

which has been conceded to the new Territory of Indiana, whose inhabitants, deriving wisdom from two years' experience of the second grade of government, have found it their interest to repose entire confidence in the Legislature appointed by and under the control of the General Government, the people still retaining in their hands the power, which cannot fail to have a happy influence over their government, to wit, that of assuming the second grade whenever it shall be the will of the majority of their citizens. The grand jury have strong reasons to believe that the majority of our citizens will approve of postponing the operations of the second grade, under the above stated privilege of assuming it whenever they shall find it expedient. The grand jury think it, therefore, a duty to present, as a grievance, that the sudden and unexpected alteration in the government of the Territory, has been brought about by the industry of fifteen persons, part of a committee of thirty-five, irregularly chosen, at whose election not one-half of the inhabitants are supposed to have attended; and which election was held for the express purpose, as the people were informed by a hand-bill, not to demand a change of the former Government, but to obtain a redress of grievances; and consequently this important measure has been effected with the implied consent of less than one-quarter part of the citizens; or, more properly speaking, by the unauthorized agency of fifteen persons, composing the minority of the committee. The grand jury feel themselves forcibly compelled by their duty to add, that so great an alarm exists in the minds of the people, on the subject of taxation, that they are of opinion that, if the second grade of Government is not arrested in its present stage, and postponed until the population and finances of the Territory become adequate to the increased expense of that grade, a very great depopulation will be the inevitable consequence.

The grand jury return their thanks to the court for their excellent charge; they presume to hope, that the just sentiments therein expressed will make a happy impression on the minds of the people, contributing, with other means, to attain the desirable end so much to be wished by all good men.

WILLIAM GORD FORNAN, <i>Foreman</i> ,	F. ZERBAN,
THOMAS WILKINS,	HENRY TURNER,
WILLIAM DUNBAR,	CHARLES TODD,
DAVID FERGUSON,	JOHN MINOR,
GEORGE COCHRAN,	JOHN WILSON,
GEORGE OVERAKER,	BENJAMIN OSMUN,
J. HUTCHINS,	DANIEL DOUGLASS,
WM. SCOTT,	JAMES NICHOLSON,
	PHILANDER SMITH.

*Ordered by the court*, That process issue on the second and third presentments, on application of Lyman Hardin, Esq., Attorney General.

A true copy, test:

ROBERT STARK, C. S. C.

6th CONGRESS.]

No. 144.

[2d SESSION.]

BOOKS AND PAPERS DESTROYED BY FIRE IN THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT IN 1801.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, FEBRUARY 24, 1801.

SIR:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, *February 23, 1801.*

In obedience to the resolve of the House of Representatives of the 2d instant, I have the honor of transmitting herewith the best information it is in my power to obtain, in relation to the destruction of official books and papers by the fire in the building occupied by the Treasury Department. To the enclosed statements from the other officers of the Department, I have the pleasure to add, that the books and papers belonging immediately to my office, with the exception of a few official letters and documents which can be replaced, have been preserved. It is not probable that any great public inconvenience will be the consequence of the unfortunate accident which gave occasion to the inquiry.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, sir, your obedient servant,

SAMUEL DEXTER.

The Hon. the SPEAKER of the *House of Representatives.*

SIR:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE, *February 19, 1801.*

In reply to your letter of the 4th instant, I have the honor to inform you, that after a careful and diligent examination, it does not appear that any records or documents appertaining to this office are missing in consequence of the late fire, from which any loss can result to the public, or to individuals. One book, in which sundry forms prescribed by this Department are recorded, has not yet appeared, though, as its destruction is highly improbable, expectations are entertained that it will eventually be found: if it should not, it can be replaced with some labor.

I have the honor to be, sir, with great respect, your obedient servant,

JOHN STEELE.

The Hon. SAMUEL DEXTER, Esq.

*A list of books and papers destroyed or lost in the Auditor's Office, in consequence of the fire which took place in the Treasury, on Tuesday, the 20th of January, 1801.*

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, AUDITOR'S OFFICE, *February 19, 1801.*

1. The books containing copies of reports on all the accounts which have been adjusted since the establishment of the present Government, excepting those on the public debt funded at the Treasury, which being entered in a

distinct set of books, and kept in another room, were preserved. With the aid and expense of an extra clerk, the lost copies may be replaced, as the originals, with the statements and vouchers belonging to them, are deposited in the Register's office.

