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Title: Letters from James Buchanan to Jacob Halderman

Date: 1822-1824

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Washington 29th January 1822.

Dear Sir,

In answer to your letter of the 21st Instant I will communicate to you all the information which I could obtain on the subject to which it refers. Upon this information I think you may rely as it comes from an authentic source.

Colonel Thomas is reported on this years list of balances due the Government of the United States to be in arrear \$20,000. His accounts are however not finally settled & it is expected that upon a final settlement that balance will be reduced but how much is very uncertain. It is believed at the War office that Col. Thomas will be able to pay any balance which may be found against him. Mr. Davis his father-in-law is sick: & from all the information which I can obtain it is my opinion you are not in much danger. It would however certainly be proper for you to urge a final settlement.

The report of the second Auditor of ^{the} Treasury containing a list of balances due the United States has this moment been placed in my hands. I will make a copy of that part of it which relates to Col. Thomas for your use.

"James Thomas, late contractor \$20,829.90

Not acknowledged by him. He stood charged, as contractor, during the last three years, with considerable sums on

the books of this office, which, by the passage to his credit of most of his accounts, & certain sums paid into the Treasury by him, has reduced the balance to this sum, against which he exhibits certain claims for provisions lost at Green Bay, for want of proper store houses, &c. which have been suspended for further evidence from the Michigan territory".

Please to present my best respects to Mr. Haldeman & believe me to be your sincere friend

W. Jacob. M. Haldeman. James Buchanan

Washington 29th. January 1822

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Please to present my best respects to Wm. Haldeman & believe me to be your sincere friend

James Buchanan

W. Jacob. M. Haldeman.

Dear Sir

Washington 9 January 1824

In obedience to the request contained in yours of the 2^d. instant I called this morning on the fifth Auditor of the Treasury to ascertain the balance due by Colonel Thomas to the Government. I found that he had settled his accounts on the 1 April last, & that the balance now remaining due is \$15,258⁰⁰/₁₀₀. These accounts have been placed in the hands of the fifth Auditor (W. Pleasonton) with instructions to bring suit for the balance against Col. Thomas & his sureties. As all the sureties except yourself have become insolvent & the Colonel is worth nothing, I fear you will eventually be compelled to pay the money.

I would suggest to you whether you should not visit this City in February. The Supreme Court will then be in session & Mr. Sergeant of Philadelphia will be here. You may then get him to examine the case thoroughly; If if you find no defence can be made I am persuaded the Treasury department will make an arrangement with you that you may have time to pay the money. In the mean time, I have got the promise of Mr. Pleasonton that no suit shall be brought against you till I hear from you.

You will be compelled finally if you contest the case to

employ counsel in Philadelphia & I think you had better at
once retain Mr. Sergeant. He will direct you with honesty
& ability.

Please to present my best respects to Mr. Haldeman & believe
me to be your sincere friend

W. J. M. Haldeman

James Buchanan

N.B. I shall be in Lancaster on the first Monday of February &
remain there two weeks. If you will visit Washington on the 3^d,
Monday of that month, I think I can arrange the business in
such a manner that no suit will be instituted against you before
that time. I shall expect to hear from you soon.

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In obedience to the request contained In yours of the 2d. instant I called this morning on the fifth auditor of the Treasury to ascertain the balance due by Colonel Thomas to the Government. I found that he had settled his accounts on the 1 April last & that the balance now remaining due is \$15⁰⁰258⁰⁰94. These accounts have been placed in the hands of the fifth Auditor (W. Pleasonton) with instructions to bring suit for the balance against Col. Thomas & his sureties. As all the sureties except yourself have become insolvent & the Colonel is worth nothing, I fear you will eventually be compelled to pay the money.

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Please to present my best regards to Mrs. Haldeman & believe me to be your sincere friend.

James Buchanan

Mr. J. M. Haldeman

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Dear Sir /

Washington 29 March 1824

I have received your letter of the 22nd Inst. & communicated its contents to Mr. Pleasonton. He informed me that he would proceed against Col: Thomas according to your request; & he is willing to stay all proceedings against you until that suit shall be determined; provided you will write to him that the balance found due shall be paid. Whether you should write such a letter or not must depend altogether upon the advice of Mr. Sergeant. ^{I can give you none upon the subject.} Mr. Pleasonton would have required nothing more, if I had permitted him to take & file your letter to me. This however I declined doing.

~~Whether you~~

I do not think Mr. Pleasonton intends to proceed against you immediately, whether you write to him or not

I have nothing more to add but that it will always afford me pleasure as a friend to interpose my good offices between you & the Jefferson Accidator.

From your friend

W. Jacob. M. Haldeman.

James Buchanan

Washington 29 March 1824

Dear Sir/

I have received your letter of the 22nd Inst. & communicated its contents to Mr. Pleasonton. He informed me that he would proceed against Col. Thomas according to your request; he is willing to stay all proceedings against you until that suit shall be determined; provided you will write to him that the balance found due shall be paid. Whether you should write such a letter or not must depend altogether upon the advice of Mr. Sergeant. I can give you none upon the subject. Mr. Pleasonton would have required nothing more, if I had permitted him to take and file your letter to me. This however I declined doing.

~~Whether you~~

I do not think Mr. Pleasonton intends to proceed against you immediately whether you write to him or not.

I have nothing more to add but that it will always afford me pleasure as a friend to interpose my good offices between you & the fifth Auditor

from your friend
James Buchanan

Mr. Jacob M. Haldeman