District of St Louis
Port of Jacksonville
June 28th 1852

Sir

I have received yours of the 9th last in relation to an examination Estimate & report of the condition of the light house at the mouth of the River St Johns — and accordingly to your instructions I procured the services of Doctor A. S. Baldwin of this place who is a scientific practicable man. and after a thorough examination he has made a report and estimates with a plat &c which I herewith enclose — And according to my own observation and knowledge of the bar light house &c the report and estimates are correct and reasonable, However in relation to the breach made near the light house purposed to be piled and imbanked &c is quite reasonable and I think to low tho it may be done for that amount perhaps — This movement will only be temporary provided the current of water continues to wash away the bank as it has for some time past. It will prevent the water at high tides from running into the Keepers house. but will only be a temporary Structure should the current still continue to make encroachments upon the bank.

It may however stand for a year or more provided there does not come any heavy gales, but in that event it will be of but little use other than to keep out the high tides — If the stoping up of Fort George inlet as

recommended by Doctor Baldwin would be the means of preventing the light house from falling down (which I have no doubt it will do) the amount would be trifling compared to the advantage to be derived from it saying nothing of the advantage to commerce by deepening the harbor.

Doctor Baldwin has for some time past paid considerable attention to the subject embraced in this report. and his views and plan for permantly protecting the light house property has the confidence of the community and especially of the bar Pilots, seafaring men who have examined them and whos calling give there opinion weight in such matters

The cause which has for years been producing the wash of the South banks of the River, near the mouth, is I believe satisfactorially shown by him, and the remedy proposed will in my opinion be an effectual one, and altho an examination by the officers of the coast survey would be desirable before this work is commenced, yet as the Doctor remarks, the emergency is such, that delay might be dangerous, and in the event of the department taking a favourable action on the plan proposed and should require further information or explanation of the subject the Doctor probably might be induced to visit Washington and by consultation with competant Engineers the details of the work may be arranged as satisfactorially there as if the parties were sent out here to survey the ground, and would save a considerable amount to the government.

While I have the honor to be
respectfully your obt Svt
Isaacs & Hart
collectors

Hon
Thomas Corwin

N. B

Doctor Baldwin has recommended that the keepers of the light house should have a boat — I think myself that is it really necessary for in case there should be a heavy gale he might be cut off from the land entirely — such an one as has been sent here for the use of the Inspectors at the mouth of the River would be a good size or perhaps it would be as well to authorize me to buy a good yawl boat constructed of wood which I can do for thirty Dollars — as it altogether uncertain when a gale may come — I would recommend the latter course —

Respectfully
your ob Sert
Lemuel D. Howe
Collector

Treasury Department
July 14th 1852.

Sir

The enclosed report from the Collector at Jacksonville Florida, and the person employed by him to examine the Lighthouse at the mouth of St Johns river, are respectfully referred to you, for your views upon the whole subject embracing the expediency of repairing and protecting the grounds or of abandoning the site with the buildings to the claimants of the land.

The Department will thank you for such a report upon all the questions involved, as will enable it to decide whether to abandon the whole to the claimants, or to direct the necessary repairs

Very respectfully
Your obt Servt
W M Meredith
Acting Secretary of the Treasury

Asst. July 14/52

S Pleasonton Esq
1st Auditor

Custom House Lockwoodville
District of St Louis
August 16. 1852

Sir

I have received yours of the 7th Inst in relation to erection of posts at the Light House at St Louis Bar in which you direct that the work be suspended for the present &c.

I have received two bids to wit

D. M. Heath of Alexandria offers the 31st July 1852. in which he proposes to erect the posts according to instructions received from you at Two hundred dollars per post.

Thomas Leduke of this place proposes to erect the posts according to my printed notice for four hundred dollars per post.

There has been no proposals received for Cypress.

I have notified the bidders according to your instructions.

Very respectfully
your obt. Sert
Isaac D. Heath
Supt &c

S. Pleasonton Esq
5th Auditor

Aug 16. 1852.

Sir,

Application has been made to the Committee of Commerce of the Senate for an appropriation of 10,000 dollars, to try the plan proposed by Dr Baldwin, of closing East Gorge Inlet, at the mouth of St Johns and thus permanently securing the Light House and opening and deepening the Channel of the River.

