HISTORICAL SOCIETY NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

LETTERS FROM THE MATHIOT PAPERS

Edited by Myron B. Sharp

Among the Mathiot Papers at the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania are many kinds of letters. Some are personal, telling of the everyday activities of various members of the family and their friends; some are business letters; some are humorous; some are about sickness and death; some are about politics, and they really took their politics seriously in those days; some are about local happenings, gossip, if you wish to call it that, and some are in a lighter vein such as the two letters which follow. The first letter1 is from Mr. Isaac Meason, Jr.,2 of New Haven, just across the river from Connellsville, and now part of that city. Mr. Isaac Meason, Jr., had become a partner of Col. Jacob D. Mathiot3 some eleven years before upon the death of his father, Isaac Meason, Sr.4

The second letter5 is from Mr. George T. Paull, of Uniontown, son of James T. Paull, Jr., partner of Col. Jacob D. Mathiot in the firm of Mathiot and Paull, owners of Ross Furnace in Westmoreland County.

These letters tell of big moments in the life of a small town.

A President Visits Uniontown

Connellsville, Pa.
8 Feb., 1829

Col. J. D. Mathiot
Ross Furnace
Dear Sir:

I have rec'd yours of the 3 Inst. and will communicate the contents to Mr. Paull when I see him, which will be in a day or two.

Mr. P. showed me a letter a day or two ago from Mr. Trevor requesting him to revive the judgements both in Westmoreland and Fayette, which I believe he was disposed to do amicably in order to

---

1 Mathiot Papers, Box 15, File 3, No. 8. To Col. Jacob D. Mathiot.
3 WPHM, Vol. 20, 41-49.
5 Mathiot Papers, Box 9, File 10, No. 2.
save costs. What course he may now take I cannot say. He will no
doubt take advice and be governed accordingly. It will perhaps be
necessary for Mr. P. to attend your court. When is it? Will you be
there and on what day in the week? Write me by return of bearer.

Gen'l Jackson passed through this county on Tuesday last. A
goodly number of the great men of this place, (you know they are
quite numerous) hurried up to Union [town] notwithstanding the
badness of the roads and the extreme cold. Unfortunately the
General's stay there was very brief indeed. Several from this place,
not having a fit opportunity of displaying their importance and mani-
festing their zeal and devotion, went three days journey into the
mountains to worship. Since they came down they have been con-
stantly engaged in repeating over and over, again and again the say-
ings and doings of the Great Man and their greater selves. It is indeed
a theme not soon exhausted and in such hands will afford commentary
for the balance of their lives.

It seems that some few of the Adams men in Union had the im-
pudence to call on the President and were treated by him with marked
politeness and attention, which has given great offense to the whole
Hog Jacksonists of this place. The cry of Judas, Judas, there are
Judases in the room was vociferated pending the introduction of
those gentlemen.

I expect the pleasure of seeing you here shortly.
Yours respectfully and sincerely,
Isaac Meason

A PRoSeNT-eLeCT VISITS UnIoNTOWN

Fayette, 22nd February, 1849

Col. Jacob D. Mathiot
West Fairfield, Westmoreland Co. Pa.

Dear Sir:

I met with Father in Uniontown yesterday, and he instructed me
to write you, respecting the termination of his two suits in the Special
Court; and to say that he lost both cases. It is the opinion of his
counsel and friends that he can never get an impartial verdict in this
county on account of the prejudices existing against his principal
witnesses (in the Factory case) Ewing and Veech from an impression
which has obtained to the effect that they, the said witnesses, are in
some way interested. His attorney has taken writs of error in both
cases for the Supreme Court.
“Old Zach” arrived in town last night at 7 direct from Wheeling in an ordinary coach. He was met at the Poor house 2 miles from town by a Comm. of Reception consisting of one from each township; and at or opposite the residence of John Dawson by the Comm. of Arrangements who received him in an open carriage drawn by 4 white horses, in which accomp’d by Thos. N. Davidson Esq., and Mr. Isaac Beeson he was conveyed into town, amid the shouts of the multitude where he was received (in front of the Court House) by Mr. E. N. Oliphant Esq. in a very bombastic though highly fulsome speech of some ten minutes, to which the Gen’l replied from the carriage by torchlight, fending off the compliments and reiterating his apprehensions respecting his unfitness for the duties he was about to assume. He spoke some 5 minutes, very slowly and with some hesitation, but using very good language — he appears very much worried.

The Gen’l is not more than 5 ft 7 and will not weigh over 150 pounds. He and his friends, some 20,000 ladies and gentlemen remained at the Clinton House all night.

I saw Geo. and Henry both in town. They report all well. Henry rec’d a letter from Va. a few days ago. All well there also.

Resply,

G. T. Paull

P.S. Will be pleased to rec. a letter from you occasionally at your leisure, touching matters and things in general.

---

6 Geo. and Henry (Dr.) were brothers of Jacob D. Mathiot. George lived in Connellsville and Henry lived in Smithfield.

7 This letter was from Ann Mathiot Dorsey, sister of Jacob. She lived near Morgantown, Va. (now West Va.).