Thomas M. Rodney Letter Book, 1849-1853
MS. Books - Official

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505 Market Street
Wilmington, DE 19801

No 1

Consulate of the United States
Matanzas November 8th 1849

Sir

I have the honor to inform the Department of State that I arrived here on the 2d inst in the Bark Elizabeth of Philadelphia, and on the following day, the 3d I called on the Governor of this District and presented my letter of appointment requesting to be allowed to discharge the duties of Commercial Agent of the United States until such time as the Royal Exequatur might be received. The Governor has exercised courteous and warm in his assurances of friendship towards both my body and country, spoke of his strong desire to be on the best terms, and his anxiety to fulfill all my wishes, but that the power was not with him to grant my request still I could procure to discharge the duties of Commercial Agent, and that he would immediately communicate with the governor and Captain General and yesterday he transmitted to me the desired permission of His Excellency the Governor and Captain General to my request.

There is a perceptible change for the better in the treatment of our citizens on the part of the authorities of this Island since last I had the honor to perform the duties of this office partly, perhaps owing to the Presidents proclamation in relation to the second expedition, and partly to the valour and heroic courage evinced by our troops in the affair with Mexico, which has forced them to believe that a very few such men could accomplish a great deal in the present universal and strong sorted antipathy to the Mother Country, which is not confined to the Black population, but has extended itself very generally to the other sex. This was strikingly exhibited on the Queens birth day, the 10th of October last, at the annual ball given in this City, the ladies with a single exception refused to attend, the consequence was, one of those acts of injustice and oppression by the authorities which has done so much to alienate

the affections of the people from the Government. Have suspected of having taken part in the affair. (four young men have immediately shipped for Spain the property of the Society, a Society composed of the elite of the City, at whose rooms the ball was given) Confiscated, and an order passed that no dancing should be done in Matanzas

On my passage out here I was strongly impressed with the necessity of some action on the part of our Government to accomplish the erection of a Light House on Elbow Key on the Northern edge of the Great Bahama Bank, of another on the Orange Keys on the Southern edge of the same Bank and another on Dog Rock on the Northern edge of the Salt Key Bank. These with two or three buoys on the Great Bahama Bank would make the navigation to this Island, New Orleans and the Gulph comparatively safe, save yearly thousands to our Commerce and entitle the administration to the thanks of the whole Commercial Community

I have the honor
to be, with great respect
your obt Sr
J. M. Forney

Hon:
John M Clayton
Secretary of State

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No 2

Consulate of the United States
Matanzas Dec. 31st 1849.

Sir

I have the honor to transmit, herewith, semi-annual Returns of American Vessels entered and Cleared at this port, for the last six months, ending this day.

I have no means of ascertaining the amount of fees received, my predecessor S. M. Johnson Esqr having taken with him ~~the official correspondence of the office for the time he held it~~ the account books, together with the official correspondence of the office during the time he held it

This Consulate is much in want of a National Flag which I hope may be furnished me, at any time it may suit the convenience of the Department

It is perhaps proper I should inform the Department that the Secretary of the Treasury at the time he issued the "Circular Instructions to Collectors and other officers of the Customs" of June the 13th 1849, laboured under a misapprehension in relation to the exemption of American Vessels from the payment of tonnage duty in certain cases, the Circular states first

That American Vessels entering ports in the Island of Cuba, in ballast, are not subject to the payment of any tonnage duty whatever

Second,

American Vessels entering the ports in the Island of Cuba with a cargo of any description of merchandise whatsoever, are exempt from any charge of tonnage duty, if such Vessels export or convey therefrom cargoes of the Exports taken at said ports

The privileges at all the ports of the Island are

1st Foreign Vessels entering and Clearing in ballast or

2d entering in ballast or with a cargo of any description

ion of merchandise and clearing with a full and entire cargo of Molasses are exempt from the payment of any tonnage duty;

But the cargo must be wholly Molasses a single box of sugar or bag of coffee or any other article will subject the Depch to tonnage duty, the Depch must also be full so that nothing more can be put on board with safety to the Depch and cargo.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obdt Sr
G. M. Rodney

Hon John M Clayton
Secretary of State

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No. 4

Consulate of the United States
Matanzas Dec. 31st 1849

Sir

I have the honor to inform you of my having this day valued on the Department of State at thirty days sight, order of Mr. S. M. Rooney for fifty eight 45/100 dollars for the reimbursement of my advances to American destitute seamen, as per account and vouchers this day forwarded the 5th Auditor of the Treasury Department.

