MLE RG26 E17E St. Marks FL

Boston. April 5. 1830.

Sir.

The lighthouse and dwelling house at St. Marks were completed on the 4th of March. On the 7th of the same, the keeper by order of the superintendant, took charge of the light house, moved into the dwelling house and that night the lamps were permanently lit. On the 8th, he made the endorsement on the back of the contract here enclosed. As far as I can construe it, he means to say, that he has received the lighthouse but not as having been built in every way according to contract.

The lighthouse is built on the spot selected by the superintendant, as one of sufficient solidity for the building, being a narrow ridge between the sea and a large lagoon. It was commenced with laying the walls 3 feet 8 inches thick, with stone from Coral Rock, leaving a surface on each side of rough projection. On each side of this was carried up a brick wall 8½ inches, bound to the stone work by the projecting surfaces, and running occasionally half brick width into the stone work. — In this manner it was carried up 20 feet, at which time, a trial was made to dig a well near the lighthouse. At a certain depth, it was found that the ground lost some of its solidity. Some doubt

then existed as to the nature of the ground, and what effect time might have on it, and it was thought adviseable, to diminish the weight of the tower, as far as could be done without decreasing its strength. It was then carried up 20 feet with two brick walls, each 14 inches thick, bound together with 12 brick withes or ties, each 16 inches thick. This manner of building often done to lessen the weight, and experience in the lighthouse last erected on Franklin Island, has proved to me, it is the strongest. In this manner it was carried up twenty feet, which lessened the weight of the tower about 40 tons. — The last 25 feet was carried up with solid brick work, the interstices between the 12 withes or ties were filled in with grouting made from shells and lime. This must be what the superintendant alludes to, when he says "shells and morter were used instead of stone and brick." The building of this lighthouse was executed by Mr. Benjamin Beal and Mr. Thayer, two of the contractors. The first has been employed in the building of 42 lighthouses, whose work has been tested for 30 years. There could have been no other motive for any deviation in the 20 feet of the tower but that of rendering it more secure, as there was on the spot a large quantity of materials, more than could be used. That the tower is as well

constructed as any that has been built for many years, I am perfectly satisfied, and to put the question beyond a doubt on the part of Government, I am willing and do propose to give the most satisfactory bonds, such as the Collector of this port will deem unquestionable, for the guarantee of the lighthouse standing and not failing in any part for any reasonable number of years, floods, or any other extraordinary convulsions of nature excepted and to guard against mortality in the bondsmen as far as practicable, six names will be put to the bonds. The lighthouse having been received and taken possession of by the superintendant, the lamps permanently lit, and the endorsement or the contract by the superintendant being so ambiguous as not to be understood as a rejection or approval, induces me to offer these bonds, to remove all doubts. ——

I have the honor to be
Sir. very respectfully
your obedient servant

Winslow Lewis

S. Pleasonton. Esq.
5th Audita and Acting
Commissioner of the
Revenue. —

RG26 E17E
St. Marks FL

Boston April 19. 1830.

Sir.

Your letter of the 12th inst has been received. Stone and brick have always been used together in carrying up the walls of the towers of lighthouses in every instance where a partial supply of stone was found near the spot, and always have been received by every Superintendant as included in the meaning of the words in the contract "brick or stone," nor was it objected to by the superintendant of St. Marks Lighthouse. He was present when the lighthouse walls were commenced and did approve of the manner that the stone and brick were carried up. So far from its being patchwork, a wall laid up with coral rock and brick with the brick worked into the stone work, may compete as to durability with any material short of granite blocks. Stone certainly is as durable as brick, and that they can be laid in solid work together cannot be doubted. The lighthouses at Cape Florida, Key West and Sand Key and Back River are built of brick with a proportion of stone. Several of the old lighthouses I have found that were built with hammered face stone on the outside of the walls and brick inside. All the granite buildings in this city public and private are hammered granite stone on the outside and backed up inside with brick. I have mentioned those to show, that building walls of brick and stone is not patchwork, nor

