

# Thomas Jefferson to Archibald Stuart, April 8, 1801, The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.

## TO ARCHIBALD STUART<sup>1</sup>

1 From the original in the possession of the Virginia Historical Society.

Monticello Apr 8. 1801.

Dear Sir, —I arrived here on the 4th. and expect to stay a fortnight in order to make some arrangements preparatory to my final removal to Washington—you know that the last Congress established a Western judiciary district in Virginia, comprehending chiefly the Western counties. Mr. Adams, who continued filling all the offices till 9 o'clock of the night, at 12 of which he was to go out of office himself, took care to appoint for this district also. The judge of course stands till the law shall be repealed, which we trust will be at the next Congress. But as to all others, I made it immediately known, that I should consider them as nullities, and appoint others: as I think I have a preferable right to name agents for my own administration, at least to the vacancies falling after it was known that Mr. Adams was not naming for himself. Consequently we want an Attorney & Marshal for the Western district. I had thought of Mr. Coalter, but I am told he has a clerkship incompatible with it by our laws. I thought also of Hugh Holmes; but I fear he is so far off he could not attend the court, which is to be in Rockbridge. I believe this is the extent of my personal knowledge. Pray recommend one to me, as also a marshal; and let them be the most respectable & unexceptionable possible; and especially let them be republican. The only shield for our Republican citizens against the federalism of the courts is to have the Attornies & Marshals republicans. There is nothing I am so anxious about as good nominations, conscious that the merit as well as reputation of an administration depends as much on

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that as on it's measures. Accept assurances of my constant esteem & high consideration & respect.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In continuation Jefferson wrote to Stuart:

“ Monticello Apr 25. 1801.

“ Dear Sir,—I wrote on the 8th. inst. to ask your recommendation of an Attorney & Marshall for the Western district of this state, but I learn you were absent on your circuit. On the inquiry I have been able to make, I have appointed Mr John Monroe, attorney, but I cannot decide between Andrew Alexander, John Alexander, & John Camphers, recommended by different persons for the Marshall's office. Pray write me your opinion, which appointment would be most respected by the public, for that circumstance is not only generally the best criterion of what is best, but the public respect can alone give strength to the government. I set out tomorrow to take up my residence in Washington where I shall hope to receive a letter from you. Accept assurances of my sincere esteem & respect.”