should there be a war of any continuance so as to render a call on the patriotism of *Tennessee*, let me

- assure you it will be promptly met.”
To Sam Houston.
- 31 Aug
 31 Aug From Jesse Williamson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Complains that a new postal regulation allowing advertisement charges for mail notification is unfair to the indigent and is “only in favor of the Merchant who has the means of calling every day and the printer who has the largest circulation.”
- Sept 1845 From Robert Hunt et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Recommend Samuel Mitchell of Arkansas for appointment to a post in the general government.
- Sept 1845 From Charles S. Jones. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits an appointment for wardenship of the federal penitentiary at Washington City.
- 1 Sept From Jesse B. Clements. ALS. DLC–JKP. Expresses disappointment at not receiving the appointment as surveyor-general for Florida; solicits any other that would be worthy of his attention.
- 1 Sept From David Files. ALS. DLC–JKP. Withdraws his application for the collectorship at Mobile, Ala.; requests consideration for the post of weigher, inspector, or boarding officer; notes that there is no naval officer assigned to the Mobile Customs House.
- 1 Sept From Thomas L. Hamer. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends David T. Disney for appointment as minister to Russia.
- 1 Sept From William A. Harris. ALS. DLC–JKP. Urges Polk to appoint him as chargé d'affaires to the Argentine Confederation without further delay.
- 1 Sept
 1 Sept
 1 Sept *From Henry Horn.*
From Richard M. Johnson.
- 1 Sept From Alexander Ray. ALS. DLC–JKP. Approves of the late removal of Edward Baxter as consul for the port of Dundee, Scotland.
- 1 Sept From Andrew Stevenson and Peter V. Daniel. LS. DLC–JKP. Recommend Bowyer F. Miller, a former Virginia assemblyman, for “some suitable appointment.”
- 1 Sept From James Walker. ALS. Polk Memorial Association, Columbia. Reports that a revised survey probably will determine the correct property lines for land the heirs of Marshall T. Polk sold to Thomas Gregory.
- 2 Sept From John F. Gillespy. ALS. DLC–JKP. Claims that T. Hartley Crawford, commissioner of Indian affairs, has denied him access to John Howard Payne’s report relating to the Cherokee treaties of 1817, 1819, and 1835; asks Polk to intervene on his behalf in obtaining the document.
- 2 Sept
 2 Sept *To James Hamilton, Jr.*
 From William H. Haywood, Jr. ALS. DLC–JKP. Notes with relief that a letter of recommendation sent to the

- Treasury Department had miscarried instead of being ignored; advises that he will be forwarding another recommendation for James T. Miller as naval officer at the port of Wilmington, N.C.
- 2 Sept From Charles J. Ingersoll. ALS. DLC–JKP. Relays George Guier’s wish to be appointed to a more lucrative post such as the consulate at Palermo or Trieste; notes that Guier’s present position at Rio Grande brings little more than \$1,000 a year in emoluments.
- 2 Sept From John H. Lumpkin. ALS. DLC–JKP. Urges the appointment of Ira R. Foster to a consular position in the West Indies; reminds Polk that the “whole of the Georgia delegation” supports Foster’s application.
- 2 Sept From James I. Stevenson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Seeks an appointment to a foreign post.
- 2 Sept *From Harvey M. Watterson.*
- [3 Sept 1845] From Anonymous. L, signed “A looker on in Vienna.” DLC–JKP. Opposes retention of Thomas Barrett as customs collector for the port of New Orleans.
- 3 Sept *From Robert Armstrong.*
- 3 Sept *From George M. Dallas.*
- 3 Sept From Emanuel Fisher. ALS. DLC–JKP. States that he is “intirely *desitude* of means”; desires Polk to provide financial assistance.
- 3 Sept From John Hill. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces “a mutual friend,” Jacob Schultz of Stokes County, N.C.
- [3 Sept 1845] From West H. Humphreys. ALS. DLC–JKP. Mentions the names of three potential candidates for U.S. marshal for the Middle District of Tennessee.
- 3 Sept *From Willie B. Johnson.*
- 4 Sept From Anonymous. L. DLC–JKP. States that he warned David T. Disney of the political opposition to his application for office; notes that New York has received its share of federal appointments.
- 4 Sept From Robert Armstrong. ALS. DLS–JKP. States that he will draw \$673 from Polk for goods Arnold S. Harris purchased in Paris, France, for Mrs. Polk.
- 4 Sept From Samuel W. Black. ALS. PHi. Recommends John B. Butler of Pittsburgh, Penn., for a position “suitable to his admirable capacity.”
- 4 Sept From James S. Campbell et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Recommend Andrew Beaumont for a federal office.
- 4 Sept *To Charles Douglass.*
- 4 Sept From Vespasian Ellis. ALS. DLC–JKP. Apprises Polk of his departure from Washington City and wishes to have an interview on his return; says that despite his unexpected recall as chargé d’affaires to Venezuela he

- will continue to support the democratic principles of the Polk administration.
- 4 Sept From Emanuel Fisher. ALS. DLC–JKP. Seeks a second interview to discuss his removal as a lighthouse keeper.
- 4 Sept *From Henry Horn.*
- 4 Sept *To Henry Horn.*
- 4 Sept From Samuel H. Huntington. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a letter of introduction written on his behalf by Isaac Toucey of Connecticut; requests an interview.
- 4 Sept From James P. McKee. ALS. DLC–JKP. Tells Polk that he voted against him but then solicits a position in the general government.
- 4 Sept From Ezekiel P. McNeal. ALS. DLC–JKP. Informs Polk that Bills & McNeal has paid the balance of his note to William H. Wood and has drawn a bill of exchange on Polk with Rockhill, Smith & Co. of Philadelphia for \$1,205.66, the amount paid to Wood and the balance of his note with Bills & McNeal; encloses the cancelled notes to Wood and Bills & McNeal.
- 4 Sept From William L. Marey. LS. DLC–JKP. States that John Howard Payne’s report on Cherokee treaties should not be made public, that it was probably prepared for political purposes advanced by former Secretary of War John Bell, that the report had received no official sanction at the time of its compilation, and that it should not be given currency now lest its circulation should be regarded as approval; suggests that John F. Gillespy review the original materials from which Payne derived his report.
- 4 Sept From Nathaniel Terry. ALS. DLC–JKP. Opposes the appointment of Richard Lee Fearn as surgeon at the Marine Hospital in Mobile; claims that Fearn supported Joshua L. Martin, the independent candidate for governor of Alabama; recommends Paul H. Lewis.
- 5 Sept From Jerome Bayon. LS. DLC–JKP. Solicits an appointment as surveyor of the port at New Orleans; states that he cannot support his family on the revenues of the Louisiana *Courier* alone.
- 5 Sept From William Grandin. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wants permission to publish the enclosed article on the rude behavior of an office seeker who had forced his way into the president’s office.
- 5 Sept From F. Randolph Hulbert. ANS. DLC–JKP. Asks to be restored to his former position as weigher in the Customs House at New York City or to be appointed to a clerkship in the general government.
- 5 Sept From Andrew Kennedy. ALS. DLC–JKP. Says that he is “much chagrined” that William J. Brown, a former

- Indiana Democrat Congressman, was appointed to an “ordinary clerkship,” a station “below his merits”; recommends Brown be promoted to an office “commensurate to his former standing in Indiana”; compliments Polk on his handling of the border dispute with Mexico; and remarks that “there is Some of the ‘old’ in the ‘young’ hickory.”
- 5 Sept From Archibald Yell. ALS. DLC–JKP. Writes on behalf of Lambert J. Reardon, mayor of Little Rock, Ark., soliciting the removal of Gerrard N. Cousins as receiver of public monies at Little Rock; approves the appointment of James McKisick as Cherokee agent.
- [6 Sept 1845] From Joseph Jones. ALS DLC–JKP. Expresses concern about the loss of property and lives attending recent fires in America; sends a sample piece of wood treated with a fire retardant that he claims to be indestructable.
- 6 Sept From Francis Thomas. ALS. DLC–JKP. States that he has a case pending before the circuit court for the District of Columbia and asks that Polk appoint an “impartial and independent” jurist to succeed the late John B. Thruston.
- 7 Sept *To James Buchanan.*
- 7 Sept *From William H. Polk.*
- 8 Sept To George Bancroft. ALS. MH. Introduces Charles L. Moses of Kentucky.
- 8 Sept From Charles Lee Brown. ALS. DLC–JKP. Relates that his father had lost a ruinous sum of money having signed as security for LeRoy Opie, a paymaster in the army, and had been forced to forfeit the bond when Opie was robbed and murdered in the service of his country; requests Polk’s aid in securing restitution of his father’s bond money.
- 8 Sept From Robert Butler. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses correspondence with James D. Westcott, Jr., pertaining to Polk’s request for opinions on removing the general land office from St. Augustine to Tallahassee, Fla.; approves of measures adopted by the administration “in the event Mexico may loose sight of common justice, common prudence and national safety in making aggressive War against the U. States”; warns that the Mexicans might attempt to establish “a small military foothold” in Texas “as a *tooth pick* for negotiation.”
- 8 Sept From Joseph Campbell. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits a government appointment in the northern part of the United States; proffers no letters of recommendation, for he resides “at a distance from any that you may know any thing about, and further because bad men have friends as well as good to recommend them.”
- 8 Sept *From William P. Chandler.*
- 8 Sept From T. Hartley Crawford. LS. DLC–JKP. Acknowledges

- receipt of Richard M. Johnson's letter to Polk of August 15, 1845; comments on Johnson's reply to tribal protests against forced enrollment of Indian boys in his Choctaw Academy in Kentucky; states that he has not received a report from William Armstrong examining statements made in the Creek memorial received on August 5, 1845.
- 8 Sept From Thomas S. J. Johnson. ALS. DLC-JKP. Asks for pardon and reinstatement into the army; encloses correspondence from senior army officers commending his action taken in a 1841 Florida military campaign.
- 8 Sept From Micajah G. Lewis. ALS. DLC-JKP. Seeks a private interview to discuss a federal appointment assured by Aaron V. Brown and J. Knox Walker.
- [8 Sept 1845] From J. M. Parks. ALS. DLC-JKP. Solicits an appointment which will raise him "from obscurity to a life of usefulness to my country."
- 8 Sept From Henry C. Pope. ALS. DLC-JKP. Complains that James Buchanan rescinded the offer to appoint him to a clerkship in the State Department.
- 8 Sept From David Salomon.
- 9 Sept From Julius W. Blackwell. ALS. DLC-JKP. States that his unsuccessful congressional bid for reelection "is of no consequence to the cause" and that winning the governorship, both branches of the Assembly, and a majority of the congressional seats is "glory enough for one day"; solicits an appointment that would prove sufficient for relocation of his family.
- [9 Sept 1845] From William P. Duval. ALS. DLC-JKP. States that his son, John C. Duval, fought for Texas independence and survived the Goliad Massacre in 1836; requests that his son, who has already gone to Texas to join the rangers, be appointed captain of dragoons in the regular army.
- 9 Sept From Benjamin F. Graham. ALS. DLC-JKP. Says that he did not waiver in his support of Polk in the late campaign despite the "perfect flood of slander and abuse" fired upon him by the Whig editors of Kentucky; solicits appointment to some federal post "at any point Texas not excepted."
- 9 Sept From Oscar H. Lide. ALS. DLC-JKP. Hopes that an appointment as paymaster in the army may be given V. M. Campbell of Tennessee; such an accommodation would allow him to replace Campbell as cashier of the Athens branch of the Bank of Tennessee, the directorship of which is presently controlled by his Democratic friends.
- 9 Sept From Wilson McCandless. ALS. PHi. Recommends John B. Butler of Pittsburgh, Penn., for a "respectable and lucrative appointment."
- 9 Sept From James Whitcomb. ALS. DLC-JKP. Asks for an