any uncommon mode of building. It certainly has occasionally been done in the lighthouses for 60 years. As far as I can understand the endorsement made by the superintendant of St. Marks lighthouse on the back of the contract, he does not complain or object to the walls being built of brick and stone, but says "other materials were used in lieu of brick and stone". — I did not name the doubts respecting the foundations as authorizing any deviation from the contract but as the motive for so doing. — In behalf of the contractors, I agree to your proposition. One of the most respectable master masons in this city whose character for veracity will be undoubted, will leave here on Tuesday, the 20th inst. for St. Marks. He will be fully authorized on part of the contractors to act with the person who may be selected by the Collector there, to ascertain if any or what deduction shall be made from the amount stipulated in the contract. Should those two not agree, he will be authorized to choose a third person. Whatever their award may be, I hold myself in behalf of the persons named in the contract bound to abide by it. When I was induced to become a partner in the contracts for building the lighthouses at St. Marks and St. Johns, it was under the full belief that a person would be appointed by Government to inspect the works in progress. This assurance was given me by you several years

since that such a person would be appointed in all instances and such has been the case in the light houses that I have built since, except these two last. Calculating on this, I had nothing more to do than to provide a sufficient quantity of suitable materials and competent workmen to execute the work, which being done under the eye of an inspector, I should run no risk of its being accepted. ——

For St. Marks, I sent out a vessel to transport the materials from Pensacola with ample funds to procure all that could be required. At St. Johns I had landed from this place two hundred and eighty thousand of the best hard burnt bricks, large size, a quantity greater than has been put into any lighthouse of the same magnitude for many years. All the men employed were paid the highest wages by the day and were skilful workmen. The ground for a permanent foundation was as favourable as could be. From the quantity and quality of the materials landed there and the skill of the workmen, I have no hesitation in guaranteeing that until time moulders away hard bricks, so long will that tower stand, and that no water will ever penetrate through the walls as is the case with most of the lighthouses by which the wood work is rotted out in a few years.

I have the honor to be
your Ob.t Serv.t
W Winslow Jesup

Stephen Pleasonton Esq
Aud.r & acting
Commissioner of the Revenue

NARA RG 26 E17E St. Marks FL

Boston. June 10th. 1830.

Sir.

The person who went to St. Marks, to act with another who might be selected on the part of the Government, as arbitrators, to determine what deduction should be made from the sum named in the contract for building the lighthouse there, has returned with the award. From this person as well as from information received in a letter from Mr. Willis the superintendant, it appears, that the two person associated with me in the contract, have been guilty of the grossest fraud, in building that lighthouse, by which I have not only to share in the loss, but must also participate in the odium that must and ought to be attached to such a nefarious transaction. Although Mr. Thayer has been the contractor for building a number of lighthouses, he never had my confidence, but in Mr. Beal I had the fullest trust. He has been engaged in building lighthouses for 25 years and has been interested in several contracts with me, and I have heretofore always found him actuated by the most honorable motives and disposed to have every thing done to his contract. In him, I placed my reliance to have the lighthouse built agreeable to what the contractors had agreed to do, but, Sir, it has been my misfortune to find, that he has in some measure given way to intemperance. In consequence the whole management of building the lighthouse, appears to have been left to Mr. Thayer. It is found to have been built very different from what Thayer

stated me under oath on his return. His statement of the insufficiency of the ground for the foundation, I find to be altogether groundless. As it is good. That the lighthouse is built in a manner that never ought to be accepted by the U. States on any terms, I most readily admit. It must also be admitted, that ground was intended by the builders and with which my name is unfortunately associated. Under these circumstances, however I may suffer in a pecuniary point, I wish to have an opportunity to redeem the odium now attached to me as one of the contractors. I should prefer rebuilding the lighthouse as well as the walls of the dwelling house agreeable to the contract and to the entire satisfaction of the superintendant, although it may cost much more than the sum deducted by the arbitrators. After admitting myself bound by the award of the referees, I now request that payment should be suspended until I rebuild the lighthouse and walls of the dwelling house agreeable to the contract and when compleled to the entire satisfaction of the superintendant. to be paid the sum named in the contract. I will commence as soon as the warm season is over, say the first of October, with a strong gang of workmen. I can complete the lighthouse by the 15th of December, and will obligate myself to erect and keep a temporary light in the mean time that shall be satisfactory to the Superintendant. I presume that it will be more satisfactory to the

