

Documents

SEEKING A FEDERAL JUDGESHIP UNDER JACKSON

Foreword

Jesse Lynch Holman was born on October 24, 1784, near Danville, Kentucky. After taking a preparatory course, he read law in the office of Henry Clay. In 1806, or the following year, Mr. Holman took up the practice of law in Carrollton, Kentucky, then known as Port William. He married Elizabeth, the daughter of Judge Richard Masterson. In 1810, Mr. Holman and wife came to Indiana and settled near Aurora. The name of the Holman home, Veraestau, was formed by combining the Latin words meaning spring, summer, and autumn. There was to be no winter at the Holman home.¹ Mr. Holman served in the territorial legislature and as a territorial judge. Later, he was for a number of years a member of the state supreme court. In 1830, Governor James Brown Ray refused to re-appoint him. As the correspondence printed below shows, he sought appointment to the vacancy after Benjamin Parke, federal judge for the Indiana district, died in 1835. He was appointed to this judgeship during the recess of Congress, and, after a somewhat prolonged wait, his nomination was sent to the Senate by President Jackson and confirmed by that body in the spring of 1836. The letters here presented relate to the appointment. The originals are owned by Miss Mildred Wagenhals of Calistoga, California, but are now in the hands of Miss Margaret Wagenhals of New York City. These sisters, who are great-granddaughters of Jesse L. Holman, kindly permitted the correspondence to be published. Copies of the letters were made by I. George Blake, professor of history at Franklin College, who is doing research on Judge Holman and his son William Steele Holman.

[The Correspondence]

Veraestau, Ind.,
July 25, 1835.

Hon. Wm. Hendricks,
Dear Sir;

The death of our Respected friend Judge Parke¹ will necessarily direct the attention of many to the subject of his successor. Some of my friends here are anxious that I should be an applicant for that

¹The fine, old Holman home is now owned by Cornelius O'Brien of Lawrenceburg, who has reconstructed it in recent years.

office. My health which has been somewhat improving this season, would now justify me in undertaking the duties of the office if I could succeed in getting the appointment. I am unapprized of who will be applicants, or what would be my own prospects. Among our representatives in Congress I have some friends. But my course will in a great measure be determined by the part yourself & Gen'l Tipton will take in my behalf. I shall apply to Gen'l Tipton immediately through Col. Pepper who is just starting to Logans Port. And I think through the influence of my friends he will be decidedly favorable.² I am very anxious to know how the case will stand with you. You are sufficiently acquainted with me to know that no unfriendly feelings will be excited by any course you may feel yourself bound to take in the matter. But I assure you, I have much solicitation on the subject, & if you felt it consistent with your public duties to exert your influence in my behalf it would confer a memorable favor & one which I should feel myself bound at all times to reciprocate in any way that lay in my power. If you & Gen'l Tipton feel disposed to aid me on this occasion I should feel bound to depend mainly on your influence & also on your advice as to my own course in the matter. Mr. Lane seems quite solicitous in my behalf—, & if elected, prepares to go to Washington immediately & personally solicit the appointment for me. I presume Gen'l Carr [Carr], Gen'l McCarty, & Mr. Hannegan would be friendly.³ I have a number of influential friends who would interest themselves in my behalf, but I do not wish to apply to them, unless it would avail me something in procuring the appointment. A word as to the political parties now forming. As far as present appearances go I shall be in favor of the election of Van Buren. I shall anxiously await a line from you. And shall not be an applicant if you & Gen'l Tipton think it unadvisable, nor take any steps without your approbation.

Very Respectfully,
J. L. Holman

Connersville, August 13, 1835.

Dear Sir,⁴

On my arrival here on yesterday I found your letter of the 31st ult. and have agreeable to your request written to the Secretary of State upon the subject of your application for the appointment of district Judge which letter I herewith enclose to your care.

I am very respectfully
Your obd Sevt,
Jono. McCarty.

² There is no mention of Col. Abel C. Pepper in the letter to Senator Tipton which Judge Holman wrote on the same day that he wrote to Senator William Hendricks (July 25, 1835). He may have sent the letter by Col. Pepper, who lived at Logansport. The letter to Tipton is almost identical with that to Senator Hendricks and is therefore omitted. There is no reference to Representative Amos Lane, Jonathan McCarty, John Carr or Edward A. Hannegan in the letter to Tipton, though all are mentioned in the letter to Senator Hendricks.

