

which bidders propose. Experience for several years past, has fully tested the propriety of this course. No permanent change from the bids accepted will be permitted by the Department, favorable to the contractors. Though it may be expedient not to require the greatest expedition until the line shall be carried into full operation and the roads become rather better than they now are from the recent rains. It shall be done however though it may not be practicable to accomplish it within the first quarter of the new contracts. At the commencement however more than a few hours additional time will not be given.

J. Mc<sup>L</sup>

your teams were not stationed on the route, and that the blacksmiths, were putting on your carriage wheels to be used on the route. These are the reasons why it was believed that the mail might and ought to have been taken by land sooner than it was taken. It will not answer to permit repeated failures even in the hour of arrival here, in changing the mail from the steam boat to the land. I have concluded to run three additional trips in the stage between Lancaster & York. This will connect with your Baltimore line and be an accommodation to the people of York. This route was acceded to you, but I think there was a private agreement between you and Mr. Staymaker on the subject.

J. Mc<sup>L</sup>

Mr R Stockton

26<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1827  
Sir, your letter of the 23<sup>d</sup> is received, and in answer have to state, that I have no objection to your placing the mail in any vehicle which will carry it with safety and certainty. As regards the late failures, between Baltimore and Philadelphia, which are referred to in your letter. I am not convinced that they might not have been avoided, had your teams been placed upon the road in time to meet the exigency. Fearful of the very result that took place, I directed Doct<sup>r</sup> Bradley in November to see that such steps were taken as to avoid failures from the uncertainty of the steam boats. He informed me that you assured him, that you would be prepared for any emergency. The failures however occurred and continued, almost daily for near a week or ten days. It is true there were not many failures to connect the mail going south, but the failures to arrive at this place at the hour fixed during the session of Congress, are extremely mortifying, and affect deeply the character of the Department. There were failures going north in the mail at the same time and it being the commencement of Congress they were felt and complained of, in all the northern states.

Had you stationed a few horses on the route, and been prepared with your waggons, on the boats failing to arrive at the proper time, the mail might have been taken by land. But as before remarked these failures continued from day to day - the mail arriving here often after the adjournment of the house complaints were to be expected. And when I made enquiry was informed you were not prepared to take the mail. That

Peter Dittor Esqr. P.M.

26<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1827

Somerset Ohio. Sir, The question has been settled, that the printed minutes of societies, religious or otherwise, when regularly issued once a year, shall be considered periodical. Though it was at first considered doubtful whether these publications came within the letter of the law, yet considering their tendency and design, and the injury which would be sustained by some of the most useful institutions in the country if the rigid interpretation should be given, it has been deemed proper to give the liberal construction, which is certainly consonant with the spirit of the law. They are issued regularly once a year and are therefore periodical.

J. Mc<sup>L</sup>

William Hale Esqr.

26<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1827

Secretary of the Committee of Citizens of Boston Ms.

Sir, your letter of the 17<sup>th</sup> inst. is received, but the copies of the report referred to have not come to hand. If the weight of the document does not exceed two ounces, it may be sent free of postage to each member of Congress. If of greater weight than two ounces, they may be sent free to Members of the House of Representatives through the Clerk of that body, and to Senators through the Secretary of the Senate.

J. Mc<sup>L</sup>

Henry Mc Daniel Esqr. P.M.

26<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1827

Brownsville N.C. Sir, Two locks have been recently lost from the mail betwixt your office and Oxford. There must have been the most inexcusable carelessness on the part of the person who closed those mails in your office, not to have seen that the lock was securely fastened. Do not permit the like ever again to recur

J. Mc<sup>L</sup>

Post Office Dept

26<sup>th</sup> Decr 1827

J Law Esqr. P.M.

Hartford Ct. Sir, On the 9<sup>th</sup> of August last a letter enclosing \$100. was put in to the Post Office at Philadelphia by Craige Holmes & Co. addressed to J. & J. A. Smith & Co. Leicester Ms. The letter has not been received. The Philadelphia mail of that day for Massachusetts was received entire at your office on the 11.<sup>th</sup> of August and your account of mails sent shows that you made up a mail on that day for Leicester Ms. \$1.50 unpaid, which, by the account of mails received at Leicester, appears never to have arrived. It have been either misdirected or purloined from the mail. On what route did you send it? by Suffield? or by Stafford Springs? Does Mr Sargent personally superintend the receiving of the mail at Leicester? Can you possibly learn where to fix suspicion? It is all important to the character of the Department that the cause of this failure should be ascertained.

J. McL

Messrs. James &amp; John A. Smith &amp; Co.

