

Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections

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

Documents Online

Title: Letters from Andrew Curtin to Eli Slifer, 1860-63

Date: 1860-1863

Location: MC 2003.4, B3, F11

Contact:

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

717-245-1399

archives@dickinson.edu

Ballymore Dec 29 1860

Hon Eli Sligo

It affords me great pleasure and satisfaction to offer you the office of Secy. of the Court.

I am induced to place myself in relations of confidence with you not only from your talents in the place, and the estimation in which you are held by the people of the State, but from our friendly personal relations.

I will confer with you (should it be your pleasure to accept the office) on the subject of the Def. Secy. Court and the other officers in your gift.

It is proper that I should say that I am clear that under the laws the Legislature must elect a successor to you in five days after notice of your resignation - There can be no waiver of the law, and as I am sure you would I could not permit a trust

of so much importance to the people to
be held in strict violation of the letter
and spirit of the act of assembly -

I have provided that there
will be no receipt for your presence here as
I will be in Birmingham on Saturday before
my migration - If in the mean time
that arrangement should be changed
I will write you -

Yours truly

H. C. Covert

Bellefonte Dec 29 1860
Hon Eli Slifer

It affords me great pleasure and satisfaction to offer you the office of Sec. of the Comth.

I am inclined to place myself in relations of confidence with you not only from your fitness for the place, and the estimation in which you are held by the people of the state, but from our friendly personal relations.

I will confer with you (should it be your pleasure to accept the office) on the subject of the Dep. Sec. Comth and the other offices in your [illegible].

It is proper that I should say that I am clear that under the laws the legislation must elect a successor to you in five days after notice of your resignation. There can be no [wavings?] of the law, and as I am now [illegible] I could not permit a trust

[page break]

of so much importance to the people to be held in direct violation of the letter and spirit of the act of assembly.

I have provided that there will be necessity for your presence here as I will be in Harrisburg on Saturday before my inauguration. If in the mean time that arrangement should be changed I will write you.

Yours Truly
A. G. Curtin

My dear Sir
I am in some bound to
propose Wilcut for Secy. - He must
be elected for the month for the case of
war at 7 months being aisting to present
my election - If he can be elected
by any fair means he should be
We can rely on him as a true
man and not afraid we cannot
on Cleveland - I write McFlinn on the
subject ^{last week} Will you see him and
Henry and others of our immediate
friends and elect him if you can -
But suppose it is of the first in-
stance to us all, and I have
no doubt of the result if you all
try it - You can use any means
ways to your extent and I will
come down if you think it prudent
I would have been here with
great reluctance but will do
about anything to secure this
point - Will you please to see
Wilcut at once and confer with
him - He will see you if the

is anything in the course of our
alliance but to be once more
launched. I have letters to that
effect this evening.

Your Well-wisher
a few others had better send
and in what can be done and
write me by return mail to
whom I shall write and what
do.

Yrs. &c.

A. G. Lunt

21 Dec 1860

P.S. There is no force in the sugges-
tion made by some that the expec-
tant for the South should be silent
they should be suffered to show any
other candidate. If you feel to
elect him you will see agents
it when too late.

A. G. L.

My dear Sir

I am in honor bound to prefer Wilmot for Senator. He sent delegates from the North for me and was at Harrisburg assisting to promote my election. If he can be elected by any fair means he should be.

We can rely on him as a true man, and rest assured we cannot on Cameron. I wrote McClure on the subject last month. Will you see him and Finney and others of our immediate friends and elect him if you can.

Rest assured it is of the first importance to us all, and I have no doubt of the result if you all turn in. You can use my patronage to some extent and I will come down if you think it prudent.

I would leave here now with great reluctance, but will do almost anything to secure this point. Will you please to see Wilmot at once and confer with him. He will tell you if there

[page break]

is anything in the rumor of an alliance between him and Gen. Cameron. I have letters to that effect this evening.