³ John Carr (Charlestown), Jonathan McCarty (Fort Wayne), Edward A. Hannegan (Covington), and Amos Lane (Lawrenceburg) were members of the Indiana delegation to the national House of Representatives.

⁴ Addressed to Jesse L. Holman at Aurora.

Washington City
Sept. 16th. 1835.

Dear Sir:⁵

I have been dilatory in acknowledging your letter of the 12th. of last month, but not negligent of the matter to which it related. On being referred to, before your communication came to hand, I had the pleasure to hear favorable testimony to your character and deportment; and to report in favor of your reputation as a Judge, so far as I was informed; and I have now the satisfaction of having learnt that the President decided this morning to appoint you Judge of the U. S. District Court for Indiana.

I have the honor to be with friendly esteem,
Your obedient servant
[E. A. Brown]

Veraestau
Sept. 24, 1835.

My Dear Children,⁶

I have delayed writing in expectation of hearing from Washington the result of my application. That has terminated favorably. I this day rec'd a Commission as Judge of the District Court, as long as the President had power to appoint in vacation until the close of the next session of the Senate. In obtaining this Commission, I am specially indebted to Mr. Hendricks, Amos Lane, & Jon. McCarty within the State. And to some influential friends without the State. Some others in our State, not Representatives, have written warmly in my favor. Gen'l Tipton previously recommended another, but gave a strong (secondary) recommendation in my favor (and I have been informed that it was believed at Washington that both he & Hendricks wished me appointed). . . . I feel under particular obligations to Hendricks, for had it not been for his encouragement & his influence, with men out of the State, who could operate indirectly, but powerfully on the heads of department at Washington, I should have given it up at the outset. I am well satisfied, too, that he had an eye to what my friends might do for him in time of need. I am therefore anxious, that my friends should remember this favor from him & requite it as far as lies in their power.

My course was a very quiet one as to the appointment. My nearest neighbors knew nothing of it. I named it to no one but those that I was confident could aid me, but with those I took as effective measures as lay in my power, so that if I had failed I should have known it was not for the want of exertions.

I have been thus full on this matter, knowing you feel an interest in it, & especially I wished you to know the part Hendricks took in

⁵ This letter is unsigned, but the signature of the sender is on the outside. It is addressed to "Hon. Jesse L. Houlmin," the writer misspelling the judge's surname. Ethan Allen Brown, earlier Governor of Ohio, United States Senator, and Minister to Brazil, was Commissioner of the United States Land Office when he wrote to Holman. Shortly afterwards he retired, making his home at Rising Sun, Indiana.

⁶ Addressed to Allen Hamilton of Fort Wayne, Indiana. Hamilton was a son-in-law of Judge Holman.

it, that you may remember his as effectively as you can next winter. . . .

I shall be under the necessity as soon as possible to go to Indianapolis, to form some acquaintance with the state of the business in the U.S. Court, preparatory to the next term. If my health will permit me to discharge the duties of the office and the appointment should be confirmed by the Senate of the U.S., I shall hereafter feel easy in my mind as to the support of my family. My friends & neighbors, I believe, are more joyful on the occasion than my family. . . .

Jesse L. Holman.

Cincinnati [sic]

Oct. 5, 1835

My Dear Allen,⁷

As to the confirmation of my appointment, or the President's making a different nomination, I have nothing definite to observe. Nor do I know of anything specific to apprehend. The President has the power to nominate another, but such a course would be, I believe, almost unprecedented. It is certain that my friends think such possibilities should be guarded against, lest a combination should be formed to defeat my success. If Tipton & McCarty stand by me, as I trust they will, of Lane & Hendricks I have no fear. Boone & Davis have said too much in their letters to me to come forward with any material objection to my success. *This however among ourselves.* I should be glad if Kinnard⁸, or any other of our Delegation could be indirectly influenced to favor my appointment. You perhaps or some of your acquaintances, might have some bearing upon Gov. Cass, or other members of the Cabinet [sic] or the Senators of other States. I know, as I said, of no ground of apprehension, but my motto is never to consider anything sure, that may by any possibility be defeated, but at the same time, never to embolden opposition by acting as if I considered any real danger as existing. Every point should be carefully guarded, and for that reason I wish the earliest intelligence of any efforts that may be making to counteract my success. As to the appointment of a Clerk I have not yet determined as to the course I shall pursue. I have consulted some of our delegation on the subject. I shall consult others, and act accordingly; I am somewhat apprehensive that, any hesitation on my part, as to the appointment of a Clerk, may be construed into an idea that I am afraid to take that independent course that a Judge ought to pursue. Bassett is strongly recommended by Hendricks & Lane, as well as others, & if they and particularly Hendricks should think the appointment should be made at the organization of the Court I shall venture to do it. . . .

