

Mint of the United States.

Philadelphia Sept. 23rd 1865.

Hon Hugh M. Culloch

Secretary of the Treasury

Sir:

I have the honor to forward herewith the report of Prof. James C Booth, Special Agent, to examine the Branch Mints at Charlotte N. C and Dalton-Longa, Ga. The duty assigned him has been well and faithfully performed, and the report now submitted is both able and interesting. The views of Prof Booth on the subject of Branch Mints and Assay Offices are so expressive of my own, that I have only to say that I fully approve the report on that, and the other points to which he has referred. Whether the Branch Mints at these places shall be opened as Assay Offices or for minting purposes, and the time when, are questions respectfully submitted to your Department. My opinion, after expressed and now repeated, is, that these Branches should not be employed as Mints.

In the event of re-opening the Branch at Dahlonega, I would respectfully suggest the name of Isaac L. Todd, Assayer of that Branch prior to the rebellion, for re-appointment. Mr Todd I believe is strongly recommended by the Governor of Georgia and many others. I herewith enclose a note from the Assayers of the Mint in reference to the character of the Assays made by Mr Todd in former years. The repairs of buildings and machinery indicated by Prof Booth should be made, and for that purpose an appropriation should be obtained at the earliest period practicable.

Yours Sir,

Very respectfully

Yr. ob^d. serv^t.

J. S. Pollock
Director.

Report of Prof L. C Booth
on
Branch Mints at
Charlotte + Dahlougee
Sept 19th 1865.

Philadelphia, Sept. 19th 1865

To Hon James Pollock
Director of the U. S. Mint.

Sir,

Under date of July 5th 1865, I received from you official notification of my appointment as an Agent of the Treasury Department, to inspect and Report upon the present condition of the Branch mints at Charlotte, N. C. and Dahlonega, Ga., in conformity with the letter of the Department of June 20th 1865, requesting you to select a suitable person for this purpose.

Pursuant to my appointment, I left Philadelphia on July 10th, proceeded to make the examinations required, with as much despatch as practicable, and returned to this place on Sept. 9th. The two months thus spent far exceeded my original estimate of the requisite time, in consequence of the broken and imperfect condition of Southern Rail Roads, - of their want of connection in running times, - & especially of the difficult and tedious over-land route to Dahlonega, a distance of 75 miles ^{from} the nearest point on a Rail Road. Indisposition, arising from two months' travel, without repose, has prevented an earlier presentation of the result of my labors.

The letter of the Department and your own express the following points as the objects of my mission: viz.

1. To examine and report upon the precise condition of the public property at Charlotte and Dahlonega, connected with

the Branch Mints at those places.

2. To adopt such means for their protection and preservation, as may be in my power.

3. To Report my opinion as to the propriety of putting those Branch Mints into operation, with the addition of particulars pertinent and important to the question.

4. To confer with the Provisional Governors of North Carolina and Georgia, in relation to temporary or permanent appointments to those Branch Mints, if necessary.

I. I prefer offering a general view of the condition of the Branch Mints in my Report, unencumbered with details of their more precise condition, which are embraced in the subjoined Schedule A.

The Buildings and Machinery of both Mints are in as good a condition as their closure during four years of war would warrant us in assuming. They received no positive detriment from troops or individuals during Confederate sway, except in the abstraction of tools & a little machinery, which last has been returned, and they have been injured to a very limited extent during their occupancy by our own troops.

The main building at Charlotte is in good condition, having been erected more recently than that at Danlonega. It was employed by the Confederate Government for the storage of goods, belonging to their so-called Navy-Yard, situated in Charlotte. The extent of preservation, which this Branch received, is due, I have reason to believe, to the care of Dr. J. H. Gibbon, the

former assayer of the Mint and recently reappointed to the same position. This Branch was not used during the war, either for minting or assaying.

The main building at Dahlonega has seriously suffered in its wood-work through the neglect of many years. The preservation of this Branch, I believe, due to the residence of a Mr. Guillen in the building during the war. He occupied a position in the Mint, & when its operations ceased upon the opening of hostilities, he was permitted to remain there to assay gold for the people. As this operation was not detrimental to the property, and was a benefit to those engaged in gold mining and washing, Gen^l Wilson permitted Mr. Guillen to remain there under the same circumstances. On the same grounds I allowed his continuance in the building, until Regular Officers should be appointed to assume the protection and preservation of the Mint.

