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Suggested Citation:

“Executive Journal of Gov. John Sevier.” Ed. by Samuel C. Williams. The East Tennessee Historical Society’s Publications Part II. 2 (1930): 135-149.

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EXECUTIVE JOURNAL OF GOV. JOHN SEVIER

With Introduction and Annotations by
SAMUEL C. WILLIAMS

(Continued from EAST TENNESSEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S PUBLICATIONS No. I,
pages 95 to 153, inclusive.)

Knoxville, 6 June 1797.

Sir: The running of the line causes much uneasiness among the frontier inhabitants. The idea of the removing from the land, that they have long since paid for, and obtained titles in legal form as they have been led to believe, occasions numerous complaints. I wish it was possible that there could be some steps taken to surmount the difficulties that I fear will be occasioned by runing this line. I am fully in the opinion, and I am confident, that was proper exertions made with the indians that they would have no objections to letting the line go from the Chilhowee mountain, down the Tennessee as low as the mouth of Clinch river, such a line would include all the settlers, except those in Powells valley, and evenly those, I am of the opinion the indians would not wish to remove. I would earnestly reccomend it to you, to communicate the matter freely to the President, relative to all the attending circumstances; his well known knowledge of the laws of nations, the sacred regard he has always discovered for the chartered rights of the states, induces me to believe that different measures will be persued from those of his Predecessor. I need not say more to you on the subject, your knowledge of every particular relative to the business is sufficient; you know the disposition of the people, and should they be removed from the plantations they have possessed for a number of years, you can readily suggest the consequences. I am anxious to hear how we stand with the French. I hope a war may be averted, tho I confess I have my fears; I believe they have a number of emissaries throughout this and the southern states.

Seperately to
The Honorable Messrs Blount
& Cocke, Senators in Congress.

State of Tennessee, Knoxville 6 June 1797.

Sir: A few days past I was favoured with your duplicate of the 20th April Ultimo, tho as yet the original is not come to hand.

The conduct of the executive of this State has uniformly manifested his intention to preserve the peace of the frontiers by all the means in his station, and the laws had put in his power. The very great and essential advantages and benefits accruing from such a situation of affairs, requires no great share of sagacity to discover the propriety of such an arrangement and measure; and should every other executive department be as pacificly disposed I should not entertain a doubt but peace and tranquility would abound throughout the United States. I acknowledge that the Chiefs of the Cherokee Nation have discovered an entire disposition for peace for some time, not from any good will for the people of the United States, for it is well known they never entertained any towards them; therefore from such a principle their pacific conduct have not arisen. When I say they have not any good will for the people, I speak from experimental knowledge of forty years. When the French attacked America, when under the British government, the indian tribes generally joined the former, and America felt the weight of their savage ferocity. Again when America was invaded by the British they uniformly turned around, in opposition to the American and French, from such a line of conduct. The information obtained from history, I am not induced to believe they ever had, or will have, any good will towards us; and I have good reasons to believe their pacific disposition proceeds from another source.

You are pleased to mention that accounts arrived that two of the Cherokees had been cruelly murdered, and whether the intention of the act was to disturb the peace, to create difficulties to the removal of the settlers, or to obstruct the operation of the Government on the frontiers, was not then necessary to be examined.

If the same person who give you the information of the murder being committed had given himself the trouble to have stated to you, that one of those indians had actually been at the murdering of a brother of one of the two men, who it is supposed killed the indians alluded to, and also some of the same party at the murder of the mother, two sisters and sister in law of the other, you might probably have accounted for it, and suggested the reason. I say murdering of those white persons, because it was perpetrated in

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Tennessee, Knoxville 6 June 1797.
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This State has uniformly mani-
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place. By the law of the other, you might
have suggested the reason. I say
because it was perpetrated in

the time of profound peace. This outrage committed on the two
indians, was by two hunters who were in company with them,
hunting in a remote part of the State of Kentucky, and when an
account of its being done was communicated to me by the executive
of that state, that there was just reasons to believe it was done by
persons living in this; my orders was immediately issued for ap-
prehending and securing the persons suspected, with directions to
be safely conveyed to the State of Kentucky to be tried by the laws
they had offended and transgressed against. The transgressors
immediately fled and left the State, well knowing they could find
no shelter in it; and I am determined they shall be dealt with as the
law directs, if they can be taken, if not I am resolved they shall not
be suffered to reside in any part of the State of Tennessee.