- “Executive promotion” of William J. Brown, a former Indiana congressman now serving as chief clerk of the Auditor’s Office for the Post Office Department.
- 10 Sept From John Beckwith. ALS. DLC–JKP. Opposes the appointment of Russell G. Hopkinson as collector of customs for Alburg, Vt.; recommends John Smith of St. Albans, Vt., for the office.
- [10 Sept 1845] From James Buchanan. ALS. DLC–JKP. Submits for review his draft of a letter to Kamehameha III of the Sandwich Islands recalling George W. Brown as U.S. commissioner to the islands.
- 10 Sept *From William S. Colquhoun.*
- 10 Sept From Charles Douglas. ALS. DLC–JKP. Declines an appointment as consul at Rio Grande, Brazil.
- 10 Sept From Henry D. Gilpin. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Christopher Hughes as someone very knowledgeable of “European politics, history and men.”
- 10 Sept From E. S. Haines. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a copy of a *Cincinnati Enquirer* article defending its editor as a friend of the present administration.
- 10 Sept From Wyllys Lyman. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses an affidavit of Jonathan S. Webster, who swears that Archibald W. Hyde promised in 1844 to resign as collector of customs at Albury, Vt., upon the termination of John Tyler’s administration.
- 10 Sept *From William D. Moseley.*
- 10 Sept From Thomas L. Ragsdale. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces two public works contractors, Bailey and Zimmerman, who wish to discuss the bidding process for work at the Memphis naval yard.
- 10 Sept From William Selden. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a note from Daniel E. Dunscomb, a Second Auditor’s clerk, who wishes to introduce his son, Edward A. Dunscomb, to the president.
- 10 Sept From Martin Settle. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests a loan of \$200.
- 10 Sept From Joseph D. Ward. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a copy of his letter to Robert J. Walker of June 21st; feels himself fully competent to discharge the duties of the position for which he had applied.
- 10 Sept From John H. Wheeler. ANS. DLC–JKP. Outlines policy considerations for appointing a civilian to head the navy’s Bureau of Provisions and Clothing; solicits appointment to that position.
- 10 Sept *From Archibald Yell.*
- 11 Sept From Benjamin B. French. NS. DLC–JKP. Invites Polk to an anniversary dinner with the “Old Defenders

- of Baltimore.”
- 11 Sept From James Hamilton. ALS. DLC–JKP. Acknowledges receipt of Polk’s letter of September 2, 1845; assures Polk that it has relieved “every painful feeling” that had prompted his last letter; asks for an interview when he reaches Washington City.
- 11 Sept From William R. Johnson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits an appointment to a government position in Virginia.
- 11 Sept From James Shields. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to procure an interview for Samuel Treat, a St. Louis, Mo., attorney.
- 11 Sept From Samuel P. Walker. ALS. DLC–JKP. Acknowledges receipt of Polk’s instructions of August 18 and confirms drawing upon him for the sum of \$2,000 to be applied, along with the proceeds of his cotton crop, to the note held by William W. Polk.
- 12 Sept From Orville Bradley. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends Crawford W. Hall to be appointed as district attorney for East Tennessee; discusses the political affairs of the Second and Third Congressional districts of Tennessee.
- 12 Sept From Joseph Hall. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends that Alfred Marshall be appointed customs collector for Belfast, Maine.; discusses divisions in the Maine Democracy over the collectorship and governorship.
- 13 Sept *To Robert Armstrong.*
- 13 Sept *From Alfred Balch.*
- 13 Sept From James Buchanan. N. DLC–JKP. Asks Polk to preserve the enclosed copy of his letter this date to Louis McLane concerning the Oregon question.
- 13 Sept *To Robert Butler.*
- 13 Sept From Samuel Craig. ALS. Polk Memorial Association, Columbia. Recommends finding a new location for the Memphis post office.
- 13 Sept *To David Craighead.*
- 13 Sept *From Charles Fletcher.*
- 13 Sept From James Hamilton, Jr. ALS. DLC–JKP. Writes that a strong northeast wind has been blowing on the coast and so has prevented the departure of the mail steamer; expects to leave for the north the following day.
- 13 Sept *From David Henshaw.*
- 13 Sept From James Saunders. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to know where his brother, Camillus, may be found and asks Polk to forward the enclosed letter to him; states that he is the son of Romulus M. Saunders and an alumnus of the University of North Carolina.
- 13 Sept From Robert J. Walker. ALS. DLC–JKP. Writes that he is going to visit his family in New Jersey and will be absent from the Treasury for one day.

- 13 Sept From Fernando Wood. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces his friend and “one of the most respectable, prominent and influential democrats” in New York, Stephen A. Goodwin.
From Fitzwilliam Byrdsall.
- 14 Sept From Robert Dale Owen. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests that former Indiana Congressman William J. Brown be appointed as head of a government bureau.
From George Bancroft.
- 15 Sept To George Bancroft. ANS. MHi. Requests preparation of a commission as a purser in the navy for Edward C. Doran.
To George Bancroft.
- 15 Sept From George Bancroft. L. DNA–RG 45. Encloses for Polk’s signature a commision for Edward C. Doran as a purser in the navy.
From Aaron V. Brown.
- 15 Sept To Aaron V. Brown.
To Aaron V. Brown.
- 15 Sept From Thomas Copeland. LS. DLC–JKP. Requests a higher-level position in the Navy Department than the one to which he was appointed.
- 15 Sept From William H. Haywood, Jr. ALS. DLC–JKP. Proposes a reorganization of federal judicial circuits to enable judges to preside over the circuits nearest to their respective states of residence.
From Thomas Herring.
- 15 Sept From Wyllys Lyman. ALS. DLC–JKP. Explains why he is a more suitable choice for a collectorship than Russell G. Hopkinson; defends himself against charges that he is unpopular among the people of Vermont.
- 15 Sept From Francis R. May. ALS. DLC–JKP. Seeks a position as messenger in the Treasury Department but will accept one as a watchman.
From James L. O’Sullivan.
- [15 Sept 1845] From Abraham D. Wilson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests reinstatement of F. W. Byrdsall as one of the measurers at the port of New York City.
- 16 Sept From Samuel P. Collings. ALS. DLC–JKP. Urges the appointment of Andrew Beaumont to a “lucrative and honorable” government office; claims that the efforts of the Democracy in northern Pennsylvania carried the state for Polk in the presidential election.
- 16 Sept From R. Gale. ALS. DLC–JKP. Inquires as to why he has been removed as surgeon and physician at the Marine Hospital in Mobile; says he would expect removal if he had been a Whig.
- 16 Sept From William M. Gwin. ALS. DLC–JKP. Asks that Marshall M. Smith, son of their late friend Williamson Smith of Mississippi, be appointed to a clerkship in Washington City; says that Smith will assign half of his

- salary to the support of his father's family.
From Paul K. Hubbs.
- 16 Sept
 16 Sept From George Loyall. ALS. DLC-JKP. Requests that until they have spoken privately Polk will not consider his recommendations "as designed to influence any appointment to office."
- 16 Sept From Rockhill, Smith & Co. LS. DLC-JKP. Advise Polk that they have received a draft on him for \$1,205.66 from Bills & McNeal; request that he remit that sum in Philadelphia exchange.
- 16 Sept From Henry Simpson. ALS. DLC-JKP. Encloses his unsent letter of May 13th requesting appointment as appraiser for the port of Philadelphia; states that he had been reluctant to forward his solicitation because of James Buchanan's opposition to his appointment; now asks that he be named treasurer of the Philadelphia mint.
- 16 Sept From W. P. Turk. ALS. DLC-JKP. Asks Polk to lend him \$200 with which to purchase land; promises to repay the loan in four years.
- 16 Sept
 16 Sept *From Robert J. Walker.*
 From Robert J. Walker. ALS. DLC-JKP. Introduces Charles G. Eastman of Woodstock, Vt., who favors the appointment of John Smith as collector at Burlington.
- 17 Sept
 17 Sept *To Thomas B. Childress.*
 17 Sept *From David Craighead.*
 17 Sept *To William P. Duval.*
- 17 Sept From Ransom H. Gillet. ALS. DLC-JKP. Introduces Henry Beaumister, formerly butler to the late George Parish of Ogdensburg, N.Y.
From Samuel H. Huntington.
- 17 Sept
 17 Sept To Cave Johnson. ALS. Private Collection of William Boozer. Encloses two letters to be delivered personally to John Slidell by the postmaster at New Orleans.
- 17 Sept From John J. McRae. ALS. DLC-JKP. Encloses copy of his letter to William L. Marcy, September 13, 1845, protesting his dismissal as enrolling and disbursing agent for the removal of the Choctaws from Mississippi.
From William H. Polk.
- 17 Sept
 17 Sept To Rockhill, Smith Co. ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Encloses a draft on Corcoran & Riggs of Washington City to pay a bill of exchange from Bills & McNeal for \$1,205.66; requests the cancelled note as receipt.
To John Slidell.
- 17 Sept
 17 Sept *To Samuel P. Walker.*
 18 Sept From James B. Bowlin. ALS DLC-JKP. Introduces Gregory Byrne, a ship-carpenter of St. Louis, Mo., who plans to submit a Memphis navy yard contract bid.

- 18 Sept *From Charles Fletcher.*
- 18 Sept From William Grandin. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a newspaper article detailing intrigues surrounding the expulsion from Tuscany of John Albinola, a naturalized U.S. citizen and agent of White, Sturges & Co. of New York City.
- [18 Sept 1845] From Ophelia C. Hays. ALS. DLC–JKP. Asks Polk to review and forward her correspondence to their brother, William H. Polk.
- 18 Sept From John Y. Mason. ALS. DLC–JKP. Writes an official opinion that the president has plenary power to reduce as well as pardon sentences imposed by a naval court martial on a commissioned or warrant officer.
- 18 Sept From A. B. Mead. ALS. DLC–JKP. Expresses dissatisfaction at not being restored to his former post as appraiser for the port of New York; details his eleven years of service under Jackson and Van Buren.
- 18 Sept From Josiah F. Polk. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests an interview to repudiate assertions John F. Mulloony obtained his appointment as U.S. consul at Morocco by making false representations against his predecessor, Thomas N. Carr.
- 18 Sept *From William W. Polk.*
- 18 Sept From Rockhill, Smith & Co. ALS. DLC–JKP. Acknowledges receipt of Polk's payment for the bill of exchange drawn against him by Bills & McNeal with this Philadelphia mercantile firm.
- 18 Sept From Peter G. Washington. ALS. DLC–JKP. Reports, as requested, that Wyndham Robertson, Jr., a clerk in the Treasury Department's Auditor's Office for the Post Office Department, has returned to his duties.
- 18 Sept From U. S. Wilson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits appointment as dispatch bearer to England; warns of the dangerous influence of the Irish within the U.S. government.
- 18 Sept From Archibald Yell et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Recommend the appointment of James McKisick to be agent to the Cherokees west of the Mississippi.
- 19 Sept From James Hamilton, Jr. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces William D. Porter, Nathaniel R. Eaves, and others as "among the most esteemed & distinguished men of their age in South Carolina."
- 19 Sept From Robert Wynkoop Lansing. ALS. DLC–JKP. Complains of his removal from office as receiver of public monies at Mineral Point, Wisconsin Territory; states that Henry Dodge put his son-in-law, Paschal Bequette, in the office without regard for either his character or his talents.
- 19 Sept *From John McKeon.*
- 19 Sept To Ezekial P. McNeal. ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP.

