

Knoxville Tennessee
18th Oct. 1809

Sir

It is with Exstream pain that I have to
Inform you of the death of His Excellency Meriwether
Lewis Governor of upper Louisiana who died on
the Morning of the 11th Instant and I am sorry to
say by suicide.

I arrived at the Chickasaw Bluffs
on or about the 18th September where I found
the Governor (Who had Reached there Two days
before me from St. Lewis) in verry bad health
it appears that his first intension was to go
around by water to the City of Washington but
his thinking a war with England probable,
& that his valuable papers might be in danger of
falling into the hands of the British, he was
thereby induced to change his Rout & to come
through by Land the Chickasaw nation by Land

I furnished him with a horse to pack his trunks
on & a man to attend to them; having Recovered
his health in some degree at the Chickasaw
Bluffs we set out together & on our arrival
at the Chickasaw nation, I discovered the he

appeared at times deranged in mind. we rested
there Two days. & Came on one day, Journey after
crossing Tennessee River & where we encamped
we lost Two of our Horses. I remained behind
to hunt them & the Governor proceeded on with
a promise to wait for me at the first house he
came to that was inhabited by White people. he
Reached the house of a W. Grinder about sun set
the man of the house being from home & no person
there but a woman who discovered the Governor to be
deranged gave him up the house & slept herself in
one near it. his servant & mine slept in the
Stable Cotts some distance from the other house
the woman reports that about three o'clock she
heard Two pistols fire off in the Governor's room
the servants being awaked by her came in but
too late to save him. he had shot himself in the
head with one pistol & a little below the Breast
with the other When my servant came in he says
I have done the business my good servant give me
some water he gave him water. he Survived
but a short time. I came up some time after
I had him as decently Buried as I could in that
place if there is any thing wished by his friends

To be done to his grave I will attend to their Instruc-
tions I have got in my possession his two trunks
of papers (amongst which is said to be his travels
to the Pacific Ocean) and probably some vouchers
for expenditures of public money for a bill
which he said had been protested by the Secy.
of War & of which act to his death he repeatedly
complained I have also in my care his rifle,
silver watch, brace of pistols, dirk & Tomahawk,
one of the Governour's Horses was lost in the Wilder-
ness which I will endeavor to regain the other
I have sent on by his servants wh expressed
a desire to go to the Governour's Mother and to
Monticello. I have furnished him with fifteen
Dollars to defray his expences to Charlottesville
Some days previous to the Governour's Death he
he requested of me in case any ~~thing~~ accident
happened to him to send his Trunks with
the papers therein to the President but I think
it very probable he went to you. I wish
to be informed what arrangements may
be considered best in sending on his

Neely James. Nashville Oct. 18. 09.

Duplicate.

Trunks &c. I have the honour to be with
Great Respect

Yr. Obedt. Servt.

James Neely

U.S. agent to the
Chickasaw nation

The Governor left two
of his trunks at the
Chickasaw Bluffs in the
care of Capt. Gilbert C.
Ruppel's commanding officer
& was to write to him from
Nashville what to do with them

The Hon^d

Thomas Jefferson
late president of the
United States

Monticello near
Charlottesville Va