You, McClure, Finney and a few others had better meet and see what can be done and write me by return mail to whom I shall write and what do.

Yours Truly,
A. G. Curtin
31 Dec. 1860

P.S. There is no sense in the suggestion made by some that the excitement from the South hinders Wilmot. Why should he suffer more than any other candidate. If you fail to elect him you will all regret it when too late

A. G. C.

Jan 1861

My dear Sir

Your letter
will, what you have
done merits my
cordial approbation
We had better live
in peace and let
our swords enjoy the
bribe of the victory
if we can -

I am gratified
that Thomas merits
your approbation -

I write Mr. [unclear]
on the subject and
after you see him
you had better

appoint Thomas and
announce it at once

We must look
out for a competent
chief clerk -

I will be in
Amherst on Satur-
day for the afternoon
train. You can
come up in the
evening and meet
me at Weymouth -

Better with Puri-
ance to be on that train.
Whitcomb is one man
and put him in if you
can - I leave the matter
with my friends -

Yours truly
W. C. Brewster

P.S. Please receive
the enclosed to
Mr. Lawrence

My Dear Sir

Your letter rec'd. what you have done merits my unofficial approbation. We had better time in [place?] and let our friends reaping the benefits of the victory if some can.

I am gratified that Thomas wants your approbation.

I wrote McClure on the subject and after you see him you had better

[page break]

appoint Thomas and announce it at once.

We must look out for a competent chief clerk.

I will be in Lewistown on Saturday for the afternoon train. You can come up in the noon train and meet me at Mifflin.

Better write [Plainance?] to be on that train.

Wilmont is our man and put him in if you can. I bear the matter with my friends.

Yr Trly

A. G. Curtin

[page break]

P.S. Please forward the enclosed to Mr. [Hanecure].

Harrisburg

July 26 - 1861

Wm. E. Miller

Dear Sir

If you can make
any arrangement to give Wallace
then the account clothing in
your office I will be much
obliged - He has always been one
of my warmest friends and his
family supported me zealously

You are aware of my
anxiety on this subject and
will oblige me much if
you can give me the
pleasure

Yrs truly

Abolentia

Harrisburg
Jany 26 1861
Hon E. Slifer
Dear Sir

If you can make any arrangement to give Wallace Kerr the vacant clerkship in your office. I will be much obliged. He has always been one of my warmest friends and his family supported me zealously.

You are aware of my anxiety on this subject and will oblige me much if you can give Mr. Kerr the place.

Yrs Tly
A. G. Curtin

Atlantic City:

August 5 1861.

How Eli Sides
Secretary of State
Harrisburg

Dear Sir:

You and
the gentlemen in the Military
Department, understand the
history of the Bentz contract,
and the difficulty about the
Overcoats up to the time of
my departure from Harrisburg.

It has now assumed ^{immediate} ~~urgent~~ ~~dictatorial~~
phase, that requires
settlement.

Gen: Biddle has
given notice to Mr Thor Webster
that he will not receive the Over
Coats made by him under
his contract with the State, which
notice, although bearing the name
of Gen Biddle, is in the handwriting
(signature and all) of Mr Bentz.
He has also given notice by a

2
I refer to the Inspectors, not to
inspect any more of the Coats made
by Mr Webster, a copy of which
was served upon him, by Mr
Snyder, one of the Inspectors.

Gen Biddle has acted under a
misapprehension, inasmuch as the
Coats ^{were} made faster, than the Inspec-
tors were ready to inspect and
receive them, of which fact, Mr
Webster, has abundant and conclu-
-sive proof. - You are fully aware
of my anxiety to protect Gen Bid-
-dle in the contract imprudently
made with Mr Benty, and but
for ^{the advice of} those who surround me, and
enjoy my confidence, I should have
assumed the responsibility of
relieving him, by placing myself
in his stead, on the second. -

To declare now, that Mr
Webster had forfeited his contract,
in order to let in Benty in preference,
would be so unjust, if not perfidious,
that it cannot be permitted.

