Collectors Office
District of Portland & Falmouth
August 31st 1821

Sir

By my Annual return of the State of Light Houses in Maine for the year 1820. in the column of Remarks, you were informed of the frequent complaints of the Light on Portland Head, that the cause of complaint was, that the Light is too small for the Lantern, and that Mr. Lewis recommended the addition of four or five Lamps and reflectors; the cost of which he estimated at 500 Dollars.

The Light House on Portland Head is of more importance than any other on this coast, it has a large Lantern capable of receiving an additional number of lamps, which may be added to the present apparatus as above named, or, as Mr. Lewis has lately proposed, to remove the whole of the apparatus with the lamps and reflectors from Portland light to the Light Houses building at Kennebeck or Boothbay, and make a complete new set with fifteen 16 inch reflectors, with lamps, for Portland Light House; The expense will be 400 Dollars in addition to his contract for fitting the two Light Houses now building, and is 100 Dollars less than the estimated cost of additional lamps and reflectors per annual statement.

I am of opinion that something should be done to make the Portland Light more brilliant, and discoverable at a greater distance, probably the addition or alteration above proposed will have the desired effect, Mr. Lewis is confident that it will.

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The building of the Light-Houses at Kennebeck & Boothbay is progressing, and will be so far completed by the first of October, as to receive the apparatus for the lights; it will therefore be necessary for me to know, as soon as practicable, whether I shall be authorised to make the alterations in the Portland light as before suggested.

I am very respectfully
Sir
Your obedient servt
Isaac Ilsley
Supt. of Light Houses in Maine

Stephen Pleasanton Esq
Fifth Auditor & acting
Commissioner of the Revenue
Washington