

Documents

THE LETTERS OF GODLOVE S. ORTH, RADICAL REPUBLICAN

Edited by J. HERMAN SCHAUINGER

This third group of Orth letters covers a period of twenty-one years, 1860-1881, during which time the government of the United States met and conquered its greatest domestic crisis. The country was ruled for a time by an extra-constitutional committee, which set up military governments to rule part of the nation for the only time in our history. A small group of Radical leaders freed the slaves, revolutionized the economic life of the old masters of that race, and, by fanning the fires of sectional hatred, managed to control the affairs of the nation for some time. Drunk with power obtained by these means, politicians blackened the pages of our history with an orgy of political corruption and disgrace, climaxed by the unsuccessful move to oust an honest president.

During these twenty years, Orth remained on the national political scene, most of the time in Congress. In 1861, despite his skepticism, Governor Morton appointed him one of the five Indiana representatives to the Peace Conference in Washington. In July, 1862, he came to Indianapolis as a captain of volunteers, but with the danger of invasion over, he was mustered out in August.

In the same year he was elected to the Thirty-eighth Congress and served continuously through the Forty-first Congress. During this time he constantly urged a determined prosecution of the war. When he became convinced that President Johnson would not compromise with Congress, he joined the camp of the Radicals and constantly supported all Radical reconstruction measures, voting for the Thirteenth and Fourteenth amendments.

He took an active interest in the foreign policy of the government, especially in making certain changes in the diplomatic and consular services. He favored the annexation of Santo Domingo but in 1868 opposed the recognition of Cuban belligerency. He did not serve in the Forty-second Congress but reappeared in the Forty-third. In 1872 he indicated a desire for a foreign post; in 1875 he declined the ministership to Brazil but accepted the office of Minister to Austria-Hun-

gary. In May of the following year he resigned this position to accept the gubernatorial nomination of his party in Indiana but withdrew from the race. In 1878 and 1880 he was again in Congress.

The following letters are more significant in their omissions than content and are less exciting and valuable than those of the Whig period. They are almost entirely concerned with his personal political affairs and problems of patronage, with little discussion of the great national problems. There are but five written during the course of the war, and no mention is made of the exciting events of the Radical contest against Johnson. No hint is given of the devastation caused by the exposure of the scandals of the Grant administration, although the recipient of many of these letters, Vice-President Colfax, was practically forced from public life because of the Credit Mobilier scandal. There are other noticeable gaps. These letters, however, reveal something of what went on behind the scene of Indiana politics. The very evident gaps in the dates of the letters to Colfax make it probable that there were other letters to him; it may be hoped that these will some day come to light. Orth was not a great man, but he was in the thick of political events for a long period. He was a voluminous letter writer and there can be little doubt that many more of his letters survive.

The Orth letters to Elihu B. Washburne, Hamilton Fish, and James A. Garfield are in the papers of those individuals at the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Those to Daniel D. Pratt are in the Pratt Papers, Indiana State Library, Indianapolis; those to Schuyler Colfax are in the Orth Collection at the Indiana State Library, also.

Friend Schuyler,

LaFayette Inda. Novr 20 1860.

I recd. a letter a few days since from our mutual friend Jno H. Harper in reference to the *Cabinet* of the incoming administration and have attended to his requests. Both our papers have spoken favorably of your name in connection with the P. O. Department.

Our State is unquestionably entitled to this consideration at the hands of Mr. Lincoln, and unless *political Gambles*, should at Indianapolis, this winter, make a new cut, deal, & shuffle I have little doubt of your success.¹ Why have you not written me yourself in reference to this matter. *Faint heart &c you Know.*

¹ Colfax did not receive the appointment to the post office. It went first to Horatio King, who was followed in the same year by Montgomery Blair. Caleb B. Smith of Indiana was, however, secretary of the interior from 1861 to 1863.

I may be a little selfish (but that is human nature) to desire your success, for it may be pleasant at least, if not profitable, to have a friend "near the throne." . . .

Friend Pratt²

La Fayette Feb 28/1862

I thank you kindly for your letter to Gov Morton.³

In this matter my friends feel more interest, and are more sanguine, than myself, and let the issue be what it may I am content in the assurance (now dawning so brilliantly), that we have a *Government*, and that we can maintain ourselves triumphantly against foes at home and, if need be, enemies abroad. . . .

Dear Schuyler:—

Lafayette Ind. May 13 / 63

I have just received a letter from Genl Totten,⁴ in answer to one of mine, stating that W. F. Reynolds jr. was appointed *Cadet* at West Point from this District. I am much surprised at this. It was done clandestinely by Mr. White,⁵ and is in derogation of my right to nominate.

Will you assist me in seeing that this matter is *changed* at once.

I have today written to Genl Totten, claiming the *right* to nominate, but have as yet not sent any name. . . .

P.S. If necessary [?] see the Prest. himself, as I have some feeling about this matter.

Dear Schuyler:—

LaFayette Ind. May 14, 1863

I wrote you yesterday rather hurriedly, in reference to the appointment of Cadet.

I think I used the word "clandestinely" in speaking of Mr. White's recommendation, and if so, I feel I did him a injustice, which I would not do knowingly to any one.

It may be his right to make the nomination, but the matter has been kept so quiet about [?] that I *suspect* there may be some doubt as to his right, but that his nomination would be respected in the absence of any from me. All I want is the exercise of my own undoubted privilege and if under the "Regulations" of the Academy, the nomination

² Daniel D. Pratt (1813-1877) practiced law in Logansport. He represented Cass County at the state House of Representatives in 1851 and 1853, and served in the United States Senate from 1869 to 1875. Pratt also was a delegate to the Republican National Convention of 1860 and commissioner of internal revenue, 1875-1876.

