

Documents

SOME ADDITIONAL JENNINGS LETTERS

Jonathan Jennings was a very important character in the early days of Indiana. He represented Indiana Territory in the Congress of the United States from 1809 to 1816, and in this capacity he was the agent who directed the passage of the Enabling Act which authorized statehood for Indiana. He was elected a delegate to the first Indiana Constitutional Convention in 1816 and was chosen president of that convention. He became Indiana's first governor and served two terms, 1816 to 1822. A third consecutive term not being constitutional, he became a candidate for Congressman and was elected as Indiana's member of the lower house of Congress to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of William Hendricks. He was then elected for four terms as the representative of the second Indiana congressional district before retiring from politics. This long period of political activity and the prominent positions which he held make his literary remains important to the student of Indiana history.

The following letters of Jennings are, in the main, published here for the first time. Only three have been previously published and these in newspapers which now are not too readily accessible.

Mrs. W. H. McDonald of North Platte, Nebraska, contributed fifteen letters which are now in her possession. They constitute letters written by Jennings to John K. Graham. Mrs. Minnie Graham Zapp of New Albany, Indiana, also possesses copies of two letters which are included in the following group. These letters were also written to John K. Graham. Miss Margaret H. Wagenhals of New York City loaned from the Wagenhals Collection five letters, which were written by Jennings to Jesse L. Holman. Miss Dorothy Riker of the Indiana Historical Bureau, Indianapolis, has sent three letters—one from Jonathan Jennings to John F. Ross, the original of which is in the possession of Margaret Ross Brown of Seymour, Indiana, and two letters from Jennings to Samuel Milroy, the originals of which are in the possession of Mrs. Mary S. Clauser of Lafayette, Indiana. Miss Riker also sent copies of two letters which were published in the

Cincinnati, Ohio, *Liberty Hall*, and one in the Madison, Indiana, *Western Eagle*.

These letters throw further light upon the character and attainments of Jennings. They contribute some additional information in respect to Jennings' antagonistic attitude toward Governor William Henry Harrison during the territorial period. The reference in the letter of November 9, 1811, to the Battle of Tippecanoe as the "Massacre on the Wabash" is interesting. The reference on April 8, 1812, to the likelihood of war with England unless the "Orders in Council at least, shall be rescinded or so modified [as] to cease to injure our Neutral rights on the Ocean" is an illustration of a Western representative writing about neutral rights when, we have been led to believe, he must have been thinking more about Western causes of the War of 1812.

The letters reveal Jennings' careful attention to local matters such as public lands, pay of the militia, post offices and post roads, and patronage. Unfortunately, the letters give very little information about the constitutional convention. Later letters give some information regarding internal improvements.

As these letters were ready for the press, information was received of some additional Jennings letters which, it is expected, will be printed in a later issue of the *Magazine*.

The chief sources of information about Jonathan Jennings are Logan Esarey, *Governors' Messages and Letters*, III, *Indiana Historical Collections*, XII, 1-269; Dorothy Riker, "Unedited Letters of Jonathan Jennings," *Indiana Historical Society Publications*, X, 147-278; and Dorothy Riker, "Jonathan Jennings," *Indiana Magazine of History*, XXVIII (1932), 223-39.

To John K. Graham, St. Louis, Louisiana, attention of James Maxwell.
Jeffersonville 26th of April 1809

[Mrs. W. H. McDonald, North Platte, Nebraska]

My very dear Sir.

Much was my disappointment, when I returned to this place and found you gone—gone for four years—gone without even leaving me one line to remind me of the past—the past which promised me (I thought) a lasting friendship—a friendship which I prized as being founded on the firmest basis—a basis which alone is capable of supporting real friendship, I mean the basis of an honest heart—a free and generous mind guarded by the strongest barriers of well settled principles of morality & rectitude. Graham, to you could I have deposited the greatest secrets of my heart & in your friendship I antici-

pated much.—I hope you will not forget me, we may see each other I fondly hope it.

I could write much but Maxwell insists upon going— Believe that you[r] welfare is the most ardent wish of your friend very sincerely

Jonathan Jennings

I am a Candidate for Congress & think I shall succeed, in Clark & Harrison Counties I shall not loose 50 votes—

To John K. Graham, Jeffersonville, Indiana Territory.

City Washington 24th Decem 1809

[Mrs. W. H. McDonald, North Platte, Nebraska]

My dear Friend

In a few days I shall be with you to give an account of my Stewardship—I shall bring with me printed statements of the whole affair; you will then be able after examining [*sic*] the most curious scene to form an opinion of what our Territory is in reality.

The Committee of Elections have reported, that the Govenor [*sic*] made an apportionment without any law to authorise him, and also that he ordered election to be held on a day not appointed by law.

