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THE EXECUTIVE JOURNAL OF GOVERNOR
JOHN SEVIER

Edited by SAMUEL C. WILLIAMS

(Continued from EAST TENNESSEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S PUBLICATIONS, No. 1,
pp. 95-153, and No. 2, pp. 135-149)

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

I have the honor of laying before you an act passed by the legislature of North Carolina, for appointing Commissioners to settle the boundary line between that State and the State of Tennessee, also a letter from his Excellency Governor Ashe, accompanying the same.⁵²

I beg leave to remark to your honorable body, that I am aware the situation of our finances does not enable us at the present to undertake a business that may appear involved in expensive operations; however, I hope it will not be thought improper in me to suggest the propriety in this State, to have some proper persons appointed to fix upon the place, at least, where the line should cross French Broad river. That would determine whether the settlements from Laurel creek downwards is above or below the line. There are several large tracts of land belonging to Love⁵³ and others, on which large sums may be collected by the taxes arising thereon; likewise, there are some families settled in the vicinity of the Warm Springs, and more about to settle. It will be of great importance to this State to have the line properly and fairly settled, otherways it may be materially injured, by improper constructions, and suffer considerable loss in territory, and other lucrative advantages. I submit it to your consideration, whether or not the expenditures for such a purpose only would be by any means greater burthensome; and when we compare the expence with the benefits that in all probability may arise by the taxation

⁵²See Williams, "North Carolina-Tennessee Boundary Line Survey, 1799," *Tenn. Hist. Mag.*, VI, 46.

⁵³Probably Robert or Wm. Love, of Haywood County, N. C., formerly residents of Washington County. See Williams, *Lost State of Franklin*, 195, 198, 327.

of the land which will be saved to the State, and forever growing and becoming better, I presume and flatter myself you will readily think it advisable and expedient to engage thus far, if not wholly, into the business.

Knoxville, 4. October 1797

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

Permit me the liberty to send forward for your consideration several papers relative to cutting and opening a road through the mountains by way of the Warm Springs. I presume it is recent in your memory that his Excellency, the Governor of the State of South Carolina, addressed the executive of this State on the subject of cutting and opening this road; that the State of South Carolina would open the same as far as to the Warm Springs, and had appropriated a large sum of money for that purpose; provided, that this state open and clear out the remaining part from the Springs through the mountains to Sherrill's cove. The Assembly expressed on our part a wish to cooperate in opening the road, but at the same time signified the finances of the Government was not sufficient to support the undertaking.

The executive of this State, sensible of the great Utility of such a road, and the advantages and benefits that would arise therefrom, was induced to encourage a number of people, of a patriotic disposition to contribute sums of money to any person who would undertake to open and clear out our part of the road; in consequence of which, Mr. Charles Robertson, (not withstanding the sums of money subscribed was by no means adequate to the trouble and expence of such a work) did undertake and compleat our part of the road, as you will perceive, by authentic vouchers laid before you, he trusting that the Assembly would make such reasonable compensation as so laudable a work might justly deserve. I further beg leave to observe that, in consequence of the road being opened by Mr. Robertson, the State of South Carolina was induced and have proceeded to cut and open their proposed part; and at the present time loaded waggons are passing the aforesaid road to and from North and South Carolina. On the other hand, had not the road been opened by Mr. Robertson, I have good reasons to believe the other part of the road would not have been cut by the State of South Carolina, for several years yet to come, if ever.

Therefore, humbly beg leave to recommend the services rendered by Mr. Charles Robertson, as a matter that well deserves the notice and consideration of your honorable body.

Knoxville, 4 October 1797

Knoxville, 4 October 1797

Sir: In the present year I ordered the Colonel Commandant to Sevier County, immediately after the indians had killed one of the citizens of that County, to keep out two active persons, to reconoitre, and keep a watch on the passways of the indians, until we could understand wheather or not they intended to commit any further hostilities. The Colonel issued his order and accordingly two proper persons served about eleven days each, and were then discharged. I am also informed that General White ordered out a small party to go in search of some indians who had wounded a man near Clinch river.

The General took several depositions prior to his ordering out the party, which justifies the measure he then pursued. I have now to request, that the Agent for the department of war will inform me wheather or not he will, in behalf of the United States, allow or pay the services I have mentioned. Permit me to observe, that since the present government has taken place every species of expenditure have as much as possible been avoided, and it will be my care so to do, as long as I have the honor to preside. Therefore beg leave to suggest, that the Federal Government would not object to the payment of so small an expence incurred in almost two years.

Colonel David Henley,
Agent for the department of War.

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

I have the honor to lay before your honorable body the returns of the elections held within the districts of Washington, Hamilton, and Mero for Major General. You will discover by papers accompanying the same that the legality of the election is disputed.

You will therefore please to make such rules and decisions as will be necessary to direct the executive on the subject.

Knoxville, 14th October 1797.

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

At this important crisis when great number of our fellow Citizens are in a few days to be compelled by the United States to leave their farms, their homes and property, under the pretext that the Cherokee indians require such removal immediately, I conceive it my duty to lay before you a message, or talk delivered to me by Arthur Coody,⁵⁴ a principal man of that Nation and one of the interpreters of the United States, a few days past from a number of the most influential Chiefs. It was in substance as follows—

"Let the people know, who appear to be upon our lands by the extension of the line, that we dont wish them to remove, and that we are willing they shall remain until we return from hunting, and we will then talk further on the subject."

It is possible they will return from hunting about Christmas.
Knoxville, 20th October, 1797.

Knoxville, 2nd November, 1797.

Sir: I am happy to hear by Mr. Shepard that you and the people of your nation are all well. I have the pleasure to inform you, that the information you give respecting the friendly disposition of Colonel Watts⁵⁵ and other Chiefs, that they did not desire the poor inhabitants, settled beyond the line, should be removed until they returned from hunting, has given much satisfaction to those people, as also to the people in general of the State, and has convinced them that your people do not wish to distress those who are settled on their lands, and are willing they should have a reasonable time allowed them to remove. I assure you, sir, I have since rejoiced very much that the information received from you came so much in time, as I have great reason to believe that a great deal of innocent blood has been saved by that means, for I have heard that a large body of disorderly people was intending to do mischief, which they might have easily effected before Government could have had any knowledge of their intentions.

You well know that it has been constantly reported that the indians was constantly complaining, and requesting that the people

⁵⁴For Coody, see Williams, *Early Travels in the Tennessee Country*, 235 n.

⁵⁵John Watts, whose Indian name was Kunuskeskee. See *ibid.*, 347.

should be removed; how true those reports have been you are the best judge. I am now informed the white people are satisfied; and I earnestly hope that we shall enjoy peace and good understanding, and you may rely safely that I shall constantly endeavour to promote harmony and friendship between the two parties, tho you know it is difficult to guard against the conduct of bad people on either side, especially now they have got so near together. Mr. Arthur Coody.

