

**Thomas Jefferson to James Bowdoin, July 10, 1807,
The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes.
Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester
Ford.**

TO THE U. S. MINISTER TO SPAIN J. MSS. (JAMES BOWDOIN.)

Washington, July 10, '07.

Dear Sir, —I wrote you on the 10th of July, 06, but supposing, from your not acknowledging the receipt of the letter, that it had miscarried, I sent a duplicate with my subsequent one of Apr. 2. These having gone by the *Wasp*, you will doubtless have received them. Since that, yours of May 1 has come to hand. You will see by the despatches from the department of State, carried by the armed vessel the *Revenge*, into what a critical state our peace with Gr. Britain is suddenly brought, by their armed vessels in our waters. Four vessels of war (3. of them two deckers) closely blockade Norfolk at this instant. Of the authority under which this aggression is committed, their minister here is unapprised. You will see by the proclamation of July 2, that (while we are not omitting such measures of force as are immediately necessary) we propose to give Gr. Br. an opportunity of disavowal & reparation, and to leave the question of war, non-intercourse, or other measures, uncommitted, to the Legislature. This country has never been in such a state of excitement since the battle of Lexington. In this state of things, cordial friendship with France, & peace at least with Spain, become more interesting. You know the circumstances respecting this last power, which have rendered it ineligible that you should have proceeded heretofore to your destination. But this obstacle is now removed by their recall of Yrujo, & appointment of another minister, & in the meantime, of a chargé des affaires, who has been received. The way being now open for taking your station at

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Madrid, it is certainly our wish you should do so, and that this may be more agreeable to you than your return home, as is solicited in yours of May 1. It is with real unwillingness we should relinquish the benefit of your services. Nevertheless, if your mind is decidedly bent on that, we shall regret, but not oppose your return. The choice, therefore, remains with yourself. In the meantime, your place in the joint commission

being vacated by either event, we shall take the measures rendered necessary by that. We have seen, with real grief, the misunderstanding which has taken place between yourself & Gen. Armstrong. We are neither qualified nor disposed to form an opinion between you. We regret the pain which must have been felt by persons, both of whom hold so high a place in our esteem, and we have not been without fear that the public interest might suffer by it. It has seemed, however, that the state of Europe has been such as to admit little to be done, in matters so distant from them.

The present alarm has had the effect of suspending our foreign commerce. No merchant ventures to send out a single vessel; and I think it probable this will continue very much the case till we get an answer from England. Our crops are uncommonly plentiful. That of small grain is now secured south of this, and the harvest is advancing here.

Accept my salutations, & assurances of affectionate esteem & respect.