I am not fond of forwarding complaints against the Cherokee
nation, on account of some murders and thefts committed by some
lawless fellows of that tribe, conceiving it would be as difficult
for the chiefs to prevent those disorders in every instance, as it
would be for the rulers in Philadelphia to restrain murders and
roberies often committed within that and neighbouring cities;
having good reasons to believe few representations go forward of
the Brutal and savage conduct of the indians, I beg leave to inform
you, that several very cruel and barbarous murders have been
committed on several of the peaceable citizens of this State, by the
Cherokees and Creeks; also a great number of horses stolen by
those nations in the course of Autumn and winter last; retaining
in captivity a number of white persons, negros, and other property,
in the treaties and solemn promises made to the contrary. It is an
unpleasant reflection to behold as it were our dearest and nearest
relations in the hands of the savages, sold and bartered from
indian to indian, and from nation to nation, in order to glut and
satisfy the ambition of savage cruelty. For to remedy these enu-
merated and aggravated agrievances, I trust and confidently rely
that decisive steps will be taken. Justice and policy require it, and if
neglected will be a reproach to the government of the United States.
Honorable James McHenry, Secretary of war.

Knoxville, 8 June 1797.

Sir: By instructions received from the Agent of the department of
war, I am under the necessity of discharging the guard stationed
at Fort Blount. I would much rather [have] continued them longer

had it been in my power. I expect a guard for that place will be shortly supplied with regular troops.

As yet we are all in the dark with respect to the business before Congress; so soon as any transpires and comes to my hand, I will do myself the honor of communicating the same to you.

The people on the frontiers places much confidence in you, respecting the line, and many are the conjectures what will be done. Honorable Brigadier General James Winchester.

Knoxville, 8 June 1797.

Brothers: I have no doubt you have heard that some disputes are likely to take place, (tho I hope it will not be the case) between America and some of the nations over and beyond the great waters. Should such a war take place, I have reason to believe they will endeavour to cause the young warriors of your nation, once more to lift the hatchet against your brothers the Americans. I take this opportunity my brothers to warn you in time, that you may watch over your young men, who is too apt to listen to talks of war. I dont mean the young men of your nation in particular, but all other young men, as well as yours, are too ready to listen to talks of this kind, without considering the great injury it may do to the good people of their nation, and the many poor women and children that always suffers in consequence of such events.

Now my friends should any people whatever come or send into your nation requesting or encouraging your people to make war against any of your American brothers, dont you listen to their talks, but on the contrary hold your brothers fast by the hand, who are the only people that can be your good friends, or your great enemies. We live very near to each other, and on the same land, and it is the wish of all the good Americans to live in peace and friendship with you, and all their red brothers.

The people over the big water dont care much about us people of America, and was we to go to war, kill and destroy each other ever so much, they would only laugh at us for it, and call us fools. I hope you will listen well to my talks, and think good of them in your hearts; remember that I have always advised you to live in peace with your American brothers, and also all other people, and your own good sense will now tell you it would have been best for you to have lived in peace. You remember last war you was told by people over the great water, that the Americans was like noth-

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ing; that they could all be killed and drove away, but you have
long seen those stories was all false. You see the Americans is
still here, and as firm as the mountains. Therefore I hope you
will listen to no more talks of such a kind.

Warriors and Chiefs
of the Cherokee Nation.