I shall be with you and become a Candidate unless my friends are tired of me already, but I hope they will until I render an account of what I have done.

To support my election I had to advocate the Govenor's conduct and Randolph on the other hand was trying to prove it illegal by producing the laws of the Territory and of the United States.

I made a long argument before the Committee of Elections to prove Harrison had acted legally—whilst Randolph produced laws enough to prove that his conduct was not legal, but still alledged, that the Govenor was not to blame because he could do no otherwise.

This was playing off Camelion in earnest.

Now my friend I shall have printed about 1000 Copies of the points upon which the election has turned as made before the Committee my defence and the Report of the Committee.

Your friendship I shall expect until I shall cease to be what I have ever been yours sincerely with friendship and Esteem

J. Jennings

(Excuse great haste) Tell Mr. Espy that I shall see his Brother in Bedford in my return.

To John K. Graham, Jeffersonville, Indiana Territory

Washington City 11th Decr. 1810

[Mrs. W. H. McDonald, North Platte, Nebraska]

My dear Graham

Why have you not written me ere now. I have not had one sentence upon Territorial measures since I arrived save a few hints by Mr. Lemon—

Persevere my dear friend the day will shortly be ours—Our Govenor has depreciated at least 50 per Cent since last Spring and if he keeps pace for a few months in his sinking way, he will have to put into the sinking fund to prevent his value from being entirely lost—

A quaker gentleman informed me that he had conversed with the Secretary of War, who told him that he doubted very much of the integrity of Harrison. Then conversation commenced upon the subject of the last treaty— We have no news as yet,

Accept the assurances of your friend eternally

J. Jennings

To John K. Graham, Jeffersonville, Indiana Territory.

Washington City 16th of January 1811

[Mrs. W. H. McDonald, North Platte, Nebraska]

Dr. Sir.

Since my departure from Jeffersonville I have not had the pleasure of one single line from you. Mr. Lemon informed me that you did not succeed in the Clerkship— I have had but little account of the proceedings of our Legislature, though in the last letter I received I had the promise of some considerable shortly which I have not received— What do the people of Jeffersonville think of the removal of the seat of Justice— They relied upon the Governor to save them— Depositions have been sent to [me] concerning the conduct of Harrison— I have laid them before the President and if he does not remove him I shall move against him in the House next month— Keep this to yourself for the present— I am yours very

Sincerely

Jonathan Jennings

To John K. Graham, Jeffersonville, Indiana Territory

Washington City 29th of Novemr. 1811

[Mrs. W. H. McDonald, North Platte, Nebraska]

Dr. Sir.

Since my arrival here I have heard nothing from you. Are you dead, tell me so. If you are alive do for God sake let me hear from you.

Yesterday the Massacre on the Wabash was made known to me a horrid scene truly. Genl. Worthing[ton] in the Senate from Ohio has instituted an inquiry by raising a Committee in the Senate for that purpose. The inquiry is progressing.

We shall have war with England if she does not revoke her orders in Council, violating our neutral commerce. I have had but very little news from the Territory since I started. Do be so good as to let me hear from you some times if it be in any measure convenient.

I am dear Sir yours

Jonathan Jennings

Present my respects to Mrs. Graham

To John K. Graham, Jeffersonville, Indiana Territory.

Washington City 21st of Decb. 1811

[Mrs. W. H. McDonald, North Platte, Nebraska]

Dr. Sir.

Your letter from Cincinnati of the 7th instant I have received With respect to the conduct of the Governor I have had many letters giving very different accounts.

I am very glad that your embarrasments are in some measure re-

moved, and it will at all times give me pleasure to afford you any act of friendship that at any time may be in my power, consistent with the charge which I am bound to discharge by every tie physical or moral—

As to the 160 dollars, I have for some time held myself, and do now hold myself, bound to advance you.

I am aware that the payment which is to be made by Gwathmey, requires one to be made by you in the first place. I cannot at the present send the draft, but, will in a few weeks, give you a draft upon abijah Bayliss of Louisville, for a sum, at least, sufficient to make one payment, which will authorise you to call on Gwathmey for the one due you by him and you may rest satisfied that I will in due time, and as soon as I possibly can, furnish you 80 dollars, over and above, for the purpose of defraying the fourth and last instalment—

We shall war with England, unless she modifies her Orders in council, so as not to affect the commercial rights of the U. S. as a Neutral Nation and every preparation is now making for that purpose—

I have generally enjoyed good health since my arrival here and am with much esteem yours sincerely.

