

Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections

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

Documents Online

Title: Letter from James Buchanan to Henry Welsh

Date: 1843-1851

Location: MC 1998.10

Contact:

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

717-245-1399

archives@dickinson.edu

Lancaster 26 December 1843

My dear Sir /

I told General Ramsey in York that I would leave here in the morning of some day this week & dine with you & afterwards go in the evening to Baltimore. That day will be Saturday & I would thank you to tell the General to send his carriage for me on that morning early.

Representations, I find, have been extensively made that Henry A. Muhlenberg was opposed to me. Now although I take no part between Shunk & Muhlenberg; yet it is but common justice to the latter to say that such reports are altogether unfounded. I feel as much confidence in Mr. M's friendship for as in Mr. Shunk's or any other man.

You have doubtless seen my withdrawal. It had become a matter of absolute necessity & stern duty. Besides, I did not wish to lead my friends on a faltering hope or place them ^{longer} in a false position.

Ever your friend

James Buchanan

Henry Welsh Esq

Lancaster 26 December 1843

My dear Sir/

I told General Ramsay in York that I would leave here in the morning of some day this week & dine with you & afterwards go in the evening to Baltimore. That day will be Saturday & I would thank you to tell the General to send his carriage for me on that morning early.

Representations, I find, have been extensively made that Henry A. Muhlenberg was opposed to me. Now although I take no part between Shunk & Muhlenberg; yet it is but common justice to the latter to say that such reports are altogether unfounded. I feel as much confidence in Mr. Mrs friendship for as in Mr. Shunks or any other man.

You have doubtless seen my withdrawal. It had become a matter of absolute necessity & stern duty. Besides, I did not wish to lead my friends on a falorn hope or place them longer in a false position.

Ever your friend
James Buchanan

Henry Welch Esq

Lancaster 27 June 1844.

My dear Sir!

I agree with you that the case of Major
Wentling is a hard one. Had there been time, I should
have attempted to reverse the ~~late~~ report of the Committee. The
testimony was certainly strong in his favor. Mr. Jarnigan is
very severe in his examination of persons; - more so than any
other member of that Committee. - I certainly cannot advise
Major Wentling to abandon his application.

I began to apprehend that the Texas question
would not do so much for us in the South as it ought to do,
we anticipated; but with New York & Pennsylvania, we shall
carry Polk & Dallas, without either North Carolina or Tennessee.

Of the vote of Pennsylvania I entertain but little doubt, though
the Whigs will make the most of the Texas question.

Henry Welsh Esq

Your friend
James Buchanan

Lancaster 27 June 1844

My dear Sir/

I agree with you that the case of Major Wentling is a hard one. had there been time, I should have attempted to reverse the ~~vote~~ report of the Committee. The testimony was certainly strong in his favor. W. Jarnigan is very sever in his examination of [one word illegible]; - more so than any other member of that Committee. I certainly cannot advise Major Wentling to abandon his application.

I being to apprehend that the Texas question will not do so much for us in the South as it ought & as we anticipated; but with New York & Pennsylvania, we shall carry Polk & Dallas, without either North Carolina or Tennessee. Of the vote of Pennsylvania I entertain but little doubt, though the Whigs will me the most of the Tariff question.

Ever yr friend
James Buchanan

Henry Welsh Eq.

Private & Confidential.

Wheatland 13 December 1849.

My dear Sir,

I have understood from a shrewd & reliable friend in the West, that an effort will be made in the Legislature of our State by some of my old enemies to steel officers hostile to me & then give it out as an evidence of my declining popularity. This, I think, cannot be done if the intrigue, should it exist, be exposed.

I am very anxious that Arnold Plumer should be elected Treasurer. His capacity, his popularity & the manner in which he was removed by the Whig majority all conspire in favor of his re-election. Besides he is a shrewd, intelligent friend of mine able & willing to ^{discover &} counteract the intrigues of Miller & Laforte.

Goodrich of Bradford is to be pressed for the Clerkship of the Senate. He is Welmot's other self & I have not a more implacable enemy than Welmot. M'Kinley will be a candidate, with a fair prospect of success. As between him & another good friend I would not interfere; but as against G, I shall do all I can in a quiet way.

Will you help me? Cannot you fix the York Senators & members in favor of Plumer & M'Kinley? I do not know,

Mr. Fulton but trust he will not support Mr. G. & I
should be pleased if he would vote for Mr. Kinley.

from your friend
very respectfully

Henry Welsh Esq

James Buchanan

Private & Confidential.

Wheatland 13 December 1849.

My dear Sir/

I have understood from a shrewd & reliable friend in the West that an effort will be made in the Legislature of our State by some of my old enemies to elect officers hostile to me & then give it out as an evidence of my declining popularity. This, I think, cannot be done if the intrigue, should it exist, be exposed.

