

Charles Yancey of Albemarle

&

Thomas Jefferson

Selected Correspondence

1807-1825

By

Kenneth B. Yancey

2013

Introduction

In the late 1730s Robert Yancey, son of Charles Yancey, Sr. married Temperance Dumas, daughter of Jeremiah Dumas, a Huguenot immigrant. Both of these families had settled along the Little River in Hanover County, Virginia. From early land patents we know that the Yancey family lived on the north side of the Little River and the Dumas family lived on the south side of the river. In 1742 the area of their homesteads became part of the newly formed Louisa County.

Robert and Temperance had four known children: Martha whose birthdate is unknown; Charles born May 10, 1741; Robert born about 1743; and Jeremiah born March 9, 1745. Robert, Sr. died in 1746 in his thirties. As a result, some of the children were raised by other family members, and Temperance remarried.

Sons Charles and Robert married Crawford sisters Mary and Ann, respectively. Jeremiah and his bride, Margaret Mullins of Mullins/Maupin Huguenot ancestry, settled a bit further west in Albemarle County.

Son Robert, better known as Reverend Robert, and his wife Ann had a son, **Charles Yancey**, born March 22, 1770. This Charles became a large landowner of over twenty thousand acres. He served in both the House and Senate of the Virginia General Assembly representing Buckingham County. His political career spanned over forty years and he has been referred to as “The Wheel Horse of Democracy”. He was commonly known as **Major** Charles Yancey.

Son Jeremiah was a planter and landowner on the Moormans River at Bucks Elbow in Albemarle County. He and his wife Margaret also had a son, **Charles Yancey** born March 13, 1766. This Charles became a tavern owner, mill operator, county sheriff and, like his first cousin Charles above, served as a member of the Virginia General Assembly in the House of Delegates. This Charles represented Albemarle County and was commonly known as **Colonel** Charles Yancey.

One of the motivations of this presentation is to correct the historical record regarding which of these two Charles Yanceys served in the War of 1812. Secondly, each Charles engaged in correspondence with Thomas Jefferson, but it is my feeling that the enduring relationship between Jefferson and Charles of Albemarle has been overshadowed by the long and distinguished political career of Charles of Buckingham. Hopefully, this effort will provide some balance to that perception.

As youngsters, each Charles lived during the Revolutionary War. As young men, they knew Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe, not only as political leaders, but as neighbors and acquaintances. They experienced the War of 1812 and served as elected representatives of their counties in the Legislature of Virginia. They were among the first generations to wrestle with the governance of our nation, at the state level, following independence. They helped pave the way on such matters as currency, banks, roads, river navigation, public colleges, state and national defense and led by example on the matter of citizen participation.

Hopefully, the following letters will increase our appreciation for the relationship that existed between Charles Yancey of Albemarle and Thomas Jefferson. For information on accessing these and more letters online, see Editor’s Note on last page 38.

Kenneth B. Yancey 3rd great-grandson of
Charles Yancey of Albemarle

Table of Contents

Date	Letter	Page
1. 28 Mar 1807	Charles Yancey of Albemarle to President Thomas Jefferson	4
2. 22 Aug 1814	Yancey informs Jefferson of his command of the 1st Virginia Regiment during the War of 1812	6
3. 23 Oct 1814	Yancey informs Jefferson of his presence in the legislature	10
4. 26 Sep 1815	Yancey informs Jefferson why the petition to build a college in Albemarle did not pass the House of Delegates	16
5. 15 Oct 1815	Jefferson's response to Yancey regarding the college petition	17
6. 24 Dec 1815	Yancey informs Jefferson of multiple legislative issues including a call for a convention, banking, and navigation	18
7. 6 Jan 1816	Jefferson responds to Yancey and discusses banking, debt, navigation, currency, and the Central College	24
8. 5 Oct 1821	Yancey writes Jefferson from Yancey Mills regarding his brother, Joel Yancey, in Kentucky - Jefferson's transcribed response is included	32
9. 7 May 1825	Yancey informs Jefferson of his visit to New York, New York and his witness to a new hoe invention for Jefferson to evaluate	34
10. 17 Jan 1816	Yancey informs Jefferson that the petition for the Central College passed the House of Delegates and he was seeking Senate support	36
11. 1 Oct 1861	President Abraham Lincoln authorized the award of 80 acres of land for Charles Yancey's (of Albemarle) service as Commander of the 1st Virginia Regiment during the War of 1812	37

C1807, Mar. 28

March 23th 1807.

to Thomas Jefferson President of the United States.

Dear Sir. Yours of the 8th instant has come to hand by
last mail; & I have fully complied with Col^o Bar-
dolph's request. it was with pleasure. I could serve him
in such a small matter but with regret he could
no longer serve us in Congress. I have always thou-
-ght him possessed of that zeal & attachment to his
Constituents that ought to characterize every representa-
tive of a free people. do me the favor to read this letter
to him. Tell him. A friend Baptist Woods is a
Candidate for the County. ~~and~~ I suppose he has
been informed of our worthy fellow Citizen W. C. M
Cholair offering to supply his place. permits me to
make use of this opportunity, of assuring you of my
full & entire approbation of your conduct. Since you
have been engaged in the important office of repre-
sentative of the American Nation. I be assured of my
high consideration & esteem.