Jonathan Jennings

To John K. Graham, Jeffersonville, Indiana Territory
Washington City 16th January 1812
[Mrs. W. H. McDonald, North Platte, Nebraska]

Dr. Sir

Your favour of the 20 ult I have received. A Statement of what you owe is of no use to me while we both live, but to prevent any thing unpleasant if one of us should die My wishes to get you to live with me is to oblige you and myself both. On that farm we shall have every convenience of life by industry. You will have no rent to pay, and every thing that is raised shall contribute to your support and convenience with out costing you one cent. I shall furnish one man to work the whole year and you with bestowing your attention shall have the one half of all the clear gain after deducting the expences of necessary farming utensils. I will erect a good saw-mill or a good Distillery, perhaps both, one of them certainly within eighteen months, half the neat [net] proceeds of which shall, after I erect them at my own expence, for your care & oversight, be yours. To the amount of what you owe me, I will then take at the market price in corn or other grain when it is harvested or whiskey so soon as it is distilled—

Say no more about it go and take possession the first of April if I be not a home. You never had reason to complain of me I trust, nor never shall We will settle it to the satisfaction of both, you need not doubt it—

In tolerable health I am your friend sincerely

Jonathan Jennings

Harrison will no longer govern us Triumphed at last has virtuous perservance J. J

To John K. Graham, Jeffersonville, Indiana Territory.

Washington City 8th of April 1812

[Mrs. W. H. McDonald, North Platte, Nebraska]

My dear Sir

Your letter of the 22d of last month I received last evening. I am very glad that you have a prospect of making at least as much as will support you— You acknowledge the receipt of my draft by a former letter and you may in the course of two weeks after the arrival of this letter at the farthest apply to Mr. Bayliss for 80 dollars more and for that purpose I will enclose you a draft in this letter, which I do not wish you to present before the first of May unless your last instalment shall become due to the United States before that time.

I shall talk to Dr. Seybert as you have requested and either give you the result by letter or personal communication when I shall return— We shall certainly have war with England unless the Orders in Council at least, shall be rescinded or so modified to cease to injure our Neutral rights on the Ocean neither of which is to be expected from her now—

I am glad that the people stand firm to the cause— Not that I am so anxious to be re-elected, but for the sake more particularly of those who have embarked with me— This however will be a secret between you and I— Ewing writes me from Vincennes, that I have gained much ground in Knox County and I have not heard any contrary account from any quarter of the Territory— I am my dear Sir your friend sincerely

& Humble St.

Jonathan Jennings

To the editors of *Liberty Hall*.¹

Washington City, 4th June, 1812.

Having lately understood, that some individuals of the Territory of Indiana, entertain an idea, that col. Samuel M'Kee of Kentucky, made an "*invidious distinction*" between the militia and volunteers of Kentucky and those of the Territory, in his speech in Congress, in favor of allowing one month's extra pay to the officers and privates who served in the late campaign on the Wabash: I have requested the colonel to give me a concise statement of the observations made by him on the occasion, which he did in the subjoined letter.² This letter calls for no comment of mine, but in justice to the author as well as myself, I must declare, that I have too often witnessed his talents exerted in favor of the wishes of the people of the Territory, to believe that he intended to make, or did make, any invidious distinction between those brave men. I was present when the speech alluded to was made, and if any remarks had been offered, prejudicial to the militia or volunteers of the Territory, I should have corrected them.

I am respectfully,

Jonathan Jennings.

¹ Cincinnati, Ohio, *Liberty Hall*, June 23, 1812.

² This letter in reply was printed in *ibid.*, June 23, 1812.

Hon. Jonathan Jennings.

Washington City, 1st June, 1812.

Sir—

In the remarks made by me in the House of Representatives, in support of the claim of the officers and soldiers who served in the Wabash campaign, to one month's extra pay. I made no "invidious distinction" between the Kentucky militia and volunteers and those of Indiana, altho the contrary might be inferred from a short and imperfect report of my remarks, published in the *Intelligencer*. I did say, and continue to say, that the militia did their duty in a manner highly honorable to themselves and fully equal to the occasion, and as to the Kentucky militia, both gov. Harrison and col. Boyd bore evidence of the able manner in which they did their duty. The remark was only introduced in reply to a statement deduced from some letter of col. Boyd, which statement certainly could not have intended any reflection on the Kentucky militia, and if conceived in the spirit of censure at all, that censure was not intended to fall on the militia of Kentucky.

I regret that any blame should be attributed to me, more especially as I am unconscious of deserving any. Of this fact, you sir must bear evidence; and if any injurious distinction had been taken, you, I am sure, would not have failed at the proper time to correct it.

I am sir, respectfully yours obediently,

Samuel M'Kee.

To Jeremiah Morrow, Chairman of the Committee on the Public Lands³
Washington City, June 30, 1812.