³ Oliver P. Morton (1823-1877) bolted the Democratic party to join the Free Soil party and then joined the Republican party because of its opposition to slavery. In 1856 he was nominated for governor by the People's party which was then merged with the Republican, but was defeated. He presided over the state Republican convention in 1857. Elected lieutenant-governor in 1860, he became governor upon the election of Henry S. Lane to the United States Senate. Morton was one of the strongest of the war governors and was known throughout the Union as the soldier's friend. He was elected to the United States Senate in 1867 and re-elected in 1872.

⁴ Perhaps this is General Joseph G. Totten (1788-1864), famous chief engineer of the army.

⁵ Albert S. White was a member of the Thirty-seventh Congress, but not of the Thirty-eighth. The final session of this Congress was held in March, 1863.

falls to me I desire to exercise it. The vacancy will only occur at the approaching Commencement. Please ascertain and inform me about the matter. . . .

Dear Colfax,

Lafayette Ind. July 25 / 64

I have just returned from White Co. where I have been seeking a few days of quiet, since the "*convention*" of the 20th. Great efforts were made by a few men, much money spent (some say \$15,000) to secure my defeat, but when the delegates from the outside Cos. arrived, and commenced casting their votes solid for me, the "[?]" man was the first to seek the floor and move my nomination by acclamation, and Capt. Wilson⁶ gave the motion a hearty second. The roll of the Counties however was called, and the *people* by an unanimous and enthusiastic vote renominated me. Those who opposed me saw the coming of the storm and like prudent sagacious men they preferred not to breast it any longer.

Suffice it to say that the people had looked upon my re-nomination as a matter of course—and being busy in their fields & shops gave themselves no concern, until I returned and got a few of my friends to sound the alarm. Tippecanoe stood finely by me (God bless her, she has never failed to respond to any of my demands on her) and as a matter of course the other Cos. followed her lead.

But enough of this, for fear I appear selfish—

So Turpie⁷ is to take a tilt at you. I met the last three days quite a number of your constituents, who while they feel a little uneasy, yet say they will work with a will, and are not by any means despondent.

Several (Johnson,⁸ Chenowith, Ash &c) requested me to say to you, that you should not bear a joint campaign with Turpie, and gave as a reason the manner he treated you before, and the fear of undue excitement in the District. I merely comply with their request, Knowing that in this matter you are your own best judge.

Will you be at Indianapolis next Tuesday? I shall go over, and regard it important for all the Congl. candidates to meet with the Union League for general consultation.

I shall make a few speeches each week, but will not commence the canvass until about the middle of August.

Ward,⁹ Applegate & Hervey, are contesting the "[?]" nomination, on

⁶ This may have been James Wilson (1825-1867), who practiced law in Crawfordsville and served in the Mexican and Civil wars. In the latter, he was a captain of volunteers in 1862; but when discharged in 1865, he had been brevetted lieutenant colonel. He was a representative in Congress, 1857-1861, and minister to Venezuela, 1866-1867.

⁷ For information on David Turpie's opposition to the Republicans, see Willard H. Smith, "The Colfax-Turpie Congressional Campaigns, 1862-1866," *Indiana Magazine of History* (Bloomington, 1905-), XXXVIII (June, 1942), 123-42.

⁸ This might have been Israel Johnson (1803-1866), a Whig from Logansport.

⁹ This may have been Thomas B. Ward (1835-1892) of Lafayette, who was mayor from 1861 to 1865 and was elected as a Democrat to Congress, 1883-1887.

Wednesday of this week. Of course as I shall not be consulted I will not indicate my preference. . . .

Friend Pratt,

Washt. City July 19, 1866.

Your favor is recd. and I note what you say upon the ticklish subject of taxation.

There is a Bill before the proper Com. to carry out your suggestions, but I doubt whether it will be acted on at all during the few days of the Session yet remaining.

It is very doubtful however whether in view of our past legislation in reference to all our National Legislation, we should not be guilty of bad faith in attempting to tax any portion.

The contest this fall all over the country is assuming vast and important proportions, and the issues involved are not second in importance to any ever presented to the American People— Their [?] will be put to a severe test, but I have great confidence in the result, and if the action of Congress should be sustained, the country will be saved from the dangers which threaten it— Should the contrary be the result I much fear that untold trials and disasters are in store for us all—

Congress is not only hopeful—but firm as a rock, and will not yield an inch to the perfidy of the Prest. . . .

My dear Colfax:—

Sunday P.M. [1867]

On my return from Delphi last night, whither I had been to address the Old Settlers meeting, I recd your note enclosing letter of Goddard.

I cannot say that I am surprised at T's course—for since you & I interceded in his behalf with McPherson¹⁰ I learned so much of his character, or rather want of character, as to be prepared for anything from that quarter. I am much more surprised that the Journal should lend itself to a promulgation of his meanness—but I suppose that all who do not worship continually at the shrine of a certain "M-ogul" of our state, are to have his dogs barking at their heels.

You know how they have served me heretofore in this District.

As to Thompson,¹¹ I have for the last 18 Mos kept Him at arms length, and of course shall expect from him similar treatment to that which you are receiving when the proper time arrives.

But my dear Sir, you must expect these things for the boys always throw stones at the best apples on the Tree.

Since my return I have been in several neighborhoods in my District—and the people all desire to know about the next Presidency. Whether *Grant*¹² is with us—and can be relied on, &c, &c. Whether we *must* take him for the Presidency—or whether we have not the courage

¹⁰ This is probably Edward McPherson who is referred to *post*, note 15.

¹¹ This is probably Richard W. Thompson, a prominent Whig and Republican politician.