I am very anxious that Arnold Plumer should be elected Treasurer. His capacity, his popularity, & the manner in which he was removed by the Whig majority all conspire in favor of his re-election. Besides he is a shrewd, intelligent friend of mine able & willing to discover & counteract the intrigues of Millis & Laporte.

Goodrich of Bradford is to be pressed for the Clerkship of the Senate. He is Wilmot's other self & I have not a more implacable enemy than Wilmot. M'Kinley will be a candidate, with a fair prospect of success. As between him & another good friend I would not interfere; but as against G. I shall do all I can in a quiet way.

Will you help me? Cannot you fix the York Senator & members in favor of Plumer & M'Kinley? I do not know

[Page Break]

Mr. Fulton but trust he will not support Mr. G. & I should be pleased if he would vote for M'Kinley,

from your friend
very respectfully
James Buchanan

Henry Welsh Esq.

Wheatland 1 January 1850.

My dear Sir /

Many thanks to you for your kind letter & for the agreeable information which it contains. I feel truly grateful to you & my other good friends for your exertions to defeat an unprincipled & faction as ever disgraced & endangered the Democratic party of Pennsylvania. I hope you will complete the good work by electing firm & reliable Democrats to the Reading Convention. The faction are becoming desperate in consequence of my brightening prospects in other States, & I shall not be astonished should they make an attempt to Reading to do me injury. Their policy now is to convince the people of the other States that I am weak at home & thus operate against me. From present appearances Douglas will be nominated almost by acclamation; & at this I heartily rejoice.

The old gentleman at Harrisburg, concerning whom you inquire, has always been decidedly & warmly my friend. His brother Henry was devoted to me; & so are now his sons at the furnace near Columbus. I know but little of J. S. Haldeman; but in the calculations of the friends of Cameron he is expected to vote for him Caucus or no Caucus. I hope this may prove to be without foundation.

Please to remember me gratefully & kindly to your son, Mr. Small, Mr. Donnell, General Ahl, General Stable, Mr. Potts, Col. Jameson, Mr. Albright & my other friends. Wishing you many a happy new year

I remain very respectfully your friend

Henry Welsh Esq

James Buchanan

Wheatland 1 January 1850.

My dear Sir/

Many thanks to you for your kind letter & for the agreeable information which it contains. I feel truly grateful to you & my other good friends for your exertions to defeat as unprincipled a faction as ever disgraced & endangered the Democratic party of Pennsylvania. I hope you will complete the good work by electing firm true & reliable Democrats to the Reading Convention. The faction are becoming desperate in consequence of my brightening prospects in other States, & I shall not be astonished should they make an attempt at Reading to do me injury. Their policy now is to convince the people of the other States that I am weak at home & thus operate against me. From present appearances Bigler will be nominated almost by acclamation; & at this I heartily rejoice.

The old gentleman at Harrisburg, concerning whom you inquire, has always been decidedly & warmly my friend. His brother Henry was devoted to me; & so are now his sons at the furnace near Columbia. I know but little of J. S. Haldeman; but in the calculations of the friends of Cameron he is expected to vote for him caucus or no caucus. I hope this may prove to be without foundation.

Please to remember me gratefully & kindly to your son, Mr. Small, Mr. Donnell, General Ahl, General Stahle, Mr. Potts, Col: Jameson., Mr. Albright & my other friends. Wishing you many a happy new year

I remain very respectfully your friend

James Buchanan

Henry Welsh Esq

Wheatland, near Lancaster 26 Dec: 1850.

My dear Sir,

I did not observe, until last evening, that your Delegate elections in York County will take place on Saturday next. I trust that the County Convention may not pass Cass resolutions. The advices which I receive from Washington, as well as different parts of the South convince me that he is out of the question. My own prospects were so bright as at the present moment. All depends upon Pennsylvania: & under these circumstances, I should feel greatly mortified if the Democracy of old York, my neighbouring County where I am so well known, should again repudiate me.

Either I shall be nominated, or a new man. I will know & justly appreciate your friendship & trust that this may be brought into active operation to defeat another Cameronian attempt. Had I known sooner of the Delegate elections, I should have written to some friends throughout your County. Gardner Furnip would have taken off his coat for me. — When am I to be gratified with your long expected visit? I should be most happy to see you.

Henry Welsh Esq

from your friend
very respectfully,
James Buchanan

P.S. I open my letter to say that I learned in Philadelphia, that Cameron

Frazar & Co will endeavor to have Cuff resolutions passed at the Reading Convention. In this they will not succeed, though they may get a number of votes from the fact that several of the delegates, at an early period were elected without any suspicion that such an attempt would be made. Still this will show to other States that there is a division in Pennsylvania & that is their object. I hope good men may be sent from York County.