government to have the lighthouse made agreeable to the contract, than to accept the present one in any case. Should I have your assent, I shall discontinue my connection with the two other contractors, who have brought me into this difficulty and go on at my own expense under my own direction. On the subject of St. Johns lighthouse, I shall write you in a few days. That lighthouse is built in a very different manner from that of St. Marks

I have the honor to be,

Sir. Very Respectfully

Your obed$^{t}$ Servt

Winslow Lewis

Stephen Pleasonton. Esq$^{r}$

the Auditor and acting

Commissioner of the

Revenue.

RG26, E17E St. Marks FL

Boston June 11 th. 1830

Sir. I wrote you by the last mail respecting the lighthouse at St. Mark's. This morning I received your letter of the 2d inst. with the copy of the report of the arbitrators, and the letter from the collector at Magnolia confirming the statement made to me by Mr. Knowlton on his return. You will see, Sir, the mortifying situation I am placed in, by the conduct of the two contractors associated with me, for I will not admit that the government supposes such conduct countenanced by me. —

A lighthouse tower carried up with two seperate walls of a sufficient thickness, and the space between left clear, no doubt are as strong and durable as any manner that can be built, but this is in no way justified by the terms of the contract, but, Sir, the walls of St. Mark's are only 8 inches thick, the length of one brick. It can never stand but for a short time. I hope I shall never be compelled to receive any payment for such a piece of fraud, and do most earnestly request, that I may be permitted to make both the lighthouses and dwelling houses at St. Marks and at St. Johns in every way conformable to the contracts. When completed in every respect to the satisfaction of the superintendant and in conformity to the contracts, then to be paid, as

stated in the contract and not before. I will have men and materials at both places by the first day of October, and will pledge myself to keep a good light at both places during the time that the work is going on. The lighthouse at St. John is built very different from that at St. Mark, having nearly double the quantity of materials in it. There is no doubt of its strength and durability, but it is not built according to contract, and it is my wish to have an opportunity of making it so. If any thing is required further than retaining the $10.500 that would have been now due, had the contracts been complied with. I am willing to give further bonds, that before the 15th day of ~~October~~ December next, that the lighthouse and dwelling house at St. John and St. Mark's shall be in every respect built conformable to the contracts.

I have the honor to be,

Sir.

Very respectfully

Winslow Lewis

S. Pleasonton Esq
5th auditor and acting
commissioner of the
Revenue.

NHL RG26 E17E St. Marks, FL

Boston. August 22. 1830

Sir,

Having advanced myself last winter 6000 dollars in the building of St. Mark's lighthouse, and it requiring a further advance of 5000 dollars for outfits and materials to do what I intend to, at the lighthouses of St. Mark and St. Johns, those with the advance for the requisite materials for building the lighthouses at Choctaw Point and Jacksons Island North Carolina, rather more than exhaust my funds which are available, I must beg the favour of you to take into view my peculiar unfortunate situation relating to St. Mark's lighthouse and St. Johns, and authorize the Collector here to advance me $2500 on account of the money that will be due on the contract for building St. Mark's lighthouse, when that lighthouse and dwelling house are made conformable to the contract.

However fraudulent the conduct of those might have been, who were associated with me in the contract, a lighthouse and dwelling house have been built which have been valued by the arbitrators at 6850 dollars and have been

occupied by the Government for 6 months. —
Materials have been purchased, workmen engaged,
and every arrangement made, to make that light
house and the one at St. Johns agreeable to the
contract as far as it may be found deficient.
With this view, and under all circumstances, I hope
you will authorize the advance requested. —

The first vessel with men and materials will
leave here, either for St. Marks or Choctaw Point
on the 15th Sept.

