

Thomas Jefferson to Willam Short, July 28, 1791, Partial Transcription Available, from the Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.

TO WILLIAM SHORT J. MSS.

Philadelphia July 28. 1791.

Dear Sir, — * * * Young Osmont arrived here safely, & is living with Colo. Biddle in a mercantile line. He appears to be a young man of extraordinary prudence. I am endeavoring to help him in the case of his purchase of le Tonnelier, if the latter had any right to the lands he pretended to sell. Mazzei's debt may rest between him & me, & I shall endeavor to arrange it here. He was certainly a good hand to employ with the Abbé Morellet, from whom I understand there is no hope, & but little from Barrois who is the real debtor. Perhaps Barrois would pay me in books.¹ If he has a complete set of the Greek Byzantine historians this would balance the account. The wines from Champagne & Bordeaux, dress from Houdon, press from Charpentier, reveille & carriages are arrived. So is

¹ The printer of the French edition of the *Notes on Virginia*.

Petit. You have not informed me of the cost of the Champagne, & of it's transportation to Paris, so that my account with the President remains still opera I inclose you a bill of exchange for £131—5 sterl. drawn by John Warder of this place on John Warder & co. Merchts. of London which I have indorsed to you. Be pleased to let me know what it yields in livres, specie, at Paris, that I may credit the President accordingly. You will be so good

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as to place it to my credit either with yourself, or Mr. Grand or the W. Staphorsts as you think

best. I have received my private account with you to Dec. 30, 1790. but as there have been subsequent transactions, I defer looking into it till I receive them. Your public account to July 1. 1790. is also received. As soon as that to July 1. 1791. comes to hand, I will take up the whole so as to make one job of it. In your's of May 2. you speak of your house rent, & expences to Amsterdam. As to the former you had better not charge it, because I think it will not be allowed, & because you charge it on the ground of abandoning any claim to an Outfit. If you continue in Europe an Outfit will certainly be allowed you; if you do not, still a partial allowance may be justly claimed. In whatever form I receive your account, I will take the liberty of modelling it so as to preserve to you every interest which justice and usage will admit. With respect to the expences of your journey to & from Amsterdam & your stay there; it has been the usage for those residing at a court when sent on any extraordinary mission out of the country of their residence to charge their expences. In my journies to London & Amsterdam I charged carriage hire, horse hire, & subsistence. The latter included my tavern expences, lodging do servants &c., the whole time, but nothing for clothes, pocket money vales &c. I think you may do the same. If your account is come off before you receive this, send me immediately the necessary amendment & I will insert it.—No diplomatic appointment will be made to the next session of Congress. Nothing more is known on that subject now than when I wrote you last. Your brother is expected

1 At this point a series of cipher numbers is written on the margin, which, translated, reads:

“Adams, Jay, Hamilton, Knox. Many of the Cincinnati. The second says nothing. The third is open. Both are dangerous. They pant after union with England as the power which is to support their projects, and are most determined Anti-gallicans. It is prognosticated that our republic is to end with the President's life. But I believe they will find themselves all head and no body.”

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here daily. He is well, and is making a fortune in Kentucky.—They say R. H. Lee will resign his senatorial appointment on account of his health. —The following is the translation of the cyphered passage of my letter of Jan. 24. which the mistake of 1287. for 128. & 460. for 466. had confounded. 'Humphries is gone to Lisbon, the grade not settled.' It was since however settled to be Resident.—Paine's pamphlet has been published & read with general applause here. It was attacked by a writer under the name of Publicola, and defended by a host of republican volunteers. None of the defenders are known. I have desired Mr. Remsen to make up a complete collection of these pieces from Bache's papers, the tory-paper of Fenno rarely admitting any thing which defends the present form of government in opposition to his desire of subverting it to make way for a king, lords & commons. There are high names here¹ in favour of this doctrine, but these publications have drawn forth pretty generally expressions of the public sentiment on this subject, & I thank God to find they are, to a man, firm as a rock in their republicanism. I much fear that the honestest man of the party will fall a victim to his imprudence on this occasion, while another of them, from the mere caution of holding his tongue & buttoning himself up, will gain what the other loses.

I trouble you with the care of the inclosed letters. That to Mr. G. Morris is important, as containing a bill of exchange.

P. S. Always be so good as to remember me to enquiring friends as if I had named them. Since writing the above, Petit informs me he has been all over the town in quest of Vanilla, & it is unknown here. I must pray you to send me a packet of 5a pods (batons) which may come very well in the middle of a packet of Newspapers. It costs about 248. a baton when sold by the single baton. Petit says there is a great imposition in selling those which are bad; that Pictot generally sells good, but that still it will be safe to have them bought by some one used to them.