

tion of his determination to fulfil with punctuality and good faith, the engagements which his Majesty has contracted by his treaty with the United States, and that they will be instructed to resume their functions, whenever the obstacles which impede the progress of the commissioners at Philadelphia shall be removed. It being in like manner, my sincere determination, so far as the same depends on me, that with equal punctuality and good faith, the engagements contracted by the United States, in their treaties with his Britannic Majesty, shall be fulfilled, I shall immediately instruct our minister at London, to endeavour to obtain the explanations necessary, to a just performance of those engagements on the part of the United States. With such dispositions on both sides, I cannot entertain a doubt, that all difficulties will soon be removed, and that the two boards will then proceed, and bring the business committed to them, respectively, to a satisfactory conclusion.

The act of Congress, relative to the seat of government of the United States, requiring, that on the 1st Monday in December next, it should be transferred from Philadelphia to the District chosen for its permanent seat, it is proper for me to inform you, that the Commissioners appointed to provide suitable buildings for the accommodation of Congress, and the President, and for the public offices of the Government, have made a report of the state of the buildings, designed for these purposes in the City of Washington, from which they conclude, that the removal of the seat of government at the time required, will be practicable, and the accommodation satisfactory. Their Report will be laid before you.

Gentlemen of the House of Representatives,
I shall direct the estimates of the appropriations, necessary for the services of the ensuing year, together with an account of the revenue and expenditure, to be laid before you. During a period, in which a great portion of the civilized world has been involved in a war, unusually calamitous and destructive, it was not to be expected, that the United States could be exempted from extraordinary burthens. Although the period is not arrived, when the measures adopted to secure our country against foreign attack, can be renounced, yet it is alike necessary to the honour of the government, and the satisfaction of the community, that an exact economy should be maintained.

I invite you Gentlemen, to investigate the different branches of the public expenditures. The examination will lead to beneficial retrenchments, or produce a conviction of the wisdom of the measure, to which the expenditure relates.

Gentlemen of the Senate, and
Gentlemen of the House of Representatives.

At a period like the present, when momentous changes are occurring, and every hour is preparing new and great events in the political world—when a spirit of war is prevalent in almost every nation, with whose affairs the interests of the United States have any connection, unsafe and precarious would be our situation were we to neglect the means of maintaining our just rights. The result of the mission to France is uncertain; but however it may terminate, a steady perseverance in a system of national defence, commensurate with our resources, and the situation of our country, is an obvious dictate of wisdom. For remotely as we are placed from the belligerent nations, and desirous as we are, by doing justice to all, to avoid offence to any, nothing short of the power of repelling aggressions, will secure to our country a rational prospect of escaping the calamities of war, or national degradation.—As to myself, it is my anxious desire to execute the trust reposed in me, as to render the people of the U. States prosperous and happy. I rely, with entire confidence on your co-operation, in objects equally your care, and that our mutual labors will serve to increase and confirm Union among our fellow-citizens, and an unhaken attachment to our Government.

JOHN ADAMS.

United States, Dec. 3, 1799.

To the Honourable the General Assembly of the State of North-Carolina.

GENTLEMEN,

Basil Gaither and Samuel D. Purviance, Esquires, two of the Commissioners appointed for the purpose of completing the investigation of the frauds suggested to have been committed in the Secretary's office, and that of the late John Armstrong, met on the 3d of March, and entered upon that part of the business which related to the transactions in the last mentioned office, and on the 6th of June, delivered the report to me marked A, containing separate views of the most prominent frauds committed in that office.

These gentlemen continued their investigation with unwearied diligence until the 28th of June, when I received from them the general report, marked B, the result of a careful and accurate examination of that extensive and complicated scene of iniquity and fraud perpetrated in the department of the Secretary of the State.

The report accompanying these, marked C, contains a classification of the frauds committed in obtaining duplicate grants.

I beg leave to refer the General Assembly to these several reports, in which these transactions are detailed in a brief but perspicuous and matterly manner; and while the citizen may lament that crimes so dishonour-

able to the reputation of his country have been committed within it, he may cherish some hope that the character of the State will be vindicated by the energy of the laws, and the able and faithful investigation which has now been completed under the direction of the legislature.