¹² This letter was obviously written before Ulysses S. Grant's nomination by the Republican party for the presidency in 1868 and possibly as early as the suspension of Edwin M. Stanton from the position of secretary of war. President Andrew Johnson suspended Stanton in August, 1867, and appointed Grant in his place. At this time

to speak right out and say we must have a true and tried Civilian, about whom there is no doubt or hesitancy, and invariably add, "Colfax ought to [be] our man." I have not heard Winters [?] name mentioned a single time—and am satisfied that he & his friends finding no response in his behalf will soon be found joining in the yelps for Grant.

Let us keep our powder dry—we are passing through eventful times—and the next 90 days may present a very different phaze from the present. A few articles in the Gazette recently did not help Grant very much, and have already made an impression here. But it behooves us to move with the utmost caution. . . .

Friend Washburne—¹³

Lafayette Octo 16, 1867

Absence from home (in Ohio & elsewhere) has prevented me heretofore from tendering you my congratulations on your safe return from Europe and that too with improved health. I do hope the improvement may continue and that you may soon be in your usual vigor of body and mind.

The results of the recent Elections are of course unexpected, but if properly viewed, will be productive of good results, to our party and the County.

The nomination of Genl Grant, has now become a fixed fact—and with prudence on the part of Congress this winter, his triumphant election will become an equally fixed fact.

We may however so conduct ourselves as to bring about the mortifying position of Grant as President, with a Congress either against him, or else so weakened as to lose much of its power to do good.

If we continue the McCollough [McCulloch plan] of restricting the currency¹⁴—and our own policy of wild and extravagant (I will not say corrupt.) legislation, we shall forfeit the confidence of the people—and we shall deserve such forfeiture.

But I must close or else shall be drawn into writing a letter which was not my intention—but merely to tender you, as I again do, my congratulations. . . .

Friend Pratt—

LaFayette Ind June 12/1868.

Permit me to tender you my sincere congratulations on your recent nominations for Congress.

Your election is of course a fixed fact and I trust I shall [have] the pleasure of serving with you in the 41st Congress.

I leave for Washt. in two or three days. . . .

it was not clear whether General Grant would cast his lot with the Radical Republicans or with the President. He soon broke with Johnson, however, and in the following year became the successful Republican candidate for the presidency.

¹³ Elihu B. Washburne (1816-1887) was a Whig and later a Republican who served sixteen years in the House of Representatives. He was a personal friend of Abraham Lincoln and Grant. Appointed first by Grant as secretary of state, a few days later he was appointed minister to France, 1869-1877.

¹⁴ Hugh McCulloch (1808-1895) was President Johnson's secretary of the treasury, 1865-1869. He served in the same capacity for President Chester A. Arthur, 1884-1885.

Friend Pratt—

Washington, D.C. June 26, 1868.

I know you must have "McPhearson's¹⁵ *Political History of the Rebellion*" for your approaching canvass, and I have therefore taken the responsibility to have it forwarded to you by Express. The price is \$5.—C.O.D. . . .

Dear Washburne—

LaFayette Inda. Sept. 7, 1868

My district is very close and I have a hard contest on hand.

Our friends have decided on a rally here on Thursday the 1st of Octo. and on its success depends very much the success in Octo.

Senator Sherman¹⁶ has promised to do the *talking* for the occasion, but if Genl. Grant could favor us with his *personal presence* we could arouse an enthusiasm that would shelve all opposition.

By this days mail I wrote to the Genl. requesting his attendance, and I hope it will meet his approval, and my object in writing to you is to have your good word added to the request—

I can see of no impropriety at all in his coming here on that day, and much good will result. . . .

Friend Pratt—

Lafayette Inda Octo. 22, 1868.

I need hardly say to you that I congratulate you most heartily on your election to Congress.¹⁷

Ever since my own term of service commenced I have felt like having you as one of my colleagues, and when we meet I can give you a *recipe* how to stay in Congress as long as you desire to do so.

Inasmuch as we have carried the Legislature I feel like being a Candidate for U.S. Senator, and especially so if I find sufficient encouragement among our friends in Northern Indiana.

I write you in that spirit of candor which should characterize a friendship of nearly thirty years standing, and will be pleased to hear from you in the same spirit, and to receive such suggestions as you may feel at liberty to make.

I know that you can do much among the Members elect from your district, and with that support I shall feel much encouraged in my efforts. . . .

Friend Pratt,

Lafayette Ind Oct. 27, 1868.

Your favor of yesterday is recd.

After you shall have entered fully upon your duties as Rep. you

¹⁵ Orth refers here to Edward McPherson, *The Political History of the United States of America During the Great Rebellion* (Washington, D.C., 1864). McPherson, a Republican, served as a representative in the Thirty-sixth and Thirty-seventh Congresses and as clerk of the House of Representatives, 1863-1875, 1881-1883, and 1889-1891.

¹⁶ John Sherman (1823-1900), a Whig and Republican of Ohio, served as a representative in Congress, 1855-1861; as a United States senator, 1861-1877 and 1881-1897; as secretary of the treasury for President Rutherford B. Hayes, 1877-1881; and as secretary of state for President William McKinley, 1897-1898.

¹⁷ Pratt was elected to Congress in 1868 but never took his seat as a representative because he was elected subsequently by the Indiana legislature to the United States Senate, 1869-1875. This fact makes the following letters of Orth to Pratt somewhat amusing.

will become enamoured of the situation, its novelty, its exciting character, and the important responsibilities with which it is surrounded.

To be one of the law-givers of this Great Republic—to study its vast and varied interests—to become familiar with its domestic affairs and its foreign policy—is worthy of any man's ambition and furnishes labor, interesting labor, for the most active and elevated intellect. But more of this when we meet hereafter.

I proceed to answer several interrogations and here let me promise, that I shall at all times most cheerfully furnish you with any information in my power.

The 41st Congress will convene on the 4th of March next, and I know of no reason why it should remain in session longer than a week or ten days. You will however most probably be detained two or three weeks in order to arrange the distribution of patronage in your District, in the event of Grant's election.

