

To [President JOHN TYLER]

Fort Hill, March 16th 1844

My dear Sir, I received by the Mail of yesterday your letter of the 6th Inst[ant] written in the Morning, and informing me that you had nominated me to fill the vacancy in the State Department occasioned by the lamented death of Mr. [Abel P.] Upshur, and your note of the same date written in the evening, that the Senate had unanimously confirmed the nomination.

I highly appreciate the honour you have confer[r]ed on me, in selecting me to fill the Department, ["as so importante" *canceled and* "at" *interlined*] a crisis, when two such importante negotiations are pending, and the very flattering manner the nomination was confirmed.

It is with great reluctance, that I return again to publick life; but, under all the circumstances, I do not feel myself at liberty to decline the appointment. But as nothing short of the magnitude of the crisis, occasioned by the pending negotiations, could induce me to leave my retirement, I accept on the condition, that when they are concluded, I shall be at liberty to retire.

I shall forthwith commence making my arrangements to leave home for Washington, and hope to be able to take my departure this day week or day after tomorrow week at farthest, by the speed[i]est conveyance. With great respect Yours truly, J.C. Calhoun.

Retained copy in ScCleA; variant PC in Jameson, ed.; *Correspondence*, p. 577. NOTE: The ms. transcribed above is in an unknown hand, possibly that of Martha Cornelia Calhoun, and is labelled "(Copy)." An AEU by Calhoun on the ms. reads: "The President's letter informing me of my nomination and its confirmation by the Senate, to the State Dep[artmen]t with a copy of my acceptance."

To A[NDREW] P[ICKENS] CALHOUN,
Faunsdale, Marengo County, Ala.

Fort Hill, 17th March 1844

My dear Andrew, You will have seen by the papers, that the State Department has been tendered to me. I have been compelled, most reluctantly, to accept. Indeed, my nomination was placed on such grounds by the President [John Tyler] and confirmed in such a man-

ner by the Senate & the appoint[ment] has been so received by the country, & pressed on me by my friends, that I did not feel myself at liberty to decline.

Immediately after the death of Judge [Abel P.] Upshur, I received letters from [George] McDuffie and other friends at Washington, indicating that the appointment would be offered, & pressing me, if it should be, not to decline. They put their opinion on the ground of the importance of the pending negotiations, in reference to Texas & Oregon to the South & the peace of the Union. I replied expressing the greatest reluctance to accepting & the strongest hope, that some one else should be selected; but said that if my service should be deemed indispensable, I would greatly prefer to take charge of the negotiation seperated from the State Department, to accepting, which I had almost insuperable objections.

The impatience was too great to wait my answer, and the appointment was made before it was received. It was made and unanimously confirmed without the usual formality at once. By the ["last" *interlined*] mail ["of yesterday" *canceled*] I received twenty or thirty letters announcing the fact, and pressing me to accept. They state it to be the wish of all sides and of all quarters. Although I regret the necessity, yet I cannot but be gratified, at this evidence of universal confidence.

I answered the President's letter by the mail that takes this ["t" (?) *canceled*] accepting the appointment, but with the condition, that when the negotiation is concluded I shall be at liberty to retire. I shall set out on my journey on the 24 or 26th Inst[ant], so that your next letter to me must be addressed to Washington.

Your mother [Floride Colhoun Calhoun] leaves home for Millwood [in Abbeville District] day after tomorrow, & from thence to Col. [Francis W.] Pickens[s], with your Uncle James [Edward Colhoun], in order to be with Maria [Simkins Colhoun], who is there, during her confinement, which it is expected will be in a few weeks. It is very inconvenient for both to be absent at the same time, but fortunately we have got an excellent Housekeeper, Mrs. Ryan [Mrs. Margaret Hunter Rion], who will take charge of the establishment during the [*and here this incomplete ms. ends.*]

ALU (incomplete) in ScU-SC, John C. Calhoun Papers.