

Thomas Jefferson to William Barton, April 1, 1792, with Copy, from the Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.

TO WILLIAM BARTON J. MSS.

Philadelphia, Apr. 1. 1792.

Sir, —I did not sooner answer your favor of the 19th because I have had reason till now to doubt whether Mr. Remsen was decided to resign his office of Chief-clerk with me. In the mean time too I found there would be real difficulties from the other clerks the senior of whom thought himself entitled to succeed, & the juniors to approach so much nearer to the succession, and that if cut off from this prospect I should lose them all. This would be to me an irreparable loss, because the two seniors have been very long in the office, are perfectly intimate with all the papers & proceedings for years back, to all of which I am an utter stranger, & to which consequently they serve me as an index. I had mentioned this difficulty to Mr. Rittenhouse & further that I thought you would not entertain a moment's wish for the Office if you knew that it offers nothing but one continued scene of drudgery in copying papers & close attendance from morning till night. I could not myself conceive you could submit to such an uninteresting & unimproving labour, and therefore can only hope now, that conceiving myself bound in justice to give it to the present senior clerk, some other occasion may occur more worthy of you, & towards which I may be of some use to you, being with real esteem Sir your most obedt. humble servt.