In reference to lists of constituents—I have two such lists. One, comprising the leading and influential Republicans in each township—this list numbers about 100 to each County. The other embracing pretty much all the *reading* Republicans, and *some Democrats*, in the District. This list numbers about 10,000.

The first list I use for the distribution of Books, Pub. Docs. and occasionally a speech of some leading Member. The other list is used almost exclusively for the distribution of speeches and political pamphlets.

The former list it would be well for you to prepare in time for the opening of the next Congress, the other, list you will not need until the Winter Session.

Your franking privilege commences on the 4th. of Feby.

Seats are selected by lot on the opening of each Congress and as much oftener as the House may order, which I have known to be done on two or three occasions during a session.

This, I believe, embraces all your enquiries—and now as to the Senatorship.

I certainly thank you for the most flattering opinion you express as to my fitness for the place. I have entered the Lists, with the full concurrence of every leading Republican in my District and I have reason to believe that every Republican Paper, and all the Republican Senators & Reps. in the District will give me their hearty support.

This should be satisfactory, on that score at least, to other parts of the state.

In the event of my election to the Senate, there would not be any trouble about electing a Republican in my succession. And as I have fully determined upon making the race I shall feel under many obligations to have the support of at least a portion of the Delegation from your District.

Should I be successful I shall regret that fortune has placed us in different ends of the Capitol, but we shall nevertheless have abundant opportunity to recall & recount many of the scenes & incidents of Auld Lang Syne. . . .

My dear Colfax,

Lafayette Ind. Nov. 9, 1868

I hardly know whether to withhold my congratulations until another most interesting event shall have been added to your history. We can however settle both when we meet at the Capitol.

I don't like to make suggestions especially when they are unasked—but many years ago you wrote advising that "a politician" should never hesitate or "look behind him."

I believe your chances to succeed Grant are at this time better than those of any living man.¹⁸

To keep them in this condition will require the constant action of yourself & friends.

It strikes me that the best thing now to be done, would be to have our old & much esteemed friend Defrees placed at the head of the P. O. Dept.

He is well qualified for this position, but independent of all this there is something due to such a friendship as his has been for the last 30 yrs

I make these hurried suggestions on *my own responsibility*, and without the knowledge of anyone; nor shall I detain you by enlarging upon a matter which your own good judgment will grasp in all its leanings upon your future. . . .

Friend Pratt,

Lafayette Inda. Novr 16, 1868.

Your favor is just recd.

I hope when the contest thickens, you will see your way clear to throw aside your neutrality—and buckle on the arms of righteousness for *Godlove's* sake. But of this anon.

As to Route Agencies I have not the time to give you full details as to the *modus operandi*—nor is it necessary until you get to Washington.

About the 1st of March the Rep. Members from this State get together and divide this patronage among themselves, taking into consideration the number of Agents to be appointed—and the different routes running through any one District.

For instance the Valley Road runs thro. the District, of Shanks,¹⁹ Williams,²⁰ Pratt & Orth—being 4. members and only 2 agents. This must be equalized by taking into consideration other lines of road, &c.

We will find it a very troublesome matter to adjust with exactitude.

In the meantime I say to all my applicants "you must wait until I see how many agencies fall to my lot". . .

¹⁸ Grant wasn't even in the White House yet, not taking office until March 4, 1869. By the time of the next election, however, Colfax was eliminated; Henry Wilson of Massachusetts became Grant's second vice-president.

¹⁹ John P. C. Shanks (1826-1901) was in the state House of Representatives in 1855 and 1879, and served as representative in Congress, 1861-1863 and 1867-1875. He entered the Civil War as a colonel and was brevetted major general of volunteers in 1865.

²⁰ William Williams (1821-1896), Republican, practiced law in Warsaw, Indiana. He was in Congress, 1867-1875, and served as *charge d'affaires* to Paraguay and Uruguay, 1882-1885.

Dear Pratt—

Lafayette Ind Decr 29, 1868.

Your favor is recd. I am half inclined to send it to Mr. Lanman,²¹ and have him publish it as your Biography *prior* to your elevation to the National Councils—leaving the Addenda for future Editions.

But seriously—Lanman is entitled to much credit for his Dictionary. I shall not consider any political Library complete without it. He gives a very brief account (about a dozen lines) to each M.C. from the organization of the Govt. stating birth, education, residence, profession, and official Station—and then etc. etc. You must furnish him, remembering that with public honors come also private annoyances. Are you still in the field for Senator? If not, I wish you to enter full handed, either for yourself or me—I know you can do me good to the extent of at least half dozen votes, and if I have drawn my Senatorial horoscope correctly, that number will about help me out.

Hoping to have the pleasure of seeing you at Inds. next week. . . .

Friend Washburne,

Indianapolis Jany 8, 1869.

I thank you very cordially for your favor of the 5th inst. just recd.

Our Senatorial question is in a very unsettled Condition, and the final result depends altogether upon what Concentrations may be made among two or three candidates in opposition to Will Cumback²² who controls at present the largest vote. . . .

My dear Pratt,

Washington, D.C. Jany 22nd. 1869.

The Telegraph has just informed me of your election to the Senate.

Permit me to tender you my unfeigned congratulations on this result, and to assure you that (next to myself, such is our selfish nature) there is no man in our State whom I would rather see occupy this exalted position. . . .

Hon. D. D. Pratt

Sir,

Apl. 5, 1869.

The President has nominated John L. Miller as Post Master at *Lafayette, Indiana* in place of W. C. Wilson the present incumbent. This nomination was made on my recommendation and I desire its confirmation by the Senate.

As you are aware, LaFayette is my place of residence—and it is fair to presume that I know the sentiments of my constituents in this respect.