Which if found correct you will please cause to be paid and charge to this Consulate against seamens funds to which account I have this day credited said amount and thus balanced the same

I have the honor to be, sir,
your obt st

J. M. Rooney

Hon. John M. Clayton
Secretary of State

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Market Street

No 5

Consulate of the U.S.

Matanzas March 14th 1850

Sir

I have the honor to inform the Department that my Royal Exequatur was this day received

I also beg leave to state that the Bark Amos Potter of Boston C. E. McNear master, on her voyage from Havana to this place went ashore on the morning of the 8th Inst on Punta de Mayo at the entrance of this Harbour, where she now lies a total loss — crew saved.

I have the honor, to be,
Sir your, Obdt Svt
J M Rodney

Hon John M. Clayton
Secretary of State

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No. 6.

Consulate of the United States Matanzas April 1st 1850.

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you of my having this day drawn on the Department of State at thirty days sight, order of Wm S. M. Rodney for $103.16. for the reimbursement of my advances to a American distitute seaman as per accounts and vouchers this day forwarded the 5th auditor of the Treasury Department

Which if found correct you will please cause to be paid and charge to this Consulate against seamens funds to which account I have this day credited said amount and thus balance the same

I have the honor to be,
Sir, your obt. Sl.
G. M. Rodney

Hon John M. Clayton
Secretary of State

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No 7.

Consulate of the United States
Matanzas April 13th 1850

Sir

Herewith enclosed I have the honor to forward the Register of the Brig David Pratt of Portland, burthen 146.33/95 tons Solomon Soule late Master, condemned by order of survey at Cardenas, January 30th 1850
also the Register of the Schr Louisa, of Frankfort, burthen 74.54/95 tons. John Wilson late Master lost to Windward of Cardenas, Feb 6th 1850
and the Register of the Bark Amos Patten of Boston burthen 249.67 tons Christopher E. McNear late Master wrecked March 8th 1850 on Punta de Maya at the entrance of the Harbour

I have the honor to be,
Sir, Your Obdt Svt

J. W. Rodney

Hon John M. Clayton
Secretary of State

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No 8

Consulate of the United States
Matanzas, April 4th 1850

Sir

In obedience to the Department's circular of March 4th 1850. I have the honor to forward herewith the signature of George P. Bell Esqr Consular Agent for the Port of Cardenas, together with an impression of the seal of this vice Consulate

And have the honor to be
Sir, with great respect
your obdt. Sl.

J M Rodney

Hon. John M Clayton
Secretary of State

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No. 9

Consulate of the U.S.

Matanzas May 13th 1857

Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the Department's letter of the 16th of April last in reply to various letters from this Consulate, and to enclose a copy of a letter I had the honor to address to His Excellency the Governor of Matanzas on the 15th of April last on the subject of one of the port regulations of this harbour in relation to merchant vessels hoisting their national flags, but to which I have not yet been able to get a reply, tho I have addressed the Governor again on the subject and have been promised an answer "as soon as an investigation can be made". I also enclose a copy of the port regulations

The Department will observe that my main objection was to the ambiguous meaning of the 19th Article which for 18 years has been understood, at all the ports of the Island, to refer more to the Captains or officers on guard there to the Masters of Vessels; but these people whether right or wrong always have their own way, and it is almost useless to contend with them

The business season being well over and all who can, having left, owing something to the prevalence of both Cholera and yellow fever, I shall avail myself of the permission granted me, and return to the United States by the first good opportunity. During my absence the duties of the office will be performed by John P. Bayley Esqr a gentleman of high character and a citizen of the U.S. for all whose official acts I hold myself responsible

I have the honor to be, sir

with high consideration.

Your obdt Svt J. M. Pollney

Hon John M. Clayton
Secretary of State

No 10

Consulate of the United States
Matanzas Dec. 7th 1850

Sir

I have the honor to inform the Department that I arrived in the steamer of the 1st Inst. from Charleston.

The new crop of sugar which promises to be unusually large is beginning to come in slowly — very few American vessels in port

There is still a feverish excitement in the public mind in relation to the expedition and American citizens are regarded with suspicion, but it is to be hoped that this state of things will not last long.

I have the honor to be
Sir, Your Obdt Sr

J. M. Pinney

Hon: Daniel Webster
Secretary of State

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No 11

January 1st 1851

Sir

I have the honor to enclose herewith Semi Annual Return of American Vessels entered at this Port during the last six months ending yesterday.