Charles Yancey
Attorney

March 28th 1807

To Thomas Jefferson President of the United States

Dear Sir,

Yours of the 18th instant has come to hand in last mail and I have fully complied with Col. Randolphs request. It was with pleasure I could serve him in such a small matter, but with regret he could no longer serve us in Congress. I have always thought him possessed of that zeal and attachment to his Constituents that ought to characterize every representative of a free people. Do me the favor to read this letter to him and tell him old friend Baptist Woods is a Candidate for the county. I suppose he has been informed of our worthy fellow Citizen W.C. Nicholas offering to supply his place. Permit me to make use of this opportunity of assuring you of my full and entire approbation of your conduct since you have been engaged in the important office of representative of the American nation and be assured of my high consideration and esteem.

Charles Yancey

Albemarle

Note: The distinct signature of Col. Charles Yancey of Albemarle at the end of this letter helps distinguish his letters from those of his first cousin, Maj. Charles Yancey of Buckingham. Both served in the Virginia General Assembly and many of their letters in the Jefferson collection are difficult to distinguish except by signature.

camp Fairfield 22nd Aug^r 1814D^r Sir

I perform a duty grateful to my feelings
in communicating to you our Military Move-
ments or operations since our arrival at this
Place. we were organized into two Reg^t one into
and others' more officers were called out, under
the requisition from the State, than what are
necessary under the requisition Adapted by the
U. S. which gave distinction to the Supernumer-
aries yet like good Citizens, they have honorably
acquiesced under the arrangement. & thereby
give high evidence of public virtue. I have
the honor to inform you that I command the
1st Reg^t & Col. Belue of Buckingham the
2nd with the officers & men under my Com-
mand, I am perfectly satisfied, They will do
their duty; & acquit themselves with honor
If met by the for. Co. Edward Garland who

Camp Fairfield 22nd August 1814

Dear Sir

I perform a duty grateful to my feelings
in communicating to you our Military move-
ments or operations since our arrival at this
place. We were organized into two Regts. on instr(uctions)
and altho(ugh) more officers were called out under
the requisition from the State, than what are
necessary under the requisition adopted by the U.S.
which gave disquietude to the (___ ? ___)
(___ ? ___). Yet like good citizens they have honorably
acquiesced under the arrangement & thereby
given high evidence of public virtue. I have
the honor to inform you that I command the
1st Regiment & Col. Belue¹ of Buckingham the
2nd. With the officers & men under my com-
mand I am perfectly satisfied. They will do
their duty & acquit themselves with honor
if met by this foe. Col. Edward Garland who

¹Col. Belue is elsewhere recorded as Lt. Col. Thomas Ballowe of Buckingham

Note: Prior to the discovery of this letter, it was assumed that Maj. Charles Yancey of **Buckingham** was the commander of the 1st VA Regt. during the War of 1812. That error resulted from an assumption regarding a War Department letter dated Nov. 17, 1925 to Wm. Shepard of Guinea Mills, VA. That letter stated that Col. Yancey did serve and at one point was "Absent on the Legislature". Although Charles Yancey of Buckingham had a long and distinguished career in the VA legislature, he was not in the legislature during the 1814/1815 or 1815/1816 sessions. However, Charles Yancey of **Albemarle** was a member of the legislature at that time. Moreover, thanks to the research of Dennis Yancey, the record of the Bounty Land awarded for this Charles Yancey's role as the commander of the 1st VA Regiment was found in the General Land Office of the federal government. Dated 1 Oct 1861 the posthumous award of 80 acres was granted to his wife Jane Yancey. The warrant was signed by President Abraham Lincoln. See page 37.

Yancey C. Fairfield Aug. 22. 14.

recd Aug. 26

was a Soldier of 76, come down as my adjutant
 on his arrival here, he found that Station requir-
 ed, more activity, labor, & caution, than a man
 of his advanced age could perform. has quietly
 returned to his family. & his place is filled by Capt.
 B. Stanford. an officer of merit. who comes well
 Recommended to me, these instances of devotion
 to our Country must be pleasing to its friends
 & I am sure to no one more than yourself.
 we expect shortly to remove to the Holly Spring
 when it is said, the Water is better than it
 here altho' our men considering our mi-
 litarious had but few on the Sick List. I sh-
 be happy as I am fully persuaded that you feel
 a deep Interest in every thing which relates to
 our Common Country, whose liberties you were
 so instrumental in establishing, that in the
 days of more important avocations you would
 drop me a line. & be assured that I shall feel
 high Gratification, from time to time to give you such
 Intelligence as may be entitled to your notice I shall
 the honor to be respectfully Your M^o Obed^t Chas Yancey

was a soldier of 76, came down as my adjutant. On his arrival here, he found that station required, more activity, labor, & exertion than a man of his advanced age could perform. has quietly returned to his family & his place is filled by Captain B. Stanford, an officer of merit, who comes well recommended to me. These instances of devotion to our country must be pleasing to its friends & I am sure to no one more than yourself. We expect shortly to remove to the Holly Spring where it is said, the water is better than it is here altho(ugh) our men considering our n(um)ber have had but five on the sick list. I should be happy as I am fully persuaded that you feel a deep interest in everything which relates to our common country, whose liberties you were so instrumental in establishing, that in the (__ ?) of more important avocations you would drop me a line & be assured that I shall feel high gratification from time to time to give you such intelligence as may be entitled to your notice. I have the honor to be respectfully your mo(st) ob(edient) s(ervan)t.