26<sup>th</sup> Decr 1827

Leicester Ms. Gentlemen your letter of the 21<sup>st</sup>. inst. is received. I had been apprized of the failure, and some time has been occupied in collecting such information as would enable me in any degree to trace the letter. I now find that the mail from Philadelphia of the 9<sup>th</sup> of August for the state of Massachusetts was regularly received for distribution at Hartford Ct. on the 11.<sup>th</sup> and that a mail of that day was made up at Hartford before Leicester, amounting to \$1.50/100 unpaid postage, which from the account of mails received at Leicester, does not appear to have arrived there. This packet undoubtedly contained your letter. It must have been either misdirected so as to have gone to an improper office, or purloined from Hartford to Leicester. If purloined no office would afford so great facility as that at Leicester itself. If a dishonest person is entrusted with the mail there, he might, seeing that the letter contained money, fail to enter it and destroy the bill. I have no reason however to suspect any impropriety in that office. The post master I believe is trust worthy. If you know of any thing that would awaken suspicion, please advise me in confidence. Do not make the matter public, till every effort shall have been made by the Deptt as publicity would defeat every measure for detection. I am however of opinion that it has been missent, and should it come to this office you will receive it. Please advise me of any information you may gain.

J. McL

Post Office Dept.

22<sup>nd</sup> Decr. 1827.

William m. Neivius sen. Esqr late P.M.

at Norfolk Va. Columbia (Mary Co) Sc. Sir, Your memorial bearing date Nov. 5. is recd. The subject has been duly investigated, and I find from the records of the department, that the post master at Norfolk from 1813 to 1819. received the full amount of credits to which the law entitled him, or which the post master general was authorized by law to allow. No allowance was made nor could lawfully be made to any post master, beyond the regular commissions on postage except for twine, wrapping paper, and sealing wax for the use of his office. All these were allowed to the postmaster at Norfolk and regularly admitted in his charge for contingent expenses in each quarterly account current. You now claim an extra allowance for clerk hire, office rent, fuel, candles and servant. No such allowance has at any time ever been made to any post master, except that when the commissions on postages exceed \$3000. per annum, the excess of commissions may be applied to those expenses, but in no case does the law authorize the application of any thing but the commissions to those objects. The full amount of your commissions was regularly allowed; and though in some cases they exceeded \$3000. per year, yet as you showed by your account for clerk hire &c. that more than sur-  
above from, was absorbed in those expenses, you were not charged with the excess. The day for errors, which you exhibit from Jan'y. 1815. to Sept. 1816. is incorrect. Every error in your accounts was corrected at the proper time, and the exact amount which the law auth-  
ized, was always admitted to your credit.

J. McL

Daniel Bryan Esqr P.M.

26<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1827.

Alexandria Va. Sir, By a law of March 9<sup>th</sup> 1823. all waters on which steam boats regularly pass from post to post are established as post roads, subject to the provision contained in the several acts regulating the post office establishment. Therefore as steam boats regularly pass up and down the Potowmack and Chesapeake, those waters are post roads, and letters brought to your office in vessels coming from Boston are chargeable with the same postage as if conveyed from Old Point Comfort by land that part of the passage being a post road. The Repository is enclosed

J. McL

J Kelly Esqr P.M.

26 Decr 1827

Cleveland Ohio. Sir, When newspapers continue to be sent to your office for more than three months after notice has been given to the editor that they are not taken out, and especially when the notice has been repeated and acknowledged, as in the case which you state, you are authorized to sell them for the postage; but if no person will purchase them for the postage you will then report them as dead papers

J. McL

Post Office Dept

26 Decr. 1827

John P. Gray Esqr. P.M.  
Louisville Ky. Sir. Locks are forwarded as you request. When more  
than the ordinary locks are sent from your office, you will please to require  
their return; also the return of mail bags

J. M. C.

James Stevens Esqr. P.M.

26<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1827

Stamford Ct. Sir, A key to the large mail is forwarded. Till  
further notice you will continue the distribution at Stamford as  
formerly

J. M. C.

Rev. William Sedwick

26<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1827

Zanesville Ohio. Sir, The law does not authorize the exchange of  
pamphlets free of postage, nor does it authorize the editors of newspapers  
to receive pamphlets, or of pamphlets to receive newspapers free of  
postage

J. M. C.

Hon. James Stevenson

26 Decr. 1827

Mayor of the City of Albany N.Y. Sir, I was not aware until the receipt of your  
letter of the 20<sup>th</sup> Inst. that the distance was supposed to be less by the water  
than on the land route, between Albany and New York. If such be the fact  
I shall not feel myself authorised to make any change in the postage now  
charged. Although the distance by water, may not have been accurately as-  
certained, I shall direct no alteration in the rate of postage, before the  
actual measurement of the water route.

J. M. C.

Editor of the "Thomaston Register" Mr.