I have the honor to be
Sir your Obdt Sr.
J. M. Rodney

Hon. Daniel Webster
Secretary of State

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Consulate U. S. A. No 12
Feb 3d 1851

Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 2d of January last, enclosing a letter from E Lewington Bowers, Lieut in the U.S. Navy addressed to the Dept in relation to the Estate of his grand father, the late Ebenezer W. Sage of Middletown Connecticut and referring to a document filed in this Office

A copy of that paper, is herewith enclosed and also a letter from George Beinekerhoff who represents one of the largest claims against the Estate of the late Mr Sage

Mr Beinekerhoff is at the head of one of the largest Commercial Houses in this Island and his statement may be relied on as correct.

I have the honor to be,
Sir, your Obt Svt
J. M. Rooney

Hon. Danl Webster

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Copy

Consulate of the United States
Matanzas. May 3d 1851

Sir

There can now be no doubt but that an expedition is preparing within the ~~Territory~~ Jurisdiction of the United States to operate with force and arms against the government of this Island, If this expedition shall ever reach its place of destination,— in the face of the Spanish and American naval forces, it can only be done by employing the fast Steamers of the Mississippi river, depending on calm weather and their speed for safety, even then their object would be to remain as short a time as possible at sea; supposing this to be the case, would not Matanzas present the most available and best place for debarcation, where, if they succeeded they would be well supplied with both heavy and field artillery, munitions of war, and military stores of all kinds, if they failed, such as could, would disembark and return from whence they came. Under these circumstances I am most anxious that one of our squadron should be here, and I beg that you will present my views to the Commander of my U.S. Ships now, or that may be, in your port, with an urgent request that the utmost expedition may be used, to the end that our treaty stipulations may be faithfully maintained, and the persons and property of our Citizens protected.

I have the honor to be
Sir, Your obt. Sr
J M Rodney

To John Norland Esq
Consular Agent U.S.
Havana.

No 14

Consulate of the United States
Nassau May 6th 1851

Sir

The excitement here in relation to an expedition fitting out within the territory of the United States against this Island is very great, and altho' I do not believe that an armed man belonging to this band of adventurers will be able to set his foot upon the Island, yet to quiet the apprehensions of the timid and to be on the side of prudence I have deemed it proper to ask the protection of one of our ships of war. and have the honor to inclose herewith a copy of a letter addressed to the Consular Agent of the United States at Havana on the subject

I have the honor to be
Sir, your Obt. Sr.
J. M. Rodney

Hon Daniel Webster
Secretary of State

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No 13

Consulate of the U S
Matanzas April 18th 1851

Sir

The unsettled state of things in this Island since my appointment has not allowed me to have my family with me, very much to my discomfort, but things having assumed a brighter aspect I respectfully ask permission of the Department for leave of absence after the black season commences, that I may return to the U S for the purpose of accompanying my family but not wishing nor desiring to be absent any part of the business season

Pending my application may meet the approbation of the Department

I have the honor to be
Sir, with high regard
Your obt. Sr
J. M. Torrey

Hon
Daniel Webster
Secretary of State

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Wilmington, DE 19801

— To Secretary of the Treasury —

Consulate of the United States
Matanzas May 8th 1851.

Sir

In obedience to Treasury Circular No 49, new Series addressed to Consuls and Commercial agents of the United States. dated Treasury Department April 7th 1851 I have the honor to report

1st Produce of this Island is bought and sold for cash within the district of this Consulate except Molasses which is sometimes taken in exchange for lumber shook &c at a trifling advance on cash Price; and there are no discounts usually allowed

2. There are no actual bounties allowed on articles of export. but the duties charged, on one dick pr box of sugar and eight cents pr quintal (101 3/4 lbs.) of Coffee less when shipped in Spanish than when shipped in foreign bottoms. and on the shipment of an entire and full Cargo of Molasses a return is made of all the Tonnage dues whether in Spanish ~~bottoms~~ or foreign bottoms

3d The customary charges for commissions for purchase and shipping produce of all kinds is two and a half pr. cent.

