

Andrew Jackson to Andrew Jackson, Jr., March 25, 1836, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

TO ANDREW JACKSON, JR.

Washington, March 25, 1836.

My son, I inclose you a letter received to day from Mr. Hobbs, from which I infer that he pays but little attention to the Stock. When I was at home, when I was ingaged both in building, clearing and farming, I always kept my oxen in good order, altho I had them in their yokes daily, but this was done by always attending and seeing them regularly fed and watered. When I found the driver had neglected feeding regularly, I ordered him upon small allowance, as well as chastising him for it, and thus with attention Mr. Parsons kept his 12 oxen as fat as his horses, but when I see Mr. Hobbs say in his letters that the young colts looks badly notwithstanding they have enough of corn, oats, and fodder and a dry stable to go into, I want no better proof of the want of regularity in feeding. They are overfed some days and starved the next, the hand that attends to them fills their trough one morning and perhaps does not see them again in two, it is the overseers business to see all the stock daily in the winter season, sometimes in the morning and again sometimes in the evening, and when he finds the stock neglected at once punish the hand charged with their keeping. We lost a great many last year, and when I hear of their bad condition this, and a plenty to give them, why there must be sheer neglect of them and for this neglect the overseer is answerable, and I wish you to Enquire and tell him frankly that he will be held responsible. That oxen, where there are plenty of food, at this season of the year is poor and broke down, shows that carlessness in an overseer, for which he ought to be dismissed. The hands have had nothing to do this last winter but take care of the stock and yet they, with plenty of forrage are all poor and some dying—say to Mr

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Hobbs this is carelessness in an overseer unpardonable and inexcusable. We have lost more in stock than two such crops would pay for—this is truly pulling out the bung, and driving in the spickett.

I wish you to select twelve young steers for oxen, have those that are large enough put into the yoke and broke and those oxen that are poor and broke down turned out and the next fall fattened for beef. When once broken down they are unfit for work oxen, and if I live to get home I will shew you and all overseers, how easy it is to keep oxen always fat, and doing more business than when neglected and broken down.

I see Campbell has got badly hurt. Pool is of no account, make Dunwody take and train your colts. Mr. Pool has made the coalt soar by putting him to galloping before he got over the soariness occasioned by rubbing his legs when first put into training, and in this way has got him restive and I suppose has spoiled him. If this is the cause he must be put into walking again and gentled before he is again attempted to be galloped, or you will get him ruined, by flying the tract. I wish you to look over the conduct of the overseer with Strictness. I have lost more property since I have been here than in a long life before and I have no doubt the most of it from neglect of overseers—we must make better crops, and preserve our stock better or we will be soon in a state of *want*, and *poverty*. My son, you must assume energy; and command how our concerns are to be attended to by Mr. Hobbs and let him know, you must be obeyed.

Your last letter received was from Louisville Ky. I have been much¹

¹ The manuscript is incomplete.