



Westwardmill (Sumner Mo) 19 March 1879

Sir,

Your retirement from the Presidency of the United States affords (I hope) a favorable opportunity for me, although an entire stranger, to address you on a subject which (from your known Patriotism & Opinion that to be happy & free we must be informed) I am assured will be pleasing to you. And without farther preface I will proceed to state to you that some fifteen or eighteen months ago the gentlemen (or some of them) of this Neigh-
 borhood agreed to procure a collection of Books - establish a Library and form ourselves into a Society the title & title of which should be the "Westwardmill Library Society." We have accordingly drawn & ratified a Constitution contributed each Member a mite of ten Dollars ~~and~~ for the purchase of Books & the most of the Money has already been expended in that way. The terms of admission are ten Dollars and the unanimous consent of the general meeting to form which a majority (at least) of all the members must be present we have some thoughts of applying to the Assembly for an Act of incorporation and under a belief that we shall do so I have taken the liberty of addressing you on the subject. Will if agreeable to you send a copy of our Constitution and some of our fundamental Laws for your inspection & correction and shall think myself very happy if by this means the Society shall gain your patronage and the advantages arising from your superior information & experience. Though I have been & still am so much afraid you will treat it with neglect not to say contempt that the secret of my writing to you does not rest with my self until I know the kind of reception you give this.

Our Society is composed of Farmers, Mechanics, Justices of the Peace, Ministers of the Gospel, Militia Officers, Lawyers, School-masters, Merchants, Post-masters, one Member of Assembly & one member of Congress. Wm. Thos. Holson

Our present President is Wm E. Proctor, a substantial ~~traded~~
tillage farmer - our Librarian James Wyche one of the ~~frank~~
young many Deputies - And Hubbard Hobbs John Harris
son (both planters) Joseph Percival (a naturalized citizen)
Jepe Fox (an Elder in the Methodist Church) Joseph Hun-
ders (a Deacons in the Baptist Church) and Mark
Greene (a Mayor in the City of Virginia) are our
Six Directors for this year. Query, will such an hetero-
geneous body ever firmly & lovingly coalesce?

I have gone thus far in detail in order to remove every doubt
that you might possibly have as to the ~~reality~~ ^{existence} of the Society.

Pardon this attempt in an obscure individual to promote
for a Society (of which he is a Member) your countenance ~~and~~
part if consistent with your dignity - I case & favourable per-
suits save him from the mortification of thinking you
contemn him & the Society and believe me to be one
among the many thousands of your great admirers &
(Sir) most obsequious & devoted

John Wyche

Wyche's letter to the President of the Society, dated March 19, 1839.

From John Wyche

Sir

Westwardmill (Brunswic Va) 19th March 1809

Your retirement from the Presidency of the United States affords (I hope) a favourable opportunity for me (although an entire stranger) to address you on a Subject which (from your Known Patriotism and Opinion that to be happy and free we must be Informed) I am assured will be pleasing to you: And without farther Preface I will proceed to state to you that some fifteen or eighteen Months ago the Gentlemen (or some of them) of this Neighbourhood agreed to procure a collection of Books, establish a Library and form ourselves into a Society stile and Title of which should be "The Westwardmill Library Society." We have accordingly drawn and ratified a Constitution, contributed each Member a mite of ten Dollars for the Purchase of Books and the most of the Money has allready been expended in that way. The Terms of admission are ten Dollars and the unanimous consent of the general meeting to form which a majority (at least) of all the Members must be present. We have some thoughts of applying to the Assembly for an Act of incorporation and under a belief that we shall do so I have taken the liberty of addressing you on the subject and will If agreeable to you send a Copy of our Constitution and some of our fundamental Laws for your inspection and Correction And shall think myself very happy if by this means the Society shall gain your patronage and the advantages ensuing from your superior Information and experience though I have been and still am so much affraid you will treat it with neglect not to say

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I have gone thus far in detail in order to remove every doubt that you might possibly have as to the existance of the Society. Pardon this attempt in an obscure Individual to procure for a Society (of which he is a Member) your countenance. If consistent with your dignity, ease and favourite persuits save him from the mortification of thinking you contemn him and the Society And believe me to be one among the many thousands of (Sir) Your great admirers & most obt humble servts,

John Wyche