26<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1827

Sir, your paper of the 18<sup>th</sup> Inst. from which the enclosed was taken con-  
tained the first intimation to the Department, of any expected arrangement  
which would give Thomaston a mail six days in the week. The records of  
the Department have been examined, and it is believed, no application  
was ever made to it, for this accommodation, at least none can be found.  
In reference to the six weekly mails, I have only to remark, that I am at  
any time ready to direct them, if they are necessary to the public convenience

J. M. C.

W. Pickbaum Esqr. P.M.

27<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1827

Pittsburg Pa. Sir, I am astonished and mortified at being informed by two or three  
letters recently received that you are in the practice of depositing letters and pack-

ets directed to your office, in the Sheriff's office, for delivery. If you have been guilty as  
represented, of this shameful prostitution of your office, the public interest will re-  
quire that the trust should be reposed in a source more worthy of public confidence. From my  
knowledge of your character, I am reluctant to believe that the charge can be true.  
I trust you will be able to show, that any letters or packets, which may have  
been deposited as above, have been deposited, in pursuance of the request of  
those persons to whom they were directed, or from some other motive, than that  
of a disregard of your duties. Your answer is expected. J. M. C.

Mr Wm McCollum

27<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1827.

West Union Ohio. Sir, Mr. Lane's bid for the stage route from West Union to  
Cincinnati was accepted on the condition, that he should purchase the stage  
property employed on the route, provided it be suitable for the service, and he  
did not own on the 10<sup>th</sup> October last property of his own to cover the route.  
If Mr. Lane and the old contractors cannot agree on the value of the prop-  
erty, each party shall choose a judicious person, who may determine on  
the suitableness of the property, its value, the terms of payment and the secu-  
rity to be given; and if they cannot agree, an umpire may be designated  
by them. Mr. Credit can show this letter to Mr. Lane and no doubt is  
entertained of his being willing to comply with its conditions. If he shall  
fail to do so the rule of the Department will oblige me to offer the  
route to the old contractor at Mr. Lane's bid.

J. M. C.

Hon. Mr. Cobb

24<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1827.

Senate U. States. Sir, On examining the bids for the mail route between  
St. Mary's and St. Augustine in the fall of the year 1826. the bid of Mr. Tria,  
being the lowest was accepted. He resided at St. Augustine in Florida, to  
which place a letter of acceptance, of the bid, was directed. Some time  
afterwards Mr. Tria wrote to the Department that his bid was made un-  
der a mistake, and that he should not execute the contract, nor make  
any provision for the transportation of the mail. On the reception of  
this letter, the letter of the 13<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1826., a copy of which is enclosed, was  
written to the post master at St. Mary's. By this letter the post master  
was informed, that no contract had been made for the conveyance of the  
mail on the above route, and he was requested to provide for the contin-  
uance of the service, at a fair and just compensation. He was informed  
that John Warren's bid, was \$900. and A. Bellamy's \$950. They were repre-  
sented to be both residents of Jacksonville, and the post master was

instructed to make a contract with either of them, at the price stated, or with any other suitable person. The mail was regularly conveyed on the route from the 1<sup>st</sup> Janu-  
ary and before any thing was heard decisively from the post master at St. Mary's on the subject, a letter was received from Francis J. Ross, stating that A. Bellamy who had contracted to carry the mail on the route having left the country immediately on obtaining it, and the writer having become one of his sureties for the performance of the contract was compelled to convey the mail. A copy of this letter is herewith transmitted and bears date the 14<sup>th</sup> June 1827. Sometime after this, the post master at Jacksonville was written to on the subject, from the circumstance of Mr. Ross' letter being dated at that place. In this letter the post master was instructed to make the contract with the person who had regularly conveyed the mail, if he was a suitable person, inasmuch as he had not only been engaged in the service, but considered himself liable as the surety of Bellamy for the faithful transportation of the mail. The post master at Jacksonville confirmed the statement of Ross, as to his having transported the mail, and the Department professed no knowledge of the steps taken by the post master at St. Mary's to advertise for proposals etc. He has not advised the Department, except by a letter dated the 10<sup>th</sup> Feby. at which time he had written to Bellamy but had not received his answer. At the time the above instruction was given to the post master at Jacksonville, to make a contract with Ross, it was believed, that the post master at St. Mary's, in pursuance of his instruc-  
tion, had made the contract with Bellamy, who had failed, and that Ross his surety, being responsible, to indemnify himself, had taken possession of the route. This seems literally to have been the fact, though a mistake is said to have been made in the contract, which induced the post master at St. Mary's, to forward to Bellamy another contract. But it seems at this time, several weeks having elapsed since the execution of the first con-  
tract, Bellamy had absented himself and Ross his surety was carrying the mail. The post master at St. Mary's should have advised the Department immediately on his making the contract with Bellamy and at all events should have done so, before he proceeded to advertise for a new contract. In my letter of the 13<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1826. he was informed of two bids made for the route, and was authorised to make a contract with either of the persons named, at the price stated, if they were worthy of confi-  
or with any other suitable person. The high sum named was £950. and from the tenor of the letter this was clearly the limit, beyond which he was not author-  
ised to go in making the contract. At least he could not make a contract for a greater sum, which would have been considered binding on the Department.