I advised the President to make this change, among other reasons, because said Wilson is an unreliable Republican. In the controversy between Congress and the late President, Mr Johnson, Mr. Wilson warmly espoused the cause of Johnson and was instrumental in removing Mr Potter, the assessor in my District for no other reason than because Potter was a warm supporter of the Policy of Congress—and had him-

²¹ Charles Lanman first published his *Dictionary of the United States Congress* in 1859. Finally it was taken over by the government and published by Congress. Lanman was librarian of the House of Representatives in 1861.

²² Will Cumback was elected lieutenant-governor in October, 1868, to serve for the four-year term, 1869-1873. He then was nominated to the United States senatorship but failed to secure enough votes and withdrew, after which Pratt was then nominated and elected.

self appointed as such assessor. At my suggestion the Senate refused to confirm said Wilson as such assessor—

During the campaign of 1866 Wilson was one of the leading Johnson men in my District, confederating with the Democrats in their attempt to defeat the Republican Party, and presided over the Convention which nominated my competitor for Congress. A vacancy occurred in said Post Office, by death in August 1867, and said Wilson was appointed Post Master by said Johnson. He continued to act with the Democratic Party until confirmed by the Senate, since which time he has professed to act with the Republican party.

He is actively engaged in the practice of the law, and pays but little attention to the duties of the office.

I need hardly add a word in behalf of Mr Miller who is nominated as his successor, because you are well acquainted with him.

He is an old and respectable Citizen of my town, has always been a staunch working Republican—represented my County honorably for four years in our State Legislature, is a man of incorruptible integrity and well qualified to discharge the duties of the office.

Should there be any objection to his confirmation you are authorized to read this letter to the Senate. . . .

Friend Pratt—

The enclosed letter of Mr Coburn shows an exact similarity between the political status of *Garland Rose & Mr Wilson*—

If it was *right* to remove the one it cannot be *wrong* to remove the other. . . .

Keep this letter.

[Enclosure]

Hon. D. D. Pratt from W. Coburn

Dear Sir

Washington D.C. Apl 6th 1869

I am asked to state what Garland Rose's political position was formerly.

He was a Johnson man in 1866, & voted against our ticket.

He voted our State & National tickets in 1868 and every where openly avowed his intention to do so. . . .

Friend Washburne,

LaFayette Inda. June 2, 1869.

This letter will be handed you by my friend John L. Reynolds Esq. of this City.

Mr. R. is one of our oldest and most respectable Citizens, and I take pleasure in commending him to your Kindness during his contemplated visit to Paris. . . .

Friend Pratt,

Lafayette Ind Jne 26/69

Will you please give me your *Autograph* in the enclosed, and return to me.

Mr. Cole is all I have stated him to be.

Shall start for California in ten days. . . .

[Orth to Pratt]

Washington, D.C. 1869

Mrs. Bainbridge has been appointed *Post Mistress* at *Fort Monroe*.

She is the Mother-in-law of our mutual friend, Genl. J. J. Reynolds²³
—and I trust you will aid in her confirmation. . . .

[Orth to Washburne]

Dear Sir,

LaFayette Inda. July 5, 1869.

This will be handed you by my friend & constituent W. L. Lingle Esq.²⁴ who is about starting on a visit to Paris and other portions of Europe.

I commend him to your Kind attentions. . . .

Dear Pratt,

Jny 11—1870.

I have known W Bradford for many years—and cheerfully testify to his character and devotion to the Repb. Party. In this latter respect I have witnessed his labors & efforts ever since my service in Congress.

He has recently met with severe domestic affliction in the loss of his wife—having on his hands a large family. He is not rich in this worlds goods— He has a bright little son whom he desires to have appd. Page in the Senate.

I am satisfied you will never regret your action in the matter if you procure such appt. . . .

[Orth to Pratt and Oliver P. Morton]

House of Representatives

Gent:—

Washington, March 23, 1870.

The Prest. has sent to the Senate for confirmation the name of Capt. Henry G. Ellsmuth for 2nd Lieut. of Marines.

Capt. E is a son of the late Henry L. Ellsmuth, & he is a worthy young man. I trust you will see to his confirmation. . . .

Dear Pratt,

Lafayette Ind May 10, 1871

Enclosed is the application of Mr Elijah Moore, one of most respectable Citizens and active Republicans.

Can I ask of you to hand it in person to the Secretary of War, and add your request to mine that the prayor of the applicant be granted.

I assure you it is a most meritorious case—and one which should receive favorable action. . . .

Dear Pratt,

Lafayette Ind. May 15, 1871

My friend F. M. Heaton²⁵ Esq. now in the Land Office desires the appointment of Recorder of the Land Office.

He is worthy of the place, and I shall esteem it a favor if you can speak a good word for him with the "powers that be."

I have examined the new Treaty casually, and do not find any

²³ Joseph J. Reynolds was the first colonel of the Tenth Regiment of the Indiana Volunteer Infantry. He received his commission of major general, November 29, 1862.

²⁴ This may have been William S. Lingle, who purchased the Lafayette, Indiana, *Courier* in 1854.

²⁵ Frank M. Heaton, of Indiana, was a clerk in the General Land Office at Washington, D.C., from 1869 to 1873.

serious objections.²⁶ It is certainly very desirable to have our relations with Great Britain, "and the rest of mankind on the most amicable basis." . . .

Dear Pratt, Lafayette Inda May 22, 1871.

Many thanks for your intercession for the release of young Moore from the Army.

By this kindness on your part you have brought joy unspeakable to the hearts of his aged Father & Mother, whose prayers will ascend to Heaven for blessings on your head. . . .

My dear Colfax, Lafayette Ind. June 19, 1871.

A desire not to intrude myself, while you needed rest and quiet, has alone delayed the tender of my congratulations, that a Kind Providence is restoring you gradually to your accustomed health & strength.