Knoxville, 8 June 1797.

Sir: I am extremely sorry that I had it not in my power to continue
your guard longer, as I much wished so to do. I expect there will
be a guard of regulars shortly placed at Fort Blount.

Your conduct at that place, so far as has come to my knowledge,
has been satisfactory and well conducted, and for which I beg you
to accept my thanks.

Lieutenant Williams,⁴⁴
Commanding at Fort Blount.

Plum Grove, 6th July 1797.

Sir: Yours of the 6 Ult by Mr. Smith came duly to hand. You
mention that you have not received any information respecting
the line to be run between the indians and ourselves. Circumstances
have been such that put it out of my power to say much on that
head, for as yet little is done. The Commissioners proceeded on
to Mero where they took their course south from Nashville to the
ridge between Duck and Cumberland rivers in order to ascertain the
point forty miles above Nashville. The last account was that they had
not then found the spot. This report came forward a few days since.

I am induced to believe that the indians themselves will not
have it run agreeably to the principles of the treaty, particularly
that part in the Cumberland country, up the river of that name;
as to any other part bordering on the frontiers of Washington and
Hamilton districts. I well know they care nothing about it, what-
ever may be said to the contrary, and time will prove the truth of
my ideas.

I observe that part of your letter wherein you mention that
Hawkins and Pickins have wrote the Secretary that a number of
Respectable inhabitants who would be effected by the line had
informed them, they had been made the dupes of a party. I believe,
with you, that they have wrote falsely on that head. The Com-

⁴⁴ Daniel Williams, afterwards a captain. He received a grant of land in Dickson
County, and removed there, establishing his home (yet standing) about ten miles
west of the present town of Dickson, on the Memphis-Bristol highway. He died
about 1829.

mandant of the Federal troops who is present, and has read your letter, declares (and he lives among those people) that he never heard the smallest hint of any such imputation. You well know the Commissioners (two of them) and you also know the people have viewed [them] ever since the treaty of Hopwell,⁴⁵ and justly too, as inveterate enemies to this country and they also suppose, from their known principles they were appointed, and I believe their opinion is well founded. Upon the whole, the people is not very communicative with them. The inhabitants generally are much alarmed respecting the conduct of those two Commissioners, and I am sorry to inform you that they generally appear to be much soured with the present measures of Government, although you know a short time past there was not better friends in the Union.

The Cherokees are daily moving into the Spanish Dominions;⁴⁶ and, am sorry to add, numbers of white also, encouraged by a neighbouring nation who will be but too successful on that head; as the present measures of the Federal Government gives rise to much uneasiness among many of our useful and respectable citizens, believing they are neglected, and the interest of the indians only consulted. Should a number of those people leave us, and a war take place, we may easily guess as well as fear the consequences. I still have my hopes that matters will be better arranged.

I have received information, which I think can be relied on, that a deligation from the southern tribes, and many of the northern, are holding a council with the Spaniards some where in the vicinity of New Madrid.

The Honorable
William Cocke,
Senator in Congress.

Plum Grove, 8 July 1797.

Brothers: It is with very great concern I have been informed that some of your people have again done some mischief by wounding of a man one of our peaceable citizens near unto Sharps Station. I cant say more to you than I have frequently done, in advising of you to keep your people at peace, and informing you the destruction it would bring on your nation should a war again take place. I now demand and request of you to make inquiry; and, should the

⁴⁵ Hawkins and Pickens had been two of the four commissioners of the United States who negotiated the treaty of Hopewell, in South Carolina, in 1785. That treaty gave deep offense to the people of the West.

⁴⁶ West of the Mississippi. See note 31 in *Publication I*.

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aggression be committed by one of your people, that you immedi-
ately either punish the person yourselves, or deliver him up to the
government, to be dealt with as the law directs, in order that
such aggressions may be punished agreeably to the treaty you
have entered into with the United States. I have repeatedly in-
formed you that it is the sincere desire of your brothers the White
people to live in perfect peace and friendship with your nation.
It is still our desire, and if a war again be brought about your people
will be the cause of it, and not ours.

