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**THE PAPERS OF
WILLIE PERSON MANGUM**

**Edited by
Henry Thomas Shanks**

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I disapprove of three of your votes. Van Buren, the Bank & the fast day. but my greatest grief is that you should be in favour of the election of General Jackson for the Presidency. If it was not for the opinion I have of your honest Integrity, I should believe that you were certainly seeking for a diplomacy, which God you may never get for the good of your family. Let G. J. be elected & our Government is gone, and even in its present situation, it would require a Hamilton; a Jay and an old Adams, bottomed upon G. Washington to repair its ruins. This Clay knows, & nothing but conscious integrity & a united love of Country, could possibly induce him to undertake the management of such a rotten & decayed Government. I hope he will be elected, & even if he should, I shall pity his situation I had a promising crop, but having but little or no rain for about ten weeks, it is almost ruined. & what makes the case still worse, I have my last grist in my meal tub, & not a cent a money & what I am to do, God only knows—

I have the satisfaction to tell you, that Benjⁿ. Rogers has, of his own accord become as friendly with me as ever he was. What wrought the change in him I cant tell. There has been no sale, & I expect will not be My respects to Mrs. Mangum & tell her never expect to see her at her house any more or again. If you will write direct your letter to be left at the post office at Rogers store—

I am your Obt. Hbl. Svt.

JOHN CHAVIS

[Addressed:]

Hon. Willie P. Mangum Esq
Orange

To be left at
Roundhill N C

WPM-LC

John Chavis to Willie P. Mangum

August 8th. 1832—

My dear Sir/

Your very friendly and satisfactory letter came to hand yesterday, and I embrace the earliest moment to answer it—

You appear to think, that I have become unsound in politics. If to be a genuine Federalist, is to be unsound in politics I am guilty. But pray how has it been with yourself? how often have changed your Federal coat for a Democratic or Republic one? & have not your friends, since you were last elected to Congress, been charged in the publick funds with the duplicity for electing you to Congress knowing you to be a Federalist? and have I not often browbeaten you for your shifting conduct? And how could you have the daring impudence, to tell me, in broad open day light, that I had become unsound in my politics? Are you not a pretty handsome fellow? No Sir, I w^d. have to know, that I am the same genuine, undeviating, unshaken lump of Federalism, that I ever was, that I have never deviated a single hair's breadth, from Dan to Beersheba. and which? because I believe that Federal policy, to be the best, that ever was adopted, in this or in other Country, of a free and elective Government. That there is no other policy that can stand the shock & vicissitudes of human nature. I do not believe that mankind are capable of living under, either a Democratic, or a Republican Government. The bonds of such Governments are not sufficient to restrain the corruptions of human nature. The volcano will burst. & the lava spread far and wide its destructive ruins. But after what I have said, I do candidly confess, that such is the state of things, that I am not capable of forming a correct Judgment what is the true policy of the day. therefore the course that I do pursue is, to form the best judgment, of the characters of those who are to administer the affairs of the Government, and they are those whom I believe to possess the greatest share of intelligence, experience, honesty & integrity, bottomed upon the love of the best Interest of the Government. And upon this principle it is, that I have ever been opposed to the election of G. J. from the beginning to this day. I believe him to be an honest man, but there is no other trait in his character, in my estimation that qualifies him for the seat of a Chief Magistrate. Therefore I cannot in consciens & honesty be in favour of his reelection now I appeal to you as a Gentⁿ. of candour & penetrating understanding, to begin at his cradle, & point out to me, the regular traits in his character up to the seat he now fills & shew me what it is, that constitutes him a dignified character, and one who is fitly qualified to fill the seat of a chief Magistrate I have made the appeal, but you wont make the attempt, & why? please you know too well that you cannot scrape up, those traits, in his character

