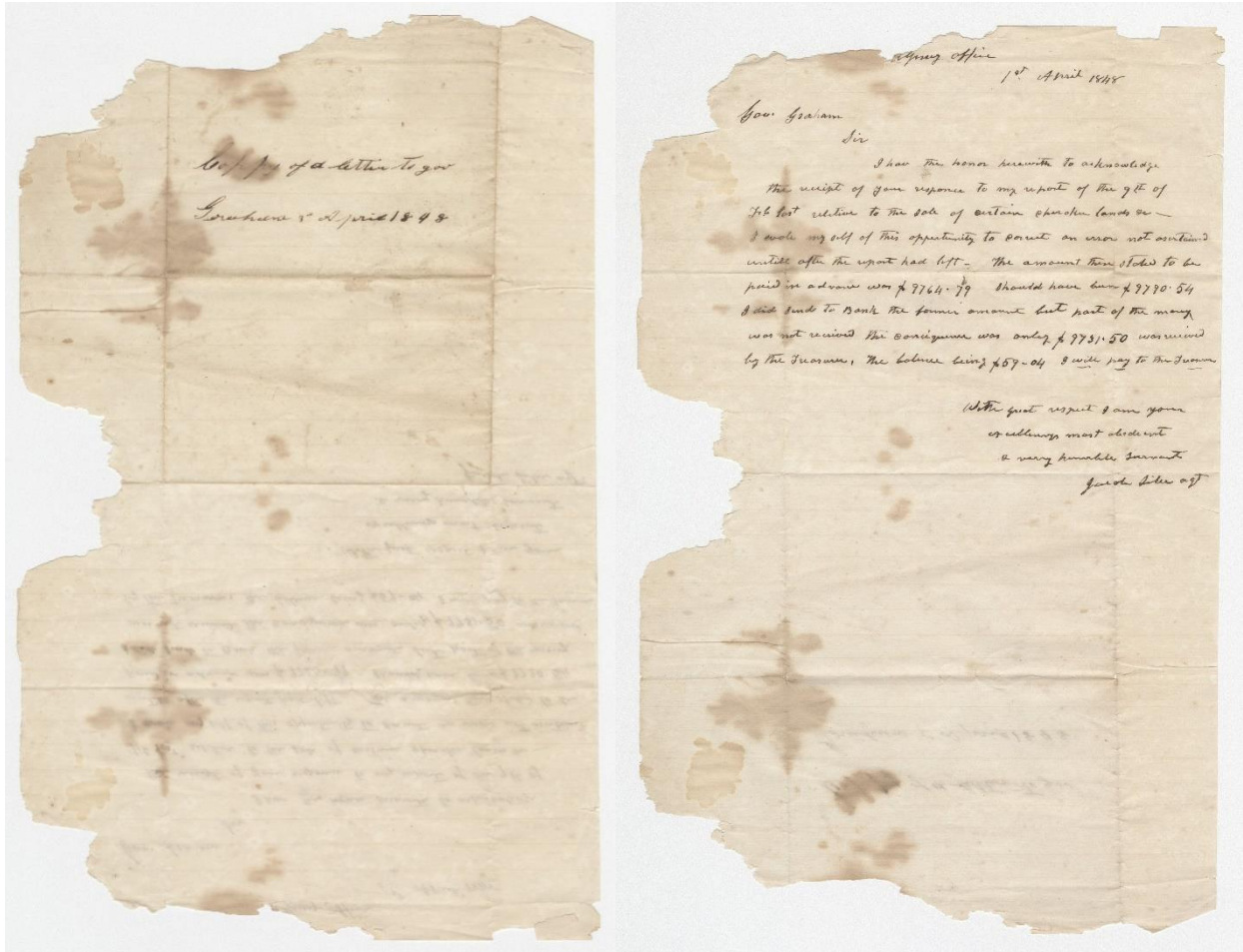


Jacob Siler's Letter to Governor William A. Graham

April 1, 1848

Manuscript: MSS05-08_01_01_15



Copy of a letter to Gov
Lynchburg 1st April 1848

Gov. Graham

Sir

I have the honor herewith to acknowledge
the receipt of your response to my report of the 9th of
Feb last relative to the sale of certain Cherokee lands &c -
I avail myself of this opportunity to correct an error not contained
until after the report had left - The amount then stated to be
paid in advance was \$ 7764. 79 should have been \$ 7780. 54
I did send to Bank the former amount but part of the money
was not received the balance was only \$ 7781. 50 was received
by the Treasurer, the balance being \$ 57. 04 I will pay to the Treasurer

With great respect I am your
obedient most devoted
& very humble servant
Jacob Siler

Transcribed by Jade Thomas

For English 618: Research Methods in English

Instructor: Dr. Brian Gastle

December 15th, 2023

Introduction to the Series

This transcription and its attendant annotations, explanatory material, and bibliography was prepared by students in ENGL 618: Research Methods in English, the required gateway class for the MA in English degree program at Western Carolina University (WCU). The learning outcomes for this class include the following:

1. Conduct appropriate, effective, and ethical scholarship.
 - a. Effectively find and use advanced research tools (handbooks, databases, guides, bibliographies, etc.) appropriate to a subject.
 - Students will be able to use a wide variety of such tools and evaluate those tools.
 - b. Find appropriate advanced research (print and electronic scholarship) and apply that research to specific disciplinary questions or issues.
 - Students will be able to find a variety of scholarship, evaluate both the appropriateness and rigor of that scholarship, and incorporate that scholarship correctly and effectively.
 - c. Develop accurate bibliographies and reference citations.
 - Students will be able to annotate, abstract, and cite materials following standard MLA format.
2. Understand the process by which the texts we use are made available.
 - Students will be able to conduct basic editorial work and evaluate the editorial work of others.