2. The books containing copies of various statements made by the Auditor and Accountants under the late Government. The originals of these are also in the Register's office, and new copies may be made from them, if necessary.

3. The ledgers and journals in which were entered the accounts settled by the late commissioner with the officers of the old quartermaster and commissary departments. The loss of these books adds to the difficulty of adjusting such of the accounts in these departments as remained open; but from the examination which had been made, the greater part were found so defective as to leave little hope of a satisfactory statement. Some of them, however, though not passed, have been stated as far as the materials would admit. It is believed that few, if any, of the papers are lost.

4. The books in which were entered the accounts of the late secret and commercial committee. The papers being safe, no great inconvenience will result from the loss of the books, as few, if any of the transactions of this committee remain unsettled.

5. A number of claims exhibited by individuals, for services or supplies during the late war. Most of these had been presented in the first instance to the State commissioners, and turned over by them to the Treasury. They had been all examined many years ago, and judged inadmissible; but as the register or list is gone with them, it is impossible to state the particular nature of each, or the names of the respective claimants.

6. An account rendered by the Bank of the United States, for the sale of 8 per cent stock, under the last act authorizing a loan. A duplicate of this may be obtained.

7. An account of Hazen Kimball for the contingent expenses of the Office of State, which had been examined and was ready for stating. The vouchers cannot be replaced, but the particulars may be had from a book in which they were regularly entered by Mr. Kimball.

8. An account of Thomas Claxton, as agent for furnishing the Capitol. The vouchers had been all examined and found right, but the statement suspended until he should also render his account for furnishing the President's house, with which it had some connexion.

9. The accounts and vouchers of Tench Francis, late purveyor of public supplies, for purchases from July 1, 1797, to the month of September, 1798, accompanied by a general account current, stated by his executors; in which they claimed a balance. The examination of these accounts was nearly completed, but the final settlement of them suspended from a wish to bring into view the balances for or against him with the Departments of War and Navy, with which his accounts were also in a course of settlement. Duplicates of the abstracts and (it is understood) of the vouchers also, can be furnished.

10. Three partial or subordinate accounts of Israel Wheelen, the present purveyor. Duplicates of all these have been already furnished.

11. The accounts of the following gentlemen, acting as agents for the commissioners of the direct tax, in their respective States:

Joseph Israel, Delaware; Nathaniel Gilman, New Hampshire; James White, Tennessee; Stephen Bayard, New York; Paul Zantinger, Pennsylvania; Thomas Davis, Massachusetts.

All these accounts, except the last, had been examined, and some of them, particularly the two first, would have been stated and passed the next day. The others were suspended, either for want of warrants, or some further explanation on particular points. As the vouchers, though much injured, are not entirely destroyed, it is probable that when they can be more thoroughly examined and properly arranged, they may be yet found sufficiently perfect to admit of settlement with at least some of the agents.

A few other accounts were also somewhat injured; but being still, however, in a state to be settled, a detail of them is deemed superfluous.

In addition to the foregoing, it is possible, and even probable, that in the course of business some other papers may be found missing, which are not recollected at this time; but none, it is believed, of much consequence.

R. HARRISON.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, REGISTER'S OFFICE, *February 19, 1801.*

The REGISTER OF THE TREASURY, upon the communication of the Secretary of the Treasury, of the 4th instant, transmitting a copy of the resolution of the House of Representatives of the United States, of Monday, the 2d of February, 1801, begs leave to report:

That upon the alarm of the late fire in the house occupied by the Treasury Department, all the books and records of the United States appertaining to his office, and which were deemed of primary importance, were removed from the fire-proof rooms occupied by the Register; and that, upon their being replaced, it does not appear, after a minute examination, that any of the books and records of the United States in his possession at the time of the late fire sustained either injury or loss, excepting statements Nos. 8,961, 10,919, and 11,349, with their respective vouchers, which were in a part of the building exposed to the fire. The official reports upon those three statements having been preserved, and the accounts thereof closed in the Treasury books, it is presumed no injury can possibly arise from the want of those destroyed documents.

Respectfully submitted.

JOSEPH NOURSE, *Register of the Treasury.*

TREASURY OF THE UNITED STATES, *February 19, 1801.*

SIR:

In answer to your letter of the 4th instant, I can assure you that my office has not suffered any injury of the least consequence by the late fire.