that will constitute him a dignified high minded honorable gentⁿ. You know also, that if you were to make the attempt that the annals of the nation w^d. contradict you. And above all, your own Ideas of propriety & dignity of conduct w^d. also forbid you to make the attempt for it w^d. only be an attempt. I could multiply, but I forbear & why? because you know the man & moreover it w^d. be treating you, like an upstart novice Teaching Hanibal the art of war. In a word, from what I have stated you may easily conceive, why it is, that I am so mortified, & killed that yourself & my two sons Priestley & Renchr, should be so attached to G. J. & to his re-election—For honesty integrity & dignity is my motto for character—But you say, his reelection is sure, & should he be elected, that liberty & the constitution will be safe, God grant it; but what you found your judgment upon, I cannot conceive, unless it be, that you have found him to be of such a subservient & Teachable disposition, that yourself & others of his friends, will or can have so much influence over him as to keep him in *the Track*, upon [no o]the[r] ground, I think, you can possibly believe it. It is time to come to Mr. Clay, but before I proceed I you must know, that I have never seen the moment when I was, as much opposed to G. J. as I was to Mr Clay untill I saw his address to his constituents. That address convinced me judgmentally, that he was an honest intelligent, & tried patriot & of inflexible integrity. Also that the Annals of the Nation have uniformly declared him to be a mighty & dignified character. Fulfilling all his deplomacies with judgment & inflexible integrity & I believe, that his worst enemies do not deny his capability of managing the destinies of the Nation because they may wield him in other respects. You are the first, that I ever hinted that this situation was impaired, it may be so, but I shall risque it upon the principles, I have above stated. You may blame me if you will, but I must be honest to myself & my Country—

I will now give my reasons, for saying, that the reasons which G. J. gave for puting his Veto on the bank bill was not worth a gourd button; I shall speak according to my understanding, & if I am wrong I would thank you to rectify my mistakes. In the first place he appears to hold out the Idea, that the people were taken on surprize, that it was not expected that an attempt w^d. be made at that session, to renew the charter of the bank, that the members of Congress had met, without the knowledge of the sentiments of their constituents upon that subject—

If I am right in my conception, this could not be the case; For when I w^d. ask, was there a press in the union, but was teeming with Notices on the subject, Memorial after memorial, for and against its renewal, & how would the people be taken upon surprize, as the Members of Congress came unprepared to act?

In the second place, like Mr McDuffee,¹⁹³ in his arguments against the Tariff system, placing the southern Farmers precisely upon equal & upon the same footing in all respects, with the exporting & importing Merchant, which Mr Appleton¹⁹⁴ show clearly, is not the case, that the parties are as distinct and as different, as light is from darkness &C. In like manner has G. J. placed the people at large precisely upon the same and equal footing in all respects with the stockholders of the U. S. bank, which is not, nor cannot be the case. Suppose for argument sake, that the Directors of the [bank] should, by bad management destroy the credit of the bank, & their paper become null and void (if you please) would the stockholders, presume to apply to the people at large, to aid them in restoring the credit of the bank? By no means, & why, because they w^d. know assuredly that they w^d. meet with an objection at the door of the application—that all the Interest the people had or could expected to have was the use of their paper as a circulating medium. That if they had destroyed their own Interest it was their own fault & not theirs. But it appears from G. J. reasoning he will not have it so, but endeavours to persuade the people that their sacred rights & privileges are about to be jeopardized, that he as their fostering father is endeavouring to protect & rescue them from such ruinous consequences—In the third place. I do not conceive the impropriety, which G. J. seems to have with respect to Foreigners holding stock in the U. S. bank. We are upon friendly & amicable terms with the British nation. We *live*, & deal reciprocally and act as brethren, as it were, in all respects, and is there any more impropriety in their holding stock in the bank than in their holding other property in this Country—or in the Americans holding property in their Country? If any should object to this statement, let him read Jays Treaty. Besides it appears plain, that at the time the bank was instituted, that such was the hostility against it, that it was difficult to obtain American stock-holders sufficient to carry it

¹⁹³George McDuffie.