Sir,

I have just been informed by letter, that some persons in the Territory which I represent, charge me with having so framed the law extending the time of payment to the purchasers of Public Lands, as to exclude all the large purchasers from the benefit of the indulgence and thereby ruined the assignees.

To correct such misrepresentations, permit me to request that you will answer me the following inquiries, viz; whether or not I endeavored to have the time of payment of the Public Lands extended as long as possible and to every purchaser without discrimination? Whether or not I endeavored to have the back interest remitted, and whether Congress during the present session, has not done more for the purchasers of the public lands, than has been done for them at any former period.

With great esteem I am your's very respectfully.

Jonathan Jennings.

Hon. Jonathan Jennings.⁴

Committee Room, July 1st. 1812.

Sir,

I received your letter of yesterday. I am very sorry that any explanation of mine has in your opinion become necessary to obviate

³ *Ibid.*, July 25, 1812.

⁴ This letter in reply was also printed in *ibid.*, July 25, 1812.

a charge, or remove the impression made by any misrepresentation of your conduct— I can in the most unequivocal terms, state, that you did endeavor, both before the Committee of Public Lands and the House of Representatives, to have the greatest possible extension of the time of payment allowed to the purchasers of public lands without discrimination, and also to have the back interest remitted; and that you had no agency in framing either the report or bill on that subject.

The extension of time to purchasers, is more ample by the late act, than by any former one on the subject.

Your's very respectfully.

Jeremiah Morrow.

To John K. Graham, Jeffersonville, Indiana Territory

Washington City 8th of December 1813

[Mrs. W. H. McDonald, North Platte, Nebraska]

Dr. Sir.

Your letter which I received shortly before the adjournment of the last Session I carried in person to the General Post Office. The Post Master Genl. expressed doubts of the expediency of the proposed establishment and observed he would take it into consideration. I believe I shall be able to succeed however, but the Post Master Genl. is now absent from the City, lying sick in new jersey and the Assistant P. M. General cannot find your former letter. These circumstances render it necessary that I should ask you to give me the name of the gentleman who should be appointed Post Master at New Albany. Write me without delay and give me also the news of the Territory so far as your are acquainted with them.

Mrs. Jennings has been unwell nearly all the past Summer and fall. I hope and intend to be with you soon after the present Session shall terminate.

We have nothing from Russia or France or England on the score of diplomacy. Make my respects to Mrs. Graham and believe me to be unfeignedly your friend sincerely with much esteem—

Jonathan Jennings

Washington city 27th January, 1814.⁵

Dear Sir:

I have the satisfaction to inform you and through your publication the citizens of the Territory, that the committee on Military affairs, who had under the consideration the Petitions and Memorial of the Territorial Legislature in behalf of Capt's Hargrove and Peyton and their companies, have agreed *unanimously* to pay them for the whole time they have been in service.

The Paymaster Gen. will instruct the District Paymaster to pay the officers and men of captains Andre's Bigger's Dunn's and Shoulz's companies from the time of their entering into the service of the U. S. A law was passed last session to authorize the payment of the

⁵ Extract of a letter from the Hon. J. Jennings to one of the editors and printed in the Madison, Indiana, *Western Eagle*, February 18, 1814.

whole number of the officers and privates, who belong to those companies of Rangers, and instructions, together with the law, have been sent to the District Paymaster, to pay them accordingly, some considerable time since.⁶

To John K. Graham, Clark County, Indiana Territory

Washington City November 21st 1814

[Mrs. W. H. McDonald, North Platte, Nebraska]

My dear friends

In the hurry of business, with which I have been pressed since my last arrival at this place, I have hardly had time to write a line on any other subject than relative to my representative duty. I have never learned whether you are at New Albany or not, but address you as if there. I should be very glad to hear from you often and if you have not fixed a plan for your next summers, and after residence, prior to your settlement on your own domain, think of fixing yourself on my place for a while. It may be necessary however for you to come to a determination on this if you have not, before the Spring arrives, otherwise I may be induced to enter into arrangements which would not afterwards admit of the plan proposed you—

We have no news here that might not be confined to a *nutshell* "no good news" Lord Hill had not embarked on the 13th of last month for our coasts. The prospect of Peace, is very remote, at least obscured and discovered by the wise acres of this place, only through the delusive medium of European Continental wars—

In making my arrangements for the ensuing summer, I have determined not to conclude finally, what they shall be, until I ask of you whether or not it will be convenient for you to pay me, any time next spring, any part, and how much of the sum which is between us— In putting this interrogatory to you, I trust you know me too well, to construe it into a demand. I should not have asked you the question but for your own observations that you expected to make it convenient— If it will be convenient, I wish to know it soon, and if it will not for the same reason I wish to be informed— If it will not be entirely convenient, or in other words, if it was not your expectation to be prepared for any reimbursement, before this letter reached you, I beg of you not to let my enquiry urge you the least, to any earlier payment— I have enjoyed but indifferent health since I last left Charleston— Taxes will be very heavy after the end of the present Session of Congress—

I am dear Sir, your unfeigned friend and Humble St.—

Jonathan Jennings

To John K. Graham, New Albany, Indiana Territory, via Louisville, Ky.