In the contract made with, Mickler £995. were fixed as the compensation. This was done at the time Ross was in possession of the mail, and although under an impression that the course taken by Mr. Bentham was correct, he bid £1000. yet there is no evidence to show, that he was not willing to continue the transportation of the mail at Bellamy's bid. His letter to the Department of the 14<sup>th</sup> June, shewed a willingness to continue the service under Bellamy's contract. In all cases where the surety is competent, and offers to perform the service, to save himself from damages, a preference is given to him. The mail on this route has never been so well transported, as by Mr. Ross the present contractor. From the report of the post master at Jacksonville, doubts are entertained whether Mickler be a suitable person for so important a trust, as the conveyance of the mail. In his first trip it seems, he admitted to the post master that he "threw down the mail in the road two or three miles from any house and went back five or six miles." Such gross inattention to the safety of the mail, would have called for the interference of the Department, had there existed no other ground. On a full view of the circumstances of this case it will be seen that the post master <sup>at Jacksonville</sup> was negligent in correcting the error of the contract with Bellamy and in not advising the Department of the steps taken, and that he exceeded his instructions. It will also appear that Ross was entitled to the contract, because he was the surety of Bellamy, and was willing, as he informed the Department, to continue the service under Bellamy's contract. That when the contract was forwarded to him, the Post Master General had no knowledge of the course taken by the post master at St. Mary's, and that the service is now better done than formerly. That Mr. Mickler should sustain any injury, through the agency of this Department forms a subject of regret, but, the facts of the case, do not seem to au-  
thorise the change of the contract from Ross to Mickler. Nor the payment of the damages claimed by the latter. A liberal allowance will be made to him for the ser-  
vice he performed, and the present contractor will be requested to purchase his horses if they are suitable for the service, and he has not a sufficient number of his own.

With great respect I am your  
obt. servt. J. M. L.

Hon. R. M. Johnson  
Chairman of the Committee

27<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1827.

"On Post offices & Post Roads" Senate U.S. Sir, In answer to your note enclosing the re-  
solution of the Senate, directing the committee on Post offices and Post Roads to "enquire  
into the expediency of deepening the channel through Pass Au. Heron to facilitate the  
transportation of the mail" I have the honor to state, that unless the above channel  
be deepened, it will be impracticable to transport the mail by steam boats  
between Mobile and New Orleans, with the necessary regularity. At a consider-  
able expense, this route has been established, and connected with a line of stage

through the southern states, as the shortest most expeditious and safe channel of intercourse between New Orleans and the eastern and northern states. One steam boat is now plying with the mail between New Orleans and Mobile, and a second boat will shortly be employed in the same service. Some failures of the mail have already occurred, by reason of the obstructions in the Pass Au. Horn, and at this season of the year, frequent failures must occur, unless the obstructions be removed. On this route the mail is now transported from Washington City to New Orleans, in about six days less time, than on the old route by the way of Natchez and much greater expedition is contemplated when the road shall be improved and the obstructions in the water route removed. I enclose a survey of the Pass Au. Horn, and an estimate of the expense of deepening the channel made by Capt. Chase. I have the honor

to be with great respect  
your obt servt. J. McL.

J. B. Coleman Esqr. P.M.

27<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1827.

Pindertown Ga. Sir. Please make out a regular account of the time and expense incurred in sending an express to Tallahassee last January, and forward it to the Department. The proper vouchers for what you have actually paid, will be the receipted bills of the persons to whom payments were made. Whenever such failures occur as are mentioned in your letter of the 14<sup>th</sup> inst. you would do well to send the mail by express and inform the Department. Please inform the contractor that he is fined \$20. for the failure

J. McL.

M. Ely Esqr. firm of

Diver & Ely. Deerfield (Portage Co) Ohio. Sir. Your letter of the 16<sup>th</sup> inst. is received with the certificate of Mr. Gardner. You appear to have done all that was necessary. You are now authorized to take possession of the mail for transportation on Route No. 388. agreeably to your contract.

27<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1827.

J. McL.

James Reeside Esqr.

28<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1827.