Chiefs and Warriors of the Cherokee Nation.

Plum Grove, 8 July 1797.

Sir: It is with extreme pain I am informed that the indians have
lately done some damage, by wounding a man some where near
unto Sharp's Station. What can induce at this time such a conduct
I am at a loss to understand, as they are sensible every measure
is pursuing to accommodate their complaints.

Since I had the pleasure of seeing you at Nashville, I have been
well informed that there are imissaries in the nation; and I wish
they may not be stimulating those deluded people to commence
hostilities.

Permit me to request that you will exert your influence to have
the aggressor punished in order that reconciliation may take place;
for be assured that the people are not in a temper that will need
much invitation to cause them to retaliate for any insults and in-
juries they may receive from that quarter. I have wrote to the
chiefs, a copy of which I do myself the honor to inclose you.

Benjamin Hawkins,

Superintendant of Indian affairs.

Plum Grove, 8 August 1797.

Sir: It is a short time until the Assembly will convene, and the
public business will, it is expected, claim their services in session
for a length of time; and, as such will be the case, it will be highly
necessary that public monies in the hands of the different collectors
should be deposited in the treasury before the close of the session.

You will therefore please to take the most effectual measures in
your power to cause the different receivers of the public monies to
bring forward the same into the treasury with all possible dispatch,

for there will be great demand for all that can be collected.
General Landon Carter,
Treasurer of Washington & Hamilton district.

Knoxville, 16 August 1797.

Sir: Yours of this day I am duly honored with, in which you mention that a large packet of letters is now in the post office, directed in the hand writing of Mr. Blount to Colonel John McKee,⁴⁷ and that probably the contents of the same may be inconsistent with the peace and interest of the United States. You also request my approbation, and an order to the post master for you to break the seal and examine the contents.⁴⁸ Inclosed is an order agreeably to your request, and if you should find any thing in the intimated letter or letters that appear to be inimical to the interest, welfare and public tranquility of the United States, or either of them, you are in such case permitted to send forward the same to Government, or otherwise should the correspondence appear innocent you are requested to close the seals and offer no further interruptions.
Colonel David Henley,
Agent of the Department of war

Knoxville, 17 August 1797.

Sir: I should have done myself the honor of communicating to you long ere this, had things been such that I could have detailed with certainty any thing interesting.

We seem to be in suspense with regard to French affairs; and various are the opinions in respect to that business. I believe the friends of America all hope a compromise will be the result; and great confidence is placed in the Envoys lately appointed to negotiate with the French republic and I earnestly hope the conduct of our diplomatic Characters will bring about an honorable and amicable reconciliation between the two nations.

It is with pain I inform you that one of the Senators of this state has imprudently involved himself in very serious difficulties; and such already has been the consequence that his expulsion from the Senate has taken place, and as a further punishment an impeach-

⁴⁷ A committee of the House of Representatives was at this time taking testimony in support of the impeachment of Sen. Wm. Blount, and this was an effort to procure further testimony to prove the senator guilty. For McKee, see annotations to *George Farragut*, and note 10 in *Publication No. I* (1929).

⁴⁸ A curious intervention of a State official in a national affair, as would be thought at this day.

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Knoxville, 16 August 1797.
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ment is carrying on against him by the house of Representatives,
for which purpose a committee is appointed to sit in the recess of
Congress, who are sending out to different parts of the Union for
persons and papers in order to elucidate and faciliate the charges.
(Circular)

Knoxville, 19 August 1797.

Sir: I was absent when yours of last evening came forward, other-
ways I should have done myself the honor of replying immediately.
I thank Colonel Butler for his politeness in offering to lay before
me, as chief magistrate of the State, the address intended to the
people who have intruded on the indian lands; how far such a
business may come in my province I am not at present able to say,
but will be happy to have an interview with the Colonel the time
he has proposed, in order to become more acquainted with the cir-
cumstances.