Washington City 26th of Decr 1814

[Mrs. W. H. McDonald, North Platte, Nebraska]

My dear friend

Your letter of the 9th inst: I have received. You say it will not be in your power to return the loan made you. That declaration would

⁶ Another very brief letter from Jennings to the same editor dated January 31, 1814, in *ibid.*, February 18, 1814, contains lengthy enclosures dealing with this matter.

have been sufficient without any explanation. I am fully satisfied that you will return it as soon as you can and I hope, nay, you will not oblige me if you sacrifice any interest of yours to the object of repayment. I write as I feel. It was my friendship that induced me to loan, and that friendship undiminished, would be wounded if you were, because of my letter on this subject of a former date, to act as if I had required payment. Enough on this point.

If nothing else more advantageous presents itself to your view, my little property on Silver creek, will be always ready to yield to your comfort or advantage while you may be disposed to reside upon it. If you have any ideas of that kind, communicate to me as soon as possible and you shall be accommodated. It will if no more enable you to "*about in equilibria, so that if you do not rise you will not be sinking,*" as you state you have been—

Since I received your letter which I now answer, I have written to the Surveyor General at Chillicothe (Doct. Edward Tiffin) with whom I am personally acquainted a pressing letter in your behalf, requesting to know, whether it will be in his power to employ you. If not immediately, I have reason to believe, that ere long it will enable you to enter upon certain engagements which will enable you to command funds which will place you beyond the grasp of immediate necessity. I am only in tolerable health.

My respects to Mrs. Graham I am unchangeably your friend affectionately.

Jonathan Jennings

To John K. Graham, New Albany, Indiana Territory, via Louisville, Kentucky.

Washington City 14th January 1815

[Mrs. W. H. McDonald, North Platte, Nebraska]

My Dear Sir.

I enclose to you a letter for your safe and confidential keeping. Therein you will find a pledge in your favour, which, according to my recollection of the profits of surveying, will be sufficient to lay the ground work of your future competency, at no distant period, and believe me, it yields me no small satisfaction.

If my life is spared, be assured, that there is nothing fallacious in this, and those bounty lands will soon be operated upon, *must be*, by the faith of the government.

I have directed Govr. Tiffin to direct to you at Charleston, I. T and I will see that any communications he may make you, shall reach you. I feared that a direction to N. Albany might be more liable to a miscarriage. Of this subject say nothing to any person, only do not bind yourself by any contract, until you again hear from me, by which you would place it beyond your power to avail yourself of the advantage which the enclosed presents.

When I see you I shall explain on the subject of your invention. I really have hardly time to drop my best friend a line—

I am sincerely yours; with my respects to Mrs. Graham. The balance of your family I am a stranger to.

Jonathan Jennings

To John K. Graham, New Albany, Clark County, Indiana Territory, via
Louisville, Kentucky.

New Lancaster Ohio 20th Nov: 1815

[Mrs. W. H. McDonald, North Platte, Nebraska]

Dear Graham

I have mustered as much paper as will carry you a line. The Surveyor General has reserved for you, ten Townships to Survey in the Territory of Illinois. The conduct of the Indians he assures me was the reason of his not calling on you by letter ere now, by letter and he assured me last evening when at his house, that he would communicate to you as soon as he conceived you could proceed with safety—

Let me hear from you, and know as soon as possible whether you wish to do the surveying of Ten Townships, or whether you would rather undertake a less quantity— My object is, if it be not your desire, to oblige another man, with the ballance if you should *not* wish to survey the ten Townships yourself— I am ever yours with unlimited esteem.

Jonathan Jennings

in haste)

To Jesse L. Holeman, Lawrenceburgh, via Marietta, Ohio, and Indiana Territory.

Washington City 8th of Decem. 1815

[Margaret H. Wagenhals, New York City]

Dear Sir.

Once more I have reached the metropolis of our country where gaiety, formality and the rounds of fashionable folly are the order of the day with the people of high life. Here the cheerful simplicity of rural maners are unknown as well as the pleasures they afford to the circles of domestic life. It really seems to me that these swarms of fashionable empherons, neither think nor speak, without consulting whether or not it be the *mode*. Here every face wears a smile either feigned or real, though poverty unveiled, retrenches the necessities of life to give means to make a *figure*. How disgusting?