Mr. John Buchanan
Dec 26/51

75-
York

Wheatland, near Lancaster 26 Dec: 1850

My dear Sir/

I did not observe, until last evening, that your Delegate elections in York County will take place on Saturday next. I trust that the County Convention may not pass Cass resolutions. The advices which I receive from Washington, as well as different parts of the South convince me that he is out of the question. My own prospects never were so bright as at the present moment. All depends upon Pennsylvania: & under these circumstances, I should feel greatly mortified if the Democracy of Old York, my neighbouring County where I am so well known, should again repudiate me. Either I shall be nominated or a new man. I will know & justly appreciate your friendship & trust that this may be brought into active exertion to defeat another Cameronian attempt. Had I know sooner of the Delegate elections, I should have written to some friends throughout your County. Gardner Furniss would have taken off his coat for me. – When am I to be gratified with your long expected visit? I should be happy to see you.

from your friend
very respectfully,
James Buchanan

Henry Welsh Esq

P.S. I open my letter to say that I learned in Philadelphia, that Cameron

[Page Break]

Frazer & Co. will endeavor to have Cass resolutions passed in the Reading Convention. In this they will not succeed, though they may get a number of votes from the fact that several of the delegates, at an early period were elected without any suspicion that such an attempt would be made. Still this will show to other States that there is a division in Pennsylvania & that is their object. I hope good men may be sent from York County.

My dear Sir/

I received your letter of the 21st & on the same ^{day} wrote a strong letter to Mr. Banks in favor of Colonel Bailey. As it was the first & only recommendation with which I have troubled him, I hope it may have some weight.

I did not write to Mr. Brawley, because I know he was not in Philadelphia; & I really have already undertaken him so much in behalf of Col. Bailey that I dislike to do more. I am, however, exceedingly anxious for his success & if you & Mr. Glassbrenne believe a letter from me would be of any service to him, I shall write one to Hanisburg which he may find there on his arrival from Meadville.

When will you, and our other friends in York pay me your long projected visit. Do fix some day after the middle of next week & come without reference to our good friend Gordon. He has so much business & his movements are so uncertain, that no calculation can be made upon them.

We are destined to have a severe conflict next Fall. The Whigs will put forth all their

Strength & spend immense sums of money to
make a permanent conquest of Pennsylvania.
The flag of Scott & Johnston will be at their mast-
heads. In order to secure our success against
them, we must not only have Bigler, but a
popular & honest candidate for Canal Commissioner
& an able & well esteemed ticket for Supreme Judges.
How much the death of poor Beatty is to be
regretted! He would, I think, have been
nominated.

If Cameron & Co should succeed in
getting Leavitt nominated, ~~it~~ ^{regarding the} ~~is~~ ^{proposing a}
~~Caps resolution~~ Lancaster regular delegates &
in proposing a Caps Resolution through the Readers
Convention, against the will of a large majority
of the Democrats of the State, I shall fear the
result. It will then be Scott & Johnston against
Caps & Bigler. You may rest assured there are
breakers ahead. I have no doubt Cameron is
pledged to Caps to carry such a resolution; & the
old gentleman, amidst his ruined political
fortunes, is buoyed up with the hope that
Pennsylvania, by leading off in his favor at this
early period, will secure him the prize on which
he has set his heart.
Yours friend
very respectfully,
Henry Welch Esq James Buchanan

[22 April 1851]

My dear Sir/

I received your letter of the 21st & on the same day wrote a strong letter to Mr. Banks in favor of Colonel Bailey. As it was the first & only recommendation with which I have troubled him, I hope it may have some weight.

I did not write to Mr. Brawley, because I knew he was not in Philadelphia; & I really have already importuned him so much in behalf of Col: Bailey that I dislike to do more. I am, however, exceedingly anxious for his success & if you & Mr. Glossbrenner believe a letter from me would be of any service to him, I shall write one to Harrisburg which he may find there on his arrival from Meadville.

When will you, and our other friends in York pay ire your long projected visit. Do fix some day after the middle of next week & come without reference to our good friend Gordon. He has so much business & his movements are so uncertain that no calculation can be made upon them.

We are destined to have a severe conflict next Fall. The Whigs will put forth all their

[Page Break]

strength & spend immense sums of money to make a permanent conquest of Pennsylvania. The flag of Scott & Johnston will be at their mast head. In order to secure our success against them, we must not only have Bigler, but a popular & honest candidate for Canal Commissioner an able & esteemed ticket for Supreme Judges. How much the death of poor Beatly is to be regretted! He would, I think, have been nominated.

If Cameron & Co should succeed in getting Scaright nominated, & in ~~passing a Cass resolution~~ rejecting the Lancaster regular delegates & in passing a Cass resolution through the Reading Convention, against the will of a large Majority of the Democrats of the State, I shall fear the result. It will then be Scott Johnston against Cass & Bigler. You may rest assured there are breakers ahead. I have no doubt Cameron is pledged to Cass to carry such a resolution: & the old gentleman, amidst his ruined political fortune, is buoyed up with the hope that Pennsylvania, by leading off in his favor at this early period, will secure him the prize on which he has set his heart.

from your friend
very respectfully
James Buchanan

Henry Welsh Esq.