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Queen Anns County 8 April 1777

Sir,

Yesterday Evening your Letter, dated the 3. of the present Month, was delivered to me, little after 6 o Clock. The Messenger who brought it informed me he had been waiting from one o Clock, at which Time I was rode out and did not return till about Six —

I will not conceal from you, Sir, that having been told some time ago, that the House of Delegates had been pleased to recommend me for the Office of Chancellor, and that it was thought their Recommendation would be concurred with by the Senate, I had taken my Resolution upon the Subject before the Receipt of your Letter. I have ever thought the Task of "Judging" to be among the hardest and severest Duties; and I am the more unqualified for this particular Department of my Practice in my Profession has been altogether in the Courts of Law. It is my Wish to spend the Remainder of my Days in Retirement from busy Life, and in the Exercise of such Offices of Humanity as the Circle of my own Neighbourhood may furnish Occasions for, and in this Wish I am not without Hopes of being indulged. I really, Sir, feel that I am every Day growing less fit for the Discharge of any public Duty.

For these Reasons I am obliged to decline the

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