C. Yancey

Note: On Wednesday, August 24th, **two days after** Col. Yancey wrote Jefferson of his command, the British burned public buildings in Washington, D.C., including the House and Senate Chambers, the Library of Congress & navy yard.

Richmond 23rd October 1814

8

Dr Sir, an apology is due to you ~~as I promised~~
to write you, while in service, & a sick family
caused by an unusual fever, has caused
me to lose about \$2000 worth of property.
Receiving this information from home, I left
camp for 3 days, I went home, this prevented
my communication with friends in the morning
I wish I am now in the legislature, I hope in
any situation, I shall never forget that atten-
tion which is so justly due to you, an act
of services already rendered. we have several
important Resolutions before us, one
of which was to appoint a Joint Committee,
to repair to Washington to confer with the Ge-
neral Government, on the best & most efficient
of defending this State during the war with
G. B. to this I gave my decided Negative,
as it appeared to assume a Dictatorial tone,

Richmond 23rd October 1814

Dear Sir

An apology is due to you as I promised to write you while in service. A sick family caused by an unusual fever has caused me to lose about \$2,000 worth of property. On receiving this information from home I left camp for 8 days & went home. This prevented my communication with friends in the manner I wished. I am now in the legislature & hope in any situation I shall never forget that attention which is so justly due to you. An account of services already rendered. We have several important resolutions & before us one of which was to appoint a joint committee to repair to Washington to confer with the general Government on the best possible means of defending this state during the war with G.B. (*Great Britain*) To this I gave my decided negative as it appeared to assume a dictatorial tone,

Note: As noted on page 5 the War Department letter of 1925 stated that "The muster roll of the Field and Staff dated Holly Nov. 30, 1814 bears remark 'Absent on the Legislature'." In this letter Charles Yancey of Albemarle writes Jefferson that he had left camp earlier for 8 days and was in the legislature as of October 23rd.

It an exclusive privilege, which I thought
 we were not entitled to, having by solemn
 compact, long ago, given to the Federal
 Government, the sole power, of defending the
 this resolution, however, has been to amend
 so, as to cause a communication to be
 sent by the Executive of V. A. with the
 near government, respecting their States
 quota of Men &c, to carry on the War.
 we have also a bill before us, to suspend
 the cap. law, deeds of trust &c. which I expect
 with some modification, will pass into
 law. a Committee have reported a bill
 appropriating \$200,000 for paying troops &c.
 a committee is appointed to organize
 the Militia system of this State, on the
 plan of the U. S. also a Committee to Review
 the laws, respecting free Lie Pos.
 all parties seem to agree that we ought
 now to join in defending the Soil the same
 old spirit of blaming the Jeffersonian poli-
 cy seems to prevail among the Federalists,

& an exclusive privilege, which I thought we were not entitled to, having by solemn compact, long ago, given to the Federal Government, the sole power of defending & this resolution, however, has been so amended as to cause a communication to be opened by the Executive of VA with the general government, respecting this states quota of men & to carry on the war: we have also a bill before us to suspend the (?) law, deeds of trust & which I assume with some modification will pass into a law. a committee ha(?) reported a bill appropriating \$200,000 for paying troops & a committee is appointed to organize the Militia System of this state, on the plan of the U.S. Also a committee to revise & amend the laws respecting public roads. all parties seem to agree that we ought now to join in defending & but the same old spirit of blaming the Jeffersonian policy seems to prevail among the Federalists,

4 I am doubtful they are desirous to degrade
 the Genl. Government: they seem to be inclined
 to avail themselves of the embarrassed situation
 of the country, to get a Majority, & office. Sen-
 ters seem to join with them, too much. the
 common cant among us for several days
 has been, ~~what~~ who is to be the next Gover-
 nor & Senator? for the former I have heard
 named; W. C. Nicholas, T. M. Randolph,
 Hugh Nelson, A. Mason, J. W. Epp, &
 Stephen Thompson. I am inclined to think
 our county will furnish a Governor, the
 3 Gentlemen being all equally friends,
 & Men of talents having all just Claims
 Make it disagreeable to the representa-
 tives from the County, but I hope men voting
 from proper Motives, will never incur the
 displeasure of good men for the latter office, the
 now Governor, & Senator Brent, J. W. Epp & Mason,
 are talked of: our taxes will be raised. The