With my little stock of skill in human [nature], I have never thought myself safe to attempt forming one friend, more than, what we may call, civil folks

The City presents a very different aspect, compared with last autumn. The publick edifices, destroyed by the British Vandals, are repairing, and will be in a great measure, again compled [*sic*] in the course of another year.

Personal enterprize in every art is exhibiting itself on a large scale since the last Session of Congress. We have but little European news or domestic either save what is contained in the message of the President of the United States— I am not very well, but able to write you a short letter. How much the taxes may be reduced I am yet unable to say. I am dear Sir, with great esteem your friend.

Jonathan Jennings

To John F. Ross, Charleston, Clark County, Indiana Territory

Washington City Feby. 7th. 1816

[Margaret Ross Brown, Seymour, Indiana]

Dr. Sir,

I was pleased at the reception of your letter and the history you give me of the late proceedings of Corydon. I must admit that Charleston would be more convenient than Corydon to accommodate a Convention. But it seems a majority of the Legislature did not think so, and I cannot take upon myself a responsibly, where nothing but convenience is at stake, and which would only involve myself. I would willingly have voted it in the Legislature, but here it is not my business since the Legislature has prescribed the seat of Government as the spot where the convention shall meet. Besides I have an interest in and near Charleston, which would give additional pretexts for clamour, and charges of personal interestedness in Legislation.

You will perceive by publications that I have at length and with much pressing got the militia services of our Territory recognized, and they will be paid, though they will have to wait a while as money is yet not too plenty with the Government. There is no need as yet for the officers to do any thing in relation to their claims. Ere long and in due time for them, I shall make a further communication if it shall be necessary. I should be gratified to be in the convention as I have no doubt the law under which it will be formed will be strictly examined. As to being a candidate for Govenor, I cannot yet positively say, it will be full time enough you know, hereafter. It may be. With respect and esteem I am your friend & Humble St.

Jonathan Jennings

To Jesse L. Holeman, Lawrenceburgh, Indiana Territory.

Washington City Feby 19th 1816

[Margaret H. Wagenhals, New York City]

My dear Sir.

I have been favoured with your letter of the 1st inst: by Saturday evenings mail. I had been long expecting to hear from you, and would have written you before now, but for the croud of letters and addresses recieved from Indiana, produced by the late Proclamation of the President ordering the settlers off the Publick Lands—

The news here that could interest you, of a general character, can be communicated, only by laborious detail. I must therefore decline such attempt, as the Publick journals convey every particular.

In relation to Indiana, and its probable change of its form of government, I have no doubt a law will pass at some period of the present Session of Congress, for the purpose, on terms as favourable, if not much more so, than have been acceded to any other of the Territories of the U. States—

You have no doubt a heavy charge to perform in your judicial capacity, and have to taste the *fruits* of *much* absence from your chosen residence, from your home and family, from your beloved retirement, from your groves and gardens and dreams of rural felicity,—

Not long since I recieved a letter from our worthy friend Mr. Hendricks. He informed me that, in his opinion, no country ever

presented more candidates for its population, than does Indiana, to lay the foundation of our proposed State fabrick.

Will you or will you not, become a Candidate with the many to meet in convention, if the law to authorize it shall be enacted by Congress?— If long absence would allow me, I should be gratified in passing two or three days with you on my return. I shall hardly do more than obtain a nights lod[g]ing with you. With much esteem and regard yours

Jonathan Jennings

To John K. Graham, Attention of Capt. Carr

July 26th 1816

[Minnie Graham Zapp, New Albany, Indiana]

D. Sir

I take the liberty of introducing to you Capt. John Carr, who is a candidate for the office of sheriff at the ensuing election. Although I have not taken, any part in the election, believing it not my best course, I have in this instance to request of you, to introduce him to such of your acquaintances and friends as may be convenient for you. You may rest assured that he is a young gentleman worthy of your attention and mine.

How goes on the electioneering campaign in your quarter of the County. Perhaps you could inform on the Capt. return—

Yours with esteemed regard

Jonathan Jennings

[To Jesse L. Holman]

Near Charleston Feby 15th 1817

[Margaret H. Wagenhals, New York City]

My dear Sir.

The Constitution nor laws of this State provides that any officer shall give a legal opinion to the Executive. A question has been made, whether the Executive can withhold the Commission of a Clerk elect, upon notice of an intended contest, until such contest can be decided. Without any reference to objections which may be made to any of the late elections, allow me to request of you the favour, to inform me by letter shortly, of your opinion on the subject, viz. Can the Executive withhold commissions of clerks on notice or evidence of contest, under the Constitution and law.

