District & Port of Newport, Collector's-Office,
June 6th 1825.

Sir,

Herewith are copies of the act to cede jurisdiction and appraise land on Dutch-Island for the erection of a light-house, No 1; of the request for the appointment of appraisers, No 2; of the warrant to Commissioners for the appraisal, No 3; and of the appraisement itself, No 4.

The question now is, whether the land is to be paid for according to the report of the commissioners, and agreeable to the law, or not. For the answer I must look to your instructions; which are hereby requested for my government. A sense of duty however urges me to express my opinion that the value set upon the land by the appraisers is much too high. It was in proof before them that the highest price hitherto given for land on Dutch-Island is $50 per acre. For the difference between this sum and $172 per acre it is difficult to account; but the Commissioners being three of the Justices of the Supreme Court, and all farmers, their decision must, I presume, be considered correct. I beg leave further to say, that their set-off of six acres was not required on the part of the United States. They seem to have been led to this by too strict a regard for the words of their

commission, without reference to those of the law which was annexed thereto for their guidance. By the law, and by the petition to the Governor it will be seen that the intention was to obtain so much land as the United States might wish to purchase, or might think necessary, not exceeding six acres. It was also proposed to the appraisers, when on the ground, that a less number of acres should be appraised, as it was likewise that a boundary line other than the adopted one should be selected.

The mischief to be dreaded is the insufficiency of the appropriation for erecting the buildings, after deducting the price to be paid for the land and the expenses attending its acquisition, which together will rise to more than $1100. To have an idea of the probable cost of the buildings, reference must be had to the nature of the site, on the rocky point of an island, uninhabited, and without even a bush for shelter. On a plat (herewith enclosed) from an original in possession of one of the owners of the soil the site is shewn by the letters H & L. A plan which I have formed (without any pretensions to architectural science, and ignorant of its terms) and here submit as the readiest mode of conveying my conception of the kind of structure most eligible for the site, may serve to throw some light on the subject. To which it may be added

that a well would be wanted at the place marked W on the plat, to be dug through the rock 20 or 30 feet; that stone as division and water fence will be needed, and of which there is not one rod on the island; that a good boat for the keeper will be required; and that it will be difficult for the builders and other workmen to bear the materials to the rock and there to erect the house and light-house.

The possibility of attaining the object with the means (funds) provided, would be ascertained by inviting proposals. If determined to do so, it should be done soon as may be, or the season will not be long enough to complete the work in a proper manner.

If silly comports with my wishes, to send you such a parcel of lumber. Expectations on my part have not been wanting to effect an issue more favorable to the United States; but in vain.

Most respectfully, Sir,
Yr. most ob't. Servant

Stephen Pleasonton Esq
Fifth Auditor & Acting Commissioner of the Revenue

Thos. S. Gibbs Col.
Sup't Light Houses

9.

To
5th Auditor & acting Comm-
-missioner Revenue
June 6th 1825.
with
Act of appraisal of land on Dutch-
-Island, for erection of light-house