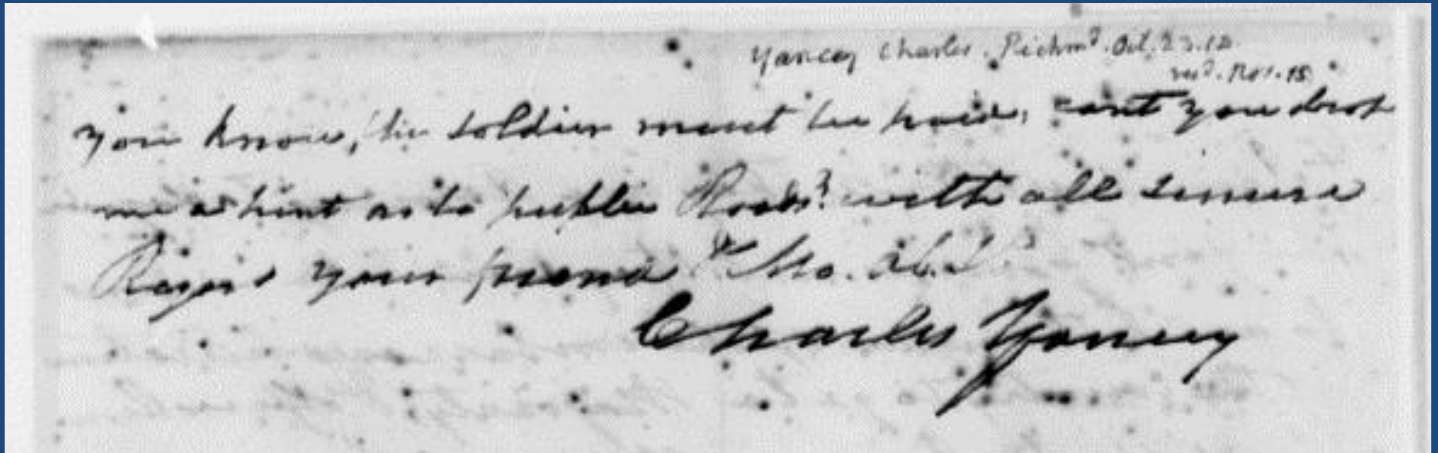
I am doubtful they are aiming to degrade the general government. they seem to be inclined to avail themselves of the embarrassed situation of the country, to get a Majority & office hunters seem to join with them too much. The common cant¹ among us for several days has been ~~about~~ who is to be the next Governor & Senator? for the former I have heard named W.C. Nicholas², T.M. Randolph, Hugh Nelson, A. Mason, J.W. Epps, & A ~~Stephenson~~ Stevenson. I am inclined to think our county will furnish a Governor, the 3 gentlemen being all equally friendly, & Men of talents having all just claim Make it disagreeable to the representatives from the county, but I hope men voting from proper motives will never incur the displeasure of good men. For the latter office the now Governor³, *Senator Brent, J.W. Epps & Mason are talked of. Our taxes will be raised. This*

¹cant - *The American Heritage Dictionary* - Discourse recited monotonously

²Wilson Cary Nicholas became Governor and served from 1814—1816

³James Barbour, "the now Governor" served as Governor from 1812—1814

Charles Yancey to Thomas Jefferson 23 Oct 1814 P. 4



4

you know, the soldier must be paid. Can't you drop
me a hint as to public roads? with all sincere
Respect your friend & Most obedient servant

Charles Yancey

Charles Yancey to Thomas Jefferson 26 Sept 1815

On 26 September 1815, Charles Yancey wrote Jefferson to explain why Jefferson's proposal to establish a College in the County of Albemarle had not passed the House. The principal cause seemed to relate to the actions of a Mr. Miller who had submitted the proposal to Mr. Watson, a Delegate from Louisa County. Mr. Watson felt that the proposal was too late in the session to be considered. Yancey, the Delegate from Albemarle, felt that a hearing on the proposal was in order and so deferred to the wishes of Mr. Watson. In his letter, Yancey urged Jefferson to send the proposal to him and "it would receive my particular support." The adjacent letter of 15 Oct 1815 is Jefferson's response to Yancey, reflecting some frustration over the handling of his proposal following the death of Peter Carr. No transcription is provided. Yancey's letter of 26 Sept 1815 is not included in this presentation.

Charles Yancey to Thomas Jefferson 17 Jan 1816

When the proposal for the Central College finally passed the House, Yancey wrote Jefferson and indicated he was seeking Senate support. See Yancey letter on page 36.

21

Dear Sir

Monticello Oct. 15. 15.

A long absence from home must apologise for this late acknowledgment of your favor of Sep. 26. — I was desired by the late Mr. Peter Carr and some of the Commissioners for the academy proposed to be established in Albemarle to furnish them with a plan for the institution. I accordingly communicated to them the best I could devise, after an enquiry of many years into the nature of similar establishments, and forming from the whole what I thought adapted to our situation. I also prepared a petition for them to the general assembly and the form of such an act as I thought should be passed. These papers I gave to Mr Carr, and have never seen them since, nor do I know in whose hands they are. Indeed I had apprehended that the proposition was not attended to since his death, until I saw an advertisement that a petition would be presented to the assembly to authorize the purchase of a house for it in Charlottesville.

This has been authorized by the board of Commissioners, it is more than I know; and if not authorized by them it is a predetermination of a question which in my judgment decides forever the fate of the institution. — Capt Joseph Miller, a resident of Norfolk, but who has staid a good deal in this country, and with one exception, & who I believe is known to you, will have a petition before the assembly for carrying into effect the will of his brother, which we hope will meet with your patronage. Accept the assurance of my esteem and respect.

