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Title: Letters from James Buchanan to Reah Frazer

Date: 1840-1844

Location: MC 1998.10

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My dear Sir,

Washington 18 January 1840.

I should long since have answered you letter; but I have had a mountain of business upon my shoulders since the commencement of the Session; besides, I was not well for some time: & a man always feels disposed to take the greatest liberties with his best friends. Should any ^{new} post roads be established during the present Session, I shall take care to have the one in which you take an interest included in the Bill.

It would afford me great pleasure to serve Willlet Gilby & I have been looking out for a vacancy but never hear of any until it has been filled. In candor, however, I must say that there are two other applicants to whom I was pledged before I knew he desired the situation. For one of them I have been endeavouring to get a place more than a year; but without success. There would be another difficulty in Willlet's way. From the great number of opposition clerks in office, they now fill up the vacancies as they occur with ~~friends~~ those whose Democracy dates back at least as far as the ~~first~~ election of Mr. Van Buren. Now I could not certify that he supported either Van Buren or Porter. Please to inform me whether he did. The Metropolis watches these matters very closely.

The Senate ordered the Independent Treasury Bill to be engrossed yesterday by a vote of 24 to 18. It will probably pass our Body finally on Monday. It is believed that there is a majority in the House in

favor of its passage; but from their course of proceeding in that
Body, we cannot conjecture ^{with certainty} whether they will ever take it up
or not. They have not yet elected their chaplain or their Printer
& they have spent their whole time, since the commencement of
the Session, in discussing the New Jersey election & abolition
petitions.

from your friend
very respectfully

Col: Beak Traza.

James Buchanan

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from your friend
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James Buchanan

Col. Reah Frazer

422
4000

Washington 27 April 1840.

My dear Sir,

I have just received yours of the 24th.

Instant & hasten to give it an answer. A National Convention

will certainly be held at Baltimore on the 5th of May; though

Several of the States will not attend. In some of the Southern

States they say they cannot run Col: Johnston without endangering the

text; and they will not attend a Convention by whose proceedings

they cannot bind themselves to support. All this is unfortunate, because

we shall lose the moral effects of a strong National Convention. I

am persuaded that in a number of the States Col: Johnston will be of service

to us, as the military services of old Tecumseh will be a set off against

those of Tippecanoe. Can you not spend a day with us here before the

meeting of the Convention?

Our news thus far from Virginia has not been as favorable as we had anticipated; but as yet we have no reasons to entertain serious apprehensions concerning the vote of that State in November. Ever your friend,

Col: Pease Frazer.

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Ever your friend
James Buchanan

Col: Reah Frazer

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87

Strictly confidential

My dear Sir

Washington 17 June 1841

In obedience to your request, & that of Mr. Jungerich I called to day on the Postmaster General for the purpose of enquiring whether he had determined to remove Mr. Jackson or not. He informed me that he had made no such determination; - that the papers were now with the President & nothing had yet been decided in regard to the case. This question & answer led to a general conversation on the subject in which I spoke of Mr. Jackson as she deserved. He is evidently much opposed to the appointment of ladies to post offices for reasons which he gave me; but I do not think he is strongly inclined to remove Mr. Jackson. He told me that Cullenstew who is a good fellow had strongly urged her continuance. This was in consequence of a promise he had ^{voluntarily} made to me ^{after my remarks in her favor}. He said, however, ^{that} strong & respectable recommendations from Lancaster in favor of her removal which he would cheerfully show to me if they were not at the President's; whilst he had received no recommendation in favor of her continuance in office; and he intimated strongly that she would be removed, unless she should receive a recommendation from the Whigs. My own impression is that such a recommendation respectably signed by Whigs would save her; but nothing else; & I further think he would be glad to receive it. I repeat that I think nothing but Whig support will save Mr. Jackson.

Ever your friend

James Buchanan

Col: Reak Frazer.