Affectionately,
J. L. Holman.

⁷ Addressed to Allen Hamilton.

⁸ George L. Kinnard was a member of the national House of Representatives from the Indianapolis district. Governor Cass, mentioned later as a member of the Cabinet, was Lewis Cass, Secretary of War under Jackson from 1831 to 1836, when he was sent to France.

Madison, Oct. 6, 1835.

Dear Sir,⁹

Allow me to congratulate you on your app't of District Judge and to say that you are a very fortunate man. Your sins of Anti-Jacksonism have been forgiven and you may fairly and emphatically be classed among the rewarded.

It has been suggested to me that you would probably appoint another clerk and that Mr. Bassett wd. like the appointment. He is a worthy man and by his appointment I should think wd. give general satisfaction. It would be very satisfactory to me and wd. also I think to a little group of lawyers amongst whom I heard the subject named today. . . .

Yours sincerely
William Hendricks.

Logansport 15th October 1835.

Dear Sir,¹⁰

Permit me to congratulate you on your late appointment. It was so much out of the order of things that it was some time before I could believe it. If I am not mistaken the Judge has the appointing of his own clerk. Should this be the case I hope you will not consider it an intrusion on my part to recommend to your consideration for that appointment, Mr. Bassett, of Derbon [Dearborn] County, he I believe is honest and faithfull and I think capable, and is really needy of som assistance. If it should be consistent with your own feelings to confer the appointment to Mr. Bassett I assure you that it will much gratify one of your old friends and humbel servent [*sic*].

Walter Wilson

Madison, Nov. 21, 1835.

Dear Sir,¹¹

On reading again this morning your letter of the 27. Oct. which had found its way into a file of unanswered letters I feel mortified & ashamed that I should have deferred a reply to it till now and especially as you say that a line from me on the subject of what you ought or ought not to do in relation to the confirmation of your appt. wd "relieve you of some embarrassment."

On that subject I see not the smallest unpropriety in your addressing yourself to the members of our delegation and such others as you are on entirely intimate terms with requesting their friendly feelings in the matter. This on the principle that men generally are fond of some attention, and it might bury efforts to raise an opposition to your app't among the delegation, should any such be made. Your confirmation however I look upon in the present condition of the Senate as absolutely certain, Tipton concurring, as he certainly will.

The prudential reasons contained in your letter against appointing

⁹ Addressed to Jesse L. Holman. The Bassett mentioned was Horace Bassett of Aurora, who was appointed clerk of the Indiana federal district court by Holman.

¹⁰ Addressed to Jesse L. Holman. Gen. Walter L. Wilson lived at Logansport, Indiana.

¹¹ Addressed to Jesse L. Holman.

a clerk till after the confirmation I think are good and ought to prevail.

Let me say to you in great confidence that from a reply of R. M. Johnson¹² to my letter in your behalf you are in my opinion much indebted to him for your appointment. Wd. it not be well enough to write him a kind letter?

Very Sincerely,
William Hendricks.

Wash., Dec. 10, 1835.

Dear Sir,¹³

I have re'd your favour and you may rest assured that I shall do everything in my power to serve you here, & secure your nomination.

Your friend,
Rh. M. Johnson.

Washington Dec. 19, 1835.

Dear Sir,¹⁴

Five of the members have united against you and in writing have requested the President to send Howard's name to the Senate in place of yours—and have given four reasons why you ought not to be the Judge—

1. That your appointment is disgusting to the friends of the President.
2. That you have been and still are a bestial and efficient opponent of all the measures of the administration.
3. That you are destitute of all the necessary qualifications for the office.
4. That you are a fanatic on the subject of abolition.

I have drawn up an answer to them all—will give you a copy and will have it published—

And then the State can see how Cristians [*sic*] act here. . . .

In haste,
A. Lane.

Steam Boat Lady Marshall,
Jan. 19, 1836.