Philadelphia Pa. Sir, Now that you are in possession of the line between New York and Philadelphia, I am relieved of all anxiety. If your distance is increased, by the taking up of a bridge, you shall be paid for the extra expense and service. But it is hoped that the bridge will soon be repaired, so as to admit the stages to resume the direct route. You shall be paid for your efforts, before the commencement of your contract. I have been deeply mortified at the failures of the last contractors though I have not been disappointed in them. Your exertions entitle you to the thanks of the Department. I have no doubt, you will regain more than it has lost, on the Philadelphia and New York route. With great respect, J. McL.

Post Office Dept.  
28<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1827.  
Hon. Martin Van Buren.

Senate U. S. Sir, In answer to your note enclosing a resolution of the Senate, instructing the "Committee on the Judiciary to enquire into the expediency of providing by law, a mode, in which sureties of public officers and agents may compel the United States to use due diligence in coercing their principal to timely and final settlement of their accounts or in default thereof, of discharging such sureties from liability, as in cases of private transactions." I have the honor to remark, in so far as the interests of this Department may be concerned in the enquiry, that by the post office law of 1804. Sureties of Post masters are released from responsibility, if suit be not commenced against the principal within two years after he fails to make payment. As the concerns of this Department are extremely multifarious and its responsible agents reside in every part of the Union, greater diligence than this cannot be required, with safety to the public interest. I see no reason why the same rule as to diligence which is applied to private transactions, should not apply with equal force to those of a public nature. If the officer who is bound to prosecute delinquents shall fail in his duty, the punishment should fall upon him, and not on the surety, who rests securely, under the presumption that the law is faithfully executed. If through the neglect of a public officer an unreasonable lapse of time take place, before suit be brought, and the principal become insolvent, it would seem to me, by the ordinary rules of justice, the surety should be released. He cannot quicken the diligence of the Government, and to require him to give notice, would impose upon him a duty extremely difficult to perform, and which can only be necessary on the presumption of neglect by a public functionary. It is now the practice of this Department when a surety asks for his release to require the Post Master to enter into new bonds, and on a failure to do so, he is removed. Responsibilities incurred are frequently forgotten, and I am satisfied that to hold the surety liable without regard to lapse of time and change of circumstances in the principal, must produce great embarrassment and distress to individuals. If under a different rule, the Government should occasionally sustain a loss, through the neglect of its officers, the hardship would not be greater than is experienced from any other omission of duty, by responsible agents. To require reasonable diligence in order to hold sureties liable would have a tendency to make public agents more efficient in their duties, and preserve many citizens from ruinous responsibilities. Believing that this principle, instead of being injurious to the public interest, would promote, I cannot hesitate to say so, in answer to your enquiry. I have the honor to be with great respect yours  
Obt. Servt. J. McL.

Post Office Dept

28<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1827.

Mr. H. Beard Esq<sup>r</sup>  
Somerset Ohio. Sir. After my letter of the 7<sup>th</sup> Decr. on examining the  
letter book, I found the words quoted by you in your letter re-  
specting the route from Bainbridge to West Union, but will distinctly re-  
collect, that from the conversations which took place, about the time and afterwards  
it was not expected, you would cover that part of the route, and on your naming to  
me Mr. White as a person you would like to be concerned with, I informed you that  
I was well pleased with Mr. White, but that I felt bound to prefer Turner & Adams  
for no other reason, than the promise to provide for them, made to the persons  
whose bid was transferred to you. I am pleased that the difficulty is now settled.  
I have written to Mr. Green and enclosed him copies of my letters to you from  
which he will see that you are not required to purchase property which is  
not suitable for the service. Doctor Bradley is to inform you of the arrange-  
ments of the mail. The contractors in Kentucky perform their route nobly.  
They are paid running from Maysville to Louisville in two days. Such evidence  
of public spirit and devotion to the public interest will not be forgotten by  
the Department. I trust that the contractors in Ohio will show them-  
selves not less energetic than those of Kentucky J. Mc.

Hon. A. Stevenson

28<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1827.

Speaker of the House of Reps. U. States. Sir. In obedience to a resolution of the House of  
Representatives, which referred "the petition of Mary Smith to the Post Master General  
with an order to report thereon," I have the honor to state, that on an examination of  
the facts of the case, an important item of proof being supplied, which had not before  
been furnished, it is found to come within the rule of the Department to grant relief  
and I have accordingly directed a credit to be given for the amount claimed by  
the petitioner.

With great respect I have the hon

re J. Mc.

Hon. C. F. Mercer

28<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1827.