I have the honor to be, Sir:

Very respectfully,
Your Obed't Servt
Wm Stone Lewis

S. Pleasonton Esq.
1st Auditor and
Acting Commissioner of
the Revenue.

RG26 E17E St. Marks FL

February 3. 1831.

Sir,

By the proposals which will be transmitted to you by the Collector of this place, it will be found that my offers for building and fitting up both lighthouses were two hundred and seven dollars less than any other, but the proposal of Noah Porter for building is forty three dollars less than mine. Noah Porter is the person whose offer was accepted for building the lighthouse at Point Defer and Sand Key. The contract was drawn and laid with Mr. Dearborn the Collector three months, during which time he was not able to obtain any bondsmen, and they were again advertised for other proposals. He also entered into a contract with the Engineer Department for work to be done in securing this harbour, which he totally failed in executing. I will only add should there be any delay in the contract for building those lighthouses they could not be finished before the sickly season, of course must lay over until next winter. The only motive I had for proposing for the low sum which I have, is, that my vessel with all my men are now at work at St. Marks lighthouse and could immediately go from there to Cat Island and

Pass Christian, and have those lighthouses done by the first of June at a much less expense than to send men from this place. I have now at Mobile one hundred thousand bricks and one hundred casks of lime and Roman Cement for plastering.

I have the honor to be Sir.

Very respectfully

Your Ob't Servant

Winslow Lewis

To Richard Rush Esqr

1st Auditor & acting

Commissioner of the

Revenue.

FL
RG26EMTE St. Marks

Boston. February 24. 1831

Sir,

I have received a letter from Mr. Welles the Superintendant of St. Marks' lighthouse, enclosing a certificate that the lighthouse has been rebuilt in a manner fully equal to the contract, and entirely to his satisfaction. My workmen are now at St. Johns' River to work on that lighthouse. Having expended more than twelve thousand dollars in building and rebuilding St. Marks' lighthouse, I have to request that you will authorize Mr. Hens haw to pay me five thousand dollars on account of the contract for building St. Marks' lighthouse, retaining in his hands the balance, which I wish him authorized to pay when I produce a certificate from the Superintendant of St. Johns' lighthouse that the same has been finished. I ask this, as I am now advancing considerable funds for the execution of the contract for building Cat Island and Japs Christian lighthouses. The request being so reasonable, I cannot doubt but that it will be granted.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Very respectfully your obed. Servt
Winslow Lewis

S. Pleasonton Esq
5th auditor and acting
Commissr of the Revenue.

| | |
|---|---|
| Contract for building St. Marks lighthouse | 10. 500 |
| Allowed for plastering with Roman Cement. | 250 |
| Building piazza — | 100 |
| Extra by order of the Superintendant and certified by him on the contract | 15 |
| | 10. 865 |
| Received of Mr. Henshaw. | 5. 000 |
| Balance due on St. Marks lighthouse & contract | $ 5. 865 |

St. Marks, FL  MC  R626 E17E

Boston January 6th 1842.

Sir,

I find from Mr Knowlton, who, has a perfect knowledge of the point of land, on which St Mark's Light house is located, that the land is low & sandy; the pan or strata on the top is somewhat hard, for one foot, under that a loose quick-sand, that the Light house can be moved back, one, two, three or even four hundred feet, should that distance be required, but must be set on piles, to give the foundation, any certainty of security, & the want, of a pile foundation, is the cause of the present buildings being cracked by settling. It appears, that the Light house was, by the consent of Mr Willis, the then, Collector, built up seventeen feet from the ground, with rough stone, cased on the outside with brick four inches, as those stone would not, on any account, be used in the Tower, that I purpose to erect, the consequence is, that there is one third less materials, in the present Tower, that I should make use of, in the new one, than, if it had been wholly, built of brick. On account of the Climate & the low, wet situation, the Dwelling house must stand in, I should think a wooden one preferable & as you will see, will cost much less, than brick, the wooden one to be set up two feet above the ground, on about 14 piles, this will prevent the timber from rotting & will last longer, than the timber in a brick house, — as there is no fresh water to be had there & the present Cistern has given out, a new cistern will be required, built in the best manner, to hold one thousand gallons. I will agree to take down the present Light house & build another of the same diameter & height, on any Site that may be agreed on, by the Superintendent & Mr Knowlton on my part, that may be thought, most judicious, not exceeding four hundred feet distance from where, the Light house, now stands.