My Dear Allen,¹⁵

Agreeably to your suggestion, and the urgent advice of Col. Pepper & Others, I am on my way to Washington City. It was very much against my inclination. But as I had resolved in my mind that this should be my last effort for office whether successful or not, I consented to do all my friends thought was incumbent on me, although everything seems rather against me. I was detained at Aurora for want of a boat more than 24 hours after I was ready to start. I was detained the greater part of today at Cincinnati by the same cause. And before this, a failure in the mails left me unapprized of what was

¹² Richard M. Johnson of Kentucky was a member of the national House at this time.

¹³ Addressed to Jesse L. Holman.

¹⁴ Addressed to Jesse L. Holman. Amos Lane was the member of the national House from Holman's district in southeastern Indiana.

¹⁵ Addressed to Allen Hamilton of Fort Wayne.

meditated at the Convention at Indianapolis until the intelligence was of no avail. A letter from Tipton to Bassett, mailed Dec. 20th which ought to have been at Aurora the 3rd of Jan., was not received until the 18th, two days after he left Aurora for Indianapolis. It was intended to put my friends on their guard against any movements that might be made at the Convention. Lane had previously written to me under date of Dec. 21st stating the charges that five of our members had allied [*sic*] against me, [writing] to the President, & urging him to nominate Howard, but added that I need not fear as the nomination would be made next week. And Tipton in his letter to Bassett, suggests a rumor or something of that nature that my name would be sent to the Senate in a few days. Since Dec. 31 my Washington papers have entirely failed for three mails. This left me entirely in the dark on the subject nor was I able while in Cincinnati to get sight of a regular file of Washington papers, and not knowing but letters from Washington directed to me, as well as my papers, might have failed by the way, there seemed the more need of my going on to the City. I thought when I left home that perhaps by the time I arrived at Wheeling the matter would be settled, but I am afraid if it is I shall learn nothing about it without delaying too long as while I staid in Cincinnati [*sic*] I could not get hold of a regular file of Washington papers. I am very much afraid the opposition against me will be too numerous for my success. If the members of the Convention generally recommended Whitcomb¹⁶, no matter how much they may have been deceived in the business, it will seem to justify one of the reasons . . . against me that the friends of the Administration throughout the State are dissatisfied with my appointment. . . . Although I am going to Washington it is not with any particular hope of influencing the matter particularly in my favor, and I know it has been said that applicants for office have been at times so numerous at Washington that their presence in general does more harm than good but my being there may at least repel some charges that are alleged against me, if it does nothing more. I am astonished at the course said to be taken by McCarty. Nor can I conjecture what his motives can have been for such an entire change. Tipton in his letter to Bassett states that Carr is violent on the subject, & had authorized him to inform the President that he had no objection to my appointment. But if my friends at Washington were not able to prevail in having my name sent to the Senate before the 8th of January petition comes to hand I fear they will fail entirely afterwards. There is but one thought that would counteract this idea, & that is that the Western members at Washington all recommend Howard & the petition from Indianapolis will recommend Whitcomb, which may produce some confusion in council. I expect I have now written more than you can read as the Boat shakes so much that I can scarcely form my letters at all.

Affectionately,
J. L. Holman.

¹⁶ James Whitcomb was later Governor of Indiana (1843-1848) and United States Senator from 1849 to his death in 1852. The Howard mentioned in this letter was Tilghman A. Howard of Rockville, Ind. He was later in the national House and a General in the Mexican War.

Washington, 20 Jany. 1836.

Sir:¹⁷

I have read your letter to Govr. Hendricks and consider it due both to Gen'l Carr and to yourself that I should inform you that you are mistaken in believing that Gen'l Carr is opposed to your name being sent in to the Senate, before I was fully informed who were making the noise here I called on Genl C who authorized me to inform the president that he was in favor of sending in your name as you were apptd in the recess you ought not now to be droptd. I informed the president of this conversation, now Millitt [?]¹⁸ has authorized me to make a similar expression from him. I have done so this day.

Yr mo obt sev't

John Tipton.

Bevansville P. O.

Maryland.

Jan. 20, 1836.