Col^o. Charles Yancey

Th: Jefferson

Richmond 24th Dec 1815

8

Dr. Sir. we have been very busi-
ply engaged in receiving petitions,
making appointments & a few bills
have been reported. I have passed over
house, I have ^{of} considerable importance
depending. ~~On a subject~~ ^{of} has for its object
the call of a Convention, on which
there appear to be a considerable degree
of difference in opinion, but I am in-
clined to think, it will pass over house
in some shape or other. The negatives
in the Senate, as they are a little further
from the people. I confess, when I reflect
on the danger of Innovation, I am at
a loss what to do. Another of great im-
portance, of which we shall have ^{my} ~~my~~
respecting the establishment of another
Banking association. in this I feel also

Richmond, 24th Dec 1815

Dear Sir,

We have been as yet principally engaged in receiving petitions, making appointment & a few bills have been reported & have passed our house & some of considerable importance depending. One of which has for its object the call of a convention on which there appears to be a considerable degree of difference in opinion, but I am inclined to think, it will pass our house in some shape or other & be negatived in the Senate, as they are a bit further from the people. I confess, when I reflect on the danger of (*innovation?*), I am at a loss what to do. Another of great importance of which we shall have many respecting the establishment of another Banking association. In this I feel also

considerable Embarrassment. Seeing &
 that States grant Charters to almost
 every association of the kind. & hear
 ing people of good standing charge
 the directors of being engaged in what is
 commonly called Shaving of paper. & in
 properly certifying to embroil the man
 who is much in debt in bank. To make
 way to shew him chase. & seeing that by
 the laws, & usage respecting Banks. Some
 persons must ultimately suffer in serious
 cases of alarm every measure which
 would tend to prevent such evil ought
 to be adopted. If possible, we have
 a Committee appointed to Report on the
 part of the Governors communications
 respecting Roads, & internal Navigation
 one act of which I hope some common be
 nefit

considerable embarrassment seeing these States grant Charters to almost every association of the kind. & hearing peoples of good standing Charge the directors of being engaged in what is commonly called Shaving of paper¹, & improperly curtailing to embarrass the man who is much in debt in bank. to make way to show him chase & seeing that by the laws, & usages respecting banks, some persons Must ultimately suffer is serious cause of Alarm. every Measure which would tend to prevent such evil ought Now, to be Adopted if possible. we have a committee appointed to Report on this part of the Governors Communication. Respecting Roads & internal Navigation, out of which I hope some Common benefit

¹*Shaving - The Random House Dictionary of the English Language - to Purchase (a note) at a rate of discount greater than is legal or customary.*

night
 will result. a petition has been present
 ed, praying the passage of a law, to come at
 Damages in a summary way, from those who
 have locks on the Rivanna River. To pre-
 vent Dams in future across said river,
 or any other obstruction, unless granted
 by the Legislature. Should this by any
 probable Means, affect your Interest, or
 that of Colo Randolph? Not benefit the
 public. Any Communication you, or he,
 may feel disposed to make, would be
 cheerfully rec^d and attended to by
 your friend & Mo. Ob. Serv^t

Charles Yancey

will result. A petition has been present
ed praying the passage of a law, to come at
Damages in a summary way. from those who
have lands on the Rivanna River. & to pre
vent Dams in (*future?*) across said river,
or any other obstruction, unless granted
by the legislature. Should this by any
probable means affect your interest or
that of Col. Randolph & not benefit this
public. Any communication you or he
may feel (*disposed?*) to make, would be
cheerfully received. and attended to by
Your friend and Most Obedient Servant.

Charles Yancey

Dear Sir

Monticello Jan. 6. 18.



I am favored with yours of Dec. 24. and perceive you have many matters before you of great moment. I have no fear but that the legislature will do on all of them what is wise & just. on the particular subject of our river, in the navigation of which our country has so great an interest, I think the power of permitting dams to be erected across it ought to be taken from the courts so far as the stream has water enough for navigation. The value of our property is sensibly lessened by the dam which the court of Fluvanna authorized not long since to be erected, but a little above its mouth. This power over ~~our~~ the value & convenience of our lands is of much too high a character to be placed at the will of a county court, and that of a county too which has not a common interest in the preservation of the navigation for those above them. as to the existing dams, if any conditions are proposed more than those to which they were subjected on their original erection, I think they should be allowed the alternative of opening a sluice for the passage of navigation, so as to put ^{as good a} river into ^{for navigation} ~~the~~ condition ^{as it was} as it was before the erection of their dam, or ^{as it would be} ~~in which~~ it would be if their dam were away. Those interested in the navigation might then use the sluices or make locks as should be thought best. nature and reason, as well as all our constitutions condemn retrospective conditions as mere acts of power against right.

I recommend to your patronage our Central college. I look to it as a germ from which a great tree may spread itself.

There is before the assembly a petition of a Capt Miller which I have at heart, because I have great esteem for the petitioner. 36585
Honorable as an honest and useful man. he is about to settle in
Col. Yancey

The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.

Thomas Jefferson to Charles Yancey, January 6, 1816

Monticello, January 6, 1816.

Dear Sir,

I am favored with yours of December 24th, and perceive you have many matters before you of great moment. I have no fear but that the legislature will do on all of them what is wise and just. On the particular subject of our river, in the navigation of which our county has so great an interest, I think the power of permitting dams to be erected across it, ought to be taken from the courts, so far as the stream has water enough for navigation. The value of our property is sensibly lessened by the dam which the court of Fluvanna authorized not long since to be erected, but a little above its mouth. This power over the value and convenience of our lands is of much too high a character to be placed at the will of a county court, and that of a county, too, which has not a common interest in the preservation of the navigation for those above them. As to the existing dams, if any conditions are proposed more than those to which they were subjected on their original erection, I think they would be allowed the alternative of opening a sluice for the passage of navigation, so as to put the river into as good a condition for navigation as it was before the erection of their dam, or as it would be if their dam were away. Those interested in the navigation might then use the sluices or make locks as should be thought best. Nature and reason, as well as all our constitutions, condemn retrospective conditions as mere acts of power, against right.