4 The brokerage for the purchase of sugar and coffee is usually one half of one pr cent paid by the purchaser but large quantities of sugar are often shipped by Planters on their account on which of course no brokerage is paid: Molasses is usually bought directly from the dealers in the article and there is no brokerage thereon

5 on Molasses there are no other charges for

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shipment than commissions 2½ p.c. cents and cooperage, which is about forty three cents per Hogshead. on sugar there is an export duty of 87½ cents p.r box. and on Hogshead of sugar 87½ cents on every Twenty arrobas. and on coffee 20 cents p.r 100 pounds

The portarage, weighing &c charged by American Consul Houses at this port is 25 cents p.r box and 50 cents p.r Hogshead of sugar. and 18¾ cents per bag of Coffee. other foreign Houses charge 31 cents p.r box and 62½ p.r Hogshead of sugar. either rate is a trifle in excess of the real cost of shipment

Packages are charged by the seller at the rate of $3.25 p.r box for sugar. $5. p.r Hogshead for sugar. and Casks for Molasses at 50 cents p.r gallon on the quantity they contain, for Coffee 62½ cents for the bag.

Launch hire 31¼ cents p.r Hogshead of sugar 12½ cents p.r box of sugar. 8½ cents p.r bag. of Coffee and 25 cents p.r Hogshead of Molasses and Stowage on board. $5 p.r Launch boxes of sugar $2.50 p.r hundred bags of Coffee and 20 cents per Hogshead of either sugar or Molasses, both launch hire and stowage are usually borne by the departure and of course increase the freight so much sometimes but rarely launch hire is paid by the Shipper but this is a matter of specific agreement.

The prices of the staple productions of the Island sugar and Coffee are continually varying from day to day according to the advices received from abroad and a difference of 1/4 or 1/2 cents p.r pound would not be out

of the usual course, or to be particularly noted
For the payment of exchanges the Spanish
Doubloon is taken at a value of $17. the Patriot
at $16.— 8 dollars are $1— dollar or more tender
ed in payment they are very scarce and
command a premium of from 2 to 4 p. cent.
Weights four ounces equal 100 pence Sterling
or 101¼ cents
all of which is respectfully submitted
I have the honor to be
Sir, with high regard
your obedt. Svt
J. M. Rodney

Hon. Thomas Corwin
Secretary of the Treasury.

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN
816 State Street
Madison, WI 53706

No 15

Consulate of the United States
Matanzas May 9th 1857

Sir

I have the honor to enclose herewith the answers to the seventh interrogatories contained in Treasury Circular No 49 New Series addressed to Consuls and Comml Agents of the United States

Very Respectfully
I have the honor to
be sir your obt. st.
J. M. Rodney

Hon Daniel Webster
Secretary of State

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No. 16.

Consulate of the United States
Nicaragua, June 19th 1851.

Sir

All fears from the expedition having passed away and the business season being well over I shall shortly avail myself of the best conveyance offered me by the Department and return to the United States. During my absence Mr. Noyes Esq. of this City a Citizen of the United States will perform the duties of this Consulate. For all whose official acts I do hereby myself responsible

I have the honor to be
with high consideration
Sir your Obdt. Sr.
J. H. Rodney

Hon Danl Webster
Secretary of State

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Wilmington, DE 19801

No 17

Consulate of the United States
Matanzas June 19th 1857.

Sir

Herewith enclosed I have the honor to forward the Register of the Brig Lisbon of New Orleans, burthen 163.44/95 tons, F. S. Manly late Master lost on Shell Key Bank June 7th 1857 and Register of the Bark Edward Augustus of Portland burthen 273.22/95 tons John Hasty late Master lost near Cardenas March 18th 1857.

I have the honor to be
With high consideration
Your obt. Svt.

J. M. Rodney

Hon Daniel Webster
Secretary of State

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506 Market Street
Wilmington, DE 19801

No 18. Consulate of the U.S. —

Sir

Matanzas. June 9th 1851

I have the honor to inform you of my having this day drawn on the Department of State at thirty days sight, order of George D Fisher Esqr for $82.45 for the reimbursement of my advances to American destitute seamen as per account and vouchers this day forwarded the Auditor of the Treasury Department which if found correct you will please cause to be paid and charge to the Consulate agents seamens fund to which account I have this day credited said amount and the balance the same

I have the honor to be
Sir, Your Obt Svt
J. M. Rodney

Hon Daniel Webster
Secretary of State

N.° 19

Consulate of the United States
Matanzas July 14th 1851

Sir

Herewith enclosed I have the honor to forward One half of the Register of Brig Imperatriz of Baltimore burthen 364 $\frac{44}{95}$ tons, Wm G. Coffin late master, which I have cancelled, this vessel being sold to a foreigner. The ~~other~~ other half of ~~the~~ Register being claimed by said Master to take home with him, I have delivered it to him accordingly

I have the honor to be
Sir, Your O. Sr
J. M. Noyes
acting Consul

Hon. Danl Webster
Secretary of State

No. 20.