Chairman of the committee on roads & canals. Sir. In answer to your letter of the 21<sup>st</sup> inst.  
respecting "the condition of the mail routes between the seat of government and the office  
of New Orleans, in the state of Louisiana and Buffalo in the state of New York, the length  
of said routes, and the time required for the conveyance of the mail to those towns  
from Washington" I have the honor to state, that until last spring, the New Orleans  
mail from Washington, was conveyed on the route, by Abingdon, Knoxville, King-  
ville, Columbus, and Natchez, a distance estimated at thirteen hundred and ninety five  
miles, and required twenty five days. As substantial repairs have recently been

made, on that part of this route, which passes through the Indian lands, greater security is given to the mail  
than formerly, but its conveyance is frequently retarded, on other parts of the route, by streams of water and  
other obstructions. The mail to New Orleans is now transported from the seat of government through the capitals  
of the southern states, thence by the way of Montgomery and Mobile in Alabama, a distance estimated at  
twelve hundred and fifty nine miles, one hundred and seventy of which, by steam boats, and requires nineteen  
days. A want of bridges on this route, and the obstructions to the steam boat from high winds and shoal  
water at the Pass Au Herm, produce occasional failures of the mail, but when these obstructions shall  
be in part removed, the mail can be conveyed from Washington to New Orleans in seventeen days.  
If a good turnpike road were constructed between Washington city and New Orleans, on the shortest prac-  
ticable route, the mail could be transported between them in eleven days, at an expense of from forty  
to fifty thousand dollars annually, for three weekly trips. The establishment of this route, would not diminish essen-  
tially, the expenditure incurred by the Department on the lines now in operation, as the present mail  
facilities could not be dispensed on either of them.

The route from Washington city to Buffalo on which the mail has been usually forwarded is by Baltimore,  
Philadelphia and New York, a distance of about six hundred and seventy miles. While the steam  
boats are in operation on a part of this route, the mail is conveyed from Washington to Buffalo in six  
days, and at other times, in about seven. Stage lines have recently been established from Harris-  
burgh in Pennsylvania, so as to connect with the western part of New York, which reduces the distance  
on the shortest stage route, between Washington and Buffalo to about three hundred and ninety  
miles, over which after the first of January next, the mail will be transported in seven days.  
If a substantial road were built on the nearest practicable route, from Washington to Buffalo,  
the mail could be conveyed between them, in less than four days, but there would be little or  
no reduction in the amount of the present expenditure. On the great route through Newport  
and Albany, the expense cannot be dispensed, it being the most important line of the mail in  
that state, failures seldom occur on this route.

With great respect I have the hon  
to be your obt. servt. J. Mc.Abra Stepp Esq<sup>r</sup>

31 Decr. 1827.

Xenia Ohio. Sir. The acceptance which was forwarded to you, was filled up by mistake your bid being \$99. for the route 302. and Mr. Gardner's  
60 dollars. In the press of business which always takes place in making contracts  
it is almost impossible to avoid occasional errors. At the decision of the late  
bids, many hundreds of persons were constantly in attendance, and it was  
important to give the utmost despatch to the business. Letters of acceptance given  
under such circumstances were conditional and liable to be recalled, if on a  
revision of the bids an error should be discovered. Whether such a condition was  
expressed on the face of your acceptance, I know not, but it was directed to be  
inserted in all of them. Regret is felt, that you should be subjected to the

26.

smallest inconvenience, by the above occurrence, and it is hoped, that the person with whom you made the contract to carry the mail, will not claim damages of you. Under the circumstances, unless the contract has been incautiously made he could not recover of you damages, where the performance on your part, was rendered impossible, by the act of the government. The bid would have been accepted to you absolutely, as readily as to Mr. Gardiner, if it had been the lowest. By the rule of the Department, I am bound to accept the lowest responsible bid.

Very respectfully

J. McL.

Mr. John Gadsby,

Present Sir, As suggested in a personal interview with you and Mr. Weightman, some weeks ago, I shall apply to Congress at their present session, for an appropriation to build a post office, on the corner, near the general post office; and that provision be made in the same building for the Patent Office. If this application should be successful the city post office will be continued, where it now is, until the contemplated building shall be prepared for it. I entertain little or no doubt, that the appropriation will be made

With great respect I have the honor  
to be your obt. servt. J. McL.

Aaron Hill Esqr P.M.

Boston Ms. Sir, I enclose a slip, which was lately taken from a Boston paper complaining of the want of accommodation, in the building in which your post office is kept. Will it not be in your power in some degree to remedy the inconvenience complained of? In all our movements, it is an object of great solicitude to me, to fail in doing nothing, which it is in our power to do, in promoting the public convenience.

With great respect your  
obdt. servt. J. McL.

31<sup>st</sup> Decr. 1827.