Whiter, as you know, I have
always been willing to sustain

3

gentlemen in the various Departments
of the Government, in the discharge
of their duties, I will not be made
a party to a transaction of such
a character. - Mr Webster will
visit Warrenton tomorrow evening
and I trust justice will
be done him at once, without
the necessity for my immediate
return to Warrenton. The enclosed
advertisement has only appeared
in the Telegraph, and in no paper
in Phil^a; which must be an omission
on the part of Gen Biddle, as
heretofore all advertisements ~~from~~
for contracts for Clothing, have
appeared in papers published in
Phil^a and Pittsburg. - You will
please have this subject, and the
letting of contracts made on
Friday last supervised by Mr
Meredith. - I have some fears

4.
that Mr. Smythe, one of the Inspectors,
is in complicity with Mr. Bentz;
and Mr. Cochran should ~~be~~ therefore
be consulted in reference to the subject.

If you desire the knowledge and
advice of Mr. Wright on this subject,
telegraph him at once.

I wish ~~you~~, if possible
to explain Gen. Piddell from the
complications, in which he is involved
by Bentz; ~ and I desire you, to
have the inspection of the clothing
furnished by Mr. Webster, resumed
on Tuesday, so that the volunteers
may at once have the benefit of
the preparation made for them.

I shall expect to hear from
you on Tuesday by telegraph.

My health is much
improved, and I am so much
benefitted by my sojourn here
that I would like to stay as long
as possible.

Yours truly
A. C. Carter

P.S.

I presume, you of course
will wish that I wish you
to consult the gentlemen in the
Military Department as well as
Mr Meredith, but as there may
be no misapprehension, I beg
you to lay the subject, with the
contents of this letter before the
gentlemen of my staff.

Chas. Co -

Mr. C. Co. Secretary
P. S. Co. Secretary

Atlantic City:
August 5 1861
Hon Eli Slifer

Secretary of State
Harrisburg
Dear Sir

You and the gentlemen in the Military Department, understand the history of the Bentz contract: and the difficulty about the overcoats up to the time of my departure from Harrisburg. It has now assumed a place that requires immediate settlement.

Gen Biddle has given notice to Mr. Thos Webster that he will not receive the Overcoats made by him under his contract with the state, which notice; although leaving the name of Gen. Biddle, is in the hand writing, (signature and all,) of Mr. Bentz.

He has also given notice by a

[page break]

telegram to the Inspectors, not to inspect any more of the coats made by Mr. Webster, a copy of which was served upon him, by Mr. Snyder, one of the Inspectors.

Gen. Biddle has acted under a misapprehension, in as much as the coats were made faster, than the Inspectors were ready to inspect and receive them, of which fact, Mr. Webster, was abundant and conclusive proof. You are fully aware of my anxiety to protect Gen. Biddle in the contract imprudently made with Mr. Bentz, and but for the advice of those who surround me, and enjoy my confidence, I would have assumed the responsibility of relieving him, by placing myself in his stead, on the second.

To declare now, that Mr. Webster had forfeited his contract, in order to [let?] in Bentz in preference would be so unjust, if not perfidious, that it cannot be permitted.

[Whilst?], as you know, I have always been willing to sustain

[page break]

gentlemen in the various Departments of the Government, in the discharge of their duties, will not be made a party to a transaction of such a character. - Mr. Webster will visit Harrisburg tomorrow evening and I trust justice will be done him as once, without the necessity for my immediate return to Harrisburg. The enclosed advertisement has only appeared in the telegraph and is on paper in Phila; which must be our mission on the part of Gen Biddle, as heretofore all advertisements ~~fewer~~ for contracts for clothing, have appeared in paper published in Phila and Pittsburg. You will please have this subject, and the setting of contracts made on Friday last supervised by Mr. Meredith. I have some fears

[page break]

that Mr. Snyder, one of the Inspectors is in complicity with Mr. Bentz: and Mr. Cochrane should be therefore be consulted in reference to the subject.