My Dear Children,¹⁹

Agreeably to the information I gave you from Portsmouth, Ohio, I arrived here on my way to Washington City. Here on the evening before last, about 9 o'clock at night, the stage upset about half way up the green ridge of the Allegany Mountains. Myself and one other, a Doctor Jamison [Jameson] of Cincinnati, late of Baltimore were considerably injured, the Doctor apparently more serious than myself. I rec'd a severe wound on my head which bled very profusely, but is not as yet very painful, though I expect it will be a bad sore. But the worst injury I rec'd was in the back of my neck & between my shoulders. I am not conscious of how I received the injury. I was stunned by the blow on my head, so as to be insensible of the manner in which I was hurt, but suppose that my neck was strained or wrenched in some way as my head struck, as I rec'd no bruise on that part of my body, & am in hopes that I shall get over it before long. Myself and the Doctor are with a very kind family, & the stage agents proffer us every assistance in their power. Some blame is attached to the driver by every person but those interested. The stage upset going uphill in a walk, & the horses were quiet & stopped immediately. The only excuse made for upsetting was that the snow was deep & falling very fast, & had drifted so that the horses left the road, which was thrown up about their [three] feet, & drove the carriage over the bank. We were near a house or I know not what might have been our condition, as I was stunned by the blow & my head so dizzy as to be unable to stand for some time, & was supported to the house with some difficulty, & Doctor Jamison fainted before he got out of the carriage. He is un-

¹⁷ Addressed to Jesse L. Holman.

¹⁸ *Millitt*, as it seems to be in the original script, may have been a sort of nickname applied to Representative McCarty by Senator Tipton.

¹⁹ Addressed to Allen Hamilton of Fort Wayne. The *Dr. Jameson* who accompanied Judge Holman on the trip to Washington was Dr. Horatio Gates Jameson. He was a noted physician and surgeon of Baltimore and a professor of medicine. At the time he made this trip to Washington, he was teaching temporarily in the Medical College of Ohio at Cincinnati. Evidently the letter of Jan. 20 was held for several days in order that Judge Holman might add some news from Washington.

able to sit or stand or cannot turn himself in bed. I can sit rather more comfortably than I can lay [*sic*] & can now write without severe pain. I have apprized Hendricks and Tipton of my situation & expect to hear from them in a few days. I am about a hundred and twenty miles from Washington & expected to have reached the city in twenty four hours. I know not when I shall be able to travel, and cannot now say whether I shall proceed to the City when I recover or not, it will depend on the intelligence I receive from the City. The stage proprietors proffer us a sleigh or any mode of conveyance we wish, and I now feel as if it would be a long time before I can bear the jolting of the stage. I am awaiting information from the City with much anxiety, and shall not close this letter until I hear what is likely to be done in my case.

Jan. 30. I am recovering very fast. The pains in my back & shoulders are abating every day. I have just had my coat on for the first time & find I can now wear it without much pain. I have just rec'd a letter from Mr. Hendricks, advising me to come on to the City as soon as I recover. He intimates an opinion that the affair will ultimately terminate in my favor, but thinks my presence in the City will help. But says no inconvenience will result from delaying until I am well. I cannot yet bear my hat on my head, as the weight falls on the principal wound, but the wound has occasioned but little pain as yet. The cut was about three inches long in the forepart of my head, & a small cut in the top. Doctor Jamison thinks it will probably heal up without occasioning much suffering. I think, according to my present feelings, that by Monday or Tuesday I shall be able to travel slowly in a sleigh, & the snow in the mountains is now highly favorable to that mode of travelling. I could not bear the jolting of the stage.

If I get on I shall write you again from Washington, if not I shall from time to time apprise you of my situation.

Affectionately,

Jesse L. Holman

Senate Chamber,
Jan. 23, 1836.

Dear Sir,²⁰

You are no doubt apprized of the hot press to defeat you here, and of the fact that the signatures of the mems. to the 8th Jan'y convention have been resorted to. They have arrived to the number of 200 or more, and Tipton [,] Lane & myself have for the last 2 or 3 days been receiving letters telling us that these petitions were gotten up on the allegation at Indianapolis that your name was out of the question, the President having determined not to send it in to the Senate & that the question of recommending a suitable person for the appt was the only question. Yesterday I saw the President on the subject, & he has also rec'd letters giving him the same view of it. He said he had rec'd a confidential letter from a friend who had no other object than to give him correct information. On this he seemed to rely

²⁰ Addressed to Jesse L. Holman at Bevensville, Maryland. Senator Hendricks marked the letter "confidential."

and intimated that that letter as well as others besides several which I showed him, had given the same view. I told him that Tipton requested me to say that he had letters & documents which he wished to show him and that he wd. call as soon as the restoration of his health wd. permit. He assured that time should be given expressed a gratification at my calling on the subject; said he wished to see us both & wished only to be fully satisfied that the recommendation of Whitcomb had been gotten up or signed under the misconception before stated. In that event your name will be sent in. That is his feeling & wish but he also remarked that he might give great weight to so full an expression of his friends as the papers referred to purported to be, if made under a correct understanding of the matter. For this information T. & myself will write to some leading men who signed the papers as we think in a misunderstanding of the case here. Should we get replies that shall satisfy the Pres. all will be right. If not he will as I think nominate Whitcomb.