That you may soon be fully restored, and spared yet many years of honor and usefulness to your family, your friends and your Country, is the ardent wish. . . .

Friend Pratt: Lafayette Ind. Septr. 6, 1871

My friends, Messrs *Perrin Clark & Co.* of this place have made applications for a National Bank Charter.

Will you please send me a letter to the Controller recommending them.

They are gentlemen of unimpeachable integrity, of large means, and well qualified to carry on business of Banking, besides which they possess the full confidence of our Commercial Community. . . .

Friend Pratt Lafayette Inda July 8, 1872.

Our friends in Delphi are getting up some feeling in reference to the Post Master at that point.

This matter requires careful handling, as it may result in trouble.

Should a vacancy occur, I will cheerfully consult with you as to the *proper person* to be appointed— In event of vacancy we want a good man who is not complicated in present troubles. . . .

Dear Pratt, Lafayette Ind July 13, 1872

I see by the *Paper* that Nelson²⁷ is on his way home from Mexico, not to return— I can hardly say whether (if the position were tendered) I would like to go or not.

Sometimes I feel as though a short sojourn abroad would be very desirable—on many accounts—and especially the advantage which would accrue to my son and daughter from travel and intercourse with the world.

Would you feel perfectly free in writing the President saying that if the position were tendered I would probably accept it—

You are the *only person* to whom I have or shall say a word

²⁶ This probably was the Treaty of Washington with Great Britain, May 8, 1871.

²⁷ Thomas H. Nelson (c. 1823-1896), a Whig and personal friend of Lincoln, was one of the founders of the Republican party in the Middle West. He was Minister to Chile, 1861-1866, and Minister to Mexico, 1869-1873.

on this subject. I will not *formally* apply for this or any other position—but I might accept if tendered. . . .

[Orth to Pratt]

Lafayette July 16, 1872

Your favor of yesterday is recd. Accept my thanks for the same.

Now as to the Delphi P. O. I am satisfied there are no *substantial* reasons for the removal of Major Hannum²⁸—that the clamor against him was raised and is kept up mainly by disappointed applicants and their friends. Should the Dept. however determine upon his removal and request you to suggest a successor it strikes me the best thing you can do is to consult with Mr. A. H. Bowen.

I have always found Mr. Bowen a safe, prudent, and sagacious counsellor in all such matters, but I hope there will be no change, at least not until after the election.

Mrs. O requests me to say that she would be very much pleased to have Mrs. Pratt pay her a visit at any time within the next two weeks, or about the first week in September. . . .

My dear Pratt,

LaFayette Ind. July 19, 1872.

Senator Wilson²⁹ will speak at this place on Wednesday the 7th of August—at 2 P.M. and at Logansport same day at 7 P.M.

I wish you to come down and escort Wilson to your town.

While here on—people will expect from you a short exhortation after Wilson's speech—and I will return the compliment by exhorting at Logansport the same evening. . . .

Dear Pratt:

Lafayette Ind. Dec. 28, 1872

At our last interview you asked me to drop you a note in reference to a copy of the "Globe" for the 42nd Congress.

While on this subject permit me to add the following,

Smithsonian Report.

Diplomatic Correspondence.

Haydens' Exploration of the Yellow Stone. . . .

Dear Pratt:

Monday Morning [February 3, 1873]

While at the P. O. Dept. this morning Mr. Marshall informed me that Major Hannum's removal as P.M at Delphi had been determined upon— At my suggestion the Dept. has agreed to accept his resignation, and by this mail I have written to Hannum to forward his resignation, at once, which he will doubtless do.

As to his successor, I suggested to Mr Marshall—that ought, in courtesy, to be referred to Judge Cason³⁰—as the Rept. Member elect from the District—and he replied he would do so, if agreeable

²⁸ Jehu C. Hannum resigned his commission of captain of the Indiana Legion, Carroll County Company, upon entering the service of the United States in 1861. He received his majority March 1, 1864.

²⁹ The presidential campaign of 1872, in which the Liberal Republicans had revolted and thrown their support against Grant, was in process. The only Senator Wilson then in the United States Senate was Henry Wilson, Grant's running mate.

³⁰ Thomas Jefferson Cason (1828-1901) practiced law at Lebanon. He represented Boone and Hendricks counties at the state House of Representatives, 1861-1865, and at the state Senate, 1865-1867. He

to *your* wishes. I agreed to send you this note, and not doubting you desire to rid yourself of the annoyance of at least Cason' District I trust you will signify your desire to Mr Marshall. . . .

Dear Pratt, Sunday Eve. [February 23, 1873]
I shall esteem quite a favor if you can send to my son, Dr. W. M. Orth, at Lafayette, a copy of the "Medical & Surgical History of the War" so soon as ready for distribution. . . .

Hon. D. D. Pratt Lafayette Ind 3/14, 1873
Is there any opposition to Millers reappointment as PM at this place. Answer. . . .

Dear Pratt, LaFayette Ind. April 11, 1873
Yours of yesterday is recd. I am aware that there are quite a number of clever gentlemen in our State who have a hankering for friend Park's position, but I have reason to believe that the administration does not desire any change.

A letter from Secy. Fish,³¹ now before me contains the following "Not being aware of any reason for a change in the incumbency of the Consulate at Aix la Chapple your desire for Mr. Park's retention will be all that is necessary to secure that result."

I have quoted as much of the Secretary's letter to me, to enable you to state to your Correspondents what seems to be the determination of the State Dept. in this matter.

Mr. Park has no *special claims* for the position. He is one of the oldest and most faithful Republicans in the State, laboring at all times and under all circumstances for the success of our cause, giving his time and his money freely—never croaking, never complaining. His character is above reproach—he is in all respects a gentleman—a classical scholar—a practical common sense man who never shrinks from the performance of duty—and he has discharged his official duties with singular fidelity and to the entire satisfaction of the President.

