

Letter of Augustin Smith Clayton to Major James Meriwether, dated January 26, 1826, found in Robert Watkins Lovett Papers, Box 1, Folder 3, Emory University Library Special Collections, Atlanta, Georgia.

Athens, January 26th 1826

Dear Major

Enclosed I return you Col. De Lassarine's claim duly authenticated as I hope – There may be some I's not dotted, & some T's not crossed, but I do trust that the clerks have amused themselves enough in bandying the poor claim backwards & forwards from Georgia to the F.C. [Federal City?]

The little Col. is so much in need of his money, he can not wait until you could bring it on to him, if I rightly understand you by sending an authority to you to receive it; he wishes it forwarded to him at this place, directed to my care, but perhaps they may want the evidence of this, if so God help the money – The truth is he lives in Jackson, & has employed me as an attorney to obtain this claim for him & I must get the favor of you together with the whole Georgia delegation if necessary to wait upon this most particular accountant & assure him that the money shall not be stolen, nor shall the U.S. have it to pay again if he will direct it as above requested – I will see that they shall receive an answer from the Col himself, acknowledging the receipt of the money if it comes, & if it never arrives, provided they start it, it shall [page 2] be at his risk – I would prefer however a draft upon Augusta, if one can be obtained, if not, let it come, as Doct Waddel would say, in the smooth copper-plate – Please expedite this business as much as possible or I am afraid it will not be in time to save the property of the Col from the hammer.

I have nothing strikingly new to give you, & it is difficult, as a subject of entertainment, to choose between the fragments, left floating on the surface, since our [wreck?] in the fall – I do hope however things are mending, the late elections for county officers have been favorable beyond I write nor say our most sanguine calculations, but certainly all reasonable expectation – And I do really conceive that there is something very decisive for us, opposed to little or no risk against us, in any event of the present funding fate of the Treaty – You have no idea to what a pitch the public solicitude has been wrought by the news from Washington on this subject every enquiry is directed to that object the prejudices against Crowell, Andrews & Gaines have, I think increased in a quadruple ratio & I can not help believing not without an obvious effect upon Clark & his party – They last seem to appreciate the delicacy of their situation, for let the Treaty go which way it will, they may suffer, & most if it is lost – We have so be-labored them with Crowell & Co that if the people should be disappointed in [page 3] this Treaty, they will be prepared from share spite to blame that party with its miscarriage – And if it succeeds surely Troup & his friends will drive the credit of it – We are extremely anxious to hear from it.

Singleton & Cleveland are both up against General Thompson, but I have great confidence that he can beat either or both indeed to tell you the truth, I do not believe they will get but one member after all & even that one is doubtful – I mean the Jasper District, of which Burney is the candidate – I can not so well tell what will be the result there, for the opposing candidate is not yet fixed upon, but I am entirely certain you have nothing to fear from Wilson Lumpkin whom conjecture has made your

competition – The news from the western counties is flattering – I discover that Alston of N.C. has submitted for enquiry, the expediency of bringing the elections nearer to the close of the Congress term – I wish that measure could be adopted, it would exactly defeat the rascals in this state, in their contemplated larceny of a seat in the national assembly.

I am very anxious to place my little son Philip at West Point, but I understand this can not be done until he is 14 years old, & not then unless he is fortunate enough to stand ready for promotion – To effect this, I should be glad if you would assist me in what is necessary, I am not acquainted with the rules prescribed for giving to the States their equal proportion [page 4] of the advantages of this institution, if any registering is required you would much oblige me by taking that preliminary step & putting me in possession of the rest of the information necessary to secure my object – He will not be 14 until the 19th of March 1829. – His progress is such as to make it very desirable to have him there immediately, but I can not expect a relaxation of the rules in his favor, unless indeed the peculiar character of his mind could create for him an interest on the part of the government in some degree equal to the singularity of his Talent – In Europe so much the boast & pride of Mr Adams & so worthy of all imitation as we have lately seen by his message, he would be considered public property, & perhaps if I were to suggest this to him there would be no difficulty in getting Phil an immediate berth, be this as it may, I will thank you for your kind attention to the request made above.

There is no neighborhood news of any interest – with the exception of colds, produced from but one change in the weather since November, the village & its vicinity are very healthy – We have had a uncommonly uniform cold & dry winter – Yesterday brought us the first snow or anything like it this winter, it fell until it was three or four inches deep – I shall be glad to hear from you, &

I am very sincerely yours

[signed] A. S. Clayton