

**Thomas Jefferson to Charles Clay, September 11, 1792,  
with Copy, from The Works of Thomas Jefferson in  
Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited  
by Paul Leicester Ford.**

**TO CHARLES CLAY J. MSS.**

Monticello, Sep. 11, 1792.

Dear Sir, —Your favor of Aug. 8, came duly to hand, and I should with pleasure have done what you therein desired, as I ever should what would serve or oblige you; but from a very early period of my life I determined never to intermeddle with elections of the people, and have invariably adhered to this determination. In my own country, where there have been so many elections in which my inclinations were enlisted, I yet never interfered. I could the less do it in the present instance, your people so very distant from me, utterly unknown to me, & to whom I also am unknown; and above all, I a stranger, to presume to recommend one who is well known to them. They could not but put this question to me, “who are you, pray?” In writing the letter to you on the former occasion, I went further than I had ever before done, but that was addressed to yourself to whom I had a right to write, and not to persons either unknown to me or very capable of judging for themselves. I have so much reliance on your friend, ship and candor as not to doubt you will approve of my sentiments on this occasion, & be satisfied they flow from considerations respecting myself only, & not you to whom I am happy on every occasion of testifying my esteem. I hope to see you in Bedford about May next, and am with great attachment, Dear Sir, your friend & servt.