¹⁹⁴Nathan Appleton, 1779-1861, was a member of Congress from Massachusetts from 1831 to 1833. *Biog. Dir. of Cong.*, 646.

into effect. Foreigners knowing this, & foreseeing the great advantages such a bank w^d. be to the Americans & themselves were willing to become stockholders, having full confidence in the American stockholders & Directors And here I w^d. ask under what shaddow of pretence could the American Stockholders set up to refuse such Marked friendship and confidence? It was also foreseen, that such joint sock w^d. not only accellerate & ficillitate Merchantal opporations, but w^d. accellerate & facillitate the fiscal concerns of the American Government, & that ultimately their paper, as a circulating medium, w^d. become equal to Gold & silver in both Countries, which has actually come pass. [torn] has objections respecting warlike operations I will [torn] as all lent which can never fall to the bottom of any place. so that upon a review of the Whole case, I concluded that his reasons were nothing more nor less, than a electioneering scheme well calculated to blind the people & shroud them in their ignorance, and therefore not worth a gourd button; but at the same time, I [do n]ot acknowledge that Van Buren is a [torn and illegible]

As to your votes I never doubted for a moment the purity of your motives but as I believe you to be like other men fallible I believe you were wrong, & in Van Burens case, I did not believe that you could possibly believe him to be a high minded honourable & dignified character possessed of inflexible integrity, & therefore ought not to be trusted in so important a mission & what you now say of him proves the correctness of my Idea—

As to your bank vote, my opinion was that you had voted against it in toto, which I know to be wrong, because it is evident that it is the back bone rib bones & sinew of the fiscal concerns of the Government, but now you say that all will go for the bank next Congress but I hope not a national bank to be within the controll & authority of the executive—

And as to your fast vote,¹⁹⁵ I never thought of the constitution, or of its having any connection with Church & state, for that is a case that I am as much opposed to any person whatever what I felt was, that you should be opposed to the worship of God, in any form—

I am glad to find that Mrs Mangum has increased her family and is well. I am [torn] you will write again shortly, tell Mrs Mangum she must send me word what for crop she has got—

¹⁹⁵On June 28, 1832, the Senate voted on a resolution to ask the President to call a day of humiliation and prayer because of the cholera epidemic in Asia. Mangum was one of the thirteen who opposed the resolution. *Register of Debates*, 22 Cong., 1 sess., 1132.

You can get boarding at Mr Soloman Thompson near at hand & a respectable house, I know of no Lady that I wd. recommend a friend to trust a daughter sooner than Mrs Thompson. Mrs Tignal Jones¹⁹⁶ alias Amelia [torn] has requested me to give her respects to Mrs Mangum & to tell her that she has three sons [torn] to match with her daughters. Col. J[torn] knows of your votes I am your [torn]-ly

JOHN CHAVIS

[Addressed:]

Hon. Willie P. Mangum Esqr—
Orange

To be left at
Roundhill P. O.

*Willie P. Mangum to unidentified person*¹⁹⁷

Orange Co. N. C. 10th. August 1832

Dear Sir.

Please to send your country paper published twice a week. to "*Harrison Parker Esqr. Red Mountain*"¹⁹⁸—He is a man of substance & will enclose you the subscription on the receipt of the paper or send it by me at the meeting of Congress.—

Every thing is quiet & firm here—The Veto has to encounter here only a few thousands—mostly those whom the people have uniformly regarded either with distrust or as their enemies—The President is protected here from his enemies by a wall of brass eye, a gulf of flame—There is but little feeling as to the Vice Presidency—If two Jackson tickets shall be run, I think the regular nomination will succeed—If a resort shall be had to the mode adopted in Virginia, (of which I have just seen some indication) Barbour may prevail.—

If two tickets shall be run, the people will not I think, suffer anything to take even the appearance of endangering the Gen^l.—

But in truth, no opposition here to him can be supported by even a respectable portion of strength.—

Accept the assurance
of my respect & esteem

WILLIE P. MANGUM

¹⁹⁶See above, p. 321n.

¹⁹⁷The original is in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.

¹⁹⁸See above, p. 426n.