If you desire the knowledge and advice of Mr. Wright on this subject, telegraph him at once.

I wish you if possible to extricate Gen Biddle from the complications, in which he is involved by Bentz: and I desire you, to have the inspection of the clothing furnished by Mr. Webster, [illegible] on Tuesday, so that the volunteers may at once have the benefit of the preparation made for them.

I shall expect to hear from you on Tuesday by telegraph.

My heart is much injured, and I am so much benefited by my sojourn here that I would like to stay as long as possible.

Yrs Trly
A. G. Curtin

[page break]

P.S.

I presume, you of course will infer that I wish you to consult the gentlemen in the Military Department as well as Mr. Meredith, but as there may be no misapprehension, I beg you to lay the subject, with the contents of this letter before the gentlemen of my staff.

A.G.C

Dear Miss
The notice
will do my well and
I make no addition to
it -

I am receiving my
action treatments and am
not able to move about
but trying to get well
I take it all without
complaint - If I
cannot get any before
Monday or Tuesday
would it not be
well for Pease to
come over for a
day and let me

Am over on to talk
with - Sunday will
be a good day -

I am repairing the
Pumpkin's car into
a riding body and
it will do good

Tom on head
cutting to the Bush-
tubs and we after the
ward -

Answer the note
instructing you
over -

Mr Hull
and Howard's body
if it can be had

Write me - I can't
write as I am a little
sore - you

Dear Slifer

The notice will do very well and I make no addition to it.

I am receiving very active treatment and am not able to move about but anything to get well.

I take it all without complaining. If I cannot get any [illegible] Monday or Tuesday would it not be well for [Russel?] to come over for a day and let me

[page break]

[illegible] ever [our?] to talk with - Sunday could be a good day.

I am organizing the Pennsylvanians here into a relief body and it will do good.

Some one had better go to the Bucktails and see after the wounded.

[illegible] the vote [illegible] if you can.

You should send Hoards body if it can be had.

Write me I cant write as I am a little [illegible].

Yrs

A.C.G

Atlantic and Ohio Telegraph Lines,

DIRECT COMMUNICATION WITH

PHILADELPHIA, HARRISBURG, PITTSBURG,
AND ALL INTERMEDIATE STATIONS,

CONNECTING WITH THE

NATIONAL TELEGRAPH LINES THROUGHOUT THE UNION.

PHILADELPHIA BROTHERS PHS.

Dated at Bedford Aug. 9 1862

To Son Eli Dizer

I received your
last dispatch and from
what you say it is
evident that I should
be at Harrisburg it is
too late now to reach
any train today or tonight.

I can leave here
this evening or tomorrow
morning and reach
Hallidayburg by noon if
you ask Scott he will
give me a locomotive
& car from there - tell
him it is important
that I should be in

Harrisburg and that I will
meet the car so as to be
there tomorrow afternoon
I am perfectly well and
have felt as though I
should be in Harrisburg
for several days past. answer
immediately after you hear
from Scott. McKaynolds
is in office waiting =

A. G. Curtin

114/233 bell

A. G. Curtin
Aug 9 1862.

Bedford Aug. 9 1862
Hon Eli Slifer

I received your last dispatch and from what you say it is evident that I should be at Harrisburg it is too late now to reach any train today or tonight.

I can leave here this evening or tomorrow morning and reach Hollidaysburg by noon if you ask Scott he will give me a locomotive & car from there. Tell him it is important that I should be in

[page break]

Harrisburg and that I will meet the car so as to be there tomorrow afternoon. I am perfectly well and have felt as though I should be in Harrisburg for several days past. Answer immediately after you hear from Scott. McReynolds is in office waiting.