I recommend to your patronage our Central College. I look to it as a germ from which a great tree may spread itself.

There is before the assembly a petition of a Captain Miller which I have at heart, because I have great esteem for the petitioner as an honest and useful man. He is about to settle in

our country, and to establish a brewery in which art I think him as skillful a man as has ever come to America. I wish to see ~~this beverage~~ become common instead of the whiskey which kills one third of our citizens and ruins their families. he is staying with me until he can fix himself, and I should be thankful for information from time to time of the progress of his prohibition.

Like a drowsy man calling out for water, water, our deluded citizens are clamoring for more banks, more banks. the American mind is now in that state of fever which the world has often seen in the history of other nations. we are, under the bank-bubble, as England was under the South sea bubble, France under the Mississippi bubble, and as every nation is liable to be, under whatever bubble design or delusion may puff up in moments then off their guard. ~~so~~ we are now taught to believe that legendmain tricks upon paper can produce as solid wealth as hard labor in the earth. it is vain for common sense to urge that nothing can produce but nothing: that it is an idle dream to believe in a philosopher's stone which is to turn every thing into gold, and to redeem man from the original sentence of his maker that 'in the sweat of his brow shall he eat his bread.' not Lucretius enough however to attempt to reason Bedlam to rights, my anxieties are turned to the most practicable means of withdrawing us from the ruin into which we have run. 200. millions of paper in the hands of the people (and less cannot be from the employment of a banking capital known to exceed 100. millions) is a fearful tax to fall at hap-hazard on their heads. the debt which purchased our independence was but of 80. millions, of which 20. years of taxation had in 1809. paid but the one half. and that have we purchased ^{of 200. millions which we are to pay} with this tax, by wholesale of 200. millions. but usury, swindling, & new forms of demoralisation. revolutionary

our county, and to establish a brewery, in which art I think him as skillful a man as has ever come to America. I wish to see this beverage become common instead of the whiskey which kills one-third of our citizens and ruins their families. He is staying with me until he can fix himself, and I should be thankful for information from time to time of the progress of his petition.

Like a dropsical man calling out for water, water, our deluded citizens are clamoring for more banks, more banks. The American mind is now in that state of fever which the world has so often seen in the history of other nations. We are under the bank bubble, as England was under the South Sea bubble, France under the Mississippi bubble, and as every nation is liable to be, under whatever bubble, design, or delusion may puff up in moments when off their guard. We are now taught to believe that legerdemain tricks upon paper can produce as solid wealth as hard labor in the earth. It is vain for common sense to urge that *nothing* can produce *nothing*; that it is an idle dream to believe in a philosopher's stone which is to turn everything into gold, and to redeem man from the original sentence of his Maker, "in the sweat of his brow shall he eat his bread." Not Quixot enough, however, to attempt to reason Bedlam to rights, my anxieties are turned to the most practicable means of withdrawing us from the ruin into which we have run. Two hundred millions of paper in the hands of the people, (and less cannot be from the employment of a banking capital known to exceed one hundred millions,) is a fearful tax to fall at haphazard on their heads. The debt which purchased our independence was but of eighty millions, of which twenty years of taxation had in 1809 paid but the one half. And what have we purchased with this tax of two hundred millions which we are to pay by wholesale but usury, swindling, and new forms of demoralization. Revolutionary

history, has warned us of the probable moment when this baseless trash is to receive its fiat. whenever so much of the precious metals shall have returned into the circulation as that every one can get some in exchange for his produce, paper, ^{as after the revolutionary war,} will experience at once an universal rejection. When public opinion changes, it is with the rapidity of thought. confidence is already on the totter, and every one now handles this paper as if playing at Robin's alive. That in the present state of the circulation the banks should resume payments in specie would require their vaults to be like the widow's cruise. The thing to be aimed at is that the excesses of their emissions should be withdrawn as gradually, but as speedily too, as is practicable without so much alarm as to bring on the crisis dreaded. Some banks are said to be calling in their paper. but ought we to let this depend on their discretion? is it not the duty of the legislature to endeavor to avert from their constituents such a catastrophe as the extinguishment of 200. millions of paper in their hands? The difficulty is indeed great; and the greater because the patient revolts against all medicine. I am far from presuming to say that any plan can be relied on with certainty, because the bubble may burst from one moment to another; but ~~so~~ if it facts we shall be but where we should have been without any effort to save ourselves. different persons doubtless will devise different schemes of relief. one would be to suppress instantly the currency of all paper not issued under the authority of our own state or of the general government: to interdict after a few months the circulation of all bills of 5, 10, & 20 under; after a few months more all of 10, 20, & 50 under; after other terms those of 20, 50, & 100 on to 1000. which last, if any must be left in circulation, should be the lowest denomination. there might be a convenience in mercantile transactions & transmissions, and would be excluded by their size from ordinary circulation. but the disease may be too pressing to await such a remedy. with the legislature I cheerfully leave it to apply this medicine or that medicine, or no medicine at all. I am sure their intentions are faithful, and embarked in the same bottom. I am willing to swim or sink with my fellow citizens. if the