The outbuildings of both Branches are in a very dilapidated condition, and will need much repair or a total renewal.

The repose of bright iron machinery and apparatus during four years, without the constant and actively protecting hand of the workman, has necessarily generated more or less rust, but after careful inspection, I believe it can be readily removed, and will not prove to have been seriously detrimental to the future working of the machinery. Small portions of the machinery, some of the apparatus, and the greater part of the tools, employed in the

direct and incidental operations of Minting will have to be renewed, as they have been removed or materially injured.

I have endeavored to approximate to correct estimates in the following table of cost of repairs and renewal to the buildings, apparatus and machinery of the two Branch Mints, reserving more specific details and estimates to the subjoined Schedule A. — Correct estimates can only be made by the professional mechanic after a careful survey. The question springing out of the third point of enquiry, whether the Branches shall be continued as mints or Assay Offices, induced me to divide the estimates accordingly.

Estimated Cost of Repairs.	Charlotte	Dahlonega
For Assaying purposes, exclusively	\$1540 = @ \$2070 =	\$1900 = @ \$2320 =
For Buildings	1500 = 2250 =	2500 = 3500 =
Total for Assay Offices	\$3040 = \$4320 =	\$4400 = \$5820 =
Additional for Refining and Coinage	1000 = 1500 =	1000 = 1500 =
Total for All Minting purposes	\$4040 = \$5820 =	\$5400 = \$7320 =

I remark on the above that the estimates embrace only such repairs as I supposed necessary to put the Branches in present active operation, but that more extensive repairs will have to be made, especially to the Dahlonega Branch, before they can be considered in the best condition.

11. Protection and Preservation of Public Property

Upon my first reaching the Branch Mint at Charlotte, I found it in possession of a detachment of U. S. Troops, who evidently inflicted no injury upon the building or its contents. The Assay-Department was then locked up, and the keys in charge of Dr J. H. Gibbon, by permission of Genl Ruger, Commandant of N. Carolina. As Dr Gibbon was then in the North & to remain for a few weeks, and as the instructions of the Commandant were that the closed portion of the building should remain so, I concluded to allow things to remain as they were, and proceed to the examination of Dahlonega, pending Dr Gibbon's return. Upon my visit to Charlotte, a month later, I found that other troops had replaced those I left in charge, that the Assay Department had been forced open, the Balances and other articles disarranged, and according to Dr Gibbon, some Gold and Silver had been abstracted. The Officer in charge had seen both the Gold & Silver, and I trust that through the investigation of Dr Gibbon, it will be found and returned. While in Charlotte, I had the lathes and pointing rolls transferred from the Confederate Navy Yard to the Mint, from which they had been removed. The reappointment of Dr Gibbon, as Assayer is now a sufficient guarantee that the Public Property of this Branch will be duly guarded and preserved.

I found that some of the apparatus of the Dahlonega Branch had been somewhat injured by the privilege accorded to the

Cavalry Detachment, quartered in the Mint, to rove unmolested over the whole building, except in a few rooms, where the more delicate apparatus was kept. A squad of 15 men, under Lieut. Zimmerman of the 139th Ill. V.V.I. accompanied me to the Mint, to replace the Cavalry, and I assigned certain portions of the building to them, with strict injunctions, which I am confident were obeyed, to enter no other part of the building. Upon my return to Dalton to give special instructions to Pt. Br. Gen^l Kueffner, of the 139th Ill. In. in relation to the Mint, I found that in the short interim Dahlonega was already transferred to the jurisdiction of Gen^l Judah. Fearing the consequences of such frequent changes of military occupation, I went at once to Augusta, to explain the state of things to Maj. Gen^l Steedman, Com^d of Georgia, and to request that the troops should not be quartered in the building, because the personal character and discipline of the officer in command was the only guarantee of the due preservation and protection of the Public Property. I further stated to him the disturbed condition of Upper Georgia and the necessity of a heavier force than fifteen men. He at once issued instructions to Maj. Gen^l Judah to detach a force of forty (40) men, duly commanded, to Dahlonega, with special injunctions that the Mint building should not be occupied by the troops, except perhaps one or two rooms by officers. In the mean time Mr Quillen resides in the Mint with his family, and will, I doubt not, exercise the same care of the building and its contents, that he has heretofore done, until officers are ap-

18650919 Booth report southern mints. Page -7- is missing from the original report. The page fastener was a rivet-type and the sheets pulled loose from the back rivet.

