

Washington, 18 October 1860

My dear Harriett,

I send you the opinion of Mr. Stanton. It was left here some time yesterday. I have not seen him since your left.

I forgot to tell you before you left to buy for me 6 large, fine, strong silk Pocket Handkerchiefs. I need them much.

There was laid upon my table two days ago by whom I know not a package with a letter directed to the Prince. I know not what to do with it. After waiting a day I concluded to send for Mr. Irvine the Secretary of the British and consult him on the important subject. He examined the exterior of the parcel and the letter and I suggested that he should send both by Adams Express to Portland. He said the Prince was very unwilling to receive presents and rather demurred to my suggestion. We finally concluded we would open the package and see what it contained. Stackpole did it with great care so that the things might be replaced in their proper order; when lo! and behold there appeared a number of yards of flashy [?] curtain calico and some red muslin. The mystery still increased until at last Mr. Irvine and myself concluded we would break the seal and read the note addressed to the Prince. He did so with fear and trembling when to our astonishment we found it to be a note addressed by you to poor Pierre giving directions to Mr. Mahoney about the cut of the calico dressing gown. I assure you we were on the very point of sending the whole affair to the Prince at Portland. Moral: Don't write Pierre's name so indistinctly that he may be taken for the Prince of Wales.

With my kind regards to Mr. & Mrs. [?]

I remain yours affectionately,

James Buchanan

Miss Lane

P.S. Mr. Stanton called. He had kept no copy of his opinion and it is delayed so that he may retain a copy.

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