suitable piles to be driven, sufficient to secure the permanency of the foundation, forming a circle of twenty five feet diameter, on their outsides, another circle of piles to be driven, in the same manner within the other circle, so as to make the distance five feet, from the outside of the outer circle, to the inside of the inner one, on those piles to be laid plank 4 inches thick, on which is to commence the two brick walls sixteen inches thick, to be carried up the same thickness until they unite, then, to be regularly graduated to two feet thick at the top, the walls to be connected by eight ties one foot thick carried up from the bottom, circular stairs from the floor of the Light house of hard Pine, the floor to be paved with brick, to be six windows in the Tower, window caps & sills, to be Bolton Stone the width of the outside wall, Granite Stone, door-post, cap & sill, an arch to be turned, on which to be laid a soap stone deck, the Lantern now on the Light house, to be put on, made tight & well glazed & painted, the Tower whitewashed inside & outside; to be allowed to use all the bricks, in the present Light house & Dwelling house, the Soap Stone Deck, ~~stairs if found to be hard pine & sound, not otherwise~~, all the window frames & sashes, that are sound, those that are not, to be new, the same lighting apparatus, now in the Light house, to be put up again.

## Dwelling house.

A frame Dwelling house of wood 36 feet by 20 two story's high, lower story or basement, seven feet in the clear, second Story, to finish eight feet in the clear, roof rectangular, sides, ends & roof boarded with good seasoned boards & shingled with good Shingles, basement Story divided into two rooms, one of which, for a kitchen, in which is to be a chimney & suitable fire place & oven, sink & shelves, stairs to lead up into the second story, three windows in the room for a kitchen

& heart Pine Carolina pine

& two in the other 12 lights 8 by 10 each, door to go out in front, & one to go from one room to the other, one to have a lock & the other a bolt - the second story, divided into two rooms with a Chimney in the end, opposite the kitchen chimney, fire place in each room, an entry eight feet wide between the rooms, with a door to go out in front & a window back, Stairs to lead from the entry into the Attic between the chambers, three windows in each room 12 lights 9 by 12 each, the Attic story to be divided into two chambers, with a space between six feet - the two rooms in the second story, entry, Closet & both chambers are to be finished in a plain decent style, lathed & plastered, all the floors in the house, laid double except the one, in the basement story, opposite the kitchen, which is to be laid with two inch plank; doors to lead from the entry into the Parlours, at the head of the kitchen stairs, Chamber doors & Closet, all the doors to be four pannel, except the front door, which is to have two frieze lights, all to have good hinges & latches, the front door a good lock, a window in each gable end of the house, a lutheran window in the roof, in each chamber, lead around the chimneys & lutheran windows, gutters back & front of the house, with trunks to lead the water into the Cistern the sills of the house to be laid, not less than eighteen inches above the ground, to rest on brick pillars or piles, as the solidity of the ground may be found, a Piazza in front of the house, eight feet wide, floor level with the under part of the sill, of the front door, of the second story - ceiling of the Piazza boarded & a good railing around it, Stairs to lead from the Piazza to the ground, all the house on the outside, except the floor of the Piazza & roof, to be painted two coats, all the wood work inside, except where it is not plastered, to be painted two coats, no other materials, in the old Dwelling house now there, to be used in the new one, except boards, for under floors & furring. A brick Cistern

to hold 1000 gallons, to be built under the house, so as to come up into one corner of the room, opposite the kitchen, in the basement, bottom & sides one foot thick, inside course of brick, laid in good cement & the whole inside, well plastered with the same. You will see by the specification, that the house is two stories, - much better calculated for that Climate, than those, that have been built, in the lower or basement story - there is a large kitchen in one end, in the other the Cistern, store-room & for other purposes - the second story, will be high & cool in the hot season, the sills of the house laying 18 inches above the ground, the air will pass under the house, - they will last much longer without decay, than in a brick house, where the air must be excluded, on the whole I have come, to the conclu-sion, that, for that Climate, a wooden house is preferable to brick