Shall these Branches be Mints or only Assay Offices?

If gold-dust be deposited in the Mint, improved by melting, assayed, cast into a bar, and its value stamped thereon, its commercial value is at once known, and this fact precludes imposition on the Depositor or Holder. If such gold is to be coined at that Mint, it must of necessity be previously refined, and hence all the appliances for refining and coinage would be required, in addition to those for assaying. These acts necessitate the employment of more officers and more workmen, the inconvenient transportation of acids in glass vessels into the Interior of the country, the use of much more machinery and apparatus, and greatly increase the cost and complexity of a Mint over an Assay Office. The only advantage of coinage in the Interior would be the distribution of a moderate amount of gold, in the directly utilisable form of coin, in the regions surrounding the Branch Mints, but this advantage is only limited to the short time of transit of a gold bar of determined value to a place of coinage and its return. The advantage appears to me to be too short in time, too small in value, and too limited as to the number of depositors, to outweigh the increased cost and complexity of Refining and Coinage at Branch Mints in the Interior of the Country. Moreover, even this slight advantage may be met, if the Government should give a Specie Draft for the value of a gold deposit, payable at any Depository in a Commercial Centre, - and should assume the responsibility of transporting such gold to a Mint for refining and coinage.

I derived this excellent suggestion from your Report, as Director of the Mint, for 1863-4 and can add nothing more to it.

I am confident that there would be no difficulty in negotiating the sale of a Specie Draft in the Southern Gold Regions, subject to no other loss than the rate of Exchange, which would doubtless be sometimes in favor of the Depositor.

Do we require any new Branch Mints in the United States?

While the question is now, for the first time since their establishment, an open one, whether the two Branch Mints in the South shall be reopened with full Minting power, or simply as Assay Offices, there is nothing in the way of examining the general bearings of this question, with a view to future legislation by the Congress. The only interference is perhaps the law, establishing a Branch at Denver, Colorado, but I believe that in consequence of the difficulties of transportation, it has only been worked thus far as an Assay Office, and has proved ample for all commercial purposes.

Gold and Silver are being extensively developed in Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Arizona, and other Territories. It is hardly necessary to remark that in a gold producing region, a very small proportion of their gold is required by the producing community for circulation, and that nearly all of it must find its way to a commercial centre.

Shall the expensive and more cumbrous structure of a Mint, in its buildings, machinery and operations, be erected in each

one of these Territories or States, or possibly in more than one locality in each of them, because of their great extent? This is not only important as an economical question, but another arises with it, whether the multiplication of centres of coinage may not multiply the possibility of erroneous issues of coin.

Consider for a moment that the same value of gold, whether in assayed bar, or in refined coin, will have to be transported to the commercial centres, at an equal cost and risk to the public. If Government were to assume the transportation of bars, the risk would no doubt be borne by perfectly responsible Transportation Companies, for a moderate consideration, more moderate than would be the case, if effected for individuals. The cost might be paid by the Depositor under the charge for coinage, with or without an additional consideration. If the gold is to be refined for coinage at an Interior Branch Mint, all the materials for refining will have to be transported to that Mint from a commercial and manufacturing centre; and the Depositor, by virtue of the proper clause in the General Mint law, requiring him to pay the cost of refining, will have to bear the expense of transporting the materials for refining, in addition to the usual charges for coinage and transportation of coin. It entails unnecessary expense both on the Government and the Depositor. For if gold is simply assayed at an Interior Assay Office, its commercial value is known, and it is immediately convertible into coin by a Specie Government Draft, at an expense to the Depositor of the moderate

charge for assaying, and the charges for transporting gold, - and at an expense to Government of maintaining an Assay Office. If such gold be refined and coined at an Interior Branch Mint, an equivalent conversion into coin is effected, at the same expense to the Depositor^{as} for assaying, with the additional charge of transportation of materials for refining, - and at a greater cost to the Government of maintaining the more expensive Mintage Establishment.

