Then there will be no extra price for filling as wanted. —

I am, Sir. —

Benj.a Lincoln, Esq.r — Your most obedient Servant —

Supert. of Lt.hs — Boston (Signed) Tench Coxe —

Commissioner of the Revenue

Sir, — (out of order being mislaid)

Treasury Department
Revenue Office March 2.d 1797

I am just informed by Mr Allibone who was directed to procure the chain and Sinker requested by you on the 23 January last, that they are now ready and will be shipped by the first opportunity — The links of the chain are round, and will go in detached pieces as desired by you — It will be found however, I apprehend that the links will soon be stretched into a boyer form by the force of the waves. —

Ex.d

I am Sir, —

Daniel Stevens, Esq.r — Your most Obedient Servant.

Super.t Lt.hs — Charleston (Signed) Tench Coxe

Commiss.r of the Revenue

Sir,

Treasury Department
Revenue Office April 1.st 1797

I transmit for the purpose of submission to the President the proposals of John M.Comb Jun.r of New-york, for erecting a light House &c.a upon the Head land of Cape Hatteras. It is proper the fact of an unsuccessful attempt to engage a contractor upon satisfactory terms in the last year should be known to the President, wherefore I notice it in this place. The Proposals then communicated, but not decidedly and bindingly offered, were expected to be at 35.000 Dollars. They were expected to be

con—

confirmed at that sum, but you will remember that the President thought the price too great. There has been since annexed to the proposals a condition of devising and furnishing the Clockwork necessary to render distinguishable these important lights, which addition is estimated, on the first instance ever attempted in America, at 1000 Dollars. This will include a complete set of lamps with 32 separate and distinct lights or wicks and mechanism to conceal them periodically from the view. The extraordinary base of the proposed house, and its unusual height, together with the difficulty of landing materials, and the badness of the climate are the pleas upon which the price has been required. — Messrs. John G. & W. T. Blount, who had communicated an intention to propose last year to erect the House, have withdrawn. Mr. M.Comb has revised his proposals, reconsidered the subject and made a definitive proposition (to include the changing light) at 37,500 Dollars. This is 1500 Dollars higher than was contemplated last year by the two parties, after allowing 1000 Dollars for the changing light not then included in the plan. After many communications with Mr. M.Comb written and oral I have been unable to procure any further diminution of the sum of 37,500 Dollars, than that which results from his agreeing also to provide the changing light — and the advantage of an election to pay him the whole costs and charges of the establishment and an allowance of ten Dollars ℔ diem for his whole profit and compensation. This election he is willing to have made at or before the time when the lantern is raised. The several papers necessary to illustrate this business, are inclosed for the more accurate and perfect information of the President, and I have also enclosed a comparative note shewing the principal differences between the proposed light House and that, last erected by Wm. M.Comb. It is understood from Wm. M.Comb, that the Montauk establishment yielded him a satisfactory compensation for his time, trouble, risk and mechanical skill. He lays much stress upon the difference between going to a near and healthy situation, and, as he conceives, a going to the east end of Long Island, and

sick—

sickly place, like Hatteras. The Montauk ground he observes was known to be firm and high above the sea, that on cape Hatteras is low, and he suspects uncertain. The stone, mortar, Hands and some kinds of provisions were procurable as he affirms, at less expence and risk. The height of the great stone octagon is greater, the foundation more mapy, and his avocation to Hatteras more injurious to his business and personally more dangerous. —

The buildings certainly will not be cheap in proportion to those hitherto erected under the direction of this office. Yet the advance upon the prices of the Boston and Delaware lighthouses is not beyond, that which is paid upon good buildings in Philadelphia, considering how much more convenient, safe and agreeable it was to build on Boston and Delaware Bays. The station for a light is highly and extensively important. No prospect exists of another offer and provision has been long made by law for this establishment.

M.r M.c Comb has the character of a first rate Mechanic, and is known by experience in the cases of Cape Henry and Montauk, both which houses he built, to merit the confidence of Government as to his fidelity, industry and skill. —

I am, Sir, —

The Secretary, — your most Obedient Servant,
of the Treasury — (Signed) Tench Coxe
Commiss.r of the Revenue

Note of the differences, referred to. —

1

The Hatteras Octagon is to be erected upon a solid mass of stone and mortar 29 feet wide & 4 feet deep, resembling an artificial rock, the ground being very low and Quicksands apprehended. —

2

It is to be ten feet higher than that of Montauk. The expence and danger of building increases as the building rises in height, as will be conceived on reflecting that the stone work of the Hatteras Octaton will be about twice the height of the chimnies of the best three story dwelling Houses.

3

The diameter of the Hatteras Octagon in the lower 80 feet will be greater than that of Montauk at every point equidistant from the ground. For although the two buildings be equally wide at top and bottom, yet as the Hatteras house will not narrow to the smallest diameter of the montauk House until it reaches a point 10 feet further from the Earth, the out lines will be wider apart at every place between the bottom and the top. —

4.

Mechanism similar to that for concealing and displaying periodically the thirty two lights in the Hatteras Lantern, is not contained in the Montauk Lantern.

Sir

Treasury Department
Revenue Office April 3d. 1797

I am yet without any reply to my two letters to you of the 7th & 27th of July. I should be glad to receive them. Your accounts in the light House service are to be sent to this office with the vouchers and a letter containing any explanations or remarks, which may be necessary. Be pleased to attend to this in future. I shall be glad to receive your Light House accounts to the 31st December, without delay. These accounts are requested to be made within fifteen days following the expiration of each Quarter. — I am Sir, — Your most obedient Servant

James Read. Esq.
Sup.t L.H. — Wilmington —
N. Carolina

Signed Tench Coxe
Commis.r of the Revenue