Thomas Jefferson to Charles Willson Peale
24 December 1816

Dear Sir,

Monticello Dec. 26. 16.

I received in October a letter from Mr. Wheeler, whom you were so kind as to recommend as a watchmaker, informing me he would come on to establish himself at Charlottesville as soon as he could hear from me. I was just about setting out on a journey to Bedford, and advised him therefore by advising him to postpone his coming till my return. He did so, and arrived in Charlottesville by the stage on Wednesday last. Thursday was rainy. On Friday he came here, I kept him all night, and on Saturday morning went with him to Charlottesville, presented him to the principal persons there, and found him a place in the very best and most public position, undertook to the landlord for his year’s rent, to board, and ascertained him of all other necessary, and until he could stand on his own legs, I left him on Thursday last, with his promise to come to Monticello Monday morning at 10 o’clock. As many watches which he had needing it, while his landlord would be fitting up the room for him, on Sunday morning without a word of explanation, as far as I have heard to any body, he got into the stage with all his baggage and went off. I can conjecture no cause for this, a watchmaker in Stanhope (40 miles above this) had received some work from this quarter, heard that I was procuring a person of that trade to come here. Mr. Ichonny came from Stanhope called at that watchmaker’s (Logan) and Logan discovered Mr. he was the person. He instantly put one of his men into the same stage which brought Mr. Ichonny, who on his arrival in Charlottesville enjoyed a house, but the remoteness of this and the entire patronage of the place which I had secured to Mr. Ichonny, with his excellent stand left him nothing to fear from that competition. I have thought it best to state these things to you lest his friends might think I had

Mr. Peale

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not fulfilled my promise of aid to him, or discouragement be produced
to any other real master of the business, he might be disposed to
come and relieve us from the bungler. From this incident has grown
upon us. It is an excellent stand for a slow, correct, good column.
I am not the less thankful to you for the trouble you were so kind
as to take in relieving our wants, something erratic I fail in
the feature of this young man; and will I suspect prevent his becom-
ing a stationary kind of man any where. I salute you with affection
and respect,

Thomas Jefferson

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