- Acknowledges receipt of his cancelled notes to Bills & McNeal and to William H. Wood; states that he has paid the draft on Rockhill, Smith & Co. for \$1205.66; wishes to know when the annual rents have been collected; and directs that the proceeds of same be applied to the taxes on the lands held by the heirs of Samuel W. and Marshall T. Polk.
- 19 Sept *To James E. Saunders.*
- 19 Sept *To James H. Thomas.*
- 20 Sept From George M. Dallas. ALS. DLC-JKP. Introduces Christopher Hughes, late chargé d'affaires to the Netherlands, who has taken residency in Baltimore upon his retirement from diplomatic service.
- 20 Sept From William S. Pickett and Co. LS. DLC-JKP. Acknowledges receipt of Polk's August 18th instructions to apply the proceeds of his cotton crop to his debt to William W. Polk.
- 20 Sept From Sally Riggel. ALS. DLC-JKP. Begs for \$200 to repay outstanding debts of her late husband; claims that he lost his life defending Polk's name and honor.
- 20 Sept From Henry Simpson. ALS. DLC-JKP. Solicits appointment as treasurer of the mint or as a measurer in the Customs House at Philadelphia.
- 20 Sept *To Levi Woodbury.*
- 21 Sept *From Joel Turrill.*
- 22 Sept From Jesse Chase. ALS. DLC-JKP. States that he intends to name his twin son for Polk and twin daughter after Polk's wife; wishes to know her Christian name.
- 22 Sept *From John Y. Mason.*
- [22 Sept 1845] From Daniel Roads and Charles Slaughter. LS. DLC-JKP. Present resolutions adopted by a meeting of the Philadelphia Democracy called to protest the appointment of Henry Horn as collector at Philadelphia; maintain that Horn has turned out Democrats and retained their opponents in the Customs House.
- 22 Sept From David W. Stone. ALS. DLC-JKP. States that a young Whig friend had written in his name for an appointment; denies having applied for an office; and renews his determination never to do so.
- 22 Sept From Joel Turrill. ALS. DLC-JKP. Expects that he and Anthony Ten Eyck will arrive in Norfolk in time to take passage aboard the U.S.S. *Congress* for the Sandwich Islands; relates that the Hudson's Bay Company has loaned the Island government \$20,000 and that George W. Brown has obtained rights to dispose of large portions of Island land on desirable terms, presumably to European investors.

- 22 Sept From Austin E. Wing. ALS. DLC–JKP. Says that he will accept the appointment of U.S. marshal for the Michigan district if tendered the office.
- 23 Sept From Harmar Denny. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Robert Baird, late a missionary to Sardinia, who wishes to speak with Polk about a philanthropic endeavor.
- 23 Sept From Thomas B. Drinker. ALS. DLC–JKP. Asserts that there is much dissatisfaction among Ohio Democrats concerning the appointment of Ambrose D. Mann, said to be a Whig, as consul at Trieste; complains that the *Cincinnati Enquirer* is pursuing an “unjust course” towards the administration; and urges the appointment of Democrats from the “Progressive Branch” of the party.
- 23 Sept From William H. Robertson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Calls attention to Denmark’s discrepancies in administering tariff duties, citing the preference given to the British “twist” over American cotton; complains that the English mislead Russians and other continentals into believing that the United States still allows the extensive importation of slaves; and reports that he will be filing patent rights for a “model matrass.”
- 24 Sept From Fitzwilliam Byrdsall. ALS. DLC–JKP. Offers varied Democratic opinions on William Lyon MacKenzie’s recent publication, *Lives and Opinions of Benjamin F. Butler...*; complains that press coverage of his removal as customs weigher is contrary to his wishes.
- 24 Sept *From Robert Campbell.*
- 24 Sept From R. R. Collier. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a pamphlet for Polk’s perusal; discusses various federal appointments in Virginia.
- 24 Sept From John F. Gillespy. ALS. DLC–JKP. Complains that the government is not fulfilling the terms of the Treaty of New Echota (1835); claims that Congress, influenced by John Ross, will not authorize the appointment of a Board of Commissioners to adjudicate claims unless the Treaty is executed under the terms of the “proud chief.”
- 24 Sept *To J. T. Leigh.*
- 24 Sept *To John A. Mairs.*
- 24 Sept From Charles A. Secor. ALS. Private Collection of George E. Webb, Jr. Recommends Samuel C. Reid for a promotion in the navy.
- 24 Sept *To Samuel P. Walker.*
- 25 Sept From Lewis Cass. ALS. DLC–JKP. States that he misunderstood the intent of the author of recent *Cincinnati Enquirer* articles and encloses the author’s clarification of intent.
- 25 Sept From William H. Crane. ALS. DLC–JKP. Writes that

- he is a fifteen year-old student of Fairchilds School at Flushing, Long Island, N.Y., who wishes to obtain an autographed reply from Polk.
- 25 Sept From Louis D. Henry. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends the appointment of John J. Mumford as U.S. consul at Havana, Cuba, or to a position such as register or comptroller in Washington City.
- 25 Sept From William J. Meiere. ALS. DLC–JKP. Asks that his father, Julius Meiere, be reinstated as a professor of mathematics at the U.S. Naval School; explains that his family is destitute.
- 25 Sept To William D. Moseley. ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Acknowledges receipt of Florida’s assent to conditions precedent for admission to the Union.
- 25 Sept From H. Gold Rogers. ALS. DLC–JKP. Makes an unsubstantiated claim of official malfeasance against Stephen Pleasonton, Fifth Auditor of the Treasury Department.
- 25 Sept *From John Slidell.*
- 25 Sept From David Levy Yulee. ALS. DLC–JKP. Suggests that Democrat William Henry Brockenbrough will be elected “without doubt” as Florida’s first congressman.
- 26 Sept From George M. Dallas. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces James Huckins, a Baptist clergyman from Texas.
- 26 Sept From John C. Haswell. ALS. DLC–JKP. Asks to be reinstated as a clerk in the Treasury Department; argues that Vermont deserves a greater share of patronage.
- 26 Sept From William B. Maclay. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces William Cripps, a merchant from Nottingham, England.
- 26 Sept From James E. Saunders. ALS. DLC–JKP. Notifies Polk that he has returned to Mobile as requested and is ready to be tendered the collectorship for the port; discusses the demise of the Alabama Democracy following its defeat in the recent gubernatorial election.
- 26 Sept From James D. Wasson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses published resolutions adopted by the Albany County, N.Y., Democratic Convention concerning the retention of the local pension agent. (Enclosure not found.)
- 27 Sept From Levi Cornell et al. LS. DLC–JKP. State that the purposes of the Albany County, N.Y., Democratic Convention were to nominate assemblymen and to appoint senatorial convention delegates.
- 27 Sept From L. L. Loving. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits a clerkship in the general government at a minimum annual salary of \$1,000.
- 27 Sept *To William H. Polk.*
- 28 Sept From A. T. Nicks. ALS. DLC–JKP. Notes there is some dissatisfaction among the Democracy of “Old Lincoln”

- 28 Sept County, Tenn., concerning the lack of federal patronage.
From William H. Polk. ALS. Polk Memorial Association, Columbia. Reports that treaty negotiations with representatives of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies cannot be conducted while the Scientific Congress is in session at Naples; asks that Polk forward an enclosed letter to their mother, Jane Knox Polk.
- 29 Sept From James W. Greenhow. ALS. DLC-JKP. Complains about his removal as postmaster at Vincennes, Ind.; suggests that it might have been due to a misunderstanding.
- 29 Sept From Frederick Powell and Elwell Blodget. LS. DLC-JKP. Say they disapprove of the passage of resolutions concerning the pension agency at the Albany County, N.Y., Democratic Convention.
- 29 Sept From Joel Turrill. ALS. DLC-JKP. States that he is leaving Baltimore for Norfolk and should arrive there September 30; asks that further communications be sent to Norfolk until his ship sails for the Sandwich Islands.
- 30 Sept From Roger Barton. ALS. DLC-JKP. Asks that his joint construction bid for the Memphis naval yard receive fair consideration from authorities.
- 30 Sept To Robert P. Currin. ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Encloses an authenticated deed. (Enclosure not found.)
- 30 Sept From James J. Faran. ALS. DLC-JKP. Recommends the appointment of John B. Warren, a "sterling Democrat" from Cincinnati, as a clerk in one of the general government's executive departments.
- 30 Sept From James O'Brien. ALS. DLC-JKP. Requests an appointment to a clerkship or lesser position in the general government; explains that his political and economic situation is desperate.
- 30 Sept From John H. Sherburne. ALS. DLC-JKP. Encloses a copy of his "Prospectus" on *The Suppressed History of the Administration of John Adams (from 1798 to 1801)*.
- [Oct 1845] From V. L. Maxwell. ALS. DLC-JKP. Implores Polk to proclaim a national day of "public thanksgiving to Almighty God."
- 1 Oct From Thomas S. Bryant. ALS. DLC-JKP. Solicits an appointment as army paymaster; encloses a letter of recommendation from Benjamin H. Brewster.
- 1 Oct From Thomas Claiborne, Jr. ALS. DLC-JKP. Writes on behalf of his brother, John Claiborne, an office seeker; encloses a letter from Isaac Johnson to Joseph M. Kennedy regarding Kennedy's possible removal from office. (Enclosure not found.)
- 1 Oct From John Faircloth. ALS. DLC-JKP. Accuses William B. Lewis of being "a defaulter to the united States" of some

- \$5,000 while serving as quartermaster; complains about Whig newspapers "heaping their abuse" on Polk for Lewis' removal from office.
- 1 Oct From Jacob Gould. ALS. DLC-JKP. Notifies Polk of the death of Mortimer F. Delano, an applicant for a diplomatic post in Europe.
- 1 Oct *From Daniel T. Jenks.*
- 1 Oct From James H. Thomas. ALS. DLC-JKP. Reports that a new survey of lands connected with Marshall T. Polk's estate has resulted in the correction of a court decree concerning the estate; declares that a potential lack of internal harmony is the only threat to the Tennessee Democracy; lists five candidates seeking election to a seat on the Tennessee Supreme Court.
- 1 Oct From James Walker. ALS. DLC-JKP. Reports that a new survey of the Gregory tract finds it to be twenty acres smaller than previously believed; notes that there is a lien of some \$225 on Dolly, a slave, which Polk has promised to pay.
- 2 Oct From Benjamin F. Butler. ALS. DLC-JKP. Introduces Robert Baird, an evangelist minister; mentions that Baird plans to call attention to the plight of the Waldensian sect in Sardinia.
- 2 Oct From Fitzwilliam Byrdsall. ALS. DLC-JKP. Complains about his removal as measurer for the port of New York City; discusses Democratic politics of the forthcoming New York constitutional convention.
- 2 Oct From Ransom H. Gillet. ALS. DLC-JKP. Encloses a clipping of a letter in the *Baltimore Patriot* claiming that correspondence between Polk and Francis O. J. Smith proves that Polk deceived Smith and other conservative Democrats by promising to retain certain conservatives in office during the 1844 campaign.
- 2 Oct From John M. McCalla. ALS. DLC-JKP. Introduces William C. Blair, a Presbyterian minister from Texas, who seeks an interview.
- 2 Oct From James W. Morgan, Jr. ALS. DLC-JKP. Sends Polk a box of "fine manufactured Tobacco"; explains that although he is only eleven years old he is a "Democrat friend" of the administration.
- 2 Oct *From Levi D. Slamm.*
- 2 Oct From Nicholas P. Trist. ALS. DLC-JKP. Relays extracts of a letter from John Thibaut recommending David O. Hincks as surveyor for the port of New Orleans.
- 2 Oct *From Joel Turrill.*
- 3 Oct *From Thomas L. Hamer.*
- 3 Oct *To Gideon Pillow.*

