

Mr. Ferrapou
20. July 1796

Paris February the 20th 1796.

Sir

Desiring to correspond to the confidence that on my departure for Hambourg, you have shewn me, in remitting to my care one letter with duplicate to be send to Mad^e. Lafayette when, once in Germany I could learn with accuracy the place where she was and that they could be forwarded safely, I think I owe you an account of my steps on that subject, more so as from the circumstances said letters have not been forwarded.

as soon I have been in Hollande I have made my business to enquire where was Mad^e. Lafayette but could find nobody acquainted with her fate till my arrival at Hambourg (by the beginning of December) where the first people I applied to, told me that she had been there some months before and had left in said town all her business in hands of an aid de Camp of M^r. Lafayette a M^r. Masson who could answer all my enquiries about that Lady; a few days after I saw M^r. Masson who really I found chiefly employed with the affairs and situation of M^r. & M^{rs}. Lafayette, he engaged me to call with him at the American Consul M^r. Parish & there after informing me of the situation of M^{rs}. Lafayette and that her confinement at Olmutz was such that no letter could reach her since she was there (for the details of what did happens to the letters send to her, I refer myself to what M^r. Masson has wrote himself to you by me) they advised me both to keep your

M^r. Monroe, Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States, at Paris

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letters and if the Circumstances should not change before my departure from Hamburg, then to deposit them, what I have done in hands of the American Consul, according the receipt I have delivered to you; from the state of the things, the persuasion I was in that trusting those letters to the post, it was to no good purpose, has made me comply with the advise of those Gentlemen and I hope, Sir, that from the same motive, you will give to it your approbation which in taking charge of the letters, has been my most earnest desire as well as of doing some thing useful for that unfortunate and interesting family, the same wish induces me, Sir, to mention to you that during my stay in Germany, I have been told at different time and by several persons of respectable Character, that when Madame Lafayette presented herself at Vienna to the Emperor to beg for the liberty of her husband or the freedom to go and live with him at Olmutz, she was received by him with kindness and was promised to have her Correspondance allowed to her, but that she was received very differently by his ministry of foreign affairs who it is supposed generally is influenced by the Cabinet of England for keeping so closely M^r. Lafayette and by the by his lady who since at Olmutz has no more freedom than her husband; the opinion hold too, for England insisting on the detention of M^r. Lafayette, is that at his return to America he could influence that Country in favor of France: I relate you all that, Sir, as I have heard it and my only aim is to assure you that I had at heart to fulfil your Commission with care and to deserve the confidence you had placed in me

I am with great regard

Sir

Your Most ob. humb. Servant
Bartholomew Ferrasson

P. S. M^r. Alexander Lameth who was made Prisoner with M^r. Lafayette is now free at Hambourg