In view of civil service reform (now so much vaunted) he ought to be permitted to remain at his post if he desires it—but there are some queer things done in this world, and especially so at Washington, sometimes, but there is no telling what his fate may be.

I have long since schooled myself into the philosophy "to take the world as it comes." . . .

Friend Pratt, Lafayette Ind. May 5, 1873
I presume you will attend the St. Louis Convention and also accompany the Excursion Party to Galveston.
I think it well for all Western Members of Congress to do so.

served as common pleas judge of Boone County, 1867-1871, and was elected as a Republican to the Forty-third and Forty-fourth congresses, 1873-1877.

³¹ Hamilton Fish (1808-1893) was President Grant's brilliant secretary of state, serving from 1869 to 1877. Previously he had served in Congress, 1843-1845; as governor of New York, 1849-1850; and in the United States Senate, 1851-1857.

Genl Packard,³² Judge Cason, & probably Mr. Tyner³³ expect to leave via the Valley Road next *Saturday morning*, and we should be much pleased to have you with us. . . .

Washington D. C. Monday Morning. [December 8, 1873]

Dear Pratt,

Our old and mutual friend Defrees will probably call and see you this evening on a little Financial matter. I hope you will be able (as I am not) to accommodate him. . . .

Friend Pratt,

Washington, D.C. Mch 11, 1874

A good friend of mine, *Jos. C. Suit*, Esq. of *Jefferson, Inda.* wants a Copy of the *Globe* and Appendix. My copies are all distributed. Can you accommodate him? He is the son of our mutual friend, *Jas. Suit*, dec. . . .

My dear Colfax,

Washington. D.C. May 11, 1874

Your note is recd. I almost envy you your "otium cum etc." Public service here is very tame in contrast with the exciting scenes through which you & I passed, in the grand effort to save the Republic.

Not only have the scenes, changed, but the principal actors are nearly all gone—and new men *attempt* to occupy their places— Of those of the old regime, who remain, it might almost be said that "they lag superfluous on the stage."

I might say many things to you—if we were vis a vis, but shall not trust the uncertainties of a letter— Why did you not pay the Capitol, at least, a flying visit this Session? You have many friends here who speak kindly of past memories & past services, but alas! also some enemies— Who amongst us is without them. . . .

My dear Pratt,

LaFayette Ind. Sept 23, 1874.

I regret very much to hear that you have been compelled, in consequence of indisposition, to retire from the campaign for the present.

I hope that a few days rest and good nursing will bring you out all right.

You undertook too great a task, in the midst of the terribly heated term through which we have passed.

Speaking every day, losing rest by frequent night travel to meet your appointments, and then *holding forth* for three or four hours is too great a draft on a man's constitution.

I have been quite under the weather since our return from Washington, but at the urgent request of friends have agreed to make about a dozen of speeches—commencing next week.

What think you of the prospect. I sometimes feel disheartened. . . .

³² Jasper Packard (1832-1899), lawyer, was brevetted a brigadier general during the Civil War, and served as a representative in Congress, 1869-1875.

³³ James N. Tyner (1826-1904) practiced law in Peru and was a representative in Congress, 1869-1875. Having served in the Post Office Department in several different capacities, he became post master general, 1876-1877.

My dear Mr. Pratt:—

LaFayette Ind Apl. 6, 1875

Am sorry you cannot be with us tonight. I shall leave in a day or two for Washt. and thence meet my family in N. York from which point we expect to sail on the 21st.

Shall I have the pleasure of hearing from you at Vienna? . . .

The American Legation at Vienna Oct 30, 1875

My dear Mr. Fish:

While in Hungary some ten days since I visited the celebrated wine cellars of Messrs. Palagyuy & Sons at Pazsony (Pressburg) the most extensive in that country.

As native Hungarian wines are somewhat of a rarity in our Country I ordered a small quantity (of several varieties) to be forwarded to you, by them, which I beg you to accept as a very slight token of remembrance of the kindness I have uniformly experienced at your hands.

I enclose a list of the wines ordered.

They are forwarded through Messrs. McDonald & Co. of Hamburg, who are instructed to send them via New York or Baltimore, whichever may be the most expeditious route, and also to pay the freight to the port of destination. The import duty I could, of course, not arrange here.

Red Wine

Chateau Palagyuy	(1868)	6 Bottles
Villyaner	"	6 "
Ofner (Budai Saskege)	"	6 "
Erlauer	"	6 "
Szegszarder	"	6 "

White Wine

Magyarader	(1811)	6 "
Somlauer	(1834)	6 "
Bakatover	(1858)	6 "
Hungarian Sherry		6 "

Dessert Wine

Takayer	Ausbruch	(1827)	3 "
Ruster	"	"	3 "

The above is the list of wines referred to. . . .

The American Legation Vienna March 11, 1876.

My dear Mr. Fish:—

As advised by official Despatches I have fully closed the business of this Legation and presented Mr. Delaplaine³⁴ at the Foreign Office at Charge d'Affaires.

It is my purpose to leave here in a day or two, and rejoin my family now in Italy.

Thence I go, via Switzerland and the Rhine to London and expect to sail for the U. States from Liverpool on the 3rd of May.

Having accepted the nomination of our friends for Governor

³⁴ John F. Delaplaine, of New York, served as secretary of the legation at Vienna, 1869-1881.

of Indiana, it is my purpose, on my arrival at Washington to place my resignation in your hands.³⁵

My brief residence here, for which I am solely indebted to the Kindness of the President and yourself, has been exceedingly pleasant.

Myself & family have enjoyed good health, made many acquaintances—been cordially received by the Court and others—see much of Europe and I trust learned something. . . .

My dear Colfax, Lafayette Ind. Augt. 12, 1876.

Please accept my thanks for your letter of the 10th inst.