Consulate of the U. States
Matanzas Augt. 14th 1851

Sir.

I have the honor to forward herewith enclosed, the Register of the Bark Mary Lowell, burthen 230 19/95ths tons, of Portland, Edward Fooding late master lost on Key "Cruz del Padre" near Cárdenas on 27th July ult.

And Register of Brig Hanover of New-York burthen 522 87/95 tons, Richard Olmstead late master, sold to a foreigner.

I have the honor to be
Sir,
Wm C. Sitt
S. M. Myers
acting Consul

Hon. Daniel Webster
Secretary of State

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505 Market Street
Wilmington, DE 19801

No. 21

Consulate of the United States
Santiago. Oct 15th 1851

Sir

I had the honor, on the 7th inst to address the Department from Havana in relation to the remaining prisoners taken in the late expedition under the direction of Genl Lopez

And now beg leave to inform the Department that I reached here on the 8th inst and immediately assumed the duties of this Consulate

The public mind is still greatly excited, and considerable hostility is manifested against our Citizens, but I am pleased to say that the officers of this Government have not given way to this feeling

I have the honor to be,
Sir, your Obdt St.
G. M. Roissier

Hon: Daniel Webster
Secretary of State

No 22

Consulate of the United States
Shatanseh Jan 1st 1852.

Sir

I have the honor to forward, enclosed herewith, some Annual Return of American Depositions at this port, during the last six months ending yesterday, together with the amount of fees received during the year 1851

I have the honor to be
Sir your Obdt. Sr.
J. M. Rodney

Hon Daniel Webster
Secretary of State

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505 Market Street
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No 23

Consulate of the United States
Matanzas March 1st 1852

Sir

I deem it proper to state for the information of the Department that the Messrs Belcher sugar refiners of St Louis Missouri have recently set up in this City a large Steam sugar Refinery, mainly, as I understand for the purpose of boiling down or concentrating molasses to be shipped to the United States, where, upon its arrival a very little additional boiling will convert it into sugar, it will be shipped direct to New Orleans from there to St Louis

The establishment when in full operation will be able to concentrate seventy Hhds pr Twenty four hours

I have no reason to believe there is any intention or wish on the part of those concerned to defraud the revenue of the U.S. nor am I certain that additional duties will be exacted on this class of Molasses That is a matter for the Treasury Department to decide. the first cargo from this establishment will depart hence for New Orleans to morrow in the Brig H. Hallock of St Georges. Jr D Kellock master

The case of Mr Cunningham of Baltimore Engineer on the Havana Rail Road, in prisoner here since the 8th day of September last for damaging the Engine off the track. still lingers in the Tribunals notwithstanding my unremitted exertions to expedite the case to a conclusion, I have now, however the assurance of His Excellency the Captain Genl that it will receive his favorable attention and I trust it will not be long before Mr Cunningham is at liberty

The sugar crop of this season is not likely to realize the expectations of the planters either as

to quality or price.

I have the honor to be
Sir, your obt. Sr.
J. M. Rodney

Hon Dan'l Webster
Secretary of State

No 24.

Consulate of the U S
Matanzas April 9th 1852

Sir

My health has been so bad for the last two or three months, that under the strong advice of my physicians I find myself obliged to draw on the indulgence of the Department for a limited leave of absence

I do not wish to leave while it may be safe for me to remain, and as the busy season will be well over in five or six weeks I trust the Department may find it convenient without any great effort to oblige me. And in the hope that my native air may restore me to my former health

I have the honor to be
With high consideration
and respect. Your
Obdt Servant
J M. Rodney

Hon Daniel Webster
Secretary of State

No 25

Consulate of the United States
Batavia May 11th 1852

Sir

Immediately on the receipt of the Department's dispatch of March 7th enclosing a letter from Gilbert Fuller, addressed to the Hon: Chauncey F Cleveland, dated Liberty Hill, March 29th 1852 requesting certain information in relation to Henry F Fuller a brother of said Gilbert, I set to work to obtain the necessary information and at once wrote to Mr De Peyster at Saguan, but he declines to answer; a few days after however, I was fortunate enough to meet with Mr Augustus A. Williams, Superintendent of Mr De Peyster's Estates, a person and intimate friend of the deceased whose statement is herewith enclosed together with a draft for $117.50 to the order of Gilbert Fuller, being the amount paid over to this office, the trunk will be taken in charge by Mr Williams who is about to return home, and I believe safe to the friends of the deceased, the contents, I understand, are of little value and for this office to forward it, the freight would be more than it is with