Knoxville, 19 November, 1797.

Sir: Since you left Tennessee two indians was inhumanly murdered, near the mouth of Stone's river; the circumstances are reported, that the indians at Hays's station⁵⁶ was a little intoxicated, and boasted of their war exploits; said they had killed Hays, the former owner of the station, and a young man of the name of McCown near the same place. In the course of a day or two afterward the two indians were found near their camp, both dead, shot through their bodies. Notwithstanding the murder being thus committed, the indians on the Cumberland road, and every where else, seem friendly disposed, and say no damage shall be done on their side as a retaliation for their people killed.

Several persons suspected have been apprehended, but no proof of the overt act could be had.

The people on what is called the indian lands, appear to be in great distress; some have removed, and others have not, and say they will not; and again others that did remove have returned. What will be the consequence I am not able to foretel, but I realy fear the event. I need not request you to use your utmost exertions in behalf of those distressed people, for I am well assured you will; and if any thing can be done in their favour, it will lay both the people and myself under very great obligations.

The Honorable Andrew Jackson, Joseph Anderson, and William Charles Cole Claiborne. (seperately)

⁵⁶Near Nashville and the later Hermitage, home of Andrew Jackson, in Davidson County; also called Hays Fort. Col. Robert Hays, its founder, married Jane Donelson, sister of Mrs. Andrew Jackson. He also founded the town of Haysborough in the same county.

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Knoxville, 25 November, 1797.

Zachariah Cox, esquire,⁵⁷

Sir: Your favour of yesterday is now before me, wherein you give information that you are desirous of having a meeting of the Tennessee adventurers at this place, in order to explain and regulate the objects contemplated by the company. You are pleased to solicit my approbation to the measure, and say you will conduct the whole business in the presence of one or two magistrates. Permit me to inform you, sir, that on the conditions you have proposed, I have no objections to the measure, on proviso, your conduct shall not be inimical to this State, or the United States.

Knoxville, 19 November, 1797.

Sir: Yours of yesterday I am honored with, and am sincerely sorry for your embarrassed situation, and would I to God I had it in my power to render you relief. You may assure yourselves that every thing will be done for you that is possible by me; but it is in the President's own power to do whatever he may think best on this very important and alarming occasion. I hope in three or four weeks to hear from Congress, and whether or not any thing is likely to be done in your favour, in the mean time I earnestly beg the people for their own interest to conduct themselves in a peaceable, orderly, and prudent manner.
Mr. John Hunt, Powel's Valley.

Knoxville, 26 November, 1797.

Sir: I did myself the honor of communicating to you in my last of the [19th] Instant, in which I mentioned the distressed situation of the people over the line; their apprehensions are still increasing, and a general clamour throughout the State prevails

⁵⁷Zachariah Cox was now engaged in an effort to found a settlement in the Bend Country of the Tennessee River, on lands granted by the Georgia legislature to his "Tennessee Company." In an earlier speculation (1790) Sevier had been associated with him. Cox published a pamphlet prospectus of his later venture in 1797, at Knoxville, where he arrived as a promoter in April of that year. Therein, he states that he had the "approbation of the executive of the State of Tennessee." This letter of Sevier and Cox's reply from Jonesborough, August 31st, appear in the account, *Cox's Scheme*, by I. J. Cox, pp. 96, 97. Cox built boats at the mouth of Nolachucky River (largest one 60 by 23 feet, armed with cannon) for a descent of the rivers, but the scheme failed because of the opposition of the Indians, chiefly that of the Chickasaws. Cox made an effort to enlist Patrick Henry of Virginia in his plan, seemingly with some encouragement from the latter.

against the rigid, and exorbitant measures about to be carried into execution, under a pretext that the indian lands are encroached upon, altho they are acquainted and sensible their claim has been extinguished upwards of twenty years ago, for which Henderson and Company have received from the State of North Carolina,⁵⁸ a very large compensation; also the same Company was largely compensated by the State of Virginia for an extinguishment of the same kind,⁵⁹ in consequence of which the state of Kentucky has not been deprived of one acre of the lands included within her limits; and the settlements of that government are daily increasing without any molestation from the General Government, notwithstanding the extinguishment of the indian claims stands on the very same ground with that of Tennessee. It is painful to hear the cries of the people of this State against a partial conduct in favour of a Savage tribe, that can only be noticed, or favoured, for their atrocious murders, robberies, and a desolute wantonness to commit every diabolical crime that could possibly suggest itself to savage invention.

A great number of people are determined to descend the Mississippi, and if the measures are pursued that now so impertinently stare us in the face, I fear one half our citizens will flock over into another government; indeed they are now doing it daily.⁶⁰ Instead of our State in its infancy being encouraged, fostered, and matured, it appears that measures are calculating to check and destroy the happiness, if not its existence.

Suppose our deligation, on proviso no other mode could be effected, would propose to extinguish the indian claim a second time, at our own expence; certainly, if the General Government had any intention of doing any thing to benefit us, they will not object to a measure purely right in itself, and without cost to the Union.

The prevention of a settlement at or near the Muscle Shoals

⁵⁸In compensation for the work done by Richard Henderson & Co., in the negotiation of the Transylvania Treaty at Sycamore Shoals, in March, 1775, North Carolina granted this company 200,000 acres of land in Powell's Valley, East Tennessee. For full account: Williams, "Henderson & Co's. Claim in Tennessee," *Tenn. Hist. Mag.*, V, 5-20.

⁵⁹A compensatory grant of 200,000 acres on Green and Ohio Rivers, including the later town Henderson, Ky.

⁶⁰Into the Spanish possessions in West Florida, near Natchez.

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is a manifest injury done the whole western country; and, as long as it is the case, we should be debared from the navigation which, by the way of Moabile, is perhaps an outlet to commerce equal if not superior to any in the United States. Permit me to remark to you, that the American line⁶¹ will cross low down on the bay of Moabile, which will include a number of inhabitants there within our line. There is also now settled high up on Tom Bigby river a considerable number of families, supposed to be about the distance of one hundred miles from the Muscle Shoals, directly in the way to Moabile. The distance from the Shoals, to the town of Moabile does not exceed two hundred miles, the portage across from the Tennessee to the Bigby is about thirty, and to where the tide ebbs and flows not more than one hundred. I state these circumstances to you sir, to explain and evince, in what an advantageous manner our intercourse and commerce may be carried on with, I may say, every quarter of the globe.⁶² The small string, or neck of land, lying between Tennessee and Bigby rivers, is all the difficulty, which is so trivial, that it is not worth a naming in the great scale of western commerce, that must ere long be equal if not greatly superior to any in all America, may I not say in the whole world! Will the American Congress cramp and refuse to the Western Americans the great natural advantages Providence has designated for, and placed before them? Will that body suffer the citizens to be drained out of their States, by other nations who will take the advantage of our discords and jealousies, by granting to emigrants the privileges of promoting their natural and useful advantages? God forbid. I hope they will not; and I sincerely pray they will maturely deliberate on the matters and things relative to the interest of the western country, while they have it in their power to keep us United, by granting and extending our just and equitable rights; a thing, so just in itself, I am flattered with a belief, cannot be denied.