As my Vessel will arrive here in a few days from Cove point, with my men & may be despatched for St marks in ten days, so as to complete that work before, any appropriation is made for any building, I have been induced to offer to you, to do all that is here specified for the Light house Dwelling house & Cistern for the low sum of $7000 Seven thousand five hundred dollars - under any other circum-stances, I could not offer to do it, for this sum - the expenses of my Vessel & 18 men, will be $28 pr day - we must allow 30 days to go there & the same to come home, 70 days to do the work - You will see by this item, that I can make but a very little by the job, more than giving employment to my men - whom I wish to keep together. No payment will be required for this, or any thing else I may do, until the first of June next. As I shall not discharge my Vessel or men, until I hear from you, an early answer is requested.

I have the honor, to be Sir,

Very Respectfully

Your Obt Servt

Winslow Lewis

Stephen Pleasonton Esqr
Fifth Auditor & Acting
Commissioner of the Revenue.
Washington.

Recd Jany 11/42

Estimate sent to Mr Sproston same date -

St. Marks

R626E17E

Boston January 15th 1842

Sir,

Your Letter under date of the 6th inst, has been received - acceding to my proposals, for taking down & rebuilding the Light house & Dwelling house at St Marks - with one alteration - that is - to have all the stairs of the Light house new & of North Carolina Yellow heart Pine, this alteration I shall agree to; you may rely on it, that Mr Knowlton will not risk my reputation, in not having the work done in the best manner - the Materials I send out, shall be good - my Vessel is here & will be despatched as soon as possible.

When last in Washington you observed that you thought, you should not do much to the existing Light houses this year, but should have Charleston Light house refitted up, this is certainly one of our very important Lights, it was fitted up 26 years ago, a revolving Light with 14, 15 inch Reflectors, which I presume still remain there - the Light house was originally 67 feet high, in 1811 it was built up to 92 feet high, how long the Lantern was made before that period, I have no knowledge, but it is one of those with a deal of Iron & little Glass - to make one of our best Lights, it will require a new Lantern of sufficient size to admit eight panes Plate Glass 24 by 20 in each Octagon, fitted up with 14 Lamps 14. 21 inch Reflectors, on two sides of an oblong square, usual spare Lamps, Soap Stone Deck, & I think one of the new improved Clocks, the one now there, must have been in use many years, it may be good -

I could wish to be authorized, to make my proposals to you, for what, I would do the work for, if they were acceded to, I could have every thing made during the winter & sent to Charleston in the Spring - in time for my Vessel to go there, on her return from St Marks & do the work - this would enable me to do it for less Money than to

have to send out the workmen from here, after her return.

I have the Honor, to be Sir,
Very Respectfully
Your Obt Servt
Wm Lee Lewis

Stephen Pleasonton Esqr
Fifth Auditor & Acting
Commissioner of the Revenue.
Washington.

Answd Jany 19/42

Washton, Jany 15/42.

Wm Lewis, acknd receipt of the
agreement to the Annapolis contract, dated
this day between Contractor, Thomas Snowden
St. and Wm Lewis Esq. with seal & bond
and directs Capt Hartwell to deliver
the same to Commissioners Navy Office
Treasury Chambers when they
arrive at Annapolis &c &c

A Pleasonton

Jany 19/42.

RG26 E17C

Custom House Boston,
January 20. 1842.

Sir:

In conformity with your instructions of the 12th. instant, I have entered into Contract with Winslow Lewis, Esq. of this city, for rebuilding the Light House and Dwelling House, at the entrance of St Marks river, in Florida. I send you, herewith, as you request, a copy of the Contract, to be forwarded to the Collector, at St Marks. Mr. Lewis has given bond, to the United States, with sufficient surety, for $ 111.000, for the faithfull performance of the agreement.