Colonel Butler.

Knoxville, 20 August 1797.

Fellow Citizens: I am informed by good authority that the Presi-
dent of the United States have given directions for all those who
are settled on indian lands to be removed therefrom, and instructed
the commandant of the Federal troops in the State of Tennessee
to take measures necessary for carring the same into effect. How-
ever well persuaded I am that many of you have resided a number
of years on your present plantations, and agreeably to the laws
of the State you were citizens thereof, procured titles for the lands
now in question. I am nevertheless induced, from a duty and
regard to the laws and authority of the General government, as
also your own interest and safety, and for preservation of peace
and good order within the State, to request that you and every of
you comply with, and pay due regard and observance to, all such
requirements and directions as you may receive by authority of the
executive of the United States; flattering myself that by means of
such compliances you will meet [with] all the indulgence the cir-
cumstances and nature of your situations will admit. I am happy
to inform you that the officer, to whom the business is consigned,
is possessed of humanity, benevolence, and moderation, and I
have no doubt will render you all the services his duties will enable
him to extend.

The inhabitants settled
on the indian lands.

Knoxville, 20 August 1797.

Mr. Zachariah Cox:

Sir: Since your arrival in this State, various reports are in circulation respecting an intended expedition you are about to make.

It appears to be a matter of importance to this government (through part of which, I am informed, you intend your route) to become acquainted and informed of your intentions, and place of destination. I flatter myself you will have no objections to communicate and lay before the executive of this State the plan of your intended operations and movements, at what place you intend making a stand of settlement, and by what authority you conceive yourself at liberty to prosecute the same.

You will not consider this application as arising from any doubt in me that your equipments or operations are intended to be inimical, to this or the United States. I conceive it a duty I owe the public, and the State, over which I have the honor to preside, to become acquainted with a circumstance, which appears pregnant with important consequences and events, of which I hope you will have no objections.

Knoxville, 22 August 1797.

Sir: The Commissioners will shortly finish running the boundary line, and a great number of respectable inhabitants has the misfortune to be left within the indian claim, many contrary to expectation, who have been peaceably settled on their plantations a considerable length of time, and had just right to expect (from the laws of North Carolina passed in their favour) they would never be molested.

It is a melancholy circumstance to reflect on the distresses a great number of people must inevitably be subjected to, should they be compelled to abandon their farms and crops, especially in so short a period; the severity of the winter, and great drought of the summer, will have the most fatal tendency by bringing on, perhaps, the greatest scarcity of provisions that has ever been experienced in this and several of the adjacent States.

I am aware, sir, of the great necessity of supporting the laws of the Union, together with the faith and confidence of the United States; and, if I know myself, I can with candour say, that no person on earth wish its prosperity more. But permit me to suggest that humanity loudly calls for my interference in behalf of those people.

Knoxville, 20 August 1797.

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importance to this government, and, you intend your route) of your intentions, and place. I have no objections to compliance of this State the plan of, at what place you intend by what authority you conceive the same.

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of supporting the laws of the United States; I would say, that no person can permit me to suggest that in behalf of those people.

Their situation is deplorable, and I fear their removal will be almost attended with a calamity. I therefore most sincerely solicit some indulgence in their behalf, and hope sir you will extend such to them as will answer their present purposes; the lands they inhabit is of little, or no use to the natives. I am confident their claim could be extinguished on very easy terms; and I am encouraged to hope that government will not think it improper to make the attempt;—few of the settlers are opulent, but many are respectable, and have contributed (agreeably to their number) very much towards the independency of the United States, and are at this time warm and zealous friends of the general government; and being fully acquainted with their circumstances I am the more solicitous in their favour, and pray that you will take under your paternal consideration, their deplorable conditions; in doing of which, you will not only render essential services to the people in question, but very much oblige the State at large, who feel an interest in behalf of those people, and will attach it to the government, and the executive.