- 3 Oct
[3 Oct 1845] *To John Slidell.*
From John D. Sullivan and Hugh Dody. LS. DLC-JKP. Forward resolutions adopted at "a large and respectable meeting" of Philadelphia Democrats which express disapproval of Henry Horn's appointment as collector of the port of Philadelphia; accuse Horn of denouncing Polk's nomination for the presidency in 1844; claim that failure to remove Horn will divide and ruin the Democratic party in Pennsylvania.
- 3 Oct [From Nicholas P. Trist] AL. DLC-JKP. Inquires if the resignation of Ambrose D. Mann as consul at Trieste should be considered as having been officially accepted before the deadline for removing his name from the *Register of the United States*.
- 3 Oct To Robert J. Walker. ALS. NN-Stauffer. Introduces the Reverend Mr. Harris of the District of Columbia.
- 4 Oct From Joseph B. Boyd. ALS. DLC-JKP. Desires to add Polk's autograph to his heretofore complete collection of presidential autographs.
- 4 Oct *To John Catron.*
- 4 Oct From Edwin Croswell. ALS. DLC-JKP. Introduces Edward Larned, Jr., of Watervliet, N.Y.; praises him as a Democrat and public works contractor.
- 4 Oct *From Charles A. Davis.*
- 4 Oct From Ransom H. Gillet. ALS. DLC-JKP. Encloses correspondence regarding the present pension agent at Albany, N.Y.
- 4 Oct From Rufus Leighton. ALS. DLC-JKP. Wishes to obtain Polk's autograph.
- 4 Oct From Joel Turrill. ALS. DLC-JKP. Reports that his trip to the Sandwich Islands has been postponed; offers to dispatch messages to Brazil and the Islands to recoup unexpected accommodation expenses at Norfolk.
- 4 Oct From Silas Wright, Jr. ALS. DLC-JKP. Introduces Daniel K. Chandler of New York, who wishes to thank the Polk administration for granting his son an appointment as midshipman at Annapolis.
- 5 Oct From Daniel Palmer. ALS. DLC-JKP. Requests that Polk place his frank on the enclosed letter that he has written to Cornelius Lawrence.
- 6 Oct From Robert Armstrong. ALS. DLC-JKP. Introduces Thomas McGuire, late consul at Glasgow, who feels "mortified" by the misrepresentations that led to his removal from office.
- 6 Oct From R. A. DeKrafft. ALS. DLC-JKP. Solicits a general government position for her husband; should such an appointment not be made, requests money.

- 6 Oct From Calvin Durfee. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to add Polk’s autograph to his collection.
- 6 Oct *From Daniel Graham.*
- 6 Oct *To John C. Hennick.*
- [6 Oct 1845] From Henry M. Morfit and Johnson Hellen. LS. DLC–JKP. Express the appreciation of the District of Columbia bar for the appointment of James Dunlop as judge of the District’s circuit court.
- 6 Oct From Henry E. Riell. ALS. DLC–JKP. Denies that he is establishing an organ in opposition to the administration; seeks restoration to government office.
- 7 Oct *From Aaron V. Brown.*
- 7 Oct From Vespasian Ellis. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a copy of a Philadelphia *United States Gazette* article in which his efforts to lower Venezuelan tariffs on goods from the United States are praised.
- 7 Oct From Dillon Jordan, Jr. ALS. DLC–JKP. Accepts the appointment as collector of customs for the port of Pensacola, Fla.
- 7 Oct From George Loyall. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Conway Whittle, collector of customs for the ports of Norfolk and Portsmouth, Va.
- 7 Oct From Robert Matthews. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a petition endorsing Samuel Mitchell, formerly of Bedford County, Tenn., for a position in the general government; adds his desire to see Mitchell’s wishes granted.
- 7 Oct From John Smith, Jr. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests that a copy of Polk’s tariff letter to John K. Kane, June 19, 1844, be sent to the National Clay Club of Philadelphia.
- 8 Oct From Anonymous. L, signed as “Several Jeffersonian Republicans.” DLC–JKP. Oppose the appointment of Denis Prieur as collector at New Orleans; allege that Prieur is a duelist and an alcoholic who “lives in open violation of the laws of God and man with a Colored Woman.”
- 8 Oct From John W. Childress. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a bill of sale for Caroline, a slave, and Polk’s previous note to Elizabeth Childress for which he has drawn up a bill of exchange on Polk for a total of \$1,305.
- 8 Oct From Robert Mitchell. ALS, copy. DLC–JKP. Notifies Polk that letters favoring his retention as collector of customs at Pensacola, Fla., are forthcoming; requests that his removal be delayed until such letters have been received and reviewed.
- 9 Oct From John K. Kane. ALS. DLC–JKP. Lists his qualifications for appointment to a vacant seat on the United States Supreme Court.
- 9 Oct *From John K. Kane.*

- 9 Oct From Joseph Lecompte. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits an appointment to “some small office”; reminds Polk of their service together in Congress.
- 9 Oct From John J. Mumford. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to be appointed consul at Havana, Cuba, as his current position of customs weigher “is insufficient” financially and “excessively laborious.”
- 9 Oct *To William W. Polk.*
- 9 Oct *To Samuel P. Walker.*
- 10 Oct From Richard O. Currey. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits an appointment as consul at Leghorn, Tuscany.
- 10 Oct *From Charles J. Ingersoll.*
- 10 Oct *From Andrew Jackson, Jr.*
- [10 Oct 1845] From Horace Warren. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests an interview to discuss obtaining contract work at the Memphis naval yard.
- 10 Oct From Lewis Warrington. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a memorial to Polk on behalf of Democratic citizens of Norfolk, Va.
- 11 Oct *To Aaron V. Brown.*
- 11 Oct *To Robert Campbell, Jr.*
- 11 Oct From George F. Lehman. ALS. DLC–JKP. Congratulates Polk on the prosperity of the nation and the success of his administration to date.
- 11 Oct *From J. G. M. Ramsey.*
- 11 Oct From Caleb B. Smith. ALS. DLC–GW. Recommends James Tilton of Madison, Ind., for an appointment as a purser in the navy.
- 11 Oct *To James H. Thomas.*
- 11 Oct From Fernando Wood. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends Christopher Hempstead for the United States consulship at Belize, Honduras.
- 12 Oct From James Hamilton, Jr. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests an interview with Polk to discuss political issues.
- 12 Oct *From Morris Longstreth.*
- 13 Oct From Charles Callaghan. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests information on Mexican indemnity payments; encloses a copy of Polk’s inaugural address in Spanish. (Enclosure not found.)
- 13 Oct From Barry Gillespie. ALS. DLC–JKP. Warns that John C. Brooke has committed land fraud in San Augustine County, Texas; opposes the nomination of Brooke for any office; expresses his satisfaction with the political developments surrounding the admission of Texas into the Union.
- 13 Oct From Thomas L. Hamer. ALS. DLC–JKP. Declines the appointment as Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

- 13 Oct From J. George Harris. ALS. DLC-JKP. Reports that Andrew Jackson, Jr., has found his father's last letter to Polk.
- 13 Oct *From J. George Harris.*
- 13 Oct *To William H. Polk.*
- 13 Oct From Anna McLean Ragsdale. ALS. DLC-JKP. Wishes to express her appreciation for the appointment of her brother, Thomas L. Ragsdale, to a clerkship in the general government; predicts that Hopkins L. Turney will win election as U.S. Senator from Tennessee.
- 13 Oct From James E. Saunders. ALS. Polk Memorial Association, Columbia. Advises Polk that he has not received confirmation of his appointment as collector of customs for Mobile; notes that he interviewed Thomas B. Childress, a cousin of Sarah C. Polk; describes favorable economic conditions in Mobile, Ala.
- 14 Oct From [?] Merchant. ALS. DLC-JKP. Condemns the appointments of Denis Prieur and Seth Barton; believes that "evil counsellors are around you as far as Louisiana appointments are concerned."
- 14 Oct From William Selden. ALS. DLC-JKP. Introduces Benjamin F. Mackall who wishes to present several letters to Polk.
- 15 Oct From Thomas Harris. ALS. DLC-JKP. Reports that the job performance of clerks in the Navy Department's Bureau of Medicine and Surgery has been satisfactory.
- 15 Oct *From Henry Horn.*
- 15 Oct From Sackfield Maclin et al. LS. DLC-JKP. Endorse the appointment of James McKisick as agent to the Cherokees west of the Mississippi.
- 16 Oct *From Aaron V. Brown.*
- 16 Oct From Richard O. Currey. ALS. DLC-JKP. Expounds on his first request to be appointed as consul at Leghorn, Tuscany; provides details of the inaugural ceremony and speech of Aaron V. Brown, governor of Tennessee.
- 16 Oct To James W. Morgan, Jr. ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Expresses thanks for the youngster's gift of "fine manufactured tobacco."
- 16 Oct To Vincent Tabb. ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Requests that his enclosed letter to James M. Morgan, Jr., be delivered to his "young Democratic friend."
- 17 Oct *From Thomas H. Bradley.*
- 17 Oct From Luman Kellogg. ALS. DLC-JKP. Encloses a newspaper article on the proceedings of a Bradford County, Penn., Democratic meeting.
- 17 Oct *From Elihu Pedrick.*
- 17 Oct *From Moses G. Reeves.*

- 17 Oct From N. S. Reneau. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests a letter recommending him to Cornelius W. Lawrence for a position in the New York Customs House.
- [17 Oct 1845] From Benjamin Tappan. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Amory Edwards, former U.S. consul at Buenos Aires.
- 18 Oct From Aaron V. Brown. ALS. DLC–JKP. Notes that West H. Humphreys has been elected attorney general of Tennessee; requests that Thomas Ritchie publish his gubernatorial inauguration address in the *Washington Union* and *Richmond Enquirer*.
- 18 Oct From George M. Dallas. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Francis Grice, the naval constructor at New York.
- 18 Oct From Benjamin B. French. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses copies of James I. McKay's report and bill on the tariff situation from the previous congressional session. (Enclosures not found.)
- 18 Oct From James Shields. LS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a request from Nathaniel P. Tallmadge to divide the land office of the Green Bay district into two offices; gives his opinion of Polk's authority to do so. (Enclosure not found.)
- 18 Oct *From Hugh Waddell.*
- 18 Oct *From Samuel P. Walker.*
- 19 Oct *From Robert Armstrong.*
- 20 Oct From Charles Serruys. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to add Polk's autograph to his presidential collection; notes that he has been replaced as Belgium's chargé d'affaires to the United States.
- 20 Oct From James Shields. ALS. DLC–JKP. States that William Carroll of Baltimore "would be entirely satisfied" to be appointed U.S. consul to Rio Grande, Brazil.
- 20 Oct From James Shields. ALS. DLC–JKP. Notes that consular applicant William Carroll is not fluent in Spanish.
- 20 Oct From Robert E. Temple. ALS. DLC–JKP. Informs Polk that a letter from Gov. Silas Wright, Jr., recommending the removal of Thomas W. Olcott as pension agent at Albany, N.Y., probably was misdirected to William L. Marcy.
- 21 Oct From George Bancroft. L. DNA–RG 45. Requests that Polk issue an order of reservation for Pecan Island, La., for the navy, due to the presence of "the most extraordinary body of Live Oak in the world," trees well suited for shipbuilding.
- 21 Oct From George Bancroft. LS. DLC–JKP. Submits reports on the conduct of the clerks in the Navy Department.
- 21 Oct From Thomas Mailing. L. DLC–JKP. Complains about the conditions at the Washington County Jail, located in the District of Columbia.