Mr. Williams seems to be a warm hearted and generous friend of the deceased, for he fully owed him fifty dollars at the time of his death, he persists in paying over the amount of property left and in his hands,

I have the honor to be
with high consideration
and respect,
your obd Servant
J. M. Rodney

Hon Daniel Webster
Secretary of State

No. 26

Consulate of the United States
Havana May 13th 1852

Sir

In the belief that the Department has granted me leave of absence, added to the fact that my indisposition seems to get out of the way of the best weather, I shall return to the United States in the Steamer Isabel on the 15th inst. Leaving my absence Charles P. Bank, a gentleman of high character, who has acted in my office on previous occasions will take charge of the Consulate, for all whose official acts I hold myself responsible

I enclose a copy of a letter of advice to me from Dr Wilmer a Physician who ranks as high in the community as any other

It gives me pleasure to inform the Department that Mr John Cunningham of Baltimore, engineer on the Havana Rail Road, in prison here since the 8th day of September last, charged with conspiracy against the laws of state in running the engine and train off the track, whereby some twenty or thirty persons were wounded, one of whom died, has been acquitted unconditionally and placed at liberty yesterday

As this case has been noticed a good deal in the public prints it might be proper for the Department to make known the foregoing for the information of all concerned

I have the honor to be
With high regard
Your obt Servant
J. M. Rodney

Hon. Daniel Webster
Secretary of State

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505 Market Street
Wilmington, DE 19801

No: 27.

Consulate of the United States
Matanzas Dec: 13th 1852

Sir

I have the honor to inform the Department that I arrived at Havana in the last steamer from Charleston, and on reaching this City, immediately assumed the duties of my office.

During my absence nothing worthy of note has taken place within the jurisdiction of this Consulate.

The crop from the coming year will be large if the weather is such that it can all be gathered in.

This Consulate is greatly in want of a National flag and I will be much obliged to the Department for one at its convenient leisure.

I have the honor to be
Sir, your Obdt Servant
J. M. Rodgers

Hon:
Edward Everett
Secretary of State

No 28

Consulate of the U.S.
Matanzas. Jan: 1st 1853

Sir

I have the honor to enclose herewith Semi Annual Return of American Papers entered at this office during the last six months together with the amount of fees received at this Consulate for the year 1852

I have the honor to be, Sir,
with high respect
Your obdt Svt
J. M. Rodney

Hon Edward Everett
Secretary of State

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No 29

Consulate of the United States
Matanzas Jan 12th 1853

Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt, by this morning's mail, of the Department's letter of the 11th of Dec. last, with the enclosures, being a copy of a letter from the late, honorable Secretary of State, in relation to the Vice Commercial Agent at Cardenas, and letters from Dr William Gooch, and L. Child, the former of whom is an applicant for the office of Commercial Agent at Cardenas

Mr George P. Bell the present Vice Commercial Agent at the port of Cardenas served under my predecessor to his entire satisfaction, and on my taking charge of this office Mr Bell was recommended to me not only by my predecessor but by far the greater portion of those having business transactions with that agency, and I will say of him, that since he has acted for me he has performed the duties of his office with fidelity and ability. he is a gentleman of high moral character, speaking the Spanish language perfectly and holds a position in society for gentlemanly deportment surpassed by no one in Cardenas. he is an Englishman by birth but his associations from his earlier youth have been with Americans and his feelings are with our country, and for my life I cannot see why Mr Thrasher has undertaken to interfere in this matter unless Mr Bell is not sufficiently inoculated with the disease of "filibustering" to suit his purposes

It is a great comfort to have an agent at Cardenas who can and will perform the duties

of that fine Country. Yet if I could find an American willing and able to perform the duties of that office any thing like as well as Mr Bell I would prefer him and then carry out not only my own feelings but my instructions of choosing American Citizens "when other qualifications are equal"

The returns for the first half year ending June 30, were forwarded to the Department, and I regret to learn they have miscarried, those for the balance of the year are made out and will be forwarded by the first opportunity

I hope the above statements will be satisfactory to the Department and that Mr Bell may be permitted to serve out the short balance of my term

I have the honor to be
Sir, with high Consideration
Your obedt Sr
G. W. Harris

Hon Edward Everett
Secretary of State

No 30

Consulate of the U.S.