Rest assured that its good Kind words have left an impression not easily to be effaced, while your approval of my course confirms my belief in its propriety.

The public mind is not only fearfully sensitive on the subject of charges against public men—but for the last few years, many leading Republicans seemed more interested in seeing their associates, rather than their political opponents, injured and destroyed.

Am glad to hear of your peace & prosperity, and sincerely hope it may continue to the end. . . .

[Orth to Hon. Dr. P. Baldwin] Lafayette June 23, 1877

I received your kind invitation to attend the funeral of our mutual friend, Senator Pratt, and regret very much that engagements have prevented me from being with you and his many friends on that mournful occasion.

Will you please present to Mrs. Pratt the sincere condolence and sympathy of Mrs. Orth and myself—in this her hour of sad bereavement.

My dear Mr. Colfax— Lafayette Ind. Oct 16, 1878.

Please accept my sincere thanks for your Kind letter of the 13th.

I have had a most bitter, malignant and unscrupulous contest against me, but thanks to the efforts of firm and steadfast friends the Verdict is on the right side. . . .

My dear Schuyler, Lafayette Ind. Sept 22, 1879.

Please accept my thanks for the "[Ottoman?] Democrat," containing the Weaver interview, you so kindly sent me.

The "Contest" has given me little uneasiness. So far as I know, if they oust me, it will be through pure "cussedness" and those things usually recoil—

For many months I have indulged the hope of being able to meet you, but our paths do not seem to cross.

I have been wanting to say to you personally—what I shall now say on paper. You owe it to yourself—to your family—to your friends—to your party and to your Country to re-enter public life—either as our candidate for Governor, or M.C from your District.

We are on the ascending wave and to the Dems. it will be a tidal wave—and no more auspicious moment will ever greet you.

³⁵ Party discord caused Orth to withdraw from the race in favor of Benjamin Harrison.

I Know what I say and I Know that I am right in my judgment and in its expression. . . .

My dear Mr. Fish:—

Wash City May 24, 1880.

I have taken the liberty of sending you by this day's post a copy of my recent remarks in the House in reference to one of the Congr'l. Investigations of 1876.

I trust that its perusal, in some leisure moment, may serve to assure you that I have not been unworthy of the confidence which you and other friends have heretofore reposed in me. . . .

My dear Genl. [James A. Garfield]³⁶ Lafayette Ind. June 14, 1880.

Please accept my sincere congratulations.

Your nomination is well received—and we shall labor with might and main to give you the Electoral vote of Indiana.

As an old friend permit me to add a word:—You are too [blank space in copy] my judgment no necessity exists for you, either in your letter of acceptance or otherwise, to commit yourself or your friends to the one term principle. . . .

My dear General [Garfield], Lafayette Ind July 20, 1880

Your recent favor is received and I cheerfully comply with your request, to send you news of the Campaign in our State from time to time.

Last week I was renominated for Congress— The District, by the election of 1878 is Democratic, and the Dems & Greenbackers³⁷ are endeavoring to unite on a Candidate against me.

If accomplished it makes the race very doubtful, if not hopeless, but I felt I [blank space in copy] this position as in any other, even should defeat be my portion—and hence I have accepted the nomination.

Hancock³⁸ is not as strong with us, as he was ten days ago—and I have reason to believe will continue to grow weaker.

The Democracy in our State are not by any means harmonious—and the nomination of English³⁹ instead of aiding, will weaken the Ticket.

I do not know and have not heard of a single Republican [blank space in copy].

³⁶ James A. Garfield (1831-1881), a Civil War general from Ohio, served in the state Senate in 1859, in Congress from 1863 to 1880, and was elected to the United States Senate in 1880; but on the day this term began, he was inaugurated as President of the United States. He was assassinated four months later.

³⁷ The Greenback party had polled over a million votes in 1878 and in 1880 put up General James B. Weaver of Iowa as a presidential candidate. He received approximately 350,000 votes.

³⁸ General Winfield S. Hancock (1824-1886) was the third Civil War veteran in this presidential race, being the Democratic nominee. Hancock was one of the ablest generals of the Union, and most of the credit for the victory at Gettysburg goes to him.

³⁹ William H. English (1822-1896) was principal clerk in 1843 and speaker in 1851 and 1852 in the state House of Representatives. He served in Congress as a Democrat, 1853-1861. He ran on the Democratic ticket for vice-president with Hancock in 1880, but was unsuccessful.

J. Kelly O'Neal, Representative—State.
 L. R. Thompson, Editor Home Journal.
 Col. W. C. Wilson, Att. at. Law.
 Wm. H. Bryan, Ex. Representative.
 James Park, Ex. Judge and Consul to Aix La Chappelle.
 John Rosser, Ex. Representative.
 George B. Williams
 Daniel Royse, Clerk Supreme Court.
 John Opp, ex. County Commissioner.

[Orth to Garfield] Washington D C Jan 24, 1881
 President told me on Saturday he would appoint Baxter⁴¹ Surgeon General if you desired it Would be pleased to have you make the request. . . .

My dear Sir [Garfield]:— Lafayette Inda March 19, 1881.
 I notice that the question of an Extra Session of Congress is being discussed by the public Press.

In my judgment nothing but an urgent and unavoidable necessity would justify it.

Since my return from Washington I have taken some pains to ascertain the drift of public sentiment in my District and other portions of the State, and with scarcely a dissenting opinion the sentiment is decidedly averse to an Extra Session. This is peculiarly the sentiment of our intelligent business men, whose response is—"give us a rest from political or financial excitement."

Should it be necessary Congress might be convened early in the fall, say about the middle of Octo. or 1st of November. . . .

⁴¹ Jedediah H. Baxter (1837-1890), of Vermont, was appointed surgeon general August 16, 1890, holding this office until his death the following December.