- 21 Oct From Samuel P. Walker. ALS. DLC–JKP. Acknowledges receipt of Polk’s instructions to pay the note due to William W. Polk.
- 22 Oct *From Cornelius Connor.*
- 22 Oct From John H. Hewitt. ALS. DLC–JKP. Invites the Polks to a performance of his oratorio, *Jephtha*.
- 22 Oct *From Morven M. Jones.*
- 23 Oct To John M. Bass. ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Requests that he forward the enclosed letter and commission to Ann Phillips Rogers Grundy.
- 23 Oct *To John W. Childress.*
- 23 Oct *From Daniel Graham.*
- 23 Oct *To Ann Phillips Rogers Grundy.*
- 23 Oct From Alexander Ketcham. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to obtain Polk’s autograph.
- 23 Oct From Joseph C. Lewis. ALS. DLC–JKP. Lodges complaints against Peter G. Washington, auditor for the post office, for failing to reimburse credit due to three previous deputy postmasters.
- 23 Oct *From John McKeon.*
- 23 Oct *From Gideon J. Pillow.*
- 23 Oct To William H. Polk. LS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Introduces Donald G. Mitchell, who plans to stay in Naples.
- 23 Oct From George W. Terrell. ALS. DLC–JKP. Relates that Samuel Houston is “greatly mortified” by reports that Houston’s enemies have convinced Polk and his cabinet that Houston opposed the annexation of Texas by the United States; informs Polk that Houston is preparing a public campaign to refute this charge; announces his intention to rejoin the Democratic party after Texas joins the Union.
- 23 Oct From John H. Wheeler. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Major Wheeler of Norfolk, Virginia.
- 24 Oct *To Aaron V. Brown.*
- [24 Oct 1845] From William Frederic Havemeyer. ALS. Private Collection of George E. Webb, Jr. Recommends Samuel C. Reid for promotion in the navy.
- 24 Oct *To Andrew Jackson, Jr.*
- 24 Oct *From William W. Polk.*
- 25 Oct *From Cornelius Connor.*
- 25 Oct From George M. Dallas. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Albert Davy, U.S. consul at Leeds, England.
- 25 Oct *From Andrew J. Donelson.*
- 25 Oct From James Hamilton, Jr. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Leroy M. Wiley, a New York City import merchant.
- 25 Oct From Cave Johnson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Dr. Albert A. Muller of Washington City’s German Lutheran

- 26 Oct Church, formerly from Clarksville, Tenn.
From Waller Overton. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits appointment as marshal for the Middle District of Tennessee; notes that A. O. P. Nicholson was defeated in the senatorial election.
- 27 Oct From J. D. Bingsley. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits funds for a mission to incite rebellion in western Canada against British rule and for the purpose of acquiring that territory for the United States; believes that such a venture is America's right and duty.
- 27 Oct *From Aaron V. Brown.*
- 27 Oct From Elias B. Gould et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Petition Polk for executive clemency on behalf of navy Lt. Matthias C. Marin who had been court-martialed and sentenced to dismissal.
- 27 Oct *From Paul K. Hubbs.*
- 27 Oct From Charles J. Jack. ALS. DLC–JKP. Complains that his charges against the commissioner and chief clerk of the Pension Office were referred to that office for action; expresses outrage; requests that the president himself review the complaint.
- 27 Oct To Charles Serruys. ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Grants his request for an autograph; regrets that he will soon vacate his post as chargé d'affaires from Belgium.
- 27 Oct From Robert J. Walker. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Captain Alexander V. Fraser, an officer of the United States Revenue Marine.
- 28 Oct From James Buchanan. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a letter from Simon Cameron, who complains about the transfer of A. B. Warford, chief engineer at the Memphis naval yard, to Pensacola; notes that he has spoken to Thomas Ritchie on the subject of U.S. foreign policy.
- [28 Oct 1845] From John A. Mairs. ALS. DLC–JKP. Updates Polk about affairs on the president's Mississippi plantation, including the death of one slave and the births of two others; explains that the cotton crop is "not good," but that the various food crops and pig stock are doing well; gives the weights of sixty-eight bags of picked cotton.
- 28 Oct From James H. Thomas. ALS. DLC–JKP. Records Jane Knox Polk's messages regarding her health and finances; encloses two receipts regarding the estate of Samuel W. Polk.
- 29 Oct From Joseph B. Boyd. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to add Polk's autograph to his collection.
- 29 Oct *To Louis McLane.*
- 29 Oct From John C. Mullay. ALS. DLC–JKP. Desires a promotion to a better paid clerkship in the general government;

- claims that he has fulfilled the duties of chief clerk in addition to his own responsibilities.
- 29 Oct *To William H. Polk.*
- 29 Oct From Wyndham Robertson, Jr. ALS. DLC–JKP. Asks for letters of introduction to some of Polk’s friends in Memphis, Tenn.
- 30 Oct *From John H. Bills and Ezekial P. McNeal.*
- 30 Oct From John McKeon. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a set of resolutions adopted at a meeting of the Tammany Society in support of the administration; criticizes an earlier set of proposed resolutions that featured weaker expressions of support.
- 30 Oct From James H. Thomas. ALS. DLC–JKP. Discusses the possibilities of selling Polk’s property in Columbia; gives his opinion of Hopkins L. Turney’s intentions as senator; recommends John P. Donelson for a military appointment.
- [30 Oct 1845] From W. Tooke. ALS. DLC–JKP. Claims to be undecided as to whether he is a Whig or Democrat and wishes Polk to clarify the Democratic position on the tariff.
- 31 Oct From Alexander H. Everett. ALS. DLC–JKP. Reports that his health is improving; expects in the near future to arrive in Washington City for further instructions on his diplomatic commission.
- 31 Oct From Benjamin S. Kinsey et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Urge creation of a magistracy for the Third Ward of Washington City; recommend that Peter M. Pearson be appointed to the position of magistrate.
- 1 Nov From Edmund Burke. ALS. DLC–JKP. Informs Polk that recent illness has led to a delay in his submission of a statistical report relating to the tariff.
- 1 Nov To Samuel P. Caldwell. ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Introduces Wyndham Robertson, Jr., a Democratic lawyer from Virginia, who has resigned a clerkship in the general government and wishes “to seek his fortune in the West.”
- 1 Nov *To William G. Childress.*
- 1 Nov From Thomas J. Hardeman. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends James Webb for U.S. district judge for Texas.
- 1 Nov *To Edwin F. Polk.*
- 1 Nov From Eliza W. Rainey. ALS. NN. States that she is the widow of James Rainey, one of Polk’s college classmates, and is unable to support her family; requests that Polk appoint her son John as a midshipman in the navy and her son William as a clerk in the New Orleans Customs House.
- 1 Nov From Joel B. Sutherland. ALS. DLC–JKP. Asks that his son, Thomas W. Sutherland, be reappointed as district attorney for the Wisconsin Territory despite allegations

- of official misconduct existing against his son; communicates that he has submitted newspaper articles to several opposition newspapers in Canada asking for the British government's acceptance of the 49th parallel to settle the Oregon question.
- 1 Nov To Samuel P. Walker. ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Introduces Wyndham Robertson, Jr., who seeks to establish a law practice in Memphis.
- 1 Nov To Samuel P. Walker.
- 2 Nov From Richard M. Johnson.
- 3 Nov From John M. Bass.
- 3 Nov From Iveson L. Brookes. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces his son, Walker I. Brookes, who intends to study at Columbian College near Washington City.
- 3 Nov From Charles Douglas. ALS. DLC–JKP. Informs Polk of his delay in determining whether he will accept the consulship at Rio Grande, Brazil.
- 3 Nov To Daniel Graham.
- [3 Nov 1845] From John E. Norris et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Present resolutions of a meeting of the Washington City Democratic Association requesting Thomas Grady be restored to his position as a gardener in the public service.
- 3 Nov From Asel Stanley. ALS. DNA–RG 59. Requests that Polk include in his forthcoming Annual Message a request for payment of the pre-1800 French spoliation claims.
- 3 Nov From Harvey M. Watterson.
- [4 Nov 1845] From Robert Armstrong.
- 4 Nov From Robert Campbell, Jr. ALS. DLC–JKP. Acknowledges receipt of Polk's letter of October 11, 1845; assures Polk that the business affairs of his Mississippi plantation will be attended by him towards the end of the year; recommends Brian T. Williams for appointment as guardian of live oak timber in Florida.
- 4 Nov From Robert J. Chester. ALS. DLC–JKP. Reports that Mr. McIntosh wishes to purchase Polk's land in Madison County, Tenn.
- 4 Nov From Walter Delavan. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to add Polk's autograph to his collection.
- 4 Nov From Andrew J. Donelson.
- 4 Nov From Cornelius W. Lawrence. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Theophilus Peck, a New York City merchant and worthy Democrat.
- 4 Nov From Charles D. Lincoln. ALS. DNA–RG 45. Refutes charges made against Joseph Hall, head of the measurers' department at the Boston Customs House.
- 4 Nov From Peter M. Pearson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a petition requesting the creation of a new magistracy

- for the Third Ward of the District of Columbia and his appointment to that position.
- 4 Nov From Elijah F. Purdy. ALS. DLC-JKP. Introduces his friend, Theophilus Peck, a New York City merchant and Democrat.
- 5 Nov From William Carroll. ALS. DLC-JKP. Desires to be informed whether he will be appointed to the consulate at Rio Grande, Brazil.
- 5 Nov From William Conner. ALS. DLC-JKP. Informs Polk that his brother, Champ C. Conner, will apply for the chaplaincy of the next Congress.
- 5 Nov From Cornelius W. Lawrence. ALS. DLC-JKP. Introduces Thomas B. Livingston, U.S. consul at Halifax, Nova Scotia.
- 5 Nov From William L. Marcy. LS. DLC-JKP. Encloses the monthly reports prepared by the various bureaus of the War Department.
- 5 Nov From James Whitcomb. ALS. DLC-JKP. Introduces A. W. Enos of Michigan City, Ind.
- 6 Nov From Thomas S. Bryant. ALS. DLC-JKP. Claims that his client, John H. Nail, represents all Choctaw orphans under the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek; requests a delay in any treaty settlement respecting the orphans until his client arrives in Washington City.
- 6 Nov From George Douglass. ALS. DLC-JKP. Presents his opinions on U.S. commercial interests involved with the Oregon question.
- 6 Nov To William F. Giles. LS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Encloses War Department reports in response to a request by the Maryland Colonization Society for a howitzer. (Enclosures not found.)
- 6 Nov *To Gideon J. Pillow.*
- 6 Nov *To John Slidell.*
- 6 Nov *To John Slidell.*
- 6 Nov From Campbell Wallace. ALS. DLC-JKP. Recommends that Polk support Isaac Lewis of Knoxville, Tenn., for election as doorkeeper for the U.S. House.
- 7 Nov From George Croghan. ALS. DLC-JKP. States that he does not merit censure since the Court of Inquiry "exonerated" him of alleged misconduct; defends his actions; requests that Polk review the court proceedings.
- 7 Nov *From Jesse Miller.*
- 7 Nov *To James E. Saunders.*
- 7 Nov From James Shields. LS. DLC-JKP. Recommends that Florida's general land office be moved from St. Augustine to Tallahassee.
- 7 Nov *To John Slidell.*