The Honorable

Andrew Jackson, Joseph

Anderson, and William C. C.

Claiborne, Members of Congress

(seperately)

⁶¹Then being run by Andrew Ellicott for the United States, between its possessions and those of Spain.

⁶²A canal connecting the Tennessee and Tombigbee was long a favorite scheme.

Knoxville, 8 December, 1797.

Sir: I have to acknowledge your two favours of the third and ninth of November Ultimo, and beg leave to return you my thanks for the information therein contained, and also for the prompt and necessary measures you took in order to endeavour to have those base murderers apprehended, that so inhumanly killed the Cherokee indians. I beg, sir, that you will use your utmost exertions to have those lawless and atrocious murderers apprehended and brought to condign punishment if possible.

You will please to call on the Officers both civil and military of your district to make every effort that may be necessary in order to discover and apprehend the person or persons that have been guilty of so flagrant and daring a piece of violence and murder.

General James Winchester, Mero District.

Knoxville, 8 December, 1797.

Sir: The inclosed is a copy of an instrument of wrighting given by a certain Tucker to one Vance.⁶³ It is said the former is one of Zachariah Cox's party. This wrighting was lodged with me by Colonel Butler,⁶⁴ requesting that inquiry might be made into the propriety of entering in such engagements. I therefore take the liberty of laying it before the Judge of the district,⁶⁵ in order to have his opinion and advice on the same.

Honorable Judge [John] McNairy.

(CIRCULAR)

Knoxville, 20 December, 1797.

To the inhabitants, who lately resided on what is called the indian lands near the Tennessee river,

Gentlemen: It may appear unto you as some neglect in me, by not sending forward into the Cherokee nation a person agreeable to the instructions of the General Assembly. In order to apologize for the delay, I hope it will be sufficient to make known unto you that I am well informed that all the principal Chiefs have for some time past been out in the woods hunting, and until they return it will be useless to send any person into their country. So

⁶³Probably Joseph Vance, of Sevier County.

⁶⁴Col. Thomas Butler in command of three companies of the 3rd Regiment, U. S. Army. A fort was erected in Powell's Valley, near Chisholm's Spring, and one of cavalry was stationed at Col. Ore's as "a corps of observation." Butler also constructed Fort Grainger at the confluence of Holston and Little Tennessee.

⁶⁵United States District Court, of which McNairy was judge.

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soon as I am informed of their return you may rest assured I shall dispatch the gentleman appointed, and will with great pleasure render you every kind of assistance, that may be in my power.

Knoxville, 31 December, 1797.

Sir: Yours of the 19 Instant, with several papers therein inclosed I am honored with, by your express. Your request shall be strictly adheared to, and every possible exertion will be made to seize and bring to light the papers and documents in the office of Martin Armstrong⁶⁶ and his deputies, and all papers in the hands of any suspected persons that may throw light on the black and base affair you have communicated to me upon; and also to bring to justice the culprits, who have been guilty of the fraud and forgery practised in obtaining warrants and grants for military lands.⁶⁷ His Excellency, The Governor of North Carolina.

Knoxville, 2 January, 1798.

Sir: I am just now informed, by letter from the Governor of North Carolina, of a very daring and alarming fraud that has been carried on for some time by William Terrell, and others. I cannot better explain to you the nature of the crime than by refering you to the copies of the Governor's letter, and some resolves of the General Assembly herein inclosed. The Governor's request you will discover in his letter to myself; but how far I should be justifiable to carry the same into full effect, is a doubt with me, however anxious I may be to bring to justice the perpetrators of a crime so base and glaring.

To seize the different offices of Armstrong with the documents and papers therein might probably do great injury to a number of innocent persons, and would at all events occasion much delay, trouble and expence to many of the good citizens of this, and the neighbouring States. The emergency of the business does not admit of any delay, and the offices being kept in your vicinity, induces me to commit the business to you; requesting that you

⁶⁶A speculator on a large scale in Tennessee lands in Middle and West Tennessee. See Williams, *History of the Lost State of Franklin*, and *The Beginnings of West Tennessee*.

⁶⁷In these operations, Stockley Donelson, brother-in-law of Andrew Jackson, was implicated. Frauds on an immense scale in the office of the secretary of state of North Carolina were uncovered. Read in this connection Bassett, *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, I, 41, et seq.

will please consult Judge McNairy on the occasion, for probably it is an offence against the United States, as well as this [State] and North Carolina. I therefore request that you will take the legal means and measures that may appear most likely for the discovery of the fraud and forgery alluded to, and to obtain proof of facts, and persons feloniously concerned therein, so that all offenders may be brought to justice.

Should it be deemed necessary to have the offices with the papers and documents seized, you will please to have the same done.

I have wrote to Judge McNairy on the subject, but have not time to inclose him copies of the papers, but refer him to those inclosed to you.

P. S. I am informed that Mr. Robert Searcy who keeps Armstrong's office is a reputable Character. Could he not throw some light on the affair?

Honorable Judge [Howell] Tatum.⁶⁸

Knoxville, 2 January, 1798.

Sir: I am just now informed by letter from the Governor of North Carolina of a very great fraud and forgery, supposed to be committed by William Terrell and others. I have inclosed copies of the papers to Judge Tatum, and have requested him to consult with you on the occasion, thinking it probable that the offence may concern the United, as well as the individual States, and beg leave to refer you to the papers for information on the subject.

I have no doubt, sir, but you will give the Judge every assistance that may be necessary, be the matter as it may, having full confidence that you will take every legal measure to bring to light so dark and diabolical an affair, as the same appears to be.

Honorable Judge McNairy.

Knoxville, 7 January, 1798.

Gentlemen: Your letter of the 4 Instance, I am duly honored with; nothing ever came before me that could yield me more pleasure than it would to render you relief on the present distressed situation of you, and your families. I have done all the Assembly

⁶⁸Howell Tatum was a superior court judge of Tennessee, located at Nashville.

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empowered me to do, which was to send forward their memorial⁶⁹
and address in your behalf; the same has been laid before the
President, and Congress; and it is thought by some of our mem-
bers that relief will certainly be extended towards you; and I
feel a strong certainty, in my own mind, that your sufferings will
surely meet with a remedy. In the mean time, I know nothing
better to advise you than to bear your misfortunes with patience,
and fortitude, until you hear the result of Congress on the subject.

