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THOMAS JEFFERSON (1743-1826) NOTE TO DOCTOR STEPTOE

The collection consists of a note from Thomas JEFFERSON, perhaps written at Poplar Forest, Bedford County, Virginia, to Doctor STEPTOE of Bedford County, 13 September 1815, asking him to come for breakfast to join a Mr. CORREA, a Mr. GILMER, and JEFFERSON, in a botanical expedition. Also included are a typescript and a photocopy of the note.

"Mr. CORREA" is most probably the Abbe Joseph CORREA de SERRA (1750-1823), "Portuguese philosopher, scientist [botanist], and diplomat." "Mr. GILMER" is most probably Francis Walker GILMER (1790-1826), lawyer, author, and botanist. Both men were close friends of JEFFERSON.

"In the summer of 1815, [Francis Walker] GILMER actually took up his residence in Winchester [Virginia], but no sooner had he done so than CORREA [de SERRA] appeared and induced him to go to Monticello. The two accompanied JEFFERSON to his Poplar Forest estate in Bedford County, and then the European philosopher and the American lawyer continued their journey into the deeper South."

["J. Correa de Serra," John P. Foley, ed., *The Jeffersonian Cyclopaedia* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1900), p. 208; Richard Beale Davis, ed., *Correspondence of Thomas Jefferson and Francis Walker Gilmer, 1814-1826* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1946), p. 14-15, 31; "Francis Walker Gilmer," *Dictionary of American Biography*, Vol. VII (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1931), p. 306.]

WILLIAM STEPTOE (1785-1862)

William STEPTOE, son of James STEPTOE, Clerk of Court for Bedford County, Virginia, and Frances CALLAWAY, was born 3 August 1785 in Bedford County. He was a graduate of the Philadelphia Medical School and had a medical practice at New London, VA. He married (1) Nancy BROWN, daughter of Henry BROWN and Frances THOMPSON. On 14 October 1822, he married (2) Mary B. DILLON, daughter of Edward DILLON, of Prince Edward County. Dr. STEPTOE's home was "Arrington Place. He also later acquired "Cedar Grove" through his marriage to Nancy BROWN. The family physician of Thomas JEFFERSON and the Poplar Forest slaves, Dr. STEPTOE died 3 December 1862 at his home in Bedford County.

["Miscellaneous Notes on the Steptoe Family," Mss., FF3741, Jones Memorial Library, Lynchburg, VA (JML); "Steptoe Family Bible Records," Mss., FF2467, JML; "Brown/Patteson/ Owen Family," James Burroughs Noell Papers, Mss., MS1388, JML; Gibson Hobbs Research, JML. Marriage Bonds, Prince Edward County, VA, 1754-1850, Microfilm Reel No. 40; *Lynchburg Daily Virginian*, 5 February 1863, p. 3 col. 2.]

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