All work is presented as submitted by the graduate students. While they take great care with their transcriptions and annotations, errors are possible. As they learn throughout this class, good scholarship requires meticulous research and corroboration by authoritative sources. Our objective is to provide transcriptions and annotations of WCU's Special Collections materials that will be useful to the institution, students, scholars, patrons, and all users of our library's resources.

If you wish to submit an emendation or correction for this document, please email Dr. Brian Gastle (bgastle@wcu.edu).

Introduction to the Document

This manuscript is a letter written from Jacob Siler—North Carolina state law maker and at the time of this letter an Agent for the State of North Carolina in Cherokee County—to the North Carolina governor of 1845-1848, William A. Graham. In the letter dated April 1st, 1848, Siler writes Graham to address and acknowledge Graham's response to the sale of Cherokee lands. In the letter, Siler corrects an error in the amount the North Carolina department of treasury received for the sale. Siler states how previously the amount sent to the treasurer was \$9764.79, but after the land sales report was sent off, Siler realized the amount should have been \$9790.54. Additionally, Siler informs the governor that of the \$9764.79 previously sent to the bank, only \$9731.50 was received. Siler accounts how the balance at the time owed to the treasurer was \$59.04 and assures Graham he will pay and clear the balance.

Jacob Siler was born on June 1, 1795, in the Pendleton district of South Carolina (Sloan-Farmer). Siler was German and Irish, as his grandfather was a German immigrant (Sloan-Farmer). Siler left his family in Buncombe County and began to relocate closer to Cherokee in the counties of Macon and Haywood in 1817 (Sloan-Farmer).

William Alexander Graham was born September 5, 1804, on Vesuvius Plantation in his family's home located in Lincoln County, NC (Williams). In the earlier period of Graham's career, along with others like Andrew Jackson, Graham helped from the Whig political party (Williams). Prior to serving as governor, Graham had experience in public office through his time in the House of Commons. Additionally, Graham represented NC in the U.S. Senate from December 1840 to March of 1843, until he was displaced by a democratic legislature (Williams). Graham won a successful bid for governor in 1844 when he defeated Michael Hoke (Williams). Graham served as North Carolina's governor from January of 1845 to January of 1849.