In the meantime it is considered necessary that something should be done to secure the Light House. Dr Baldwin therefore recommends that the small gully or Creek made above the Keepers House and running around both buildings be closed about 30 feet above high water mark. He recommends for the purpose that an excavation of the sand be made across the gully or Creek 3 or 4 feet deep and that piles be driven close together from one side of the Creek to the other, and afterwards that the excavation be filled up with brush wood, sand, & Mud to within 4 or 5 feet of the top of the piles.

You will be pleased to cause this to be done as early as you can; postponing the use of the spring until further advised. The keeper could probably have this work done: If not you will send Materials & men to do it from Jacksonville

Isaac D. Hart Esq
Jacksonville — Florida

July 20 1852

Sir,

to the Secretary of the Treasy

Your letter of the 28 June, inclosing the report & chart of Mr Baldwin, to the Secretary as to the best mode of securing the St John Light House, was referred to me a few days ago.

Upon examining Mr. Baldwins plan of closing the mouth of Fort George Inlet, I perceived that it called for so large an expenditure, that it would be better to select another site and build a new Light House on it. He estimates the expence of closing the inlet at 10,000 dollars & about 1300 dollars for some work near the Light House. For these sums a new site could be bought, and new buildings erected, and it would not therefore be advisable to expend that money under an uncertainty that it would secure the present Light House.

Mr Bal Since we cannot go to the expence recommended by Mr Baldwin, I wish you to adopt a plan which I have always found an infallible security of Light House against the encroachment of the sea, in all cases where the buildings stood upon sand. It is by putting groins from the shore into the water some 40 feet, composed of piles 4 feet a part and between them thick plank to be driven, so as to make what is called sheet piling. These groins ought to be 30 feet apart.

I send you a copy of Mr Baldwins chart on which I have marked the manner in which these groins ought to be placed, and I also send you a printed copy of an

advertisement

advertizement describing particularly how they are made and placed.

I have to request that you will advertize for proposals for the erection of as many of these piers in front of the Light House and dwelling House, as you may think necessary, for 10 or 12 days, and accept the lowest bid if it be reasonable. You will fix as short a time for the completion of the work as it can, in your judgment, be accomplished in. You will send me 6 or 8 copies of your advertizement and a list of all the bids.

Mr Baldwin mentioned that after taking off a ~~shell~~ shell of 3 or 4 feet you come to quick sand, but I have no doubt the piles can be driven a sufficient depth to remain firm, in which case I have no doubt they will pile up both creeks, and accumulate a quantity of sand in front of the buildings.

You will alter the advertizement in such particulars as you may judge proper.

July 20th 1852
Isaiah D. Hart.
Received

Isaiah D. Hart Esq
Supt Lights
Jacksonville, Florida

at the St Johns Light ~~the~~ after penetrating thro the upper strata of
sand ~~you meet with a quicksand bed~~ a quick sand is met with which the pile would take
no hold, but I am of opinion if the pile be driven 20 or 25 feet
(Piles about 60) there would be sufficient adhesion for them to remain upright,
in which case we could form the piers to our satisfaction; and
if it be possible to form them there can be no doubt they will
protect the Light for all time to come. A sufficient number
of those piers, for the Light at St Johns, would probably
not cost, with the work on them, more than 1200 dollars.
I have protected several Lights in this manner, and I
propose, with the concurrence of the Secretary of the Treasury,
to make the trial in this instance, before we
look out another site.

Wm L Hodge Esq
Acting Secretary of the Treasury

## U. S. Marshal's Sale.

BY virtue of a writ of Fieri Facias, issued out of the United States District Court for the Northern District of Florida, wherein Josiah Gates is Plaintiff, and Cornelius Taylor Defendant—I have levied upon and shall on the first Monday in November next, between the hours of ten, a. m. and two, p. m. of that day, expose at public sale, in front of the Court House in the City of Jacksonville: All the right, title and interest, which the said Cornelius Taylor had on the 10th of May, 1843, in and to the following tracts of land, viz:—

