

From: "Stuart Green" <stuartgreenmd@yahoo.com>
To: "Benjamin Franklin" <dr_benjamin_franklin@yahoo.com>
Subject: **Considerable persons**

Dear Doctor Franklin:

As news of your revival spreads, many individuals will clamor to meet you. Your descendents, now numbering in the thousands, will doubtless profess filial devotion. Likewise, many persons surnamed Franklin may claim descent from you, but as all your progeny came through your daughter Sarah Bache, the Franklin name must have come from someone else's descendents. For these reasons, I suggest you decline meeting with family members until you've fully regained your senses and refreshed your memory with my emails.

Certain individuals who in your day were called "considerable persons" will insist upon making your acquaintance as soon as you revitalize—if only to later brag about the encounter. I suggest, Sir, you limit such meetings to those individuals who owe their position to your own activities more than two centuries ago. As you will likely follow protocol, I recommend that you greet them in order of their importance or influence, with the President of the United States first.

I needn't remind you of your proposal for a chief executive of Britain's North America colonies in your 1754 *Plan of Union*. Our nation's current leader is, in many ways, your wished-for "President-General." You repeated the President-General idea again in your draft for an Articles of Confederation, submitted at the Second Continental Congress in 1775. As you know, the Articles eventually agreed upon in 1777 created a toothless central government with no power over individual states. Your advocacy for a predominant federal authority, however, influenced the U.S. Constitution, still the nation's governing document.

Although your encasement occurred during the first of Washington's eight years in office, you knew six American presidents personally. After Washington, John Adams assumed the leader's post, followed by Thomas Jefferson. He doubled the size of the United States in 1803 by purchasing all of France's North American holdings. James Madison and James Monroe—Virginia delegates to the Constitutional Convention—served as our fourth and fifth presidents.

You'll never guess who became our sixth president: young Quincy, John Adam's son. Recall that he spent time in Paris with your grandson Temple while you, his father and John Jay negotiated peace with England. Quincy proved quite a good president, which shouldn't surprise you, considering how bright he was. Until recently, the Adamses were the only father and son who served as American presidents, but the man you'll likely encounter is also a former president's son.

Only men of European ancestry have occupied the president's office. We've had only one Catholic president—no Jews, Blacks, Native Americans, Asians or women. Deranged assassins slew four presidents in office, which explains the security arrangements that'll precede the President's visit.

Out of courtesy you should meet with America's Chief Justice along with the eight Associate Justices of the Supreme Court. I recommend, however, that you deflect their questions about specific issues. Today's legal debates focus on what the *Founders* meant by freedom of speech, religion or the press. The justices will want answers from you because these matters are much on their minds.

Pennsylvania's Governor should be next because you functioned as that state's chief executive twice in your career. Both he and the Mayor of Philadelphia will advise you of developments in your adopted state. As for your birthplace, Boston's Mayor and the Massachusetts Governor also deserve a short visit.

Seventy men have served as Postmaster General of the United States since you occupied that position. Posterity credits you with founding an efficient postal enterprise that served the nation rather well for more than 150 years. By the 1960s, however, the postal system became hopelessly old-fashioned, failing to take advantage of new technology. Congress and the President converted our Postal Service to a profit-making corporation wholly owned by the federal government. The present postmaster will fill you in on the details of modern postal operations. Permit extra time for the visit.

Historians claim that your support of the Great Compromise—establishing equal states' representation in the Senate and proportional representation in the House of Representatives—was essential for ratification of the Constitution. For this reason, members of both houses of Congress will request an audience. If you don't restrain them, all 100 senators and 438 congressmen and congresswomen will offer compelling reasons why they—rather than anyone else—deserve time with you. Our political system, I regret to inform you, became partisan shortly after you died. Whigs and Tories of England have become the Democrats and Republicans of our times. On many issues, the parties oppose each other for the sake of dissent itself. For this reason, I recommend meeting with a single leader from each chamber and then only briefly, lest one or the other try to solicit you to their side.

You also should parlay with certain officials—the Secretary of State and the Ambassadors to France, England, Sweden and Morocco—whom you'll query about the favorable outcome your foreign treaties of peace, amity and commerce.

My next email will return to health matters to consider your problems voiding.