Post office Report

Jan. 1. 1828

Hon. J. C. Beckow

Vice President of the U. S. I have the honor to send you herewith, a statement of the number of clerks employed in this Dept. during the year 1827, with their names & salaries

A similar letter as the above to the Speaker of the H. of Reps. J. M. C. In obedience to the 4<sup>th</sup> section of the act of Congress "to regulate & fix the compensation of Clerks in the different offices" approved April 20. 1818. The City has the honor to submit the following statement of the number of clerks employed in their Dept during the year 1827, with their names & salaries. 202

A. Boyle Chief Clerk	\$1.700
Radcliff B. Brown Clerk	1.400
Thos. B. Dyer	1.300
Jos. W. Head	1.300
John Mc. Cland	1.200
Wm. G. Elliott	1.200
Andreas Tate	1.100
J. W. Gray	1.100
Chauncy Weston	1.100
John R. Dyer, deceased	1.100
Chas. H. Gardiner	1.400
Thos. Arlacke	1000
Jos. F. Baldwin	1000
John T. Lewis	11.00
A. Hart Dyer	1000
Nicholas Tarratt	1000
Wm. Deming	1000
David Saunders	1000
Richd. Dement	1000
William Blair	1000
W. C. Lipscomb	1000
Jos. Haskell	1000
Jos. Taylor	1000
Phineas J. Brooks	1000
Sam'l. Fitzhugh	1000

William G. Ellison	\$1000
Thos. B. Addison	1000
Matthew Ross	<del>\$100</del> 800
James S. Scott	800
Daniel Hoxsey	800
Wesley Simpson	800
Grafton D. Hanson	800
Walter Addison	800

Respectfully submitted

J.M.L.

B. F. Hallott, Jan. 1. 1838

Providence R. I. your communication respecting  
the late failures of the mail between Phil. & N.Y., have  
been rec'd. & I am happy to inform you, that an efficient  
remedy has been applied - The contract, which nearly  
terminated, was forfeited, and instructions given for the new  
contractor to take possession of the mail. This was done with  
the least possible delay, & this, greatly to my satisfaction,  
several failures occurred before the teams of the contractors  
could be stationed on the road. -

To avoid failures, instructions were given to procure  
teams & coaches, at any expense, temporarily, until the  
regular means could be employed - One or more of  
the failures, were caused by bridges on the turnpike being  
broken down, which required the mail to be carried on  
a circuitous route - The contractor now employed on  
this route, is not surpassed, for energy, by any other  
contractor in the union, and his means are ample.  
There will in future, be no failures upon this important  
route -

The mail is delayed two hours longer in N.Y. than  
is necessary for its distribution, in order to afford time  
for replies to letters received by the Eastern mail -  
This delay was ordered at the instance of the Chamber  
of commerce of N.Y., sanctioned by application from  
other places, and it was supposed would promote the  
convenience of all the towns, thro' which the great mail

is conveyed, from N.Y. to Boston -

If this object is not considered of sufficient importance, to  
compensate for the delay, a change will readily be adopted.

J.M.L.

Hon. C. L. Mayes

Jan. 1. 1838

No. of Aps State just pleasure in saying, that for  
more than a year past, you have shown great solicitude for the  
establishment of six weekly mails from Fayetteville, in N.C.,  
thro' Columbia & Augusta to Milledgeville, & being convinced  
by the representations made by your other gentlemen of the  
Southern delegations, of the expediency of the measure, it  
was adopted.

J.M.L.

W. P. Hunt Jr.

Decr. 26. 1837

St Louis Mo.

From the 1. you inquiring, you will always place  
under the large lock every thing from your office for Vincennes and  
this Vincennes - There ought not to be a large key at St. Charles -  
Some time ago the Mr. at St. Charles was directed to send you  
the large key which is at his office, forward your receipt for  
it. Please obtain it & acknowledge its receipt. It is desirable  
to know every office where the large key is, & that it shd. never  
be where it is unnecessary - Keep it with sacred care under  
a lock -

J.M.L.

Seth Lewis, Jr.

Jan. 3. 1828

Franklin La. Letters coming to your office without  
post mark or Bill, you will charge with the whole distance of  
the nearest distributing office on the route from which they come,  
offering to the persons receiving them to correct the postage  
if erroneous, on the condition, that they will show you the place  
where they were dated, so that you may know the true rate.

Letters enclosed in newspapers are not only to be charged  
with letter postage, but both the letter & the newspaper must  
be charged with letter postage, & neither returned till letter  
postage is paid on the whole -

J.M.L.

Post Office Depart  
Jan. 3. 1827

Gen. Breckinridge P.M.

Braggston Md. you have acted correctly with  
letters addressed to deceased persons

Letters addressed to Ministers are free,  
tho' his family or friends may be jointly interested with  
himself in their contents; but letters addressed to the  
members of a Minister's family, & enclosed to the one  
himself are subject to postage.