It is painful to me in the extreme to hear of your hardships
and sufferings, and was it in my power to render you redress, God
knows nothing could give me more satisfaction than to do it, in
the most speedy manner.

The People of Powell's valley.

Knoxville, 8 January, 1798.

Sir: Yours of the 7 of December Ultimo came duly to hand, and
for the information therein contained I am very much obliged.

It is really laughable to discover how matters have been contrived
in regard to the testimony of Ripley and Odeon, and the paultry
cunning manner of Eaton's contradicting the part, that impli-
cated T. Pickering. How vain such paltroons that suppose their
sneaking cunning, with their usual double faced duplicity, can
arrogate to themselves the fulsome opinion of imposing upon the
understanding of a whole nation. Our new consul has made a
sad balk in his first state, and it is doubtful whether or not his
sudden transition from democratical, to aristocratical principles,
has not occasioned such a vertigo in his brain that his whole race
will be a very crooked one.⁷⁰

I am extremely well pleased to be informed of the President's
promise to afford relief to our distressed frontier citizens, for I
assure you they stand in great need, for we may truly call their

⁶⁹The "Tennessee Memorial" is in *American State Papers, Indian Affairs, I*, 625. Senator Andrew Jackson wrote to Gen. James Robertson, Jan. 11, 1798: "Policy dictated to us that the only thing that could strike at the root of opposition, and secure success, was a nomination of commissioners by the President for the purpose of holding a treaty with the Cherokees. Opposition is on the decline, and I have no doubt but a treaty will be ordered." *Correspondence, I*, 41. President Adams appointed commissioners, to negotiate a treaty, but the Treaty of Tellico, of October 2, 1798, is signed by commissioners George Walton and Col. Thomas Butler, and not by those so nominated. Royce, *Cherokee Nation*, 174, *et seq.*

⁷⁰The references in this letter are to national affairs.

sufferings a real calamity. I have nothing very particular; this is my fourth.

Hon'ble Andrew Jackson.

Knoxville, 22 January, 1798.

Sir: I discover in the Secretary's⁷¹ report, he effects to have apprehended great danger from a party about to settle at or near the Muscle Shoals, intimating that the executive was possessed of information on that head which menaced the United States in an extensive indian war. I make no doubt you are fully apprized that the executive [of Tennessee] early after the arrival of Zachariah Cox in this State applied to him to be informed where he intended making a stand, and by what authority he conceived himself authorized to take such measures, as he was then about to pursue. His answer was laid before the Assembly which appeared to be satisfactory, that he did not intend violating the laws of his country, and was ready to give sufficient security for a regular conduct, should it be required. I presume, whatever may be reported, it is well known to all those, who have had any knowledge of Mr. Cox's conduct, that it has been his uniform declaration that he had no wish or desire to transgress the laws of the Union, nor of any particular State, and that he should not proceed until authorized by the laws of his country. Another great discovery has been made, or pretended, that is; Chisolm⁷² had enlisted one thousand men to rendezvous at Knoxville, in order to attack the Floridas; as you are acquainted and satisfied how little credit the report deserves, I shall not trouble you farther than to observe that if the British had not more friends in Philadelphia than they have in Tennessee our commerce and tranquility as a nation would not be menaced in the daring and insulting manner that is daily experienced.

The act for regulating trade and intercourse with the indian tribes, and for preserving peace on the frontiers, will expire some time in May, excepting Congress adjourn before that period; if so, not until the end of the next session. I hope this infamous act will not be revived. It has given more umbrage to the people

⁷¹See generally and for the part played by James McHenry, Secretary of War, in Steiner's *Life and Correspondence of McHenry*, pp. 171, 266-72.

⁷²As to John Chisholm and the Blount Conspiracy, see *Publications* No. I, p. 62, and No. 2, pp. 3-21.

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of this State than any act ever passed since the independency of America; and there has went more hunters over the line this year, I believe ten to one, than at any former period; and should the act continue in force another year, the poor indians, in my opinion, will scarcely have a bear or a deer left. It is my opinion the peltry received the present year at Tellico factory would scarcely defray the expences of five waggons from this [place] to Philadelphia.

The frontier people, except a few, patiently wait, with daily expectation of hearing some favourable news.

Hon'ble

Andrew Jackson, Joseph
Anderson, and William Charles
Cole Claiborne. (seperately)

Knoxville, 29 January, 1798.

Sir: Your favor of the 15 Instant came duly to hand, in which you inform me, that you have received from General [Martin] Armstrong all the warrants, and original locations, that was in his office, and have the same in your hands. The Governor of North Carolina has dispatched to this state James Holland, James Wilburne, James Brittain, and William Brittain, esquires, for the purpose of securing and taking into their custody all the books and papers belonging to the office of Martin Armstrong, etc., and requested them to call on the Governor of this State for his aid to accomplish the same, should it be found necessary.

Permit me, sir, to request that you will please to deliver the papers you have received, out of the aforesaid office of Martin Armstrong, unto the above named gentlemen, appointed to receive the same; and, if required, afford them such aid as may be necessary on the occasion, in securing and conveying the books and papers aforesaid.

Honorable

Howel Tatum, esquire.

Knoxville, 29 January, 1798.

Sir: The Governor of North Carolina, by direction of the General Assembly, has appointed James Holland, James Wilburne, James Brittain, and William Brittain, esquires, to take into their custody, the books and papers belonging to your office, with directions, also, to call upon the Governor of this State, for his aid if necessary to obtain the same. I therefore request that you will

please to deliver unto the aforesaid Gentlemen, the books and papers required.

General Martin Armstrong.

Knoxville, January 1798.

Brothers: I am sorry to hear that some of our bad and inconsiderate young men have done mischief to two peaceable men of your nation. My heart is sorry for this dark and evil deed, and the more so when I consider the good and friendly intercourse that has so long subsisted between us, and earnestly hope no more blood on either side would have again been spilled between your people and ours. Brothers, you may rest assured that, if the murderers can be found out, they shall suffer according to the treaty subsisting between us; and that I will do every thing in my power to have them apprehended.

It is the wish of our head men, and all the good people, to live in peace and friendship with you, and all our red brothers; and it shall be my constant care to prevent any more damage being done unto any of your people, and I hope you will be equally watchful and cautious that no mischief is done to any of ours. A good many of our people moving to Cumberland has lost horses. I wish you to make enquiry, and if any of your people has carried any into your Country, you will have them sent back, in order that the owners may get them again.

The Chiefs and Warriors
of the Cherokee Nation.

Knoxville, 1 February, 1798.

Friends and Fellow Citizens: It is with much pleasure I announce to you I have just received the pleasing information from our members in Congress, that your grievances and sufferings will shortly be redressed. Your submission to the laws and orders of the General Government has gained you great reputation, and contributes very much to your interest on the present occasion; and a continuance of a similar conduct cannot leave a shadow of doubt but you will inevitably be relieved from your distresses, which is the sincere wish of your friend.