I am, Sir,
very respectfully,
Your obt. Servt.
Lucius Lincoln.
Superintendent

S. Pleasonton, Esq.
5th. Auditor
Acting Comr. of the Revenue
Washington - City.

St. Marks, FL MLC RG26E17E

Boston Oct$^{r}$ 28.$^{th}$ 1843.

Sir, Ans$^{d}$. Nov. 1$^{st}$ 1843—

After some time spent in deliberation I have matured a plan of a dwelling house, for the keepers of St Marks & Sand key light-houses, which I now enclose. My chief object has been strength, to make a plan so strong it would stand the force of any wind & sea, which has taken place at the location of either St Marks & Sand key light-houses within the recollection of any one now living. In the plan of St Marks the foundation and frame of the house are so tied together, that no sea can separate them. Those heavy piles 12 inches square, (equal to 16 inches round) driven down 7 feet will insure their never being undermined. The 10 Spar shoar braces must prevent any wind from moving the house. It may blow off all the boards & shingles but the frame must stand. St Marks being sand foundation brick piers would not answer, as in all sand beaches after you go down 3 or 4 feet the sand becomes wet and too loose to lay bricks on. This depth would be liable to be undermined in some of those extraordinary gales. The large piles as well as all the timber of the house being yellow southern pine must last a long time. To have the house as little exposed as possible I have made only one story 9 feet in clear. Roof only 1/3 pitch. But I have made it 38 feet long which gives three rooms on the floor besides a hall in the centre 10 feet wide with doors

at each end to let the air through. The kitchen being only for cooking & generally occupied by blacks I have placed fifteen feet from the house, detached the same as the house & secured with iron to the piles. A walk with railings to go from the kitchen into the back door of the house.
To have the house less exposed I have dispensed with a piazza but have introduced blinds which will keep out the sun & admit the air.
I think Sand Key much less exposed to the sea than St Marks, owing to the coral rocks that lay around it, which breaks the force of the sea.
Here I have brick piers as we have a solid foundation for them to rest on 4 or 5 feet below the surface of the ground. The iron bolt that runs up through those brick piers & sills of the house, must prevent the building lifting in any hurricane, and the ten spar shoars secure it against rocking any way. I cannot believe that either of those houses will ever be carried away by either wind or sea, judging from any thing that has happened in our day or from what history has furnished an account, that is, if they are faithfully built agreeable to the plan I have given.
You will see by the materials of which they are to be built, the manner they are put together & the expense of going there, they must cost considerable money, but will never have to be rebuilt by the present generation. Both of these houses situated 2 or 3000 miles from here, will not cost so much as a single lantern & lighting apparatus for Cape Cod Light, put up by I. W. P. Lewis.
I could wish to build those houses & would build them for a very small compensation, and from my knowledge of the places & the

men & means at my command, could complete them in much less time than any other person. I will agree to build them both agreeable to the plan I have given for Five thousand nine hundred dollars.

Should you advertise them & the building of them should go into other hands, I shall expect you to allow me a moderate compensation for the plans furnished.

I am not fearful of any person underbidding me who may be competent to execute the work & is capable of calculating the cost & the risks, particularly the risk of a vessel laying at Sand key in the winter, for I should go to St Marks first, that being first wanted, but where proposals are advertised for the lowest bidder, it may be expected that offers will be made by men not competent to calculate the cost or the risk & have not much to lose.

When St Marks light house was rebuilt the same lighting apparatus was put up again. From the tenor of the letter you received from Mr Ware, Superintendent, when I was in Washington I should suppose that a new set of lighting apparatus was wanted including the Chandelier. I have prepared 15 lamps & 15.15 inch reflectors which will enable me to furnish a set of apparatus at very short notice.

Stephen Pleasonton Esqr
Fifth Auditor & Acting
Commissioner of the Revenue.

I have the honor to be Sir,
Very respectfully
Your Obt Ser.
Winslow Lewis

Your plans were sent to Sir Graham
before I got
here for [illegible]
1 Nov 43