The Honorable
Secretary of War

SECOND ADMINISTRATION

Governor Sevier's first administration covered the period of March 30, 1796—September 23, 1797, less than a full two-year term. This was due to provisions made for the aligning of the second gubernatorial election with the general election date in August of odd years—a system that prevailed until the Constitution of 1870.

Sevier's first administration had given such general satisfaction that he had no opposition for re-election. He apparently made no sort of canvass. He went to his home in Washington County to vote, and in his Diary under date of August 3, 1797, he simply recorded: "Went to the election—a very fine rain." There was no comment of gratification or reflection on the result.

In September he rented a house in Knoxville of Major Charles McClung with a view to the removal of his family to the seat of government; and in his Diary under date of September 21st, he wrote: "Informed by a Committee [of the legislature] that I was unanimously elected Governor, and that they would wait on me the next day to conduct me to the house to be qualified into office.

Friday, 22. The Committee accordingly attended—I was qualified &c."

When it seemed probable that there would be war with France, it was the purpose of the President to appoint Governor Sevier general in command of Southern forces.

The second inaugural address was recorded in the Executive Journal:

Fellow Citizens of the Senate, and of the House of Representatives:

Permit me to solicit you to express to the people, in the liveliest terms of sensibility, my gratitude for all the honors they have conferred upon me.

The happiest reward I could possibly receive for past services, consists in the public approbation, and whilst my second election to the office of Governor, will be esteemed as an honourable testimonial of that approbation, it cannot fail to excite my utmost endeavours to promote the welfare and happiness of Tennessee.

Gentlemen, It cannot have escaped your observation that the advancement of our State to respectability and greatness has of late been truly flattering. Emigration, the certain source of strength and wealth continues unabated; the manly and pleasing art of agriculture flourishes; the plough is fatigued in the furrow, and honest industry has heretofore reaped the rewards of her labour. But this happy, this bright prospect of affairs is considerably darkened by the extension of the indian boundary, and gloomy reflections strikes the mind. The situation of many of our Citizens in the frontier counties of Hamilton district must claim the sympathy of every lover of his country;—a considerable tract of settled, and well improved land is said to be within the boundary guaranteed to the Cherokee nation by the treaty of Holston, and it needs no argument to prove that, if the people are compelled to abandon their possessions, great injury will result to individuals, and to the public at large.

The attention of the legislature cannot therefore be too early attracted to this important object, and the propriety of forwarding a respectful memorial to the Congress of the United States, (from which authority, adequate relief can alone be obtained) well deserves consideration.

With great pleasure I inform you that the peace with our indian neighbours still exists; and, in endeavouring to preserve it, I trust I shall be supported by the legislature, in as much as a continuance

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of tranquility is highly essential to the happiness and prosperity
of our constituents.

A general apprehension has for some time past pervaded America,
lest (notwithstanding the exertions of the federal executive to
prevent it) we be compelled to become a party in those bloody
wars of Europe, which have greatly thinned the ranks of mankind.
But from late events in that quarter, which may probably lead to
a general peace, a hope is entertained that the calamities of war
may yet be avoided. But it is becoming a wise nation to provide
for her safety. It has been thought advisable to hold in readiness
an army of eighty thousand militia, to be apportioned among the
several States; the act of Congress on this subject shall be laid
before you, and I must entreat you, gentlemen, at as early a period
as possible, to make provision for holding in readiness the quota
assigned to this State.⁴⁰

The laws of the General Government, should always meet with
our support; from that source we can look for succour and relief
when danger threatens, and it should be the pride and pleasure of
Tennessee to appear among its greatest supporters.

Suffer me to recommend to your consideration, as a pressing
and necessary measure, a well regulated Militia law, calculated to
establish military discipline, and to ensure punctual attendance at
private and general musters; for, let it be remembered, that a well
regulated Militia is the security of a free State.