The Inhabitants of Powel's Valley.

Knoxville, 5 February, 1798.

Sir: Your favour of the — Ultimo I had the pleasure of receiving a few days since. It is with sincere satisfaction I receive your information that there is a prospect of relief being obtained for the

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of our bad and inconsiderate peaceable men of your rank and evil deed, and the friendly intercourse that most earnestly hope no more blood shed between your people and that, if the murderers according to the treaty submit to every thing in my power to

the good people, to live with all our red brothers; and that no more damage being done to any of ours. I hope you will be equally satisfied with the loss of your horses. I hope your people has carried them sent back, in order

ille, 1 February, 1798.

With much pleasure I announce to you information from our friends and sufferings will be the laws and orders of the great reputation, and consequently the present occasion; and leave a shadow of doubt to your distresses, which

de, 5 February, 1798.

With the pleasure of receiving from you I receive your information being obtained for the

suffering frontier citizens. I hope it may be in time for the people to return to make their crops, and also enable them to take care of their stocks, which is in a very perishing condition, by reason of their being compelled to leave their farms, and of course their provisions. I hope speedy and effectual provisions will be made, which I trust will do away with the clamours, not only of the people of this State, but several others, which I am sorry to inform you has become general. Surely there never was an instance of such mistaken policy in any other government, since governments had an existence. It would be arrogance in me to point out further to you the situation of this State. Your integrity, address, and abilities is competent to the task, more so than I am able to point out, and I have full confidence that you and your colleagues will be sufficiently attentive to the great interests of the State.

I have forwarded to you and your colleagues a copy of Judge [David] Campbell's letter to me, and of mine to the President. The conduct exercised towards the Judge is unaccountable, and alarming, and if persisted in, such as will bring about very serious events.⁷³

Permit me to offer you my thanks for the interesting information contained in your favour, and to be honored with your communications, as often as may be convenient.

Honorable

Andrew Jackson, Joseph
Anderson, and William Cole
Claiborne.—Members in Congress.
(seperately)

Knoxville, 5 February, 1798.

Sir: A very important law question has arisen, and in itself a singular one, which very much effects the interest and welfare of this State. Being authorized to call on the attorneys-general, for their advice and counsel, on certain occasions, I take the liberty to request that you will without delay come forward to this place, and attend on Wednesday the fourteenth Instant, in order to take under your consideration such matters and things as I shall then lay before you.

Hopkins Lacy, John Lowrey
and John Hamilton, esquires (Seperately)
Attornies General.

⁷³Judge Campbell was seized as a trespasser on Cherokee soil, his location being at the present Lenoir City, near Fort Grainger. See, for circumstances, letter of Feb. 6, *infra*.

State of Tennessee,

Knoxville, 6 February, 1798.

His Excellency, The President of the United States:

Sir: In a letter of this day from the honorable David Campbell, esquire, one of the Judges of the superior courts of law and equity in this State, he complains that on the third Instant about Ten O'Clock at night on his own premisses, and not within the indian line, he was arrested by two of Colonel Butler's officers, and conducted a prisoner to his cantonment, and I am informed there detained until the next day, before he was liberated.

Permit me, sir, with all due deference to observe, that no act hostile to the general government has been committed or attempted by the State of Tennessee, nor can any transaction of our government warrant the imputation of any thing of the kind. Our laws are sufficiently wholesome and energetic, and also faithfully administered, in a manner fully competent and adequate to the suppression of every kind of crimes and enormities that may be committed.

I do not harbour or entertain a doubt that the President ever gave any orders that will warrant or justify a procedure so despotic and inimical to the liberties of our citizens; but on the contrary believe he is entirely uninformed that a transaction of the kind was contemplated.

Permit me to express that it is painful in the extreme that such an event has happened, and been exercised on a character that has served with fidelity the United, as well several of the States, in very high and dignified stations. I therefore request, with much solicitude, that a stop may be put to such unwarrantable and unconstitutional conduct; if not, the disorder may progress into an incurable disease.

I cannot admit or suppose that martial law has any right to be enforced, when the civil meets no obstruction or impediment; but, if such has been directed, we hope to be advised, in order that we may know in what manner to conduct in future.

Knoxville, 7 February, 1798.

Gentlemen: This day our mail arrived without meeting with that of Abingdon.⁷⁴ This is either the third or fourth time it has failed since you left here for Congress. I am not able to account for such

⁷⁴See p. 62, of *Publications* No. I, for an account of this mail route.

6 February, 1798.

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neglect, but it is essentially necessary that it should be enquired into, and remedied, and I make no doubt you will take such measures as may be necessary.

The disappointment occasioned by such neglect is often attended with very great difficulties, and at times not easily surmounted; both public and private suffer on the occasion, and the public faith in the office entirely destroyed. I wrote last summer to the Post Master General, who then promised to have the neglect rectified; but it has become much more irregular of late than heretofore.

Honorable

Joseph Anderson, Andrew

Jackson and William Charles Cole

Claiborne.

Knoxville, 14 February, 1798.

Gentlemen: In consequence of numerous frauds supposed to have been committed by William Terrell and others in obtaining warrants and grants for lands within the boundary reserved for the officers and soldiers of the North Carolina Continental line, the Legislature of that State, has appointed a committee for the purpose of seizing upon, and conveying to the city of Raleigh, the records and papers of the office of Martin Armstrong, which committee have went on to Nashville for the purpose aforesaid.

I wish to be informed whether it will be proper for the executive to suffer the Committee to carry the records and papers aforesaid out of this state, should they obtain them from Martin Armstrong.

I herewith lay before you, for your consideration, all the documents and papers that are in my possession relative to that business, and on which you will please report to me.

The Attornies General for the state of Tennessee

Knoxville, 15 February, 1798.

Sir: I am duly honored with your favor of the 12 Instant, by Captain [Richard] Sparks.⁷⁶ It is true that Judge Campbell has lodged a complaint, stating that two of your officers on the third Instant arrested him, on his own premisses, and within the line of the State of Tennessee. You are pleased to mention, that you have

⁷⁶Son-in-law of Gov. Sevier. See *Publications* No. I, pp. 128, 134, and sketch in Williams, *Beginnings of West Tennessee*, 62n.

nothing to fear from any report the Judge can make, provided he adheres to truth. Permit me to assure you, sir, that I have not the smallest doubt of your candor, and readiness to justify your conduct either in this or any other case, nor do I believe you would intentionally violate the laws of your Country, or abridge the liberties or privileges of the Citizens. If the statement in the Judge's complaint is correct, the conduct of the two officers who arrested him is not warrantable, so far as I am capable of judging. I have hitherto entertained a high opinion of the two young officers, and be assured, it will not afford me any pleasure to see either of them criminated for any mal conduct in office.