- 7 Nov To James H. Thomas. ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Extends his thanks to Thomas for attending to his private financial affairs in Columbia.
- 8 Nov From George Bancroft. L. DNA–RG 45. Recommends the dismissal of John N. Todd as a purser in the navy for failure to pay accounts promptly.
- 8 Nov From Charles Callaghan. ALS. DLC–JKP. Claims any increase in federal taxes arising from Texas annexation would facilitate the European conspiracy to destroy the United States.
- 8 Nov From William M. Lowry. ALS. DLC–JKP. Reports that Whigs and Democrats support Polk’s administration; expresses concern over Hopkins L. Turney’s election as U.S. senator.
- 8 Nov From John H. Zivley. ALS. DLC–JKP. Desires a loan to complete his studies at Union Theological Seminary; claims that his expenses in New York are much higher than they were at Lane Seminary in Cincinnati, but he had to leave Lane because the faculty and students there are “mad Abolitionists.”
- 9 Nov *From Fitzwilliam Byrdsall.*
- 9 Nov From Nathaniel Niles. ALS. DLC–JKP. Advises Polk to stress the geopolitical claims of the United States to the Oregon Territory in his forthcoming Annual Message.
- 10 Nov From T. M. Adams. ALS. DLC–JKP. Offers to transport mail from Independence, Mo., to Oregon for \$2,000; advises Polk on the commercial worthiness of the Puget Sound region.
- [10 Nov 1845] *From James G. Bennett.*
- 10 Nov *From William Briggs.*
- 10 Nov *From Aaron V. Brown.*
- 10 Nov From George M. Dallas. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces G. Tochman, a New York lawyer and formerly an army officer from Poland.
- 10 Nov From William Faulkner. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces T. M. Adams of Connecticut, an Oregon emigration promoter who wishes to secure a mail contract to Oregon.
- 10 Nov *From Thomas L. Hamer.*
- 10 Nov *To José Joaquín Herrera.*
- 10 Nov *To John Slidell.*
- 10 Nov *From Campbell P. White.*
- 11 Nov From George Bancroft. LS. DLC–JKP. Submits a commission for William B. Hartwell as a purser in the navy.
- 11 Nov From James Buchanan. ALS. DLC–FP. Introduces the former consul at Glasgow, Thomas McGuire.
- 11 Nov From George M. Dallas. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Samuel E. Perkins, a lawyer from Richmond, Ind.

- 11 Nov *From Samuel H. Laughlin.*
- 11 Nov From Andreas J. Petersen. L. DLC–JKP. Seeks remittance of any potential penalties assessed for carrying more emigrants from Germany on his ship into Baltimore than U.S. law allows.
- 11 Nov From William L. Plumer. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to add Polk’s autograph to his collection.
- 11 Nov From A. Schumacher. ALS. DLC–JKP. Endorses the enclosed letter from Andreas J. Petersen.
- 12 Nov *From Anson Jones.*
- 12 Nov *From Anson Jones.*
- 12 Nov From Cornelius W. Lawrence. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Isaac Townsend, a New York City merchant.
- 12 Nov From Stephen B. Leonard. ALS. DLC–JKP. Congratulates Polk on his election as president; introduces Stephen Strong, congressman-elect from western New York.
- 12 Nov *From Samuel P. Walker.*
- 13 Nov From Edward Sanford. ALS. Private Collection of George E. Webb, Jr. Recommends Samuel C. Reid for promotion in the navy.
- 13 Nov *From Henderson Yoakum.*
- 14 Nov From George Bancroft. L. DNA–RG 45. Submits a commission to appoint Felix Grundy Mayson as a second lieutenant in the marines.
- 14 Nov From Amos Kendall. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces the Rev. Cephas Washburn, a former missionary to the trans-Mississippi Cherokees, who seeks a personal interview with Polk.
- 14 Nov *From Harvey M. Watterson.*
- 14 Nov From Levi Woodbury. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces a former officer in the Boston Customs House, Stephen Hoyt.
- 15 Nov *From Samuel P. Walker.*
- 16 Nov *From John Slidell.*
- 17 Nov *To John H. Bills and Ezekial P. McNeal.*
- 17 Nov From Albert G. Brown. ALS. NN. Endorses an enclosed letter from Eliza W. Rainey.
- 17 Nov From Robert Campbell, Jr. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses letters from John A. Mairs regarding business affairs at Polk’s plantation.
- 17 Nov *To Robert Campbell, Jr.*
- 17 Nov To Robert J. Chester. ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Refers the offer to purchase land in Madison County to his agent, James Caruthers.
- 17 Nov To Ann Phillips Rogers Grundy. ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Informs her that a commission in the marines was sent to her grandson, Felix Grundy Mayson; notes that her grandson, Felix Grundy, Jr., has arrived in Washington

- 17 Nov City on his way to the Naval Academy.
From Abijah Mann, Jr. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces A. W. Enos from Michigan City, Ind.
- 17 Nov To William S. Pickett and Co. ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Revises his instructions regarding the disposition of the proceeds of his annual cotton crop.
From William H. Polk.
- 17 Nov From Reuben J. Todd. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits Polk’s autograph for the collection of the Mercantile Library Association of Boston.
From Samuel P. Walker.
- 17 Nov From Ransom H. Gillet. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends the transfer of Thomas Claiborne, Jr., to the office of the Solicitor of the Treasury for legal training.
- 18 Nov From William R. Griffith. ALS. DLC–JKP. Announces that Polk has been elected an honorary member of the Philological Society at Indiana Asbury University.
From James Caruthers.
- 19 Nov From William C. Dunlap.
- 19 Nov From William F. Giles. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces a delegation of Baltimore Democrats who wish to complain of removals made in the local Customs House.
- 19 Nov From Cave Johnson. ALS. DLC–JKP. States that a ladies’ committee of Washington City’s German Lutheran Church wish to arrange a reception with the Polks.
- 19 Nov From Lucy Knox Thatcher. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to know if Polk is related to her late father, Henry Knox, whose biography is soon to be written.
From James H. Thomas.
- 19 Nov [20 Nov 1845] From Absalom H. Chappell et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Petition for the appointment of Matthew Hall McAllister of Georgia to a major position in the general government.
- 20 Nov From A. F. Cunningham. ALS. DLC–JKP. Complains that Navy Department patronage goes to the Whig newspapers of Norfolk instead of his Portsmouth *New Era*.
- 20 Nov From William L. Helfenstein. ALS. DLC–JKP. Informs Polk of the public confidence his administration inspires; hopes that the removal of John L. Graham as postmaster of New York City will not harm the administration.
- 20 Nov From William B. Maclay. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Mr. Brannan, from New York City, who wishes to discuss migration to Oregon.
- 21 Nov From John W. Childress. ALS. DLC–JKP. Reports that he has spoken to his mother about the financial arrangements Polk made with her in December 1844; doubts that he can visit the Polks in the winter; asks Sarah C. Polk to welcome their old neighbor, Leonard H. Sims, a visitor to

- Washington City.
- [21 Nov 1845] From John C. Mullay. ALS. DLC–JKP. Asks Polk to request that he be appointed a clerk in the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Townsend Waugh, a Whig, be removed.
- [21 Nov 1845] From Wooster Smith. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to add Polk's autograph to his collection.
- 22 Nov From L. M. Welch. ALS. DLC–JKP. Informs Polk of his election to the Franklin Institute of Bacon College; asks that Polk notify the Institute whether he accepts or declines.
- 24 Nov To George Bancroft. ALS. MHi. Requests a letter of introduction for Felix Grundy, Jr., to Franklin Buchanan, head of the Naval Academy.
- 24 Nov From John C. Brooke. ALS. DLC–JKP. Seeks the patronage of the general government for newspapers he expects to establish in Texas.
- 24 Nov *From Thomas J. Green.*
- 24 Nov From John H. Prentiss. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Thomas Shankland.
- 25 Nov From George Bancroft. L. DNA. RG 45. Encloses a letter regarding the claim of Benson and Company against the Navy Department. (Enclosure not found.)
- 25 Nov From Arnold S. Harris. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits an appointment as paymaster in the army.
- 25 Nov From J. George Harris. ALS. DLC–JKP. Expresses concern over his confirmation as the purser at the Memphis naval yard.
- 25 Nov *From John Hogan.*
- 25 Nov From James Jackson et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Join their fellow Georgia Democratic representatives in recommending Matthew H. McAllister for appointment to a position in the general government.
- 25 Nov From Thomas C. Wilson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Invites Polk to attend a public meeting called by the Sons of Temperance for November 27, 1845.
- 26 Nov From John Catron. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends Josiah Spaulding be named Indian superintendant in St. Louis.
- 26 Nov *From John Slidell.*
- 27 Nov From Clement C. Clay. ALS. DLC–JKP. Informs Polk that William Crawford again failed to appear for the session of the U.S. district court in Huntsville, Ala.; notes that he would be amenable to replacing Crawford as judge or would accept another governmental position so long as it was lucrative and not arduous.
- 27 Nov From Joseph Hall. ALS. DLC–JKP. Seeks an interview regarding the possibility of his appointment in the Boston Customs House.

- 27 Nov From James Morrison. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to add Polk’s autograph to his collection.
- 27 Nov From William S. Pickett and Co. L. Polk Memorial Association, Columbia. Acknowledges receipt of Polk’s revised financial instructions.
- 27 Nov *To William H. Polk.*
- 28 Nov From Jonathan P. Hardwicke. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes employment in the general government; believes that Hopkins L. Turney has used the Whigs to get elected.
- 28 Nov From Henry Hubbard. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Dr. and Mrs. John P. Batchelder of Utica, N.Y.
- 28 Nov From John C. McLemore. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces A. Sigourney Bender, special agent for U.S. lead mines and mineral lands in Galena, Ill.
- 28 Nov From John Y. Mason. LS. DLC–JKP. Renders his opinion that presidents have the legal authority to pardon offenders convicted on charges of contempt of court in federal jurisdictions.
- [29 Nov 1845] From Sanfor Bell et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Recommend a list of candidates for collector of customs at the Newport, R.I., Customs House.
- [29 Nov 1845] From Lewis Cass. ALS. DLC–JKP. Apologizes for not meeting with Polk due to “violent cholick.”
- 29 Nov From Thomas W. Dorr. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests that Polk reconsider the appointment of Edwin Wilbur as collector of customs at Newport, R.I.; notes that Wilbur is a member of the faction headed by Dutee J. Pearce; recommends Gilbert Chase as an alternate choice.
- 30 Nov *From Rebekah Crowell.*
- 30 Nov *From Nicholas Trist.*
- 1 Dec From James S. Holman. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Ovid F. Johnson, former attorney general of Pennsylvania.
- 1 Dec *From Louis McLane.*
- 1 Dec *From Jacob L. Martin.*
- 1 Dec From William W. Thompson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Protests the admission of Texas into the Union as a slave state.
- 2 Dec From William L. Marcy. LS. DLC–JKP. Encloses monthly reports concerning War Department clerks’ attendance.
- 3 Dec From Henry Addison. ALS. DLC–JKP. Thanks Polk for including the concerns of the citizens of Georgetown, D.C., in his Annual Message; hopes that Polk will make his summer residence in Georgetown.
- 3 Dec *From Fitzwilliam Byrdsall.*
- 3 Dec From John M. Felder. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces his friend, Laurence M. Keitt of South Carolina.
- 3 Dec *From Henry Horn.*
- 3 Dec From William Innes. ALS. DLC–JKP. Proposes a plan