A tract on the St. John's River, near the mouth of said river, called the *Pablo Tract* of land, situated in Duval County, State of Florida, and bounded on the *North* by the St. John's River, on the *East* by Sherman's Creek, running with the meanders of said Creek to King's Road, thence along said road, to lands of Lewis Mattair; on the *West* by the St. John's river, thence running with the river to the place of beginning; this tract conforming to a plat of survey made by Z. C. Gibbs, on file in the St. Johns' Circuit Court, under a decree of partition, made by the St. Johns' Superior Court, in 1827, and containing about six hundred acres. Also, a tract of land, known as the *Forbes Tract*, bounded on the *South* by lands belonging to Lewis Mattair, on the *West* by the King's Road, on the *North* by the North fork of Sherman's Creek, to the mouth thereof, and from the mouth of said Creek to the mouth of an Inlet of the sea, about one mile South of the St. Johns' Light House, and on the *East* by the sea beach, to the place of beginning, and conforming to a plat of survey made by Joshua A. Coffee, on file in the Duval Circuit Court, under a decree of partition of the Duval County Court in 1839, and confirmed by the Circuit Court of the County of Duval, at the May Term, 1847—containing about one thousand seven hundred and sixteen acres—each tract being a part of the Grant made by the Spanish Government to Andrew Dewees, on the 3rd day of September, 1791, and confirmed to his widow and heirs, on the 4th day of May, 1804—said tracts include the town of Hazzard, the steam saw mill, on the beach, and the scite on which the St. Johns' Light House stands.

ROBERT MYERS, Marshal,
By his Deputy, G. HUMPHREYS.

*U. S. Marshal's Office,*
St. Augustine, Sept. 17, 1847.

N. B.—The reservation of four acres, including the Light House, will first be offered for sale, as above, and the remainder in separate tracts, made known on the day and at the plac of sale.

Custom House
Dist of St Johns
Oct 9th 1847

Sir!

By the News paper sent You of the advertisement of the St Johns Light by Marshal's Sale on a/c of an old judgment against Cornelius Taylor, the present claimant of the Land on which the Light Stands — You will observe the impropriety of settling with him or his Att.y — for said Land as it is subject to said judgment —

If the Light House Premises is offered for Sale, as advertised it could probably be purchased for a much less Sum than has been claimed by him for the Land on which it Stands & would be I presume a perfect Title — of which the Department has had proper information by his Att.y claiming payment for 4 Acres Land — Be pleased to instruct me in relation to this matter & if the Dep.t think proper to purchase, to place me in funds for this object —

With great Respect
Your Obt Servant
Hazen Dell
Dep.t Collr

To J. Pleasanton Esq
5th auditor

and. Oct 19/47

Jacksonville October 18th 1838

Sir

Your letter of the 4th Inst has been received, and I regret, that the instructions of your previous letter were not understood by me. I had considered that copies of the advertisment, proposals, or offers, and report upon the work were all required. Should the originals, now sent fail to reach you, I should have nothing but copies left in my office; which appear to be of but little value in consequence, at the department. The original advertisment for proposals was not printed. It was however, written out in fair hand, and posted up, in several prominent places in the county, as the best mode of giving publicity to the notice. It is true that there is a news-paper published at this place; but not one person in twenty takes it; and in the absence of instructions to print, I did not feel authorized to incur the expense. I herewith send you an exact copy, or original, of the advertisment, posted up as stated, this having been the one, retained in the office. I also send you the original certificate and report of J. B. Morgan, & Chester Bisby Esquires, upon the work. The original proposals were forwarded to you by mail, under date of 26th September, which I hope have reached you. I am of opinion, from the tenor of your recent letters to me, that some designing and malicious person

has been making some statements to you against me, calculated to injure me, in your estimation. I hope you will not let reports have any weight; without a fair investigation of the matters that they refer to. If any charges, or reports, have been made, will you be kind enough to furnish me with them. Long and painful indisposition, has no doubt been the cause of some slight neglects on my part; yet I am fearless of any other charges that can be brought against me.

I have the honor to be

very respectfully your

obedient servant

James Dell

Superintendant Light Houses

To

S. Pleasonton Esquire

Fifth auditor

Collectors Office
St Augustine 22d. Feby 1831

Sir

I now inclose the voucher for the payment of the Salary of Roque Leonardy the keeper of the Light house at the St Johns river, from the time when he entered upon the duties of the office up to the end of the last quarter, and charged in my quarterly abstract of the last quarter; also the state of that Light house up to the same period, from the 22d. of April last, when it was first lighted up.