Lt. Col. Thomas Butler,
Commanding in Tennessee.

Knoxville, 17 February, 1798.

Sir: Yours of the 16 Instant I am duly honored with, and beg leave to repeat that I never entertained the most distant idea you would be the means of doing, or suffering any thing to be done that would unjustly injure any of the citizens, either in their persons, or properties; nor do I believe you would refuse permission to any person to visit their farms, and remove their provisions, provided they made proper application. It is true, for some particular reasons, I have given the person you mentioned a permit, and wish he might be allowed to remove his corn, as it is an article of necessity; and I flatter myself the reasons will readily suggest themselves on reflection. I am aware of the consequences, was I to take upon myself to issue such permissions generally; but this, sir, you may be assured I shall not do. Under existing circumstances, it is distant from my thoughts to do anything that might occasion any unjust irritation in the officers of the general government, having no doubt, generally speaking, they are well desposed to serve this State.

Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Butler.

Knoxville, 17 February, 1798.

Sir: Having perused the documents and papers which you laid before us relative to the frauds and forgeries said to have been committed by Terrill *et al*, in obtaining warrants and grants for lands within the boundary reserved for the officers and soldiers of

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the North Carolina Continental line;⁷⁶ also having taken into view the requisition made on your Excellency by the Governor of the State of North Carolina to have the documents and papers belonging to the office of Martin Armstrong seized and sent to the City of Raleigh agreeable to a resolution made by the Legislature of that State for the purpose aforesaid:

Tennessee and her citizens being in some measure involved in the event, these questions suggest themselves: Ought the Executive thereof to countenance the removal of them on this authority or is he bound *ex officio* to prevent it? It is not necessary here to draw into view the principles which would have governed this case had North Carolina given her proceedings the solemnity of law. The difficulties of this State and her officers in that case would have been increased, and the discussion must then have taken a much wider range. Under existing circumstances let it be admitted, and it cannot be denied, that the records of this office contain the origin of claim to a great part of the real estate held by the inhabitants of this State, and that on the faith to which they are entitled must depend the effect of title, and it immediately becomes the duty of the supreme Magistrate of this State to prevent their passing into hands which might impeach their testimony. Records cannot be aided by evidence, being themselves the highest, and this arises from their being continually under the care of a sworn officer, whose charge admits of no cessation. In new elections the officer elect is sworn and assumes the charge prior to the abandonment of the former trust.

By a law of the State of North Carolina, passed one thousand seven hundred and eighty-four, this office is confined to Nashville. Considering the State of Tennessee as Unaffected by the great political changes, which have since happened, and as still a part of the parent State, this office could not be reached by the late proceedings of the State of North Carolina, which is a request of the Governor of that State to exercise a power not deligated him by the Constitution. The constitution of North Carolina, in enumerating the powers deligated to the executive, gives power to draw for

⁷⁶This reservation, laid out by Anthony Bledsoe, Absalom Tatum and Isaac Shelby, commissioners for the State of North Carolina, was bounded: "Beginning in the Virginia line where the Cumberland River intersects the same; thence South fifty miles; thence West to the Tenasee River; thence down the Tenasee to the Virginia line; thence with said Virginia line last to the beginning." Act of North Carolina, 1783, Ch. III.

and apply money as voted by the General Assembly for the contingencies of government accounting to them for the same; he may also with the advice of the Council of State lay embargoes, or prohibit exportation for a time; he may grant pardons and reprints under particular limitations; in short, all powers attached to the office are expressed, and no powers afforded him of acting in opposition to the laws by the request of either, or both houses of the Legislature. The eleventh section of the Constitution declares the solemnity to be observed in enacting laws, that all bills shall be read three times by each house before they pass into laws, and be signed by the speakers of both houses. A law having been once enacted must be the guide of those within the perview of its meaning, until repealed by the same, or some coordinate or superior power, and this is a maxim old as the science. Were it otherwise, there would exist no stability in Legislative bodies; the labours of time would be destroyed in a moment, and the impetuous resolutions of some turbulent demagogue would annihilate the best established principles of right.

To remove the office of Armstrong under this resolution is an infraction of the laws of North Carolina, and to remove it out of this State is to annihilate it, as the change of hands thro which it would pass must destroy the faith of records it contains, which hold their authenticity from the impossibility there is of altering them, but which impossibility ceases under the touch of many hands. Again, a resolution is an inferior, subordinate expression of the Legislature's will, and always used for the direction of the officers of government, when such chasms present themselves in the legal code as without such resolution would leave her officers uninstructed on some essential point of the trust committed. But an officer abridging the rights of an individual or body corporate secured to him or them by law, sanctioned only by resolution, would be considered and punished as a trespasser, in any court of the State having cognizance of the offence, as tho no resolution had passed; publicity being essential to a law, and the right of pleading it in all cases coming within the perview of its meaning. A resolution can only be considered in this case as a pledge of faith in the Legislature to assume the payment of all penalties incur'd by the parties acting under its instructions.

The demand of the executive of one State on that of another is founded in fundamental principles of that paramount law the

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constitution. To this instrument therefore let us recur for prin-
ciples, on which we may form some judgment of the propriety of
its exercise, in the case now *sub judice*: By this instrument we find
it vested only where persons fleeing from justice shall be found
within that State on which the demand is made (see second section
of the fourth article of the Federal Constitution), and this clear,
that the act be committed within the Jurisdiction of that State
making the demand, which idea is not only aided but manifested
by refering to the latter part of the Second Section of the third
article, securing to the individual the right of trial in all cases
except impeachments within the State where the crime should
have been committed. If, therefore, there has been fraud and
forgeries practised as stated, the demand will be from the executive
of this State on North Carolina, but cannot be inverted without
violation of the Constitution which is the paramount law operating
not only over the several Legislatures of particular States, but also
over the United States.

Sir, you will find from the reasoning above, our opinion is, that
the executive of North Carolina is not legally authorized to make
such a request (as matter of right) on your Excellency; and, also,
if the books and papers should be given up to the Commissioners,
it is the duty of your Excellency to arrest them in their hands.

We have the honor to be, sir

Your no Obedt and very humble Servants

Jno. C. Hamilton, Atty for Dist Mero,⁷⁷

John Lowry, Atty for Dist. Hamilton.⁷⁸

His Excellency, John Sevier.

Knoxville, 17 February, 1798.

Sir: Yours of the 4 Instant by Mr. Nelson, is now before me;
previous to the receipt of your favour, I had summoned the At-
tornies general to attend at this place on the 14 Instant, in order
to aid me in their counsel respecting the books and papers of
Martin Armstrong's office being removed out of the State. Two
of the Attornies attended (to wit) Lowry and Hamilton, and

⁷⁷Appointed attorney-general of the Mero District in territorial days; reappointed
vice Tatum, raised to the judgeship, under the State after its organization; first
judge of the ninth circuit, in West Tennessee, 1823. See further, Williams, *Be-
ginnings of West Tennessee*, *passim*.