I have rec'd 2 or 3 letters from Allen Hamilton enclosing letters about it. All I can do to have your appt. confirmed shall be done.

Yours sincerely,

William Hendricks.

P.S. I read a part of your letter to the President.

Senate Chamber

Jan. 28, 1836.

Dear Sir,²¹

I have this morning rec'd your letter of the 25th and regret your stage accident. Have consulted the friends you name and they all say *come on*. I say, get well first, for there is no danger of hasty action of the President. I saw him on Saturday last read him a portion of your letter denying abolition, etc. I believe all will ultimately be well. Your coming will help.

I wrote you at length some time ago and regret you did not get it before you left home. I have rec'd many letters and have showed several to the President. Hamilton, Pepper, Bassett and others have written me.

Tipton & Lane have also received many letters in your behalf.

Yours sincerely

William Hendricks.

Washington Jany 30, 1836.

Dear Judge—²²

It was with extreme regret I learned from your letter to friend Hendricks you had been detained upon the road from an injury received from the stage upsetting.

The nomination has not yet been acted upon nor will the president pass it up untill you shall arrive—which I trust will be in a few days.

The President is disposed to do right if at liberty to do so—. . . You had better not put up at any of our logings [*sic*] when you

²¹ Addressed to Judge Holman at Bevansville, Md.

²² *Idem*.

arrive. This may not apply to our Senators [,] Karr [*sic*] or to myself—You had better take lodging at Parson Brown's . . . or at Mrs. Davis, on F St. Corner of 12—No member boarding there—or at Fuller where the New York Senators board—. . .

A. Lane

Washington first Feby 1836.

Dear Sir,²³

In reply to your letter of 26 last month I have to inform you that nothing has been done here in relation to your nomination, but receive and lay before the President letters and papers on both sides, the opposition to your nomination originated with our Delegation in Congress and was intended to affect others besides yourself. You have been mistaken in regards to Genl. Carr's course, of which I wrote to you but suppose that my letter had not arrived when you left home the Gen'l is not opposed to you.

I delayed answering your letter two days with a view of seeing the P. and urging what I suggested some weeks ago, viz., to appoint you to our Court and Mr. Whitcomb to a Judgeship in the new Territory. I called on Saturday and found the P. surrounded with company. I can do no more than hand him some letters from your friends and request an interview before a decision is made.

Yr obt sert
John Tipton.

Washington City
Feb. 10, 1836.

My Dear Allen,²⁴

I am here and nearly well. All that remains of my disaster in the mountains is a sore head. The wound is nearly healed up. Today I have gone without a bandage with nothing but a plaster, which the hair on my forehead nearly covers, so that I can go out without any particular inconvenience. Hitherto I have not gone out, & have seen but few of our delegation. My operations thus far have been to soothe Boone²⁵ and McCarty as far as possible. Our delegation is in a sad condition at open war with each other, & this is the sole cause of all the difficulty in my case. Boone is hostile to Hendricks & Tipton, and has aimed to defeat me for the principal purpose of destroying their influence. McCarty is extremely bitter against Tipton & Lane, & will oppose any man they advocate. He pretends to think there was some secret understanding between Lane & myself which he gives as the reason for opposing me. I think I have removed this impression. As Hendricks has eluded their penetration, as to the part he has taken in this matter, & I am not at liberty to disclose the efficient agency in promising the appointment, they are left to stumble on the supposition that it was promised by Lane, which is an idea peculiarly obnoxious. I go as far as I can in smoothing the matter by saying I promised the

²³ *Idem*.

²⁴ Addressed to Allen Hamilton of Fort Wayne.