In asking this favour, I will add that I ask the same of your colleagues on the Supreme Bench, and as it presents no question which can come Judicially before the Supreme Court, I have solicited your legal opinion, inasmuch as the Legislature, has not provided for a case of dissatisfaction which arise in relation to the election of Clerks, and there are more instances than one— I am with esteem yours truly.

Jonathan Jennings

P. S. Please address me at Charleston

To Jesse L. Holeman, Decatur [Lawrenceburgh], Indiana.⁷

Corydon Dec. 19th 1818

[Margaret H. Wagenhals, New York City]

Dear Sir.

I received your letter by Doc. Ferris and am obliged to you for the trouble you have taken in the monied concern which you had. It is all correct and satisfactory and herewith I return the receipt the receipt [*sic*] and pay the postage of this letter as it principally regards my own interest and business.

I will now give you some detail of political events. On the meeting of the Legislature, great exertion was made in the House of Representatives, to recognize Lt. Govr. as acting, upon the reports of the news papers of the day, or upon what Harrison considered as an official communication through the Paper edited by Mr. Nelson. I cannot enter upon a detail of all the various resolutions and motions, they would crowd a sheet themselves, but when you see them your good sense will perceive the solecisms which several of them present.

The House after spending several days on the subject indefinitely postponed it. Since when several seem very anxious to fix on a candidate that may out poll me next august, and talk as if desirous of having a *caucus* for that purpose. The Senate had nothing to do in the whole transaction, at least by any act which appears on the record of their proceedings Those who are most desirous of affecting me urge the idea of bringing you forward as a candidate for the Office of Govenor at next election.

What I have given you is the substance of what has transpired here, except what the publick papers will give you. I have delay writing until the "Govenor question," was decided and delayed also until nearly the hour of the mail.

Excuse my short letter, and believe me yours with respect & esteem—

Jonathan Jennings

To Samuel Milroy

Washington City Dec: 28th. 1822

[Mrs. Mary S. Clauser, Lafayette, Indiana]

Dr. Sir.

Yours of the 3d instant, you must know, only reached me by the last Western mail, from which you will perceive how uncertain are our mails at this season of the year.

With regard to the Land Office appointment, there are many applicants, most of whom [are] my political friends and some of them very respectable. There names I must give (I mean those entitled to that attention) to the government with yours, and likewise their general character, and then shall designate those whom I wish to be appointed; viz yourself and *one* other. This course I have deemed in the first place, as proper with regard to all the applicants, and in the last place, as proper with regard to myself. This course I shall pursue and none other, and shall be gratified if you shall succeed. I had a

⁷ This letter was sent via Lawrenceburgh. As a result of Holman's influence, the name of Decatur was later charged to Aurora.

conversation with Mr. Brown of Penna. who will aid you as far as he can.

We have here a great field of intrigue and arrangements, and Indiana may again be made the *upping-block* for others, but if any but citizens receive appointments in our state hereafter while I am here at least, I shall take some trouble to let the good people of the State know the fact and the circumstances leading to such transaction if it shall ever again take place.

Every thing here among certain men of certain views look with a very jealous eye upon any proposition which touches the Public Lands or the completion of our great Western national road; more so than I could have believed before I witnessed it. There is a system of management here to make a certain man President, which goes to great lengths; but I want to see Domestic manufacturers flourish and internal improvement progress as fast as these objects can be accomplished without a resort to internal tax; and as to taxing the manufacturing of whiskey without levying a tax or impost upon imported spirits, which would amount to a prohibition of its consumption in the U. States unless by the Overgrown in wealth, the idea is absurd. Narrow policy always takes narrow measures; for you know that a *tax* would be popular in your County with those who think it a moral evil either to make the whiskey let alone to drink it—

There is nothing here to interest you, but what the Newspapers contain.

I am very respectfully your obt. Humble St.

Jonathan Jennings

To John K. Graham, New Albany, Indiana

Washington City Feby 7th 1823

[Mrs. W. H. McDonald, North Platte, Nebraska]

Dear Sir.

Such is my situation, that I am entirely unable to oblige you. Coopers disappointments have given me much difficulty and I am expecting a draft upon me after a few days, that will be as much as I can meet & indeed before long and before summer I shall be on the borrowing list, unless Cooper shall do something for me. I am sorry it is not in my [power] to oblige you but so it is.

We have no news but such as the Newspapers detail, except managements & intrigues with regard to the next Presidency.