I am, with respect, sir, your most humble servant,

SAMUEL MEREDITH, *Treasurer of the United States.*

SAMUEL DEXTER, Esq., *Secretary of the Treasury.*

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, REVENUE OFFICE, *February 13, 1801.*

Sir:

I have paid due attention to a notice from the House of Representatives, which you communicated to me on the 4th instant.

I have the satisfaction of assuring you that the books are all safe, and that I know of no paper missing from this office which can impede or in any manner affect the adjustment of the public accounts.

I am, with perfect respect, sir, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM MILLER, *Commissioner of the Revenue.*

The Hon. SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

Sir:

GENERAL STAMP OFFICE, *February 23, 1801.*

In obedience to your request and the resolution of Congress on the 2d current, I have the honor to report, that I have been fortunate enough to reclaim all the papers belonging to the General Stamp Office, of any consideration, and that the public will sustain no material injury in this office by the unfortunate fire.

I am, with the most perfect respect and esteem, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

JOSHUA JOHNSON, *Superintendent of Stamps.*

SAMUEL DEXTER, Esq., *Secretary of the Treasury.*

6th CONGRESS.]

No. 145.

[2d SESSION.

CITY OF WASHINGTON.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, FEBRUARY 27, 1801.

Mr. GRISWOLD, from the committee who were appointed to inquire into the expenditure of money made by the commissioners of the city of Washington, the disposition of public property made by them, and generally into all the transactions of the commissioners which relate to the trust confided to them by the President of the United States, made the following report:

That the short period which has elapsed since they have been possessed of the documents relating to the transactions of the commissioners, the imperfect situation of those documents in several particulars, and the complicated nature of the inquiry, will prevent the committee from presenting to the House that full view of the subject which was desired. They deem, it, however, their duty to submit the result of their inquiry, so far as the same has been made.

By a general account of receipts and expenditures, hereunto annexed, it appears that the commissioners have expended more than one million of dollars on various subjects, which are partially detailed in that statement. Whether those expenditures have been made with economy, or not, it is not necessary for the committee to decide, as the House will possess the same information which the committee possess on this point. It may, however, be proper to remark that the principal objects of expense have been the Capitol, the President's house, and the two buildings erected for the accommodation of the Executive Departments; and that the situation of those buildings, being under the eye of every member of the Legislature, cannot want a particular description.

As large as these expenditures have been, it is understood that the accounts of the commissioners have not been regularly audited by any public officer, but have rested on their own statements.

By the report made by the commissioners to the President of the United States, and by him transmitted to Congress during the present session, it appears that the site of the city of Washington was conveyed by the original proprietors to certain confidential persons, in trust, for certain uses which were defined in the deeds delivered to the trustees, a copy of which is annexed to the commissioners' report; that the trustees have conveyed to the commissioners, for the use of the United States, agreeably to the provisions of those deeds, the building lots which belonged to the public, and were laid down on the plan of the city, but that the trustees have declined to convey the streets of the city and the public squares and other grounds designed and appropriated for public uses.

The committee have thought it their duty to ascertain the causes which induced the trustees to refuse their deeds of this part of the public property; and, without pronouncing whether the trustees have conducted correctly or not, they understand that the trustees claim that they held these lands as well for the benefit of the proprietors as for the public; that the price allowed to the proprietors for those squares and public grounds being comparatively small, it was expected that these grounds should forever remain unoccupied, except by necessary public buildings; that the areas which they furnished should remain open for general convenience, and thereby increase the value of the building lots, and particularly those lots which adjoined those public grounds; that, under these impressions, and after receiving a remonstrance from some of the proprietors, they deemed it proper, in faithfulness to the parties concerned, to require that, before they made a conveyance of this property, the principle should be settled that the public grounds should not, after the same were conveyed, be converted by the commissioners into building lots; that the commissioners, however, declined establishing that principle, and claimed the right of converting such parts of the public ground into building lots as should be afterwards judged proper. The trustees further state that the plan of the city has been varied more than once, and that some of the public grounds, which are delineated upon a plan which was engraven and circulated by the commissioners as a true plan of the city, and is now in the hands of the members of the Legislature, have since been surveyed by the commissioners into building lots; that, under these circumstances, the trustees did not believe that, in justice to the proprietors, they could convey these public grounds.

The committee have likewise understood that, in consequence of the contracts entered into with Morris, Greenleaf, and Nicholson, for the sale of a large number of the building lots belonging to the public, and the failure of payment on their part, and the subsequent transactions which have grown out of that contract, some doubts have been entertained respecting the titles to a considerable part of those lots. *These doubts*, whether well or ill