Matanzas Jan: 20th 1853

Sir. I have the honor to receive, by the mail of this morning, the Department's letter of the 21st December last calling my attention to the appointment of a Consular Agent at Cardenas, and have the honor to say that I addressed a letter to the Department on the 12th Instant 29 in relation to this subject which I trust has been received and that the statement therein given is satisfactory

I am greatly obliged to the Department for the flag which I understand is on board a vessel arrived from New York this morning

I shall unfortunately have no occasion to draw on the Department being somewhat in debt to "sea news friend"

My letter to which the despatch received this morning is a reply should have been dated 29.

The great quantity of rain which has fallen within the last month, has retarded the grinding and it is becoming a matter of serious doubt whether the present crop of sugar, which is very large can be gotten off before the actual rainy season sets in

I have the honor to be
Sir, with high consideration
Your Obdt Servant
J. M. Rodney

Hon: Edward Everett
Secretary of State

No. 31.

Consulate of the U.S.

Matanzas. Feb 2nd 1853.

Sir

I have the honor to enclose a copy of a letter from Geo: P. Bell Esqr. Consular Agent of the United States for the port of Cárdenas, informing me of the total loss by fire of the furniture and papers belonging to that Consulate

The fire occurred on the night between the 28th and 29th days of January during a severe gale of wind and thunder in a very short time the whole business part of the town

Messrs Safford and Co., in whose house the Consulate was located, and where the fire originated are the greatest sufferers having saved nothing — not even the money in the iron chest, which tho' warranted fire proof, could not stand the test, the private funds of Mr Bell together with the funds of the Consulate, deposited in the same fire proof, shared a like fate

The Department will, I presume at its convenience, forward ~~[illegible]~~ the necessary office furniture, but would it not be proper to give official notice of the accident, to the end that documents from that office may be received, for the present, without the seal

With high Consideration
I have the honor to be
Sir, your Obt Servant
J. M. Pedrosa

Hon
Edward Everett
Secretary of State

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505 Market Street
Wilmington, DE 19801

No 32

Consulate of the U. S.
Matanzas Feb 20th 1853. B. P. M.

Sir

I have the honor to inform the Department of State that the Hon: William R. King Vice President elect reached this City in the afternoon of Wednesday the 16th inst in the U.S. Steamer Fulton, from Havana, in less than five hours

Previous to his arrival we had made every arrangement for his comfort and accommodation, and immediately on the Steamer reaching dock, he was taken to the private mansion of Mr. Noyes Lyon where he was received and entertained in the kindest manner, and on the afternoon of the following day he took up his permanent residence at the beautiful Country seat of William Sanders Esq. situated on the Cumbre, or top of the hill to the N. of the City and about three miles distant from the Town

Mr. Sanders who is a native of the United States, put his furnished house, servants, horses carriages and all things tending to his comfort at the entire and sole disposition of our estimable Vice President, and if climate and a general and universal sympathy, and an anxiety to do all things for his accommodation and recovery can restore him to health, his restoration will be perfect

At present Mr King is extremely feeble, but something perhaps better than when he left the United States, and I think there is a reasonable hope that with the advantages he now has, his life may be prolonged for some time to come

be this as it may, his friends in the United States may be assured that if he is in a strange land he is among strong devoted and warm hearted friends. I have this moment returned from the Cambre and left our distinguished guest comfortable improving and delighted, as are the ladies of his family at their beautiful residence.

I have the honor to be
with high consideration
your obdt. servant
J. M. Forney

Hon: Edward Everett
Secretary of State

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505 Market Street
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No. 33

Consulate of the U.S.
Matanzas March 8th 1853.

Sir

When last I addressed the Department in re-
-lation to our esteemed Vice President he was lo-
-cated at the County Seat of Mr William Jenkins
on the "Cumbre"; but he soon found that the
situation was too much exposed to the strong
sea breezes, and on Thursday last the 3d inst.,
he took up his residence at the Sugar Estate
of Col: Charbonel about 15 miles from Matanzas
on the Colisso Rail Road: the house of Col: Char-
bonel has board floors and windows with glasses, yet
all the comforts of home, and is known throughout
all these parts as the abiding place of hospitality
and kindness

The Vice President seems greatly pleased with
the change and is more hopeful and of better
heart than he has been since his arrival here
and altho I think he is something weaker
than when he first reached Matanzas, there is still
room for hope that his life may be prolonged
for some time to come

