

# Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections

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## Documents Online

**Title:** Letter from Benjamin Rush to Charles Nisbet

**Date:** August 30, 1784

**Location:** MC 2001.7, B1, F41

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My dear friend,

Orinda<sup>n</sup> Aug: 30<sup>th</sup> 1784

By the Dutty of Argyle Cap<sup>n</sup> Miller  
who sailed for Liverpool a few days ago, I sent  
you a copy of the Charter of the College together with  
an answer to several of your questions, and by a  
Vessel bound to Bristol I sent you the day before yes-  
terday a full acc<sup>t</sup>: of the present state of parties  
political & religious in the state of Pennsylvania. This  
was necessary to explain the mystery of Dr Ewing's  
letter. The Ammanensis Mr Todd to whom I commu-  
nicated the discovery, condemns his conduct in strong  
terms, and as he is now convinced of the falshood  
of the information given you, & of the malignity  
of Dr Ewing's character, intends to make reparation  
to you & the trustees by conveying to you such  
facts as time & more particular enquiries have  
furnished him with. The letter was a most accepta-  
ble discovery. It will be laid before the Legislature  
of the state, and will have great weight in obtaining



have become our principal contributors. It is  
no matter <sup>to us</sup> what the motive with ~~us~~ <sup>them</sup> was for  
giving. Perhaps it was to facilitate the ~~re-~~se-  
stitution of the College of Philad<sup>a</sup> to its original  
owners. It will be happy for the interests of lite-  
rature & much for the honor of our Society if  
it should have this effect. At present it is a stain  
of so black a dye upon us, than till it is  
wiped ~~away~~ <sup>away</sup> ~~it will do~~ <sup>I shall feel</sup> myself under an obligation  
to make an apology ~~for~~ to the world for  
being a Presbyterian. — Indeed his - the history  
of the administration of the Government of Pennsylv<sup>a</sup>  
for 4 years after the war, was the history of little  
else than oppressions & crimes. It is  
wholly in the hands of the enthusiasts & con-  
clap of people belonging to our Society. at present  
milder counsels prevail in Pennsylvania, and the  
spirit of our worthy governor persuades all ranks  
in power and office. a great body of the most respecta-  
ble Presbyterians have declared themselves in favor of order  
collaboration, and good government. These are the men

who love your character, & who will be your friends  
 & support, while they expect you will be their head.  
 - your learning - your abilities - your integrity - and  
 (when occasion shall require) your wit they are sure  
 will be an overmatch for all the machinations  
 & chicanery of a whole host of Dr Ewings. —  
 Adieu - yours sincerely B. Rush

~~PAID~~  
 The Rev. Dr Charles Wesley  
 at Montrose  
 in Scotland.  
 A Packet.

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St. Paul & S. M. Co.  
 300 N. 1784

Philad Aug.st. 30th 1784

My dear friend,

By the Dutchess of Argyle Cap Millar who sailed for Liverpool a few days ago, I sent you a copy of the charter of the College together with an answer to several of your questions, and by a pupil bound to Bristol I sent you the day before yesterday a full acct. of the present state of parties political & religious in the state of Pennsylvania. This was necessary to explain the mystery of Dr. Ewing's letter. The amanuensis Mr. Todd to whom I communicated the discovery, condemns his conduct in strong terms, and as he is now convinced of the falsehood of the information given you, & of the malignity of Dr. Ewing's character, intends to make reparation to you & the trustees by conveying to you such facts as time & more particular enquiries have furnished him with. The letter was a most acceptable discovery. It will be laid before the legislature of the State, and will have great weight in obtaining

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an endowment for our College, for many Episcopalians & Quakers in the Assembly who have little reason to love our Society will favour us in this instance if they can by so doing mortify Dr. Ewing. The Confession of "the Presbyterians having turned out the Episcopalians, & Assumed the direction of the College of Philad. into their own hands" is directly contrary to what the Dr. & his associates have held out here. They say they took it out of the hands of One Sect only, and put it into the hands of all the Sects in the State. But this is false, for the principal management of the institution is in the hands of the Presbyterians and a few of their tools, as the Dr. this matter has confessed to you. I do not wonder he sickens at the name of Dickinson College. It has detached the most respectable part of the Presbyterians from his influence. All possible advantages were taken of the resentment of the Episcopalians against Dr Ewing & his friends for robbing them of this College by the friends of the new College, & many of them

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have become our principal contributors. It is no matter to us what the motive with them was for giving. Perhaps it was to facilitate the situation of the College of Philad. to its original owners. It will be happy for the interests of literature & much for the honor of our Society if it should have this effect. At present it is a stain of so black a dye upon us, than till it is wiped away I shall feel myself under an obligation to make an apollogy to the world for being a Presbyterian.

Indeed Sir, the history of the administration of the government of Pennsya. for 4 years after the war, was the history of little else than oppressions & crimes. It is wholly in the hands of the enthusiasts & lower class of people belonging to our Society. At present milder counsels prevail in Pennsylvania, and the spirit of our worthy governor pervades all ranks in power and office. A great body of the most respectable Presbyterians have declared themselves in favor of Order tolleration, and good government. These are the men

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