The original reports are lodged with the papers and documents to which they refer, in the office of the Secretary of the State. Those which I have the honour to submit to you are certified by him, as the officer under whose keeping they have been placed.

I have the honour to be, with great respect and consideration, Gentlemen, your, &c.

Wm. R. DAVIE.

Raleigh, September 10, 1799.

(A)

To His Excellency WILLIAM R. DAVIS,

Raleigh, June 6, 1799.

SIR—The Commissioners for the further investigation of frauds suggested to have been committed in the Secretary's office, had the honour to inform your Excellency in their note of the 20th of March last, that they had met on the third of that month, had adjourned on the 19th in consequence of the absence of Mr. Graham, and had agreed to meet again on the 15th May ult.—During the short time of our sitting, our attention had been principally confined to the investigation of the frauds practised in obtaining warrants from the office lately kept by John Armstrong, and in obtaining grants on such warrants.

We might at that sitting of the Board, have prosecuted this part of our duty to a conclusion, but we were anxious to obtain the assistance of Mr. Graham; unacquainted with the circumstances which had occasioned his absence, and supposing them of temporary operation, we indulged the expectation that he would, at our second meeting, find it convenient to attend—we now learn that his professional engagements oblige him to decline the office.

We have now gone through an investigation of such of the sales arising from the practices in the office of John Armstrong, as had not before been the subjects of particular enquiry, we have not yet completely digested and arranged them; but as it is the wish of your Excellency that the operations on these should commence as soon as possible, we have now the honour to present you with a rude sketch of our proceedings.

The nature and manner of the frauds committed in the office of John Armstrong, will present themselves to your Excellency's observation on an inspection of the books which accompany this note: we will merely remark, that the whole mass of corruption is reducible perhaps to the following descriptions:

1st. An entry is made by one person, and the warrant issues in favour of another, without any apparent transfer except a memorandum on the entry book or warrant, in the hand-writing of Armstrong, or some of his clerks, that such transfer had been made.—See case 1720, &c.

2d. An entry is made by one person, and the warrant issues to another, without even such memorandum of transfer.—See case 1694, &c.

3d. Transfers of the enterer's right have frequently been made to others, by persons signing as agents, when in truth no such agency was authorized.—See case 900, &c.

4th. Transfers have been made by such unauthorized persons to themselves.—See case 1027, &c.

5th. A warrant issues to one person, his name is afterwards erased, and that of some other inserted, for whom a survey is accordingly made, and grant issued.—See case 976, &c.

6th. A warrant issues to one person, the land is surveyed for and granted to another, without any authority whatever.—See case 993, &c.

7th. Transfers have been very frequently forged, a survey made in behalf of the transferee, and grant issued to him.—See case 1070, &c.

8th. Transfers from the original warrantees have been forged, and afterwards another transfers back to the person who forged the first transfer, has been forged also.—See case 593, &c.

9th. A warrant gets into the hands of a surveyor, who instead of surveying it for the person entitled, surveys it for himself, and a grant issues accordingly.—See case 1746, &c.

10th. Grants have issued to persons claiming under a piece of paper, purporting to be a warrant, without even the signature of the Entry-taker.—See case 1235, &c.

11th. Two warrants have issued on the same entry, and grants have been executed for both.—See case 27.

12th. Three warrants have issued on the same entry, and grants have been executed for the three.—See case 732, &c.

13th. Grants have issued without any warrant whatever.—See case 1279, &c.

The names of the persons who have been principally concerned in these fraudulent transactions, are unknown to the Commissioners: The books which accompany this note will discover to your Excellency whom the Commissioners have suspected, and the circumstances which have induced their suspicion.