I am your friend sincerely

Jonathan Jennings

To General Samuel Milroy, Salem, Indiana

Near Charleston Sepr. 6th. 1823

[Mrs. Mary S. Clauser, Lafayette, Indiana]

Dear Sir

Some difficulty has occurred between Jno. H. Thompson and myself in relation to a few facts with regard to the relief of purchasers of Publick lands Thompson says he first raised his voice in behalf of the purchasers, without a hint from any man but Genl. S. Milroy. I have understood that you intimated to Thompson, that your county

was interested in a measure, which you intended to introduce the next day, which was a motion in behalf of Land purchasers, and that Thompson, took the advantage of you and introduced it without your consent or knowledge and with which you were displeased. This took place during the Session of 1819 & 1820—

Will you oblige me by giving the facts to me in a letter, with regard to this business, and be pleased to state what were the prayers of the Memorial sent to Congress pursuant to Thompson's resolution—

You will oblige me much by giving me an answer as soon as possible—I do not intend to publish your letter at any time unless with your express consent, but to have it as a document—

I am yours with esteem & regard

Jonathan Jennings

To Jesse L. Holeman, Aurora, Dearborne County, Indiana.

Near Charleston Sep. 6th 1824

[Margaret H. Wagenhals, New York City]

Dr. Sir.

I was desirous to have seen you, when you were in this neighbourhood lately; but was prevented by the weather, on account of my health, from detaining longer on Monday evening after preaching, at the association.

I have been solicited to address you in behalf of Chauncy Butler Esq. of Jennings Co who is desirous of being the bearer of the result of the election of President & Vice President of the U. States, to the City of Washington—

He has a journey to make Eastward, and is a very respectable and deserving man and you perhaps may have a knowledge of him. If consistent with the duty you may have to discharge as an elector, he could succeed in his wishes, it would be gratifying to your friend & Humble St

Jonathan Jennings

To John K. Graham, New Albany, Floyd County, Indiana

Near Charleston Sept. 17th 1825

[Minnie Graham Zapp, New Albany, Indiana]

My dear Sir.

I have never learned whether you got a copy of the Report of the Engineers invitation to a "Western Armory"— After you and I last parted I called at the office of the "Indiana Intelligencer Co" but they were disappointed— The Report I sent was in the hands of Mr. Ligan and he not at home at the time but Dunkin told me he would have the pamphlet at Doc.r Hays on the succeeding day— There is a copy however in the hands of O. Raymond Esqr. at Jeffersonville. I should be extremely gratified, if you could investigate and make some comments on so much of it as relates to the opposite sides of the falls of Ohio. Having been practically engaged in the surveys, you are able no doubt to give much in addition to what you gave me last winter in as much as, at that time, you had not the official report of the engineers before you— If I could get your comments on it by the first of January or 15th of December next, it would be very gratifying to me.

Mrs. J. is still confined to bed has gained I think, a small accession of strength and her stomach is not so subject to sickness and cascading as it was two or three months since—

A friend of mind Mr. James M. Ross of Indianapolis contemplates being a candidate for a clerkship in the body to which you belong— He is well qualified and at his request I address you. He is quite a dilligent, obliging and if he shall succeed you will find him I have no doubt, a very faithful and punctual officer— I have no wish to injure any of the many, or few, who may like him be applicants, but he is my friend and I believe competent— I have then only to add *confidentially*, that if you should be under no propositions and should find yourself at liberty, consistent with your duty, to support his pretentions it would I am sure, be gratifying to me, and gratefully acknowledged by himself— I have been much confined from various causes, *too tedious to mention* but not the less your friend with undiminished esteem and regard—

Jonathan Jennings

To John K. Graham

Washington May 4th 1826

[Mrs. W. H. McDonald, North Platte, Nebraska]

Dear Sir.

I transmit you a copy of the Bill reported by the Committee on Roads and Canals in this House,— When it became the order of the day the Committee of the whole, took up the Bill on the same Subject, which had previously passed the Senate, and which Bill from the senate, (now having become a law) is substantially what the enclosed Bill, except the 3d Section, which the Senate's Bill did not contain— Now Hendricks is a member of the Committee of Roads and Canals of the Senate, which reported the Bill, which is not a law— This is remembering the hopes and wishes of the Jeffersonville Canal

I proposed the third Section of the enclosed Bill as an amendment, and as an additional section, to the Bill from the Senate, when before this House, and intimated to Mr. Haynes to offer as an amendment to my amendment the proposition to have a survey of both sides of the river before any payment should be made to the Louisville Company and upon condition that the Engineers should report of the Louisville side of the River, which amendment to my amendment I afterwards accepted— The whole however has been voted down and \$100,000\$ is appropriated to to *[sic]* the Louisville company, to be paid as the enclosed Bill designates, without the third section—

The relief Bill is passed more favourably to the Debtors than the Bill which passed two years ago—

In haste your friend, etc.

Jonathan Jennings