There is no place in this Island where his wants
and comforts could be more kindly and attentive-
-ly considered than his present residence, and I can
assure the Department that while he is permitted
to be with us, no pains will be spared to make
his time pass gently and comfortably. I write this
at the last moment to be in time for the mail by
the Steamer Isabel, and have the honor to be

Hon: Secretary of State Sir, Your Obdt Servant

Washington J. H. Pinney

No 34

Consulate of the U.S.
Matanzas March 8th 1853

Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the Department's dispatch (No 14) of the 18th of February, and in obedience to the instructions therein given, enclose herewith a list of the Registers of Vessels destroyed by the fire at Cardenas, duly Certified by the Consular agent.

And am with high consideration
Sir, Your obedient servant
J. M. Rodney

Hon.
Secretary of State

No 35.

Consulate of the U.S.
Matanzas March 10th 1853.

Sir. Herewith enclosed I have the honor to forward the Register of the Brig Financier of Portland, and the certificate of deposit of the Registers of the Ship Henry and Brig Alpinea Registers destroyed by the fire at Cardenas. The Ship Henry has lost to windward of Cardenas: The two Brigs are condemned under order of Survey, and sold, to a Citizen of the United States residing in a foreign Country.

I have the honor to be,
Sir, Your Obdt servant
J. M. Rodney

Hon: Secretary of State

No. 36

Consulate of the U.S.
Matanzas March 20th 1853

Sir

In order to keep the Department advised of the situation of our citizens here I have the honor to state, that he is still at the Sugar Estate of Col. Chartrand, pleased with his location, still desirous of a good deal, and we think decidedly better

I have the honor to be
Sir, your obdt Svt
G. W. Rosine

Hon. Secretary of State.

No. 37.

Consulate of the U.S.
Matanzas March 21st 1853

Sir

I have the honor to inform the Dept that the Brig Cobden of Plymouth arrived at this port yesterday bringing in with her the Sch. Friends of Washington N.C. from Newhaven as seen in Lat 32.50, Long 73. The schooner has a cargo of pine lumber and shingles, and will be sold together with her cargo, to satisfy the salvors and for the benefit of all concerned

I have the honor to be
Sir, your obdt. Servant
G. W. Rosine

Hon. Secretary of State

No. 38

Consulate of the U.S.
Havana April 6th 1853.

Sir

I have the honor to inform the Department that the Hon: William R. King, Vice President of the United States, has determined to depart for Mobile in the U.S. Steamer Fulton to morrow. Mr King's general health is as good, if not better than when he first reached this City but I am sorry to say his strength has gradually declined until he is extremely feeble, so much so as to make it almost impossible for him to get up or down the hatchway of the steamer, and at his request we have had a small Cabin erected on deck for his better accommodation. This has been done by the ships Carpenters in a most creditable manner under the constant inspection of Captain Gregory, who I believe has been an eye witness to the driving of every nail.

The accommodations of the ship are now made as comfortable as any of our packet steamers and should the weather prove pleasant on the passage over, we hope, and believe, Mr King will be greatly benefited by the voyage.

In the close of this despatch, I shall leave immediately, for the Country, to accompany the Vice President to Louisiana morrow morning

and have the honor to be
Sir Your Obt Servant
J. M. Forney

Hon
Secretary of State

Consulate of the United States
Bahia Nov 16th 1849

Called at this office and required assistance the following, distressed American seamen.

George W Melvin 2 Mate
George Williams. Cook
John Carter
Thomas Jersey
John Thompson. Report themselves of and belonging to the Brig Salem of Philadelphia, from Wilmington N. C. bound to Rio Janeiro with Naval Stores — the vessel took fire at sea about four hundred miles to the Eastward of the Hole in the Wall on Monday the 22nd day of October 1849. and was entirely consumed, the officers and crew took to the boats, with nothing but the clothes they had on at the time of the accident, and when within forty miles of the Hole in the Wall, blowing very heavy, six pirates came by the Brig Carolina of Boston and taken into St Juan de los Remedios. Cuba, where said Brig was bound, from Stone they got passage on board the Spanish Coasting Schooner Abla for Havana, but on account of heavy weather the said Schooner put into Bahamas, where three of said men were put by me on board the Brig Albion Cooper. and sent to New Orleans the second Mate and Cook remaining with the Schooner in order to reach Havana.

John Toomey