²⁵ Ratliff Boone was a member of the national House from the "Pocket." He lived at Boonville, Ind.

interference of every friend I could think of, both in and out of the State, & presumed that it was a combination of influences that enabled me to succeed. Neither Boone nor McCarty appear to think they will succeed. They seem to give up the contest as hopeless, but still keep the matter [undecided]. . . . I have just parted with Boone on rather better terms than I anticipated. If no change is produced in his mind by Davis²⁶ & Hannegan, I think the matter will be favorably disposed of. Boone is the principal barrier now in the way, as I am told the President wishes to have his opposition quieted down before he makes the appointment. I am already convinced that my coming on has thus far had a good effect. I am not boarding near any of our members, & to lessen their suspicion of each other I have more intercourse with the opposition members than with my friends. I have had a long talk with McCarty. I believe he regrets the course he has taken, & I hope he will try to get back if he can. I have had several interviews with Boone & with good effect. Hendricks & Lane has called on me several times. Tipton & the Western members I have not seen. Tipton & Hendricks have a great deal at stake in this case & are, for their own sakes, as well as mine, laying out all their might in it. My intention is to visit the President tomorrow & also to go up to the Capital. I have written thus far to show you *in confidence* the real state of the case. Though I shall not close this until the nomination is made, unless it should be delayed too long. A word as to my defeat in the mountains. I was detained there nine days, & after that I travelled by easy stages in a sleigh, & was four days travelling what might have been done in half a day in the stage. But I resolved to run no risk. I am afraid my long absence from home will derange my affairs very much. I had purchased the quarter section of land adjoining me with four or five hundred cords of wood on it, & had just completed a wood shoot down the hill, & was just preparing at least to establish a wood yard. Everything was finished but the boat the evening I left home. I have a good waggon & train, & two men employed to haul wood & several others were about commencing to cut me a quantity more. I had also rented out my farm or the greater part of it, & the man was sick who was to have it, so as to render it doubtful about his taking it. So that altogether I left home at the most inconvenient time that could have been selected for several months. But when the subject of coming here was proposed & concluded on, I knew that if I came at all I must come immediately. So I dropt all, and left it to chance and the agency of others. I started, thinking to have been at home by this time. If I should not succeed in this business it will embarrass me very much. . . . I have just called on Doctor Davis. His first preferences were in favor of Whitcomb & he still adheres to him, but is by no means obstinate, says he will leave the matter entirely to the President & be content who will be appointed. I have been to see the President. I was accompanied & introduced by Gen'l Carr, who stands somewhat neuter in this business, though rather inclined to favor my appointment. The President received me very cordially. I was fortunate enough to find him alone. He conversed freely on a great variety of subjects. Talked for

²⁶ Dr. John W. Davis was a member of the national House from the district of Western Indiana north of Boone's district. He lived at Carlisle.

some time on the subject of my appointment, & the opposition that was got up against me; seemed to be apprized that the opposition was not so much against me as against my friends. He mentioned the charge of abolition, which Hannegan & others had started & which I had answered in several letters, which I had shown him. I satisfied him completely on that subject, & especially by repeating my decision in the first Negro case I acted on a few days after I rec'd my commission, & which I gave a certificate for removal of the slave to Kentucky. I stated the principles upon which I decided. It gave him entire satisfaction & Carr remarked afterwards that the Gen'l was particularly pleased with my decision. He spoke of the appointment as if he intended to give in my name, but said there was no need to be in haste about it, & he wanted to have Boone quieted as much as possible, as Boone was an old friend of his. Spoke of Davis as quite easy about it. Did not even name Kinnard. Spoke slightly about McCarty, & named Hannegan as being strongly opposed to me, & only named Boone as the person he wished to pacify. I shall see Boone as soon as I can.

Saturday 13. I have seen Boone, but I do not know that he will do anything to expedite this business. I suspect Hannegan & Kinnard, the one rough & the other designing. . . . A man who has as much influence with the President as any man, & who knows how matters of the kind generally go, told me today that I had nothing to fear, as I would certainly be appointed. But there is no telling when the matter will be determined & my friends say I must not leave the ground until the matter is settled. So that I know not how long I may have to stay. I have just seen Tipton. He tells me he will call on the President in a few days & urge him to bring the matter to a close, as no good can result from the delay. . . .

Jesse L. Holman.

Senate Cham. 15 March 1836.

Dear [Sir],²⁷

Your nomination has not yet been sent in, but I cannot learn that there is any other state of things in relation to it than when you left. Of the standing of the case there you are well informed. I think it will be sent in soon.

Yours sincerely,
William Hendricks.

Washington 29 March 1836.