- to compensate commercial steamship builders who design vessels that can be easily converted to wartime usage.
- 3 Dec From Richard Rush. ALS. DLC–JKP. Thanks Polk for sending him a copy of the Annual Message.
- 3 Dec From Garret D. Wall. ALS. DLC–JKP. Approves of Polk’s Annual Message; believes that “our title to Oregon will have to be established at the Cannon’s mouth.”
- 4 Dec *From Robert Armstrong.*
- 4 Dec From James Buchanan. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces George Latimer, a native of Pennsylvania living at St. John’s, Puerto Rico.
- 4 Dec From William L. Helfenstein. ALS. DLC–JKP. Reports on the favorable reception of the Annual Message among Whigs and Democrats in New York City.
- 4 Dec From David Henshaw. ALS. DLC–JKP. Approves of the Annual Message, especially the strong foreign policy position on Oregon.
- 4 Dec From William L. Marcy. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a letter concerning peacekeeping efforts in the Cherokee territory between Treaty Party and Ross factions.
- 4 Dec From Jesse Miller. ALS. DLC–JKP. Expresses thanks for receipt of the Annual Message; warns Polk that it is “rather strong on the reduction of the tariff for Penna.”
- 4 Dec From Elijah F. Purdy. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Parke Godwin, a New York City journalist.
- 4 Dec From Evans Rogers. ALS. DLC–JKP. Offers to commission a marble bust of Andrew Jackson by Hugh Cannon should Polk wish to purchase one.
- 5 Dec From John Anderson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Approves of the Annual Message; believes that the revenue standard offers fair tariff protection; recommends settling the Oregon question at the 49th parallel and yielding navigation rights on the Columbia River.
- 5 Dec From John Anderson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Informs Polk that J. W. Robinson of Bath, Maine, intends to communicate the dissatisfaction of the Maine Democracy with Amos Nourse, the collector of customs at that city.
- 5 Dec From Ralph I. Ingersoll. ALS. DLC–JKP. Thanks Polk for sending a copy of the Annual Message; notes that in his State Democratic Convention speech he alluded to the position taken by John Q. Adams on Oregon in 1825; wonders what course Congressman Adams will take on the subject.
- 5 Dec *From Levi Lincoln.*
- 5 Dec From John McKeon. ALS. DLC–JKP. Acknowledges receipt of the Annual Message; expresses great satisfaction with its contents.

- 5 Dec From James T. Soutter. ALS. DLC–JKP. Expresses support for the Annual Message and the administration’s position on Oregon; believes the “rebuke to France” will have a profound effect on its ministry.
- [5 Dec 1845] From Andrew Stevenson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Responds favorably to Polk’s first Annual Message.
From Hampton C. Williams.
- 5 Dec From George Bancroft. LS. DLC–JKP. Presents naval officer warrants for Polk’s signature.
- 6 Dec From Samuel D. Bradford. ALS. DLC–JKP. Approves of the Annual Message, especially the tariff provisions that approach the free trade standard.
- 6 Dec From Peter J. Dunworth and J. S. Sullivan. LS. DLC–JKP. Approve the Annual Message in the name of the “many Thousands of Emigrants of this City and County.”
From Thomas Fittman.
- 6 Dec From James Hoban. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Walter Lenox, a Washington City attorney.
- 6 Dec From Henry Horn. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Peter A. Browne, a Philadelphia lawyer.
- 6 Dec From William J. Leiper. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests additional copies of the Annual Message be sent to a list of prominent Pennsylvanians.
From Romulus M. Saunders.
- 6 Dec From J. D. Bingsley. ALS. DLC–JKP. Claims “England has determined upon war” and that this is not a “matter of doubt or speculation it is a fact”; solicits funds to foment anti-British rebellion in Canada so as to facilitate the annexation of Canada by the United States.
From James K. Paulding.
- 7 Dec From John Wilgus. ALS. DLC–JKP. Approves the content of the Annual Message while admitting that he is a life-long Whig; suggests that a transcontinental railroad will secure American interests in the Pacific.
- 8 Dec *To James Buchanan.*
- 8 Dec *From Alexander H. Everett.*
- 8 Dec From Robert P. Flenniken. ALS. DLC–JKP. Assents in the “firm unequivocal tone” of the Annual Message; adds that to “the anglo saxon race belongs this continent.”
- 8 Dec From James W. Hayward. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests an autograph.
- 8 Dec From Charles Nichols. ALS. DLC–JKP. Approves the Annual Message; mentions that he is on leave from his post as consul at Amsterdam due to the death of his son.
- 8 Dec From John Norvell. ALS. DLC–JKP. Assures Polk of his satisfaction with his position as U.S. attorney for Michigan; awaits the arrival of the Annual Message.

- 8 Dec *From Francis W. Pickens.*
- 8 Dec *From James E. Saunders.*
- 8 Dec From Edward Strahan. ALS. DLC-JKP. Encloses a printed copy of resolutions adopted at the December 3rd meeting of the Democratic Republican Young Men's General Committee of New York. PD. DLC-JKP.
- 9 Dec From George Bancroft. LS. DLC-JKP. Submits a report of the case of William J. Belt, former commander in the navy; recommends the court martial ruling not be overturned. N. DLC-JKP.
- 9 Dec *From John Catron.*
- 9 Dec From Isaac Collins. ALS. DLC-JKP. Encloses an engraving depicting the African slave trade; hopes that it will be suitable for display in the White House.
- 9 Dec *From Franklin H. Elmore.*
- 9 Dec From Ransom H. Gillet. ALS. DLC-JKP. Discusses the possibility of his appointment as First Comptroller of the Treasury instead of Register of the Treasury.
- 9 Dec *From Aaron Vanderpoel.*
- 10 Dec *To Clement C. Clay.*
- 10 Dec From Amos T. Jenckes. ALS. DLC-JKP. Encloses three maps of North America; asserts that they validate the U.S. claim to the Oregon Territory. (Enclosures not found.)
- 10 Dec *From John Lat.*
- 10 Dec To William Sawyer. ALS, press copy. DLC-JKP. Asks that Sawyer extend thanks to his "fair constituent" for her needlework and "her good opinions."
- 10 Dec From Burrell B. Taylor. ALS. DLC-JKP. Approves of the Annual Message and its effect on the Ohio Democracy.
- 10 Dec *From Hugh Waddell.*
- 11 Dec From Branch T. Archer and Thomas J. Green. LS. NcU. Recommend appointment of William L. Cazneau as U.S. marshal for Texas.
- 11 Dec From Henry Hubbard. ALS. DLC-JKP. Thinks that the Annual Message will unite the Democracy of New Hampshire behind the administration.
- [11 Dec 1845] From Owen D. Leib et al. LS. DLC-JKP. Recommend Jacob S. Yost of Pennsylvania for commissioner of public buildings.
- [11 Dec 1845] From Thomas Mailing. ALS. DLC-JKP. Seeks a presidential pardon for his larceny conviction.
- 11 Dec *From William D. Moseley.*
- 11 Dec From Collin S. Tarpley. ALS. DLC-JKP. Requests Polk instruct William Armstrong, Choctaw agent, to demand securities from the new contractors for a removal in January; cautions that protective care "should ever be exercised over these poor simple headed children of the

- 12 Dec forest against the wiles of unprincipled speculators.”
From George M. Dallas. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a copy of a letter to Andrew Beaumont, requesting that he consult with the president concerning the nomination of a Supreme Court justice. L. DLC–JKP.
- 12 Dec From William F. Giles et al. LS. MdHi. Recommend Charles S. Spence, a Baltimore lawyer and Democrat, for appointment as a purser in the navy.
- 12 Dec From Robert J. Hemphill. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests that Polk send a copy of his Annual Message and accompanying documents.
- 12 Dec From David Morrison. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends that A. B. Warford be retained as chief engineer of the Memphis navy yard.
- 12 Dec From William S. Taneyhill. ALS. DLC–JKP. Declares the Annual Message to be “democratic up to the hub” and “patriotic from beginning to end.”
- 13 Dec *From Robert Armstrong.*
- 13 Dec From Walter T. Colquitt. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a petition for clemency on behalf of Thomas Mailing, who is serving a one-year sentence in the Washington City federal penitentiary for a larceny conviction.
- 13 Dec From Charles Comte de Miallis. ALS. DLC–JKP. Sends word of the good health of Polk’s relatives in Columbia; approves the Annual Message.
- 13 Dec From Preston King. ALS. DLC–JKP. Seeks help for a constituent wishing to collect an old debt.
- 13 Dec From Edward J. Mallett. ALS. DLC–JKP. Thanks Polk for a copy of the Annual Message; reports that his position on Oregon is widely approved; notes the factions within the Democracy of New York City.
- 13 Dec *To William H. Polk.*
- 13 Dec *To William W. Polk.*
- 13 Dec From James H. Thomas. ALS. DLC–JKP. Forwards receipts for repairs made to Polk’s rental property and Jane Knox Polk’s residence in Columbia; sends a receipt for a land survey ordered for the Marshall Tate Polk estate.
- 13 Dec *To Samuel P. Walker.*
- 13 Dec *From Harvey M. Watterson.*
- 14 Dec *From Alfred Balch.*
- 14 Dec To Samuel P. Caldwell. ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Invites him to stay at the White House during his forthcoming trip; remarks that the Annual Message “has been favourably received by Congress and the country.”
- 14 Dec From Daniel Graham. ALS. DLC–JKP. Informs Polk that the Annual Message has been favorably received at Nashville; doubts whether any legislation concerning the

- 15 Dec Bank of Tennessee will pass during the current session.
From J. Bathman. ALS. DLC–JKP. Petitions for a pardon on behalf of Thomas Mailing.
- [15 Dec 1845] From James Buchanan. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces the former chargé d'affaires of the Republic of Texas to the Netherlands, William H. Daingerfield.
- 15 Dec *From John Catron.*
- 15 Dec From John Landis. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests that Polk purchase some of his paintings.
- 15 Dec From William D. Lee. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces John H. Brower, Republic of Texas consul at New York City.
- [15 Dec 1845] From John C. Mully. ALS. DLC–JKP. Seeks a promotion in the Bureau of Indian Affairs.
- 15 Dec *To Hugh Waddell.*
- 15 Dec From Robert W. Williamson. ALS. DLC–JKP. Solicits twenty dollars.
- 15 Dec *From Archibald Yell.*
- 16 Dec From John T. Bergen. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests the appointment of his son, Alexander J. Bergen, as consul at Montevideo, and Paul K. Hubbs to the post of chargé d'affaires to Uruguay.
- 16 Dec From Barry Gillespie. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces his friend, Anthony Butler of Texas.
- 16 Dec From David Lambert. ALS. DLC–JKP. Proposes to go to California as a confidential agent of the government with the goal of American acquisition of California.
- 16 Dec From Derick B. Stockholm. ALS. DLC–JKP. Supports Polk's position on Oregon; urges an increase in the U.S. military; claims England "trembles in her shoes."
- 16 Dec From Joseph A. Wolf. ALS. DLC–JKP. Informs Polk of his election to an honorary membership in the Berlin Improvement Society of East Berlin, Penn.
- 17 Dec From George Bancroft. LS. DLC–JKP. Submits for Polk's signature a midshipman's warrant for Henry C. Hunter.
- 17 Dec From John Branch. ALS. DLC–JKP. Approves of Polk's positions on the tariff and independent treasury as delineated in the Annual Message; adds that his son approves as well.
- 17 Dec *From Aaron V. Brown.*
- 17 Dec From Asbury Dickens. LS. DLC–JKP. Informs Polk of the public printing of Senate documents for executive use.
- 17 Dec *To John Slidell.*
- 18 Dec From Franklin Buchanan. ALS. DLC–JKP. Assures Polk of the improving health of Felix Grundy, Jr.
- 18 Dec From John McKeon. ALS. DLC–JKP. Notes that a meeting is scheduled for the next evening at Tammany Hall in support of the Annual Message; states that he has been

