Sir

Treasury Department
Revenue Office. Novem^r 6th 1797

The inclosed contract with Benjamen Dearborn Esquire, comprehends both the Light house Establishments directed for the coast of N. Carolena — that is to say, the first rate light House for the Headland of Cape Hatteras, and the Beacon House for Shell castle Island. The whole consideration money is only 34.500 Dollars. The expectations of the legislature were extended to a hopsibility of 44000 Dollars, for that Sum was appropriated on the 10th July for the two Establishments. The present proposer, Mr. Dearborn, has erected one Light House upon Segwin with good judgment, so that from experience, as well as other circumstances, the necessary confidence is to be reposed in him. The proposals of Mr Blount were 35000 Dollars for the Hatteras Establishment alone, and those of Mr M. Comb were 35000 Dollars for the same, which demand afterwards on reconsideration was waved by him.

This contract is so much more favorable than the three proposals which I have before communicated and so much delay and difficulty have arisen in obtaining so good a contract, that I do not perceive any probability of advantage in further Endeavours. — and indeed considering those circumstances with the cost of such buildings in the best places thirty years ago, the advanced prices of provisions, materials, labor and workmanship, the large dimensions of the Hatteras Lighthouse and the opinions held by many of the unhealthiness of the climate near the great Marshes, this Contract is more ad-

advantageous to the United States, than I have for a long time expected. You will be pleased to submit the same to the President for his confirmation or other determination thereon.

I am, Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,
Signed Tench Coxe
Commissr of the Revenue

The Secretary
of the Treasury

Sir,

Treasury Department
Revenue Office Novem 7th 1797

I have just received your letter of the 28th Ultimo. You will find on recurrence to the printed notification sent you that the lighted Beacon House near Occacock inlet in Pamptico Sound is expressly fixed to be on Shell castle Island, which also conforms with the Law of 30th May 1794 in your bound volumes. My letter of the 27th September also expressly mentions Shell castle Island twice. My letter of the 3d Instant also expressly mentions Shell castle Island, as you will perceive. The money can be lawfully expended on Beacon Island. What I mean by "the Light house lot" in that letter is of course the Hatteras lot which establishment is particularly called a Light House at the head of the second column in the Advertisement. For this a purchase was to be made of any quantity not more than four acres. You will observe my urgent request, that on the receipt of mine of the 27th September you would make the purchases. Whatever means are necessary were and are to be forthwith adopted. I observe your intention to proceed with expedition. The quantity of land necessary is small, in both cases. In the