A. G. Curtin

Atlantic and Ohio Telegraph Lines,

DIRECT COMMUNICATION WITH

PHILADELPHIA, HARRISBURG, PITTSBURG,
AND ALL INTERMEDIATE STATIONS,

CONNECTING WITH THE

NATIONAL TELEGRAPH LINES THROUGHOUT THE UNION.

WELLS, GARDNER & CO. PROP.

Dated at Bedford Springs Aug 9th 1862
To Hon E. Slifer

I am well enough to
Come but It is too late
for Stage meet evening
train - If very important
will try to make train
tonight at Hollidaysburg
Intend to go on Monday
but Can go tomorrow
let me know if important
I should come and I will
in quickest possible time
52-109 Coll A. G. Curtin

Bedford Springs August 9th 1862
Hon E. Slifer

I am well enough to come but it is too late for stage meet evening train. If very important will try to make train tonight at Hollidaysburg. Intend to go on Monday but can go tomorrow. Let me know if important I should come and I will in quickest possible time.

A. G. Curtin

Weymouth 18

Hon Elihu

Secy Commonwealth

I find every
thing here in confusion
and if it should rain
tonight it is hard to
tell what will occur
No arrangements for
Commissary or Quarter
masters duties and the
men are encamped or
rather on the ground
about the town —
The Grey Reserves

2

have gone to Boonsboro
in same condition and
the Regiments here refuse
to march -

I send Wright
to the army where Genl
Reynolds now is to explain
and will remain until
his return. If the army
requires immediate support
as I am here there is but
one course to pursue
I must go along and ask
Men to volunteer to follow
me - The battle yesterday
did not result in a
decisive success from

all I can learn I arrived
 at one O'clock & I
 will await return of
 night which will be six
 hours - unless we can
 get system at once better
 stop men from coming or
 hold them in Harrisburg

I will get a room
 and try what I can
 do - I'll tell Mrs Curtin
 I will be home tomorrow
 evening - Day nothing
 about my going to Army -
 A G Curtin

Hagerstown
Hon Eli Slifer
Secy Commonwealth

I find everything here in confusion and if it should rain tonight it is hard to tell what will occur.

No arrangements for commissary or quarter masters duties and the men are encamped or rather on the ground about the town.

The Grey Reserves

[page break]

have gone to Boonstown in same condition and the Regiments here refuse to march.

I send Wright to the army when Genl Reynolds now is to explain and will remain until his return. If the army requires immediate support as I am here there is but one course to pursue.

I must go along and ask men to volunteer to follow me. The battle yesterday did not result in a decisive success from

[page break]

all I can learn I arrived at one 1 o'clock & will await return of Wright which will be six hours. unless we can get system at once better stop men from coming or hold them in Harrisburg.

I will get a room and try what I can do. Tell Mrs Curtin I will be home tomorrow evening. Say nothing about my going to Army.

A. G. Curtin

By Telegraph.

From Harrisburg. dated November 1862.

Received at Lewisburg _____ at 7: o'clock P. M.

Addressed to Com. Eli Slifer

Come down so as to be here
early Monday as possible.
General Thomas is here
to take drafted men for
old Regiments, and will
begin Monday.

A. G. Curtin

Paid.

Harrisburg November 1862
Hon Eli Slifer

Come down so as to be here early Monday as possible. General Thomas is here to take drafted men for old Regiments, and will begin Monday.

A. G. Curtin

Paid

Mr. E. Slifer

Wash 5

Call off
12/4

Frick & Armstrong will
be restored. Would have been this
morning if report of proceedings here
will wait until tomorrow to see it done.
Ferry will be delivered. Do not believe
business in Colure anxious for will succeed
it is too much deferred. A. J. Curtis

Wash. 5
Hon E. Slifer

Frick & Armstrong will be restored would have been this morning if report of proceedings here will wait until tomorrow to see it done.

Ferry will be delivered. Do not believe business McClure anxious for will succeed it is too much deferred.

A. G. Curtin