Several Characters in this State of Military spirit and ardor have
raised volunteer companies of Cavalry, and some of them having
already rendered very essential services to the State. Permit me to
recommend them to your particular notice, in the formation of your
militia law; and make for them such provision as you in your wisdom
may think their military genius and enterprize may justly merit.

The transactions of the executive during the recess of the legis-
lature, and such other documents as may relate to the public serv-
ice, shall be reserved for a special message.

Gentlemen of the Senate and the House of Representatives:
Coming as you do from every part of the State, your knowledge
of the interests and wishes of the people must be accurate, and I
entertain no doubt you will labour to support the one and embrace
the other. As for myself, my fellow citizens, the greatest object of
my future life will be to contribute to the good of my country, and

⁴⁰ The reference is to the threatened war with France.

I am [sure] of the wisdom and patriotism of this legislature. I retire from among you this day with a full persuasion that under the smiles of a heavenly father the results of your deliberations will strengthen and perpetuate the great blessings of liberty, law, and peace.
Knoxville, 22 September 1797.

Mr. Speaker of the Senate and of the House of Representatives:

I have the honor to lay before you the Secretary of the department of War's letter of the first of August, together with an act, passed the last session of Congress, entitled, "An act authorising a detachment from the militia of the United States."

I have also sent for your consideration a copy of my letter addressed to Mr. Zachariah Cox, dated 20 August, and his reply to me dated 31 of the same month,⁵⁰ with several papers inclosed, all which is submitted.

Knoxville, 23 September 1797.

Mr. Speaker of the Senate, and of the House of Representatives:

I do myself the honor of laying before you sundry documents and letters of a public nature touching the correspondence of the executive during the recess of the Legislature.

My official letters and proceedings are recorded, by the Secretary of State, in a book, and sent forward for your perusal and information; any other papers in my possession, that you in your wisdom may deem necessary, I will with pleasure send forward on the shortest notice.
Knoxville, 25 September

Mr Speaker of the Senate, and of the House of Representatives:

I do myself the honor of laying before you sundry papers relative to several contested elections, that has been held for militia officers, supposed to be contrary to the laws of this state. The legislature not having pointed out any mode for the adjusting those kind of disputes, and being a business of a delicate nature for an attempt of the executive, (wishing to avoid as much as possible the imputation of partiality) I have thought it most expedient, to lay the disputes before your honorable body, that you in your deliberations may take and direct such measures as you shall deem most convenient.
Knoxville, 28 September 1797

⁵⁰ This reply of Cox, written from Jonesborough, appears in I. J. Cox's *Documents Relating to Zachariah Cox*, 97.

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Mr. Speaker of the Senate, and of the House of Representatives:

I herewith send you the papers relative to the election held for
the majors of the regiment of Cavalry in the district of Mero. I
beg leave to observe, that the Colonel Commandant of the said
regiment was commissioned on the thirteenth day of January, one
thousand seven hundred and ninety seven, and his election was
held and conducted by the same Judges, and at the same time;
but, there being no opposition to his appointment, the commission
issued on the return being made, which was in a short time after
the election. The returns of the majors' elections did not come to
hand until the sixth day of February, one thousand seven hundred
and ninety seven, as you will discover by the date of Colonel John-
son's⁶¹ letter, and my memorandum on the back, in which the re-
turns was inclosed, being subsequent to the time Edmondson and
Blackmore had prayed a suspension of their commissions, as you
will discover by affidavits and other papers on that head.

I have thought it expedient to lay the matter before you, in order
to be directed by your superior judgement.

Knoxville, 30 September 1797

⁶¹ Thomas Johnson, of the Clarksville district, later a brigadier-general; father
of Hon. Cave Johnson, member of Congress, and Postmaster General under Presi-
dent Polk.