Editorial Statement

The letter is written on thin, ripped edged, folded paper with dimensions of approximately 8 by 12” inches. The paper feels thin as it has become wrinkled since its creation in 1848. There are several stained blots on the paper, mostly on the left side of the paper. These stains appear as though they are grease like in nature. The letter looks like it was first folded horizontally, then folded several more times vertically and horizontally. The page’s edges are mostly made up of tears. All of the edges of the paper are torn, with the paper’s right side being mostly unscathed.

This transcription is diplomatic, as I attempted to transcribe the letter as closely to the original as possible. With that in mind, Siler’s spelling at times can cause words to be misinterpreted as others. Along with this, standardized English used a few different spellings of words during this time. Since this is a diplomatic transcription, any spelling and grammatical issues will be transcribed in their original form. Any misspellings or grammatical issues will be clarified from my perspective with a footnote. Some things to keep in mind when viewing Siler’s handwriting and letter are:

- Agt is an abbreviation of Siler’s title “agent”.
- At times, Siler forgets the inclusion of certain letters in words.
- Even though this document is dated April 1st of 1848, the letter’s back is dated April 3rd, 1848, which is likely the day the letter was sent off.
- Siler’s “e”s at times, first appear as an “i”.

Transcription

Agency Office¹

1st April 1948

Gov. Graham,

Sir

I hav The honor herewith to acknowledge the receipt of your response to my report of the 9th of Feb² last reletive to the sale of certain Cherokee lands &c³ --- I evale my self of this oppportunity to correct an error not ascertained until after the report had left- the amount then stated to be paid in advance was \$9764.79 should have been \$9790.54 I did send to Bank the former amount but part of the money was not received The conciquence was only \$9731.50 was received by the treasurer, the balance being \$59.04⁴ I will pay to the Treasurer

With great respect I am your
excellency most obedient
& very humbly servant

Jacob Siler agt

¹ The first half of "agency" is torn in the letter, due to the paper's torn edges.

² The receipt of the \$9,731.50 that was originally received from Siler, can be found as courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina, in the North Carolina Treasury Department's transaction report for the time of November 1847- November of 1848. The receipt of the \$9,731.50 is documented as being received in February of 1848 for the "sales of Preemption Cherokee lands" (Documents printed by order of the General Assembly, 30).

³ "etc".

⁶ In the report, it can be seen where the following May of 1848 after Siler sent this letter, the department of treasury received a payment of \$58.22 from Siler for the "amount collected on per-emption Cherokee lands" (Documents printed by order of the General Assembly, 34). While there is not enough documentation to solidify that the \$58.22 is a record of the error amount Siler is writing about, the date and time of this payment being received, along with how small this amount is compared to others in the report, the \$58.22 could be considered as payment for the error Siler references. In accounting for the 0.82 discrepancy, the treasury department could have only received the \$58.22, similar to how they only received the majority of Siler's first payment.

Works Cited

- Documents printed by the order of the General Assembly of North Carolina at its session of 1848-1849. North Carolina Digital Collections, Institute of Museum and Library Services, <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/documents-printed-by-order-of-the-general-assembly-of-north-carolina-at-its-session-of-...1848-1849/3931262?item=3931912>. Accessed 23 November 2023.
- Sloan-Farmer, Maryann. Jacob Siler. *NCPedia*. 1994. <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/siler-jacob>. Accessed 20 November 2023.
- “The US Indian Agency (1820-1853).” *Minnesota Historical Society*, <https://www.mnhs.org/fortsnelling/learn/native-americans/us-indian-agency>. Accessed 14 December 2023.
- Williams, Max R. William Alexander Graham. *NCPedia*. 1 January 1986. <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/graham-william-alexander#:~:text=Displaced%20by%20a%20Democratic%20legislature,January%201845%20to%20January%201849>. Accessed 14 December 2023.