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Matthew Lyon Esq.

General Post Office

Trenton 14 October 1797

Sir

I received your letter of the 11<sup>th</sup> of August last to which I should have replied earlier but the removal of the Office from Philadelphia to this place and a very unusual pressure of Business for some time past have hitherto prevented me —

In arranging the Post Routes I have usually made them as long as would admit of their being performed in a week or a fortnight, as it may happen, with convenience to the Contractors for this reason that the Mails are conveyed on such Routes with much greater Regularity, than when divided into short distances, and I have made it a general Rule not to divide the Routes into two or more parts, when I have proposals for them entire as they are advertised —

This will account for your proposal and Gen<sup>e</sup> Williams's not being accepted; as you proposed only for parts of the two Routes from Saunbury to Putland, and from Salem to Champlaintown

The Post Rider on the Route from Salem to Champaintown is directed to pass alternately on the Lake Road — I hope this arrangement will prove satisfactory to the people residing on both Roads between Fairhaven and Derry —

Sam<sup>l</sup> J<sup>r</sup>

W<sup>m</sup> Abraham Hodge

General Post Office  
October 16. 1797

Sir

Previous to Mr. Blount's return to North Carolina I had agreed to send two mails a week from Harris's to Halifax — This Measure I can assure you has been unavoidably delayed from a multiplicity of Business occasioned by a renewal of more than one half of the old Contracts, and making a number of new ones for the routes lately established by Congress —

These Circumstances together with the removal of the Office from Philadelphia, and Mr. Burall's long Indisposition, of more than two months, have thrown a load of Business on me that has required and I can add has received my most unremitting attention, notwithstanding which I find a great deal of it remains still unfinished —

If I am not mistaken Mr. Burst<sup>s</sup> offered to carry the additional Mail and if you should be of Opinion that the Business will be attended to by him, I wish you to place the Contract in his hands — I will however observe that Post Masters do not always make the best Contractors — The Compensation for that Service should not exceed Four hundred Dollars a year, and perhaps a Contract may be obtained on lower terms — Now you enclose you the necessary papers for effecting a Contract for the additional Mail, and must request the favor of your Agency on the Occasion and informing a suitable Schedule for the Contract —

It will I find be very necessary for the Inhabitants

3

Inhabitants of Halifax, to allow Mr. Harris some Compensation for his trouble in sending the mails for Halifax &c on their proper routes as the PostMaster of Hicks's Ford writes me that they are frequently missent from Mr. Harris's, and are often forwarded from Godson's, and Warminster after a detention of two or three weeks — No Commission arising from the Postages collected by him can be an inducement for Mr. Harris to continue to hold the Office at his house

I am &c JH

Mr. Peirce's Contract will expire on the 31st of March next when I shall advertise for proposals for carrying the Mail twice a week from Harris's to Halifax, of course the term of the present Contract must be limited to that time

---

Jacob Richardson Esq: October 16. 1797

Sir

Mr. Reuben Bacon had engaged to carry the Mails on Mr. Mumford's Routes in time to have ensured an uninterrupted Conveyance of them, but in the hurry occasioned by the removal of the General Post Office to this place, his Contract and Bond, though made out before I left Philadelphia, were omitted to be sent to him until the 28 ult<sup>o</sup> — he did not therefore receive ~~the~~ papers before the 6 Instant, and will not be prepared to commence carrying the Mails on those Routes until the 20<sup>th</sup> Instant.

This Circumstance I am much obliged to you for the Manner in which it appears, by your letter of the 6 Instant,

that you had disposed of the Mails which were then in your Office, and for prevailing on Mr. Henry to continue carrying the Mail between Providence and New-Port until he could hear from me — Mr. Henry and Mr. Spooner shall be amply paid for their Services since the expiration of Mr. Mumford's Contract, and I will leave it with you to determine what will be a proper Compensation for them to receive, which you will be pleased to pay them and to send their Receipts —

I expect Mr. Bacon will be prepared by this time this reaches you to commence the carriage of the Mails on the Routes he has contracted for; if however it should not be the case I shall rely on your exertions to prevent any Interruption in the Conveyance of them until he is prepared for it. I am &c JH

Post Script.

October 16. 1797

As an old Servant of the Public I could have wished to have continued Mr. Mumford as your Contractor but the following estimate will shew that his demand was much too high for me to close with —

Estimate of the Expence of carrying the Mails on the following Routes calculated at the average rate of such Mails throughout the United States —

Three Mails a week between Providence and New-Port  
29 miles ~~at 12~~ Ds gives . . . . . 348

Once a week from New-Port to New-Bedford  
30 miles ~~at 5~~ Ds . . . . . 150

Once a week from New-London to Providence  
by New-Port &c 92 miles . . . . . 460  
460  
958

Mr. Mumford demanded 1500 Lrs —

Mr. Reuben Bacon

General Post Office  
Trenton October 17. 1797

Sir

By this Post Mr. Rosecrans has sent me your Bond and Contract for the Routes in the neighbourhood of New Port. I therefore enclose you the Counterpart of that Contract executed by me — I hope before this can reach you that you have commenced carrying the Mails on those Routes — From your Letter of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Ult<sup>r</sup>, in which you observe that your Riders stood ready to execute their Engagements with you, I was hopeful that they could have entered on the Business without much delay — I rest satisfied however that you will use every endeavour in your power to ensure a regular conveyance of those Mails so as to prevent any Complaints from that Quarter —

To shew you that there was no mistake on my part, in estimating the expence of carrying the Mail from Providence to New Port I have subjoined an estimate of the expence of carrying the Mails on Mr. Mumford's Routes which was made in your presence and for your information —

Mr. Bauman wrote me that he commenced sending the Mails on the Bennington Route about the 5<sup>th</sup>. of October —

It was my intention that your Contract for that Route should have commenced its Operation on the first of September, but in the hurry of the Business at this Office it happened otherwise. Your Contract I find was not to commence before the first of October —

I am &c J. H.