Strictly confidential

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My dear Sir/

In obedience to your request & that of W. [Junzcrick?] I called to day on the Postmaster General for the purpose of inquiring whether he had determined to remove Mrs. Dickson or not. He informed me that he had made no such determination; - that the papers were now with the President & nothing had yet been decided in regard to the case. This question & answers led to a general conversation on the subject in which I spoke of Mrs. Dickson as she deserved. he is evidently much opposed to the appointment of ladies to post offices for reasons which he gave me; but I do not think he is strongly inclined to remove Mrs. Dickson. He told me that Crittenden, who is a good fellow, had strongly urged her continuance. This was in consequence of a promise he had voluntarily made to me after my remarks in her favor. He said, however, that there were strong & respectable recommendations from Lancaster in favor of her removal which he would cheerfully show to me if they were not at the Presidents; whilst he had received no recommendation in favor of her continuance in office; and he indicated strongly that she would be removed, unless she should receive a recommendation from the Whigs. My own impression is that such a recommendation respectfully signed by Whigs would save her; but nothing else; & I further think he would be glad to receive it. I repeat that I think nothing but Whig support will save Mrs Dickson.

Ever your friend
James Buchanan

Col. Reah Frazer

Senate Chamber 18 February 1843.

My dear Sir,

I enclose you a letter which I have this moment received from Mr. Harris. What answer shall I give him? If you have not time to attend to the business, could you not entrust it to some other person?

The prevailing belief here is that Judge Porter will come into Mr. Tyler's Cabinet as secretary of War immediately after the 4. of March. Although I know nothing of the matter, yet I have no doubt of the truth of the rumor. We shall then have a Tyler party in Pennsylvania; because the President will surely expect the support of the Judge's friends. I observe that the Signal is already out for the Captain.

I have many, very many things to say to you which I must defer until we have the pleasure of meeting. In the mean time I remain most sincerely & most gratefully your friend.

James Buchanan

Col: Rich Izard.

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James Buchanan

Col: Reah Frazer.

Washington 21 February 1844.

My dear Sir,

You have done all things rightly & well in regard to Dr. Hume; & you have my sincere thanks for extricating Captain Steele & myself from the difficulties in which we were involved. I shall pay your subscription to the Spectator & order it to be discontinued according to your request.

I have already promised all the money & more than all that I shall be able to command on the first of April next. Had you intimated your desire to borrow before I left Lancaster, it would have afforded me sincere pleasure to accommodate you, on your own Bonds; and before next fall, I shall doubtless be able to loan you \$2500. I say loan, because I should not be willing to make an investment payable in an annuity of eight years. The final payment is too distant. I am becoming too old for such long delays.

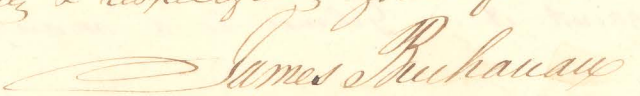
The appointment of Gilmer & Wise is the best that the President could obtain. No dissatisfaction exists in any party against it. Gilmer is a man of talents & energy & great industry,

who intending to retire from public life to pursue his profession, was prevailed upon, from motives of personal friendship & state pride, to accept the appointment. No person attributes to him any mercenary or improper motive, or even any desire to sell the station. Although ranked with the Guard, he has always pursued an independent course & opposed the measures of the President when he deemed them wrong. — Within's, you know. I presume he thought it would be a pleasant close to his political life to be a Cabinet Minister. He is a gentleman in his manners & feelings & his personal integrity is undoubted. My political relations toward the administration are not changed by these appointments, although I am pleased with them.

I have pursued the even tenor of my way between Shunk & Elliklenberg; and sincerely desire that the Convention may pass off harmoniously. Any division there would prove fatal. I consider it almost impossible that either of them can be beaten; but you have better opportunities of knowing public sentiment, than myself.

Van Buren's nomination is inevitable. This being the case, it is the part of wisdom to submit to the necessity & yield our objections to the man in our love for the principles of which he has ever been the steady exponent.

Remember me most kindly to Mr. Frazer. Hoping that you may both enjoy yourselves at the ball tomorrow evening & that you may be prosperous & happy through life, I remain sincerely & respectfully your friend

Col. Reak Frazer. 

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