M.T.

Post Office Depart  
Jan 3. 1828

Hon. A. Parker

H. of Rep.

I have examined, carefully, the papers  
which have recently been received respecting the Lebanon  
office, with a view to come to a decision, which may settle the  
question - In such case, I have always found it best to spare  
no pains in ascertaining the important facts in the case, by  
which a satisfactory decision can be made - The location  
of the Lebanon office, has long been a subject of controversy, &  
has produced no doubt, considerable excitement among the  
citizens of the town - Some years ago, a very strong expression  
of the people was given in favor of the present office, which, it  
was supposed, would place the subject at rest. Since that  
time, however, much dissatisfaction has been shown to the  
location, & some complaint has been made against the  
present incumbent - It was hoped, that the late expression  
would enable me to decide without any embarrassment  
but in examining the number of signatures, & the documents  
which accompany them, I find it extremely difficult, if  
not impracticable to ascertain whether all the signatures  
are by Electors of the town - From the number of Electors,  
as stated, by ~~you~~, I believe the town Clerk, it would seem  
that a majority are in favor of the present location of  
the office, while the paper, in favor of a removal, exhibits  
a greater number of signatures, of persons, represented to be  
citizens of the town -

In order to settle this controversy finally  
I am pleased with the mode recommended by you, and  
shall adopt it. I shall ask the favor of you to transmit  
this letter to the parties concerned, that a fair opportunity  
may be afforded of an expression by the electors of the  
town -

This may be done in a way that the parties interested  
may prefer, either by general meeting, or by petition.  
I wish two points submitted.

1. Shall the office remain where it now is, or be removed  
to the place designated. 2d. If removed, shall the

Post Office Depart  
Jan. 3. 1828

present be continued, or a new one be appointed.  
If an appointment is to be made, the person to be recommended, by a majority of the Electors.

The Dept' will conform to whatever may be the decision of the Electors of the town on the points stated - The fact of their being Electors to be certified by the town Clerk. As suggested, the only doubt I entertain as to the above course, arises from an apprehension, that the people of the town may suppose, that the Dept' imposes upon them more labor than is necessary - but, I trust, an apology will be found, in the solicitude which the Dept' feels to conform to the wishes of the people of the town, on a subject to which their attention has been often called - and also in the prospect, of having the question permanently & satisfactorily settled.

I have already sent a similar letter to the Hon. Mr. Baldwin -

M.L.

S. Martin Jr.

Campbell Station Fe. 3.  
your letter proposing a repeal of the law, which imposes a postage on newspapers & pamphlets, forwarded in the mail, has been received - you are aware, that your wishes can only be attained by the sanction of Congress - at present the mails are very large on important routes, some of them weighing not less than 2000 pounds - Would not the measure you propose have a tendency to increase the size of those mails, which would render a rapid conveyance of them impracticable unless two lines, instead of one, were established - which w<sup>d</sup> add greatly to the expense of the conveyance of the mails - A rapid movement of the mail is indispensable, & any thing which w<sup>d</sup> go to retard it, w<sup>d</sup> in some degree defeat the great object of its establishment.

M.L.

Stephen F. Miller

Marion Co.

I thank you for yr letter of 22<sup>o</sup> ult<sup>r</sup>, informing me of the discovery that has recently been made of the dishonest practices, of the late Mr. St. Martin - with me it is a subject of respect, as it is with you, that the removal of the late Mr was protracted, by the harassed dishonesty produced by him, in suspending the letter of appointment to his successor - I hope the present Mr who has been written to on the subject will examine the letters found, & do every thing that can be done, to restore to those persons who have lost money on the route, any part of it that can be found

M.L.

Hon. J. T. Wingate

4<sup>th</sup>

Hr. of Ap<sup>r</sup>!  
In answer to that part of your letter which relates to the removal of the Thos. Martin office, I have the honor to state, that no change shall be made, unless the public convenience requires it - The letter of the Mr. & the survey enclosed by him, shall be referred to, if an application, for the removal of the office, shall be made.

I am aware, that in many cases, the compensation of Post Masters is entirely inadequate, for the services they render, but there has been little or no difficulty in procuring the services of competent persons to fill the office of Mr. - The privilege of franking, exemption from militia duty & serving on juries, the facilities which every Master enjoys of receiving the earliest intelligence, together with the per cent allowed, have afforded generally, a sufficient inducement for competition, for a loss which occurs. It is admitted that in proportion to the labor, the incumbents of post offices, which exceed in their receipts, one thousand dollars annually, are better paid than those who hold offices of less importance - It would, therefore, seem to be unjust, to increase the allowance of the former, without adding to the pay of the latter. There are now between seven & eight thousand post masters in the union - an increase of geo to each, which would