Dear Sir,²⁸

I wrote you today of your confirmation the moment it happened. I might have added unanimously, for although there were no ayes and noes taken, there was no sound of "no" in the Chamber. This it will be gratifying to you to know, and this result seldom happens where strong efforts as in the present case have been made to prejudice the minds of Senators against the nominee. They talked with members of the Judiciary Committee as well as other Senators, and spoke of

²⁷ Addressed to Judge Holman at Aurora, Ind. The Judge had returned from Washington without waiting for President Jackson to present his name to the Senate.

²⁸ Addressed to Judge Holman at Aurora. The letter is marked "confidential."

sending in a remonstrance which however was not done. Hannegan I think got ashamed of it. I asked him what he would allege in a remonstrance. He said unfitness on acct. of old age: near 70. I told him you was less than 50 and that he could not expect to use successfully party grounds against you, but in attempting it he would place himself in an attitude of party hostility to the President.²⁹

Now you are not much of a politician, but are rather unaccustomed to exertions of that kind. I do wish however that you would throw a little influence into the community wheresoever you can the ensuing summer. Your friends now are energized and in proper tone for action.

Yours sincerely,
William Hendricks.

Washington City April 1, 1836.

My dear Judge,³⁰

With the exception of the very unexpected pleasure of meeting with yourself, I assure you that no circumstance could give us more real, sincere gratification, than your very kind and friendly letter of the 9th March last, which was handed me on Sunday the 20th by your friend the Hon. Mr. Lane, who carried it to my house, and with whom I had a long and very satisfactory conversation, principally about you, and the artful efforts that had been made by your opponents to prevent your appointment. I was very much pleased to hear Mr. Lane speak of you in such high terms as he did, and for the friendly expression of his feelings for you. I'm sure I respect him very much. To tell you the truth, when we learned that you had started for home, —of which circumstance by the bye, we were apprized in a day or two after your departure,—we were fairly nonplused,—it was to us inexplicable,—unaccountably so, but still we could not for a moment entertain an unfavorable or unkind feeling about you, nay on the contrary we felt well satisfied in our minds, that you had good and sufficient reasons for so doing, and although in painful suspense as to the cause of your return, we hoped it was not on account of any disagreeable or unpleasant occurrence, in our City, in reference to the object of your visit; and now My Dear Sir, you have removed every thought in relation to this matter, except that feeling of real unmixed pleasure which we experienced, as I read over your kind letter, and perfectly satisfactory explanation,—I will not say apologies, because we neither required nor expected any,—all I wished for I have now obtained,—that is the assurance of Judge Holman's unabated and sincere friendship,—conveyed to us in such a manner as to enhance its value, and here permit me to say, that it is highly prized, and most sincerely and truly reciprocated, by both Mrs. Brady and myself.

I'm sure after your long absence, and your "hair breadth scapes" [*sic*], that the meeting of Mrs. Holman and your dear children was a

²⁹ Judge Holman was born on Oct. 24, 1784. He was about fifty-one and a half years of age when a political opponent set his age at almost seventy.

³⁰ Addressed to Judge Holman at Aurora. The writer of this letter, Peter Brady of Washington, had become acquainted with Judge Holman, when he, with his family, visited friends in Aurora.

real overflow of heart and soul, and now as you are at home, safe and well I hope,—surrounded by your dear family,—and your appointment this morning officially announced in the *Globe*, one of which I send you by this day's mail,—let me here express our sincere congratulations at these circumstances, and also pray that you may long enjoy the high office so honorably conferred upon you, in opposition to your political opponents, for I'm sure you neither had nor could possibly or justly have any other.

Mrs. Brady has sent to Mrs. Holman, with her most affectionate remembrance, the flower seeds, by Mr. Lane's family, who started last week for Lawrenceburg,—she hopes they may reach you in safety and in time to sow during the present spring, and when they grow up and come into full flower, they may occasionally remind you of some of your distant friends on the other side of the Alleghany Mountains, who will always look back with a pleasing recollection of your kindness to us during our stay in Aurora,—Mrs. B. has also added an India rubber apron,—being to us something of a curiosity,—which she hopes Mrs. Holman will accept as a very sincere token of her respect, and a book for Master Jesse L. Holman, with our united wishes, that he may be as worthy & as good a citizen, as his father has been.—There is in the parcel another India rubber apron, which Mrs. B. requests Mrs. Holman, on the first favourable opportunity, to present to Mrs. Lewis, with our affectionate remembrance, and now My dear Sir, having executed this part of my mission, I pray you to be assured, of the very sincere sentiment of respect with which I subscribe myself

Very truly your friend,
Peter Brady.