history has warned us of the probable moment when this baseless trash is to receive its fiat. Whenever so much of the precious metals shall have returned into the circulation as that everyone can get some in exchange for his produce, paper, as in the revolutionary war, it will experience at once an universal rejection. When public opinion changes, it is with the rapidity of thought. Confidence is already on the totter, and every one now handles this paper as if playing at Robin's alive. That in the present state of the circulation the bank should resume payments in specie, would require their vaults to be like the widow's cruse. The thing to be aimed at is, that the excesses of their emissions should be withdrawn as gradually, but as speedily, too, as is practicable, without so much alarm as to bring on the crisis dreaded. Some banks are said to be calling in their paper. But ought we to let this depend on their discretion? Is it not the duty of the legislature to avert from their constituents such a catastrophe as the extinguishment of two hundred millions of paper in their hands? The difficulty is indeed great: and the greater, because the patient revolts against all medicine. I am far from presuming to say that any plan can be relied on with certainty, because the bubble may burst from one moment to another; but if it fails, we shall be but where we should have been without any effort to save ourselves. Different persons, doubtless, will devise different schemes of relief. One would be to suppress instantly the currency of all paper not issued under the authority of our State or of the General Government; to interdict after a few months the circulation of all bills of five dollars and under: after a few months more, all of ten dollars and under; after other terms, those of twenty, fifty, and so on to one hundred dollars, which last, if any must be left in circulation, should be the lowest denomination. These might be a convenience in mercantile transactions and transmissions, and would be excluded by their size from ordinary circulation. But the disease may be too pressing to await such a remedy. With the legislature I cheerfully leave it to apply this medicine, or no medicine at all. I am sure their intentions are faithful; and embarked in the same bottom, I am willing to swim or sink with my fellow citizens. If the

latter is their choice, I will go down with them without a murmur. but my exhortation would rather be 'not to give up the ship.'

I am a great friend to the improvements of roads, canals & schools. but I wish I could see some provision for the former as solid as for the latter, something better than fog. the literary fund is a solid provision, unless lost in the impending bankruptcy. if the legislature would add to that a perpetual tax of a cent ahead on the population of the state, it would set agoing at once, and for ever maintain a system of primary or ward schools, and an university where might be taught in it's highest degree every branch of science useful in our time & country: and it would rescue us from the tax of toryism, fanaticism, & indifference to their own state which we now send our youth to bring from those of New England. if a nation expects to be ignorant & free, in a state of civilisation. it expects what never was & never will be. The functionaries of every government have propensities to command at will the liberty & property of their constituents. there is no safe deposit for these but with the people themselves, nor can they be safe with them without information. where the press is free and every man able to read, all is safe. — the frankness of this communication will, I am sure, suggest to you a discreet use of it. I wish to avoid all collisions of opinion with all mankind. shew it to Mr Maury with expressions of my great esteem. it pretends to convey no more than the opinions of one of your thousand constituents, and to claim no more attention than every other of that thousand.

I will ask you once more to take care of Miller & our college, and to accept assurances of my esteem & respect.

Th: Jefferson

latter is their choice, I will go down with them without a murmur. But my exhortation would rather be "not to give up the ship."

I am a great friend to the improvements of roads, canals, and schools. But I wish I could see some provision for the former as solid as that of the latter,--something better than fog. The literary fund is a solid provision, unless lost in the impending bankruptcy. If the legislature would add to that a perpetual tax of a cent a head on the population of the State, it would set agoing at once, and forever maintain, a system of primary or ward schools, and an university where might be taught, in its highest degree, every branch of science useful in our time and country; and it would rescue us from the tax of toryism, fanaticism, and indifferentism to their own State, which we now send our youth to bring from those of New England. If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be. The functionaries of every government have propensities to command at will the liberty and property of their constituents. There is no safe deposit for these but with the people themselves; nor can they be safe with them without information. Where the press is free, and every man able to read, all is safe. The frankness of this communication will, I am sure, suggest to you a discreet use of it. I wish to avoid all collisions of opinion with all mankind. Show it to Mr. Maury, with expressions of my great esteem. It pretends to convey no more than the opinions of one of your thousand constituents, and to claim no more attention than every other of that thousand.

I will ask you once more to take care of Miller and our College, and to accept assurance of my esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson

5 Oct 1821

Yancey Mich. Alb. Co. 5 Oct 1821

Dear Sir



My Brother Joel Yancey
of Kentucky, often writes me, & of
ten Kentucky, goes in a late let
ter he says "pray dont forget to pre
sent me in Respectfull terms to our
good Republican Father, friend, & be
liever Mr. Jefferson." I avail my
self of this opportunity to assure
you my dear Sir. that I have ne
ver lost sight of the obligation the
people are under to you, for the many
years hard labor you have spent in
maintaining, & supporting, our Repub
lican institutions. accept Sir. of my
best wishes for your health & happiness.
with assurances of regard & esteem I am Dear
Sir your friend & Mr. Chas. Yancey

Yancey Mills Albemarle, Virginia 5 October 1821

Dear Sir

My Brother Joel Yancey of Kentucky often writes me & often mentions you. in a late letter he says, "Pray don't forget to present me in Respectful terms to our good Republican Father, friend and benefactor Mr. Jefferson." I avail myself of this opportunity to assure you my dear sir that I have never lost sight of the obligation the people are under to you, for the many years hard labor you have spent in maintaining and supporting our Republican institutions. Accept Sir, of my best wishes for your health & happiness with assurances of regard & esteem. I am Dear Sir your friend and most obedient servant.