⁷⁸Of Hamilton District from the organization of the State in 1796; resided at
Maryville. Hopkins Lacy, of Washington District, was absent. This opinion
evinced more than ordinary legal ability and acumen on the part of these early
prosecuting attorneys.

their report I do myself the honor to inclose you. You will therefore observe, that you are not to suffer by any means the books and papers to be taken out of this State, observing at the same time that the Commissioners from North Carolina be permitted to take such authenticated copies and transcripts of the aforesaid books and papers as they may think necessary and proper.

You will please to observe that in the present, as you may readily perceive in my past communications, that I have confided the business principally to your own judgement and opinion respecting this important matter, wishing that every aid might be afforded by this government to the State of North Carolina, to enable that government in the detection of the frauds and villanies alledged to have been committed.

I have not given any order for military force to be raised to seize the books, as you have mentioned you was informed; neither have I written by the North Carolina Commissioners to any other officer of our State beside yourself; and assure yourself, sir, that I must form a very different idea from my present, before I should conceive there was any necessity to enforce any just and reasonable compliance by a military order among the respectable part of the community in which you reside.

Should the books (contrary to my expectations from your letter) be given up, you will immediately have them arrested and detained. Honorable Judge Tatum.

Knoxville, 17 February, 1798.

Sir: On advising with the attornies general, it is their opinion that for the books belonging to Martin Armstrong's office to be removed out of this State, would be improper, and highly detrimental to the interest and endanger the real property of all concerned.

You will therefore be pleased to deliver all the books and papers in your possession to the Honorable Judge Tatum or his order, that may be relative to the said office. You are at liberty to take such authenticated copies and transcripts of the records, as you may think proper, which I hope will be amply sufficient for the detection of any frauds alledged to have been committed.

James Holland, esquire, and others,
Commissioners from North Carolina

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Knoxville, 19 February, 1798.

Sir: In my favor of the 17 Instant, I informed you that I did not mean to grant passports generally, nor shall I, only in particular cases. Since I wrote you, I have been necessitated to take the advice of two of the attornies general on the subject of issuing passports, who have determined in the affirmative; since which, application has been made to me, and passports granted to three persons (Viz) to Archibald Lacky⁷⁹ to transact some business with Hotchkiss at or near your Cantonment; to Charles McClung esquire, to transact some business with one of your officers, I believe Lieutenant Smith; the third to Robert Trimble,⁸⁰ to carry some medicine to his brother in law Ritchey, near the cantonment, and from thence, to pass to Andrew Miller's⁸¹ to receive some money, that Miller is indebted to him. They alledged that they could not proceed to you to obtain passports without first crossing the line, which would subject them to the penalties of the law, which appears to be a fact, your cantonment being within the indian line. Permit me to suggest would it not be well to remove those obstacles. Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Butler,
Commanding the Federal troops in Tennessee.

Knoxville, 20th February, 1798.

Sir: Yesterday his Excellency Governor Sevier left this place on business in a different part of the State⁸² and previous to his departure left me certain instructions, as to what conduct I should pursue respecting the books of Armstrong's office, in case they had been delivered to Messieurs Holland, Wilbourn, and Brittain's. To day those Gentlemen have arrived at this place without the books, accompanied by Mr. Sackfield Maclin,⁸³ who has been engaged as express by Judges Tatum and McNairy, to deliver

⁷⁹Perhaps son of J. Lackey, mentioned in Sevier's "Diary." Lackey's Creek in Blount County empties into Tennessee River near Louisville.

⁸⁰Of the family whose head was William Trimble, a member of the legislature of the State of Franklin.

⁸¹For a glimpse of Miller: Williams, *Early Travels*, p. 466. He owned by Indian purchase the plantation on which stood the Cherokee town, Coyatee (the Kaiatee of Ramsey, p. 268).

⁸²The Governor was away at Plum Grove, his Washington County home. "Diary," *Tenn. Hist. Mag.*, V, 246.

⁸³A brother of William Maclin who died in Davidson County about 1802. He was an assistant Indian agent. Another Sackfield Maclin, probably a nephew of the first, who was a bachelor, lived at Somerville in West Tennessee shortly after that grand division was opened to settlement. He was a leading politician, Democrat, and served in the State senate from Fayette, Hardeman and Shelby counties in 1841-42.

letters to your Excellency upon the subject of detaining the said books. Mr. Maclin will also have the honor of delivering this letter into the hands of your Excellency, and with it I embrace the opportunity to forward to you a copy of Governor Sevier's letter of the 17 Instance addressed to Messieurs Holland, Wilbourn and Brittain's, which I this day delivered, and a Copy of the opinions of the attornies general of the several districts convened at this place for the special purpose of giving an opinion, and upon which the Governor's letter as before mentioned was founded.

I rejoice that the books were not delivered at Nashville, because I am thereby saved the painful necessity, that would have existed, for my demanding a surrender of them at this place; and the State from the trouble and expence of returning them again to Nashville.

I assure your Excellency, that the final decision of Governor Sevier, as expressed in his letter of the 17th Instant as above mentioned, is the result of his most mature judgement, founded not only upon the opinion of the attornies whose duty it is to advise him upon legal questions, but upon constitutional and legal researches of his own.

I have the honor to be

With great respect

Your excellency's most obedient
and very Humble servant

Wm. Maclin, Secretary
of the state of Tennessee.

His Excellency,

The Governor of the State of North Carolina.

Knoxville, 20 February, 1798.

Mr. Sackfield Maclin,

Sir: Under the instructions of his Excellency Governor Sevier, previous to his departure from this place, I have opened the letter addressed to him of the Instant from Judges Tatum and McNairy; I mean the one by you this day delivered me express, and by it I find you are charged with other letters from those gentlemen to the Governor of North Carolina, upon the important subject of the demand and refusal of the books of Armstrong's office, and I also find they wish the Governor to sanction the expence, to the end that the State of Tennessee may thereby become liable to pay

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the same. Upon this head I have to remark, that I am without the instructions of the Governor, but as the subject appears to me equally important as to Judges Tatum and McNairy, I would recommend it to you to proceed as express to the Governor of the State of North Carolina, with their letter, and with such other official letters as I shall deliver you upon the same subject, in full confidence that the legislature of the State of Tennessee will not hesitate to pay you, for your trouble and expences in delivering the said letters express. If the Governor of North Carolina should not think proper to give answers, it will be your duty of take receipts for the delivery.

I am with esteem

Your Obedient servant,
Wm MACLIN, Secretary
of the State of Tennessee.

Knoxville, 20 March.

