

Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections

<http://archives.dickinson.edu/>

Documents Online

Title: Letter from James Buchanan to James Henry

Date: April 2, 1864

Location: I-Friends-2010-2

Contact:

Archives & Special Collections
Waidner-Spahr Library
Dickinson College
P.O. Box 1773
Carlisle, PA 17013

717-245-1399

archives@dickinson.edu

Wheatland 2 April 1864.

My dear James /

I propose to assign to you a rather disagreeable duty but as it is one of mercy, I know you will not complain.

You recollect our old friend David Lynch of Pillsburg. He left behind him a daughter named Isabella, a poor afflicted sickly creature (I believe) who was anxious to enter a Convent. Through the intervention of her Aunt M^{rs}. Kohn of Chicago her mother's sister, a very good woman, I believe, & in that respect very different from her own mother, & on account of my personal regard for poor Dave Lynch, I made arrangements to have her received at a Convent in Chicago & to pay her expenses for the required two years. Whereupon her mother became exasperated both with M^{rs}. Kohn & myself & said we wanted to rob her of her child. So this fell through.

For a considerable time I heard no more of Isabella. She turned up at a Convent in Brooklyn called the Convent of the Visitation from which she wrote to me & I sent her money at two different times \$30, on the 1 January 1863 & \$50 on the 17 August 1863.

This preamble is necessary to explain the enclosed letters the one from Clotilda Smith who is I believe the mother & the other from Isabella Lynch. The letter from Clotilda dated simply in 1863 is a curious specimen of I will not say what. It was advice to submit to the will of Providence in the great trial of her removal from the Convent although this appears to have been

the act of the mother herself. -

The letter of Isabella Lynch gives a sad account of her sufferings which has caused me to feel deeply for the daughter of my old friend. There are, however, some suspicious circumstances about it. It was evidently dated at a period previous to the 24th February & it was not received by me until some time after its date. I cannot say exactly when. It was not attended to soon on account of my illness.

Now what I desire of you is to enquire into the circumstances of this strange case. If Isabella is in want, supply her wants to the extent of \$50 & give me information. From the account which she gives of her condition the proposed operation could be of no service to her.

Yours affectionately,

James Buchanan

J. Buchanan Henry Esquire

J. Buchanan Henry Esquire

240, Broadway

New York

g) ALS. 2pg. 8" x 12 ½". April 2, 1864. Wheatland. An autograph letter signed "**James Buchanan**" as the former President: *"I propose to assign to you a rather disagreeable duty but as it is one of many, I know you will not complain. You recollect our old friend David Lynch of Pittsburgh. He left behind a daughter named Isabella, a poor afflicted sickly creature (I believe) who was anxious to enter a Convent. Through the intervention of her aunt Mrs. Korn of Chicago her mother's sister, a very good woman, I believe, & in this respect very different from her own mother, & on account of my personal regard for David Lynch, I made arrangements to have her received at a convent in Chicago & to pay her expenses for the required two years. Whereupon her mother became exasperated both with Mrs. Korn & myself & said we wanted to rob her of her child. So this fell through. For a considerable time I heard no more of Isabella. She turned up at a convent in Brooklyn called the Convent of the Visitation from which she wrote to me & I sent her money at two different times \$30 on the 1 January 1863 & \$50 on the 17 August 1863. This preamble is necessary to explain the enclosed letters the one from Clotilda Smith who is I believe the mother & the other from Isabella Lynch. The letter from Mother Clotilda dated simply in 1863 is a curious specimen of I will not say what. Pious advice to submit to the will to Providence in the great trial of her removal from the convent although this appears to have been the act of the mother herself. The letter of Isabella Lynch gives a sad account of her sufferings which has caused me to feel deeply for the daughter of my old friend. There are however some suspicious circumstances about it. It was evidently dated at a period previous to the 24th February & it was not received by me until some time after its date. I cannot say exactly when. It was not attended to sooner on account of my illness. Now what I desire of you is to enquire into the circumstances of the strange case. If Isabella is in want, supply her wants to the extent of \$50 & give me information. From the account which she gives of her condition the proposed operation could be of no service to her. Yours affectionately **James Buchanan**".* The letter is folded three times and is in very fine condition; it is accompanied by the original mailing envelope in Buchanan's handwriting.