- selected to speak at the meeting to explain the administration's foreign policy.
- 18 Dec From James Maguire et al. LS. DLC-JKP. Oppose the nomination of George W. Woodward to the Supreme Court due to his anti-immigrant positions.
- 18 Dec From Elijah F. Purdy and Isaac V. Fowler. LS. DLC-JKP. Transmit resolutions adopted at the December 9th meeting of the Democratic Republican Society of New York supporting the Annual Message. DLC-JKP.
- 19 Dec From George Bancroft. LS. DLC-JKP. Acknowledges receipt of the congressional resolution regarding live oak timber; intends to respond quickly.
- 19 Dec From John Fairfield. ALS. DLC-JKP. Wishes to discuss nominations for patronage positions in the Bath, Maine, Customs House.
- 19 Dec From Reverdy Johnson. AL. DLC-JKP. Encloses correspondence from John Fairfield concerning collectorship nominations for Maine.
- 19 Dec From George W. Owens.
- 19 Dec From James M. Williamson. ALS. DLC-JKP. Believes that the Annual Message "is a bomb-proof battery and no mistake."
- 20 Dec From Joseph W. Chalmers. ALS. DLC-JKP. Reports that he will vote against the nomination of James H. Tate for U.S. consul at Buenos Aires if charges of deception levelled against Tate are substantiated in the Senate.
- 20 Dec From Joseph W. Chalmers. ALS. DLC-JKP. Discloses confidentially that he wrote a letter in regard to the nomination of James H. Tate as U.S. consul to Buenos Aires only to mollify Jacob Thompson, who is determined to defeat Tate's nomination in the Senate.
- 20 Dec From Andrew J. Donelson. ALS. DLC-JKP. Notes that he is attempting to arrange his business affairs before he leaves the country; approves the Annual Message.
- 20 Dec From John C. Whitsitt. ALS. DLC-JKP. Introduces T. J. Vaden of Gainesville, Ala.
- 21 Dec From James H. Birch. ALS. DLC-JKP. Believes that the Annual Message will unite the Democracy and secure victory in 1848.
- 21 Dec From Nathan Gaither. ALS. DLC-JKP. States that "the Country is with you" in support of the Annual Message.
- 21 Dec From Gouverneur Kemble. ALS. DLC-JKP. Praises the Annual Message as a "bold and frank avowal of the policy and views of your administration."
- 21 Dec To Robert J. Walker. ALS. CSmH. Forwards correspondence received from Mexico by express messenger.
- 21 Dec From Archibald Yell. ALS. DLC-JKP. Encloses a letter

- from Josiah Gregg proposing to lead an American expedition to New Mexico and California.
- 22 Dec From George Bancroft. LS. DLC–JKP. Presents nominations for promotion of David Harlan to surgeon and Henry O. Mays and John Rubenstein to assistant surgeons in the navy.
- 22 Dec From James Buchanan. L. DLC–JKP. Requests the return of Louis McLane’s dispatch.
- 22 Dec From John Fairfield. ALS. DLC–JKP. Apologizes for his excitement manifested while meeting with Polk about appointments at the Customs House at Bath, Maine.
- 22 Dec From Theophilus Fisk. ALS. DLC–JKP. Invites Polk to attend a public dinner at the U.S. Hotel hosted by the New England Society.
- 22 Dec To Theophilus Fisk. LS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Declines the invitation to a public dinner at the U.S. Hotel hosted by the New England Society.
- 22 Dec To Henry Horn. ALS, press copy. DLC–JKP. Requests that Horn come to Washington City as soon as possible.
- 22 Dec From Robert McClellan. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces John Sanders of New York.
- 22 Dec From Alexander Newman. ALS. DLC–JKP. States that George W. Thompson is not only a native Virginian but also “a Virginian in principle.”
- 22 Dec From William W. Seaton. L. DLC–JKP. Requests that the president submit the nominations of William Thompson and B. K. Morsell, as justices of the peace for Washington City, to the Senate for confirmation before the Christmas holiday arrives.
- 22 Dec From William H. Smith et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Invite the president to a public dinner sponsored by “the personal and political Democratic friends of *George Mifflin Dallas*” commemorating the Battle of New Orleans.
- [22 Dec 1845] From Hopkins L. Turney. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests an interview regarding Oregon.
- 22 Dec From David Wilmot et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Recommend George W. Woodward of Pennsylvania for U.S. Supreme Court justice.
- 23 Dec From Walter T. Colquitt et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Send letters recommending a ministerial appointment for Matthew H. McAllister of Georgia.
- 24 Dec From George Bancroft. ALS. DLC–JKP. Presents a gift of a woolen suit made by Welcome Farnum’s mill in Waterford, Mass.
- 24 Dec *To John M. Bass.*
- 24 Dec From Samuel A. Bridges. ALS. DLC–JKP. Reports that the Democracy of Lehigh County, Penn., strongly approves

- the Annual Message and should war erupt over Oregon, "you will find a *plenty of men* here to shoulder the musket, at a moments warning."
- [24 Dec 1845] *From James Buchanan.*
- 24 Dec From David Lambert. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a memorandum giving his views on the acquisition of California by the United States. (Enclosure not found.)
- 24 Dec To [?] Lawrence. N. CtY. Invites her to dine at the White House on December 30, 1845.
- 24 Dec From John McNeely. ALS. DLC–JKP. Believes that the Mormons are cooperating with agents of Great Britain and Mexico in a "treasonable movement" during their westward relocation.
- 24 Dec From Ambrose H. Sevier. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces David Lambert.
- 25 Dec From John S. Chipman. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to postpone his scheduled interview concerning the collectorship for Detroit, Mich., until tomorrow.
- 25 Dec *To George M. Dallas.*
- 25 Dec From Henry Horn. ALS. DLC–JKP. Indicates that he had a positive interview with James Semple on his nomination and the nomination of George W. Woodward as a justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.
- 26 Dec From Willie P. Mangum. ALS. DLC–JKP. Encloses a letter from Joseph D. Ward.
- 26 Dec From James Shields. ALS. DLC–JKP. Recommends William Carroll of Baltimore for appointment as U.S. consul to Rio Grande, Brazil, a position Shields believes to be "worth little" and "the place sickly."
- 26 Dec From Joseph D. Ward. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests that Polk examine his "case" for a government clerkship in light of recommendations from the North Carolina congressional delegation.
- 27 Dec *From George Bancroft.*
- 27 Dec From Frederick G. Burnham. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to add Polk's autograph to his collection.
- 27 Dec From Thomas J. Green and Branch T. Archer. L. NcU. Recommend David G. Burnet for appointment as U.S. judge for the district of Texas though they had previously supported John C. Watrous for the position.
- 27 Dec From John K. Kane et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Invite Polk on behalf of Democratic citizens of Philadelphia to attend the anniversary celebration of the Battle of New Orleans.
- 27 Dec From N. M. Miller. ALS. DLC–JKP. Wishes to counter the "unscrupulous efforts for nine months past to procure my ejection from office."
- 27 Dec From Horace Wheaton. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests delay

- in the nomination of William W. Teal for postmaster of Syracuse, N.Y.
- 28 Dec *From Orson Hyde.*
- 29 Dec *To Robert Armstrong.*
- 29 Dec From George Bancroft. LS. DLC–JKP. Advises against the reinstatement of John S. Neville as a midshipman in the navy.
- 29 Dec From J. Raymond Barstow. ALS. DLC–JKP. Offers to provide the president with a copy of Richard Hakluyt's *The Principall Navigations, Voyages and Discoveries of the English Nation* (1589).
- [29 Dec 1845] From James Buchanan. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests that Polk review and revise a draft letter to Louis McLane.
- [29 Dec 1845] From Henry P. Darrow. LS. DLC–JKP. Disapproves of the nomination of Philip Dorsheimer to be appointed postmaster at Buffalo, N.Y.
- 29 Dec *From Henry Horn.*
- 29 Dec *To Sam Houston.*
- 29 Dec *To Louis McLane.*
- 29 Dec From William L. Marcy. LS. DLC–JKP. Reports that William A. Richmond, Jonathan L. Bean, and James McKisick were appointed as Indian agents during the recess of the Senate.
- 29 Dec *To William H. Polk.*
- 29 Dec *From John Slidell.*
- 29 Dec From George Vonnieda et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Invite Polk to a celebration of the anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans in Spring Garden, Penn.
- 29 Dec From William Williams. ALS. DLC–JKP. Opposes the appointment of Philip Dorsheimer as deputy postmaster at Buffalo, N.Y.
- [29 Dec 1845] From David Levy Yulee. ALS. DLC–JKP. Informs Polk that the Texas collection district bill has been reported before the full Senate; believes the bill will be passed that day.
- 30 Dec From George Bancroft. L. DNA–RG 45. Encloses reports from the Bureau of Yards and Docks and the Treasury Department concerning the live oak agencies. (Enclosures not found.)
- 30 Dec From William H. Feild. ALS. DLC–JKP. Asks Polk to provide the source of alleged slander which he believes to be the obstacle preventing his appointment to a position in the general government.
- 30 Dec From Thomas H. Hyatt. ALS. DLC–JKP. Praises the president's Annual Message; encloses an article demonstrating his support for Polk since 1839.
- 30 Dec From Robert McLane. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces his

- brother, George McLane, who seeks an appointment to West Point.
- 30 Dec From John G. Tod. ALS. DLC–JKP. Reports that he will be delayed one day in Richmond due to a missed connection on the mail route.
- 30 Dec From William Wilkinson et al. LS. DLC–JKP. Invite Polk to a celebration of the anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans in the Northern Liberties of Philadelphia.
- 31 Dec From James Anthony. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests a proclamation for a national day of fasting.
- 31 Dec To James Buchanan. ALS. DNA–RG 59. Requests that a parchment copy of the act creating a Texas collection district be made and sent to the state government; asks that all recommendations for Texas offices be sent to the president’s office.
- [31 Dec 1845] From George W. Hopkins. ALS. DLC–JKP. Requests that Polk reconsider the removal of George Floyd from his position as secretary of the Wisconsin Territory.
- 31 Dec From Henry Horn. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces Francis West, Jr., a Philadelphia physician.
- 31 Dec From A. G. McDaniel. ALS. DLC–JKP. Warns Polk that John W. Ford, a candidate for U.S. marshal for Middle Tennessee, is suspected of improprieties while postmaster at McMinnville.
- 31 Dec From Marcus Morton. ALS. DLC–JKP. Introduces his friend, Fisher A. Hildreth, a Democrat and editor of the *Lowell Advertiser*.
- 31 Dec From Hugh Waddell.
- 31 Dec From John H. Wheeler. ALS. DLC–JKP. Indicates that the Annual Message “meets universal approbation from all quarters”; encloses a copy of resolutions from a Catawba County Democratic meeting endorsing Polk’s administration; encloses a printed letter declining nomination as a candidate for governor of North Carolina as he prefers to accept a position in the general government.

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