Gentlemen: Your joint letter of the 16th of February Ultimo is now before me, in which I find inclosed copies of a letter from the Tennessee delegation to the President of the United States, and one to the Secretary of War, and his answer; the measures you have pursued, the communications you have transmitted for my own and your fellow Citizens' satisfaction, demonstrates and evinces to every impartial mind the great and patriotic part, and the feeling and sympathetic interest you have uniformly discovered and taken in favor of our distressed frontier sufferers; for which, gentlemen, permit me to offer you my earnest thanks. I further beg you, to believe that I have full confidence that no exertions of yours will be lacking in whatever may tend to promote the interest and welfare of the State, which you have the honor to represent. The regular mode you have taken for the relief of the sufferers, promises them ultimately a permanent success; their sufferings are extremly great and distressing; and I have no doubt but your solicitations to relieve them will be constant and unremitted.

The interest of our State being materially concerned in the event of the intended treaty,⁸⁴ I flatter myself you will avail of every

⁸⁴The reference is to the Treaty of Tellico, negotiated Oct. 2, 1798, by George Walton, of Georgia, and Col. Thomas Butler, as commissioners, by which the Cherokee ceded most of the lands from which settlers had been ejected by the United States.

advantage and privilege that is necessary on the occasion. I hope the President will not be contracted, but on the other hand extend to us all the reasonable advantages which we have a right to expect and enjoy.

Your letter and the other papers, being of much public information, I conceive it very proper to have the same published. Honorable Joseph Anderson, Andrew Jackson and William C. C. Claiborne, Members in Congress

Knoxville, 1 March, 1798.

Captain Samuel Handly

Sir: In pursuance of a resolve of the General Assembly, the Executive of the State of Tennessee is impowered to appoint a suitable Character to repair to the Cherokee Nation of Indians, in order to gain information and be informed whether or not the Cherokees can be prevailed upon to dispose of some part of the lands claimed by that Nation adjoining our frontier Settlements, including the lands, which some inhabitants have lately been removed from:

I have thought proper to appoint you the said Saml. Handly⁸⁶ to Undertake and perform the aforesaid mission, hoping the same may meet your own approbation and conveniency,

I am aware that this appointment will be attended with danger, trouble, and expense; but you will Understand that you will be duly compensated for what ever trouble and services you may render on this occasion.

You will therefore please to hold yourself in readiness to Act on the Shortest Notice and agreeably to such instructions as you may from time, to time, receive

Knoxville 30th March 1798

Sir: Any person that has a Rifle gun that Colo. John Watts may like, I will give an order on the Treasurer for the payment of the same.

JOHN SEVIER

Joseph Greer Esqr.⁸⁶

Delivered to John Watts a Rifle of John Smith,⁸⁷ a 24 Dollars price

JOSEPH GREER

⁸⁶For an account of Handley's earlier capture by, and residence among, the Indians, see Ramsey's *Annals*, 570 *et seq.*

⁸⁶One of the first settlers of Knoxville, and of the family of Andrew Greer, of Watauga.

⁸⁷John Smith was secretary of the Tennessee commissioners at the above treaty.

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Knoxville, 28th March, 1798.

Sir: Yours of the 15th of February Ultimo I am duly honored with, and, for the information therein, am much obliged. I am sorry to hear the spirit of party runs so high, and the fracas between Lyon and Griswold seems to fix an indelible stain. Pitty indeed such an event ever took place within the walls of a house of legislature. I hope the prating about disorganisers will cease after this, and Mr. Speaker will certainly decline calling to order.

Aristocracy appears to have become desperate and delirious, and as you have wisely observed phelibotomy will be a well administered remedy.

Colonel Watts is here on a visit, and seems to be well disposed towards the intended treaty, and the indians generally appear very pacific indeed.

I have nothing worth relating or troubleing your attention with. I am extremely sorry to observe that America appear so much menaced by the French nation. So much for a feeble debilitated conduct.

Honorable Andrew Jackson.

Knoxville, 28 March, 1798.

Sir: Yours of the 20 January Ultimo, with a letter enclosed to Zachariah Cox, I was honored with on the 20 Instant. I am truly sensible of the efforts you and your colleagues have made in behalf of our suffering friends lately removed from off their farms. I hope they will soon obtain leave to return. Watts is here on a visit, and seems friendly disposed as to the treaty. I am proud to hear the President seems to interest himself in favour of the people, and feels for their sufferings; and in case he should use his influence to make and have the Tennessee the line, it will for ever endear him to the people of this country. I have nothing now, or worth communicating. The indians appear pacific in the extreme. I will be more full in my next.

Mr. Coxe's letter I will have safely delivered.

Honorable Joseph Anderson.

Knoxville, 28 March, 1798.

Sir: Your several letters, to wit—26 January arrived at this place 12 Instant, and those of the 8, 14 and seventeenth of February the 20th. This letter will be any how interesting, as I have nothing new. Colonel John Watts is now in my house on a visit to see me,

and appears very friendly disposed towards the business of the treaty. Your circular letter of the 17th of February is pleasing and satisfactory to all I have heard speak of the same, and I further have the pleasure to assure you, your conduct meets general approbation. I am extremely sorry to learn that the French Nation still continue to menace our Government, and I am fearful it has not arrived to its full height.

The people removed from their farms are very uneasy and restless. I wish they could return in time to make crops, for fear more dangerous events will be the consequence. I had the pleasure a few days past to receive by Mr McNeil, Calender's Sketches,⁸⁸ for which I beg leave to present you my thanks. Your brother⁸⁹ is well, and is gaining an extensive practice. The affair between Lyon and Griswold fixes an indelible stain—pitty that such a fracas ever happened within the walls of a house of legislature. Honorable William Charles Cole Claiborne

Knoxville, 28 March, 1798.

Sir: Yours of the 2d Instant I was duly honored with on the 20th, and for the information therein contained I am very much obliged, and beg leave to present my thanks to you for the part you have taken in behalf of our distressed frontier people, who have been obliged to remove from their farms. I am sorry to learn the awkward and embarrassing situation of our government as a nation, and have been fearful that the debility of administration, would bring forth a serious disease; time can only discover the event, and I console myself with the hopes that the wise and virtuous will avert the storm, that is clouding up, and hovering around us. I have nothing now to favour you with; shall be happy at all times to do myself the honor to communicate and correspond with you, on the politicks of the day.

The late affair between Lyon and Griswold seems to fix an indelible stain—pity that such an event ever happened within the walls of a house of legislature.

The Honorable Joseph McDowell,⁹⁰
Member in Congress.

⁸⁸The reference is to James Thomson Callender's *Sketches of the History of America* (1798).

⁸⁹Dr. Thomas Augustine Claiborne, then practicing medicine in Knoxville. Governor Sevier stood sponsor for him as he had in earlier years for William C. C. Claiborne.

⁹⁰Had served alongside Sevier at the Battle of King's Mountain, 1780, and was now in Congress from North Carolina.

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