
24. *Jefferson's Death*

To Nicholas P. Trist

Montpellier, July 6, 1826

I have just received yours of the 4th. A few lines from Dr. Dunglison had prepared me for such a communication; and I never doubted that the last Scene of our illustrious friend would be worthy of the life which it closed. Long as this has been spared to his Country & to those who loved him, a few years more were to have been desired for the sake of both. But we are more than consoled for the loss, by the gain to him; and by the assurance that he lives and will live in the memory and gratitude of the wise & good, as a luminary of Science, as a votary of liberty, as a model of patriotism, and as a benefactor of human kind. In these characters, I have known him, and not less in the virtues & charms of social life, for a period of fifty years, during which there has not been an interruption or diminution of mutual confidence and cordial friendship, for a single moment in a single instance. What I feel therefore now, need not, I should say, cannot, be expressed. If there be any possible way, in which I can *usefully* give evidence of it, do not fail to afford me an opportunity. I indulge a hope that the unforeseen event will not be permitted to impair *any* of the beneficial measures which were in progress or in project. It cannot be unknown that the anxieties of the deceased were for others, not for himself. . . .