Expence of car-

carying the Mails on Mr. Mumford's Routes 1<sup>st</sup> —

Providence to New Port 29 miles 3 times a week at 12 D <sup>s</sup>	348 -
Providence, New Port and New London 92 miles	
New Port and New Bedford 30	122 25 D <sup>s</sup>
	610
	958

Mr. Howson Clark

October 17. 1797

Sir

I am favored with yours of the 14<sup>th</sup> Instant relative to the misconduct of Mr. King, in not sending on the proper day to Prince Edward Court House for the Northern mail —

Mr. King is charged with five Dollars for that failure, which will be deducted from his pay for the present Quarter as the information respecting it was not received in time to stop the amount of the fine out of his pay for the last Quarter — I could wish Post Masters, in general, were more attentive in noticing the failures of the Contractors, when they happen, as it is a very essential part of their Duty, and the fines shall be uniformly exacted in every instance where a reasonable excuse cannot be offered on the part of the Contractors —

A Map was certainly sent to your Office, but as you did not receive it I send you another by this Post which I hope will get safe to hand —

Jam<sup>d</sup>g. J. H.

Mr. John McGowan General Post Office  
Trenton October 17, 1797

Sir

As it will be inconvenient for you to continue to hold the Office at Northampton Court house I have appointed Mr. Coventon Simkins to succeed you in that appointment — May I request the favor of you to have the enclosed Bond and oaths executed by Mr. Simkins with good Security?

When properly executed these papers are to be returned to this Office, and I will send Mr. Simkins his Commission as Deputy Post Master of Northampton Court House — I hope your state of Health will soon admit of your rendering the accounts to the end of the last Quarter — As soon as they are received Mr. Burrall the Assistant Post Master General, will draw on you for the balance due from you at the time of delivering the Office to Mr. Simkins —

Pray remind Mr. Simkins of the necessity of returning the Mail Bags to Norfolk, and keeping them passing, and repassing in the Portmanteaus on the route whether they contain any Mails or not — Great Attention is requisite

on every part of the Route, but particularly at Northampton Court House, to ensure a regular and safe conveyance of the mails between Philadelphia and Norfolk — which will be indispensably necessary to make the route of importance to the Public, and of any emolument to the Pro-

Proprietors of the Stage — As Mr. Simkins is one of the Proprietors, his interest must be promoted by a due attention to such regulations as are adopted for the safe conveyance of the mails —

Dan'l. P. H.

W. Burd Ashton Jr.

October 17, 1797

Sir

Received yours of the 3<sup>d</sup> Instant and as you cannot serve any longer as Deputy Post Master of New Port you may deliver the Key of the Mail and any articles of Post Office property to Mr. Charles Edwards who is appointed to succeed you in that Office — I expect to receive your account and the amount of postages collected by you by the next Post —

Pray do not fail to render the accounts, and make the remittance

When the enclosed Bond & Oaths are executed and taken by Mr. Edwards, he will be pleased to return them to this Office and on receiving them I will send him a Commission —

Dan'l. P. H.

W. Lechariah Hawkins Jr.

October 17, 1797

Sir

You will be pleased to have the enclosed Bond and Oaths duly executed and returned to this Office and upon the receipt of them I will send you a Commission as Deputy Post Master of Brookhaven —

CW

On referring to Mr. Wetmore's account I find there is a small balance of three Dollars and thirty five Cents, which must have arisen from errors in his accounts, as I find he generally sent what he considered to be the balance with his quarterly accounts — This sum is reduced to three dollars and twenty eight Cents by crediting him with seven Cents overpaid on the accounts of two Quarters by a Remittance in July —

I am &c D. H.

Mr. Abraham Cohen October 17, 1797

Sir

Having received no proposal for the Post-Road lately established from Wilmington to Charleston which I could accept I divided that Route and placed that Contract from Wilmington to Georgetown in the hands of a person in North Carolina who is to commence carrying the Mail on the first of November — It now remains to make a Contract for the remainder of the Route from George Town to Charleston for which purpose I send you enclosed a blank Bond and Contract, and must request the favor of your good Offices on the Occasion —

Mr. Durkee informed me that he was about establishing a Stage from Charleston to Georgetown and offered to carry the mail through the whole route, but his terms were so high

that

that I could not possibly close with his Offer, he demanded Eighteen Hundred Dollars where Twelve Hundred Dollars would be considered, according to the average rate of a Weekly Mail, a very liberal Compensation — The Contractor from Wilmington to Georgetown is to receive Seven Hundred and Fifty Dollars a year and I have no doubt but a Contract may be obtained for carrying a weekly mail on the remainder of the Route for Four Hundred Dollars a year — If Mr. Durkee's Stage should be running and he is willing to take the Mail for that Compensation you may give him the Contract, but if he should not take it on these terms you will in that case be pleased to use your endeavours to obtain a Contract for that Route by advertising it, or in any other way you may think proper — In the mean time I wish you to employ an Express to carry that mail until the Contract can be effected — In many parts of the Union a weekly mail on Horseback would be carried for Three Hundred Dollars, the same distance — I therefore think you will be at no difficulty in getting a Contractor for Four Hundred dollars.

I will request Mr. Bacot to pay your Drafts on him for the purpose of sending the Mails by Express, until the Contract for the new Route is completed — I am &c D. H.

You may give Four Hundred and Fifty Dollars rather than fail in getting a Contract —