

Manassas, Va., August 2nd 1876

August 1876 letter from Robert Tansill

Virginia Governors Executive Papers – James L. Kemper

To His Excellency James L. Kemper, Governor of Virginia, Richmond

Sir:

I beg you will consider me an applicant for the office of Superintendent of the Penitentiary, made vacant by the death of Mr. Geo. H. Strother. I was born in this County in 1812, and entered the U.S. Military service in 1833. When the late war commenced I was a Captain in the U. S. Marine Corps, which position I resigned, and joined the Confederate Army, and faithfully served in it as Colonel to the end of the contest, and by its sad termination, lost my commission, the only means I had for the support of myself and family. I am now an old man, entirely without employment, or means of support, and in my hard and distressed condition, I appeal to you as Governor of the State, for the position in question. My sacrifices, misfortunes, and devotion to the honor, and rights of The Old Commonwealth, during, and sense of right, justice, and sympathy. I can furnish you with any testimonials as to my qualifications, and claims upon the State, that may be required. Gratitude is one of the noblest sentiments of the human heart, and believing that this noble virtue prevails in the breast of your Excellency, it inspires me with the confident hope, that my application will not be made in vain.

Be so kind as to advise me as soon as convenient , if I may hope for success.

Very respectfully

Your obedient servant

Robert Tansill

(The back of the letter from Robert Tansill appears to be a rough draft for an answer)

Absence from city delays – The Governor acknowledges your formal application for the office of Superintendent of the Penitentiary and he highly appreciates your honorable record in the service of the Country. Should the place mentioned become vacant during the recess of the General Assembly; it would then become the Governor's duty to fill it by temporary appointment, and in that event he would impartially and carefully consider your own as well as all the applications. It is perhaps well to state here that in respect to all such appointments the Governor is greatly embarrassed by the multitude of applicants of excellent qualifications who are in distressed circumstances, many of whom left the U. S. Army and Navy in 1861 to serve Virginia and who served with fidelity and distinction throughout the war. For every gentleman of that class who can possibly be appointed many others of doubtless equal claims necessarily fail to be provided for.

Manassas, Va., August 3rd 1876

August 1876 letter from Charles E. Sinclair

Virginia Governors Executive Papers – James L. Kemper

To His Excellency James L. Kemper, Governor of Virginia, Richmond

Dear Sir:

I understand there is a vacancy in the Office of Superintendent of the Penitentiary which it will soon devolve upon you to supply.

I beg to recommend for the position Colonel Robert Tansill of this County. Colonel Tansill was formerly a Captain in the U.S. Marine Corps which office he resigned at the breaking out of the late war & came South serving as you are no doubt aware with distinction as Colonel in the Confederate Service.

Colonel Tansill is a Gentleman of great integrity and high executive ability and has in his sacrifices for the south placed himself in a position peccinarily which would under this place very acceptable to him. I have no doubt he would fill it satisfactorily to the public service & this view earnestly _____ the application to your favorable consideration.

Very respectfully

Your obedient servant

Charles E. Sinclair

Manassas, Va., August 3rd 1876

August 1876 letter from Robert Tansill

Virginia Governors Executive Papers – James L. Kemper

To His Excellency James L. Kemper, Governor of Virginia, Richmond

Dear Sir:

By your direction I have had the honor to receive through your secretary, Col. S. Bassett French, an answer to my application of the 2nd inst. for the position of Superintendent of the Penitentiary predicated upon the reported death of Mr. George F. Strother, the present incumbent, whom I am happy to learn is still living, and hope his life may be long spared, as I really have no desire to be benefited by the misfortune of my fellow man. Understanding, however, that Mr. Strother, from the nature of his disease, is not likely to live long, and that his death may be expected at any moment. I herewith enclose two letters of recommendation, one from Hon. John Letcher and another from Hon. B. B. Douglas, and ask that they may be filed, with that of Judge C. E. Sinclair, forwarded sometime ago, with my application.

I feel assured that should the appointment devolve on your Excellency it will be bestowed on the gentleman you may think has the best claims upon the justice, and gratitude of the Commonwealth. I also enclose a copy of my resignation from the U. S. Service, recently received from the Navy Department, from which you will perceive that my predictions therein at that early date have had a sad confirmation, and that my character is matter of the positive than negative type.

Very respectfully, Sir,
I have the honor to be
Your obedient servant
Robert Tansill