Received the voucher and his report only yesterday. I have requested him in future, to be more regular in making his returns; but the infrequency of intercourse between this place and the mouth of the St Johns river is one cause of the delay. The chains for the buoys, at the St Johns river, have at last arrived at the Bluff, and I requested Mr Penn, the newly appointed surveyor at that place, to have the buoys placed; but I have just received a letter from that gentleman informing me that he had left that place, and appointed a deputy, as he found no comfortable place of abode there. Some further delay will, I fear, therefore take place in placing the buoys.

I have the honor to be,
very respectfully,
your most obt servt
John Rodman
Collector of St Augustine

S. Pleasonton Esqr.
Fifth auditor of the Treasury
and acting commissioner of the revenue
Washington

Collectors Office.

St. Augustine 13th. March 1831.

Sir,

I have lately received a letter from Mr. Winslow Lewis, one of the contractors for the building of the light house at the St. Johns river, informing me that he had sent workmen to make such alterations in the construction of the walls, as to render them in conformity with the terms of the contract and requests me to go there and examine the work when completed, As it is a long and disagreeable journey I should gladly be excused from taking it, unless you deem it necessary, but if so, I will go there. There is no regular communication between this city and that part of the country, and but rarely a private conveyance is found to send a letter.

I have constantly had a deal of trouble and vexation with the people here, about the shell stone, within the precincts of the Light-house on St Anastasia island; a good deal of this stone is formed along the shore, above high water mark and a few years ago there was much of it lying scattered on the beach, near low water mark. The people here pretended, that under the Spanish government they were allowed to take as much as they wanted at pleasure; and for several years I permitted them to take small quantities, to build chimneys and ovens, but I found this permission was abused, and that large quantities were taken away to build houses and walls, A very considerable quantity was taken by a contractor to build a wall around the catholic church here, and without any permission, as the stone was then wanted here for the construction of the bridge building by the

the United States, across the St Sebastion river I directed the attorney of the United States to bring a suit against the Catholic trespasser, but on the trial, most of the jury being Spaniards, as is usually the case here they gave a verdict for the defendant. Indeed the United States stand no chance with a jury in this place, in any cause in which a Spanish inhabitant is interested. They cannot get rid of their old habits under the Spanish Government of taking every possible advantage of the government. They are totally unfit to be jurors in any case having not the most distant idea of the duties and obligations of a jury.

Some little time ago, the building of the Episcopal church was begun in this city, under the direction of the Rev. Mr. Henderson, and he applied to me for permission to take stone along the shore, by the Light house, I told him I could not give the permission, but that he might have as much as he wanted, by digging it in the quarry; for there is an extensive quarry on the island within the boundaries of the Light house, and the working of it would be no loss. Consequently he borrowed tools from the Barracks here, and set his people to dig for the stone in the quarry; but yesterday the keeper of the Light house informed me that a number of men were taking stone for the Episcopal church along the shore. I immediately wrote a note to Mr Henderson and requested him to call about the matter, in the evening he came, ~~admitted~~, and admitted that his people had taken about three square and a half about 1000 feet of stone, from the shore, and that they wanted only about as much more to complete the church; That the tools having been sent away by the commanding officer at the barracks, they had no means to dig the stone but of the quarry, and offered to pay for the stone if the United

States

States requried it. I beg to have your instructions on this subject. Some of the old inhabitants here have a notion that the removal of the stone along the shore, tends to spread the water and make the bar more shallow, but I am of opinion that this all imaginary

very respectfully
your obt. Servt.
John Rodman
Collector of St. Augustine

Ans. April 25, 1831

To.
S. Pleasonton Esqr
Fifth Auditor of the Treasury &
acting commissioner of the Revenue
Washington D.

Treasury Department
Jany 16th 1836

Sir

The compensation to be allowed to William Livingston who has been appointed Keeper of the Light House at the mouth of St. Johns River, and Samuel Crosby Keeper of the Light House at St Marks is four hundred dollars each.

I am respectfully
Your Obt. Servt

[signature]

Secretary of the Treasury

Stephen Pleasanton Esquire
1st Auditor of the
Treasury