We send to your Excellency John Armstrong's book of entries, as also the files containing the suspected warrants upon which we have acted. The Commissioners would observe, that some instances may occur, in which the warrant mentioned in our book of re-

marks cannot very readily be found, for want of a more precise reference than that book contains: The cause of this inconvenience was a request from Mr. White, the Secretary, that the warrants might not be transposed from the order in which we received them, if we could avoid it, as it might tend to confuse, in some measure, the arrangements of his office.

If however it should be necessary to have a more prompt recurrence to the warrants, than their present order will permit, the Commissioners will endeavour to effect it, and will at all times be highly pleased to contribute any assistance or information in their power, which might tend more speedily and effectually to embrace the objects of their appointment.

The Commissioners will continue to sit without adjournment, until they have completed the whole of their investigation; and hope by the last of the present month, to be enabled to furnish your Excellency with a general report, which will perhaps be freed from the embarrassments and defects to which a partial statement is subjected. We have the honour to be, with real respect, your Excellency's obedient servants,

BASIL GAITHER,

SAMUEL D. PURVIANCE.

Copy from the original, WILL. WHITE, Secretary.

(B)

To His Excellency WILLIAM R. DAVIS, Esquire, Governor, &c. of the State of North-Carolina.

SIR—The Board of Commissioners for the further investigation of frauds committed in the office of the late Secretary, after sitting sixty-three days, have at length terminated their enquiries, and have now the honour to present your Excellency with a general report of their proceedings.

The act of the Legislature which authorized the appointment of the Board, has defined their duty to consist, in examining the frauds committed in obtaining military land warrants, and in obtaining warrants from the office lately kept by John Armstrong, and in obtaining grants on warrants in either of the above cases. The discharge of this duty has been diligently and earnestly regarded by the Board, and, in order to omit nothing by which it might be accomplished, they have carefully examined every warrant committed to their inspection, which has issued from either of the above offices, and considered with attention every circumstance of fraud or fairness with which each warrant was respectively connected.

In the examination of the military land warrants, the considerations essential for the observation of the Commissioners, in order to enable them to determine whether such warrants were fair or fraudulent, appeared to be two: First, whether the soldier in whose name the warrant issued, was entitled to the land directed to be surveyed for him: And, secondly, if entitled, whether he had received a grant for it accordingly. The muster-rolls and certificates were required to for the ascertainment of the first; the last was discoverable by adverting to the grants issued on military warrants; by which it appeared whether the land was granted to the soldier in whose name the warrant issued or not.

These warrants, however, having generally been the subjects of traffic and negotiation, the grants have been found most frequently to have issued, not to the soldier himself, but to some person claiming as his assignee, by assignment endorsed on the warrant. In such cases it was our duty to enquire, whether the right of the soldier was usurped by a forged and fraudulent transfer, or whether it was fairly divested by his own act, or the act of his legal representatives.

In the ascertainment of these particulars we pursued, in some measure, the arrangement of the former Board. When we discovered a warrant which bore a suspicious appearance, we selected the same, and put down in columns appropriated to that purpose, the number of the warrant, the name of the soldier, the number of acres, the name of the person by whom the warrant was drawn, and of him who assigned it, the name of the person to whom it was assigned, for whom surveyed, and to whom granted. The large book, marked A, accompanying this report, contains an enumeration of these warrants thus selected by the present Board of Commissioners, on account of fraud and forgery, with our remarks on each, amounting in the whole to about one thousand military warrants, exclusive of those selected and reported on by the former Board.

In many of these cases, although the Commissioners have been able to discover and describe the fraud, they have not been able to designate the persons by whose agency it was effected. In some instances, however, these frauds have been accompanied with circumstances which induced the Commissioners to attribute them to persons who they conceived, must have been privy to their commission; the names of such persons are accordingly mentioned in our remarks on the cases to which their practices had extended: Among these your Excellency will perceive, that James Glasgow, Esq. the late Secretary, holds a conspicuous place; the practices attributed to him by the Commissioners, are perhaps referable into the following descriptions:

1st. He has issued duplicate warrants, on the presumption of the originals having been lost, without any evidence to that effect, and before the issuing of duplicates was authorized by any act of the Assembly.

2d. He has issued two warrants to the same soldier,