Charles Yancey

Thomas Jefferson's Response:

Yancey Charles Yancey Mills Oct 5 21 Rec'd Oct 16

"Oct 16, 1821

I receive at this place your favor of the 5th conveying to me the kind remembrance of your brother Mr. Joel Yancey for which I pray you to return him the assurances of my continued esteem.

The expressions of the favor with which you are so good as to (?) my public services are (*truly?*) grateful to me, and I pray y(ou) to accept my thanks for them & the assurance of my high respect."

Richmond 7 May 1825

16

Dear Sir,

I was lately at New York in
New York State. I was then requested to
to take some Patent hoes, & present to
the farmers, & Planters of V. I Recd. 1 Box
for the Agricultural Society of V. with
a request, that you, & Col. J. M. Can-
dolph. Should receive one each. a letter
has been put in the P. O. here for you from
The Patentee, (Mr. Hines) The hoes are of the
iron & kind they are light & useful -
I fear I shall be troublesome when I ask
your opinion after a fair trial I am
Your old friend & well wisher

Charles Yancey

P. I hope if the hoes prove useful
The Inventor May be encouraged -

Richmond 7 May 1825

Dear Sir,

**I was lately in New York in
New Your state & was there requested
to take some Patent hoes & present to
The farmers & Planter of V^a. I rec(eive)d 1 Doz
for the agricultural society of V^a with
a request that you & Col T.M. Randolph
should have one each. a letter
has been put in the P.O. here for you
from the Patentee. (W. Hines) the hoes are of the
tran__? kind They are light & useful
I fear I shall be troublesome when I ask
your opinion after a fair trial I am
your old friend & well wishes.**

Charles Yancey

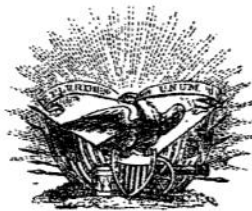
**Ps. I hope if the hoes prove useful
the inventor may be encouraged**

Note: At age 49 this may have been Charles Yancey's last letter to Thomas Jefferson, age 82, for on July 4, 1826 Thomas Jefferson died. Although the tumult and glory of state and national statesmanship had passed for both, their friendship as neighbors & political colleagues for over 20 years continued. Jefferson had been a steadfast friend, mentor and benefactor to Charles and Charles had been a constant communicator with Jefferson on state legislative activities as well as war matters. One enduring legacy of their friendship is the University of Virginia.

Richmond, Va. Jan 17th 1816



Dr Sir the ~~the~~ petition of Mr
Miller has passed our body
agreeable to the prayer & I have
spoken to Mr. Cabell to support
it in the Senate. The petition ~~of~~
for the Central College has also
passed our body & the one con-
cerning ~~the~~ the obstruction
of the Navigation &c. we are
hearing with esteem. I am
Dr Sir Your friend & Res^t
Wm. Charles Yancey



^{Examined}
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

To all to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting:

Whereas, In pursuance of the Act of Congress, approved September 28th, 1850, entitled "An Act granting Bounty Land to certain Officers and Soldiers who have been engaged in the Military Service of the United States," Warrant No. 29610. for 80 acres has been issued in favor of *Jane Yancy, Widow of Charles Yancy, deceased, Colonel 1st Regiment Virginia Militia, War 1812, which warrant has been assigned to Anthony Leonard by Leckmias Yancy, Sarah Rall, Alex. W. Yancy and Jane Yancy - the only heirs of the said Jane Yancy, deceased.*

has been returned to the GENERAL LAND OFFICE, with evidence that the same has been duly located upon the West half of the North West quarter of Section Eleven, in Township one Hundred and fourteen, North, of Range Twenty three West, in the District of lands subject to sale at Henderson, Minnesota, containing Eighty Acres.

according to the Official Plat of the Survey of the said Lands returned to the GENERAL LAND OFFICE by the SURVEYOR GENERAL:

Now Know Ye, That there is therefore granted by the UNITED STATES unto the said *Anthony Leonard, as Assignee, as aforesaid*

the Tract of Land above described: TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said Tract of Land, with the appurtenances thereof, unto the said *Anthony Leonard, as Assignee, as aforesaid* and to his

heirs and assigns forever.

In Testimony Whereof, I, *Abraham Lincoln*
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, have caused these Letters to be made Patent, and the SEAL OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE to be hereunto affixed.



GIVEN under my hand, at the CITY OF WASHINGTON, the

first day *October*
in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred
and *sixty-one* and of the INDEPENDENCE
OF THE UNITED STATES the *eighty-sixth*

BY THE PRESIDENT:

Abraham Lincoln

By

W. O. Stoddard

Sec'y.

J. H. Granger,

Recorder of the General Land Office.

Editor's Note

These letters of Charles Yancey of Albemarle and Thomas Jefferson were copied from The Library of Congress - Thomas Jefferson Papers - online collection at:

http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/jefferson_papers/

These and other letters of Thomas Jefferson, Charles Yancey of Albemarle, and Charles Yancey of Buckingham may be accessed by entering Charles Yancey in the search box at the upper right of the above home page.

Except for the transcription of Thomas Jefferson's January 6, 1816 letter presented on pages 25, 27, 29 & 31, all other transcriptions were produced by Kenneth Yancey.

Any errors related to these other transcriptions are those of Kenneth Yancey. Corrections or suggestions for improvement are welcomed at: kenandjudyyancey@verizon.net.