The only object of the increased cost of a Mint over an Assay Office can be, in effect, the supply of the very small proportion of coin, needed for local circulation, an object wholly inadequate to warrant the greater expense of a Mint, - and wholly unnecessary, when we know that the production of gold, of known value, will attract the equivalent quantity of coin, required for circulation, without cost to any one, especially if the Specie draft System were adopted.

Near all the gold produced and coined in the Interior, would be charged with the increased cost of refining, over that necessarily imposed on it in localities most favorable for refining and coinage, and that without adding to its value as a manufactured article. In general, the increased cost of production should add to the value of that production, but as this is not the case in the present instance, it is at variance with the soundest economical principles to refine and coin gold in the Interior of the Country.

The views which I have presented appear to me sufficiently to prove, that it is against the Interests of the Government, the

Depositor, the Miner, and the general Public to establish Branch Mints in the Interior of the Country. Some of the reasons adduced go further to show that Mints should not be multiplied, even in the Commercial centres of the Republic. The simple manufacturing principle ought to be sufficient, that the manufacturing operations of Refining and Coinage can be most economically effected in the fewest localities. On the grounds I have presented, it appears to me that there should be but two Mints in the United States, one on the Eastern and Western coasts respectively. I am not prepared to advocate, on general grounds, the continuance of even the Branch Mint at New Orleans; for however useful it formerly was, as the nearest recipient of Silver from our then chief source, Mexico, the increasing production of silver in our own Territories will probably diminish the activity and need of that Branch. Nevertheless, as it is in existence with all its appliances, and in an important commercial centre, as well as to avoid the imputation of a desire to deprive the Southern Ports of Coining Privileges, I am inclined to waive my objections in relation to it, and to accord to it the power of coining silver. The current of gold-dust will probably not hereafter flow towards New Orleans.

General Plan for Assay Offices.

Since the most favorable moment is present for adopting a general system for Assay Offices, because of the question in relation to the two Southern Branch Mints, & because the legislation of the Congress will be asked for to establish like offices in new Territories

and States, I venture to suggest the outlines of an operative Plan, which appears to me to combine the greatest economy with efficiency and a full system of checks.

The official staff might comprise two Commissioned Officers, one the Superintendent and Assayer, the other the Treasurer and Melter. There might be a general Mint Clerk, or one subordinate to the Treasurer, and the Assayer should have a first class workman to assist him. The operative force might consist of two melters, two laborers, and a watchman. The whole force, then, would be two officers, a clerk and six workmen, of different grades.

The works for an assay office might be a plain and moderate sized building, with two substantial vaults, fire and burglar proof, and plain sheds for the storage of fuel, &c. A steam-engine to supply water and for power, a grinding apparatus for sweep, two melting furnaces, the full appliances of an assayer, several large and small balances, with the subsidiary mechanism of a lathe, smithy and carpenter's bench, seem to me to constitute sufficient furnishing for all assay purposes.

The official and operative force above suggested, and the building and furnishing, just recited, commend themselves to my judgment as constituting an assay office, that will operate securely, economically and effectively. I submit the plan to your better judgment.

IV. On Appointments at the Branch Mints.

I called upon Prov.^l Gov^r Holden in the middle of July, and finding that he had already suggested to the Department the name of a gentleman as Superintendent, I took no further action on that point. In a conversation with Prov.^l Gov^r Johnson, as I was not then acquainted with individuals capable of filling the offices, I preferred suggesting the principles which ought to govern nominations. On the supposition that the Branch Mints might be opened with full minting powers, I suggested that the Superintendent should possess a business capacity, that the Assayer should have some acquaintance with Chemistry, as well as be or become a skilful Assayer, and that the Melter, Refiner and Coiner should be a tolerably expert mechanician, and if possible possess some Metallurgic knowledge. He informed me that he had suggested the name of M^r Todd, the former Assayer, for reappointment. I do not doubt, from all that I could learn, that the appointment would be a good one.

Subsequently, as the propriety of opening the Branch Mints only as Assay Offices, forced itself on my attention, and satisfied my judgment that their establishment as Assay Offices was the only proper course for the Government to pursue, I wrote to Gov^r Johnson, knowing it to be your opinion also, to the effect that in all probability the Mints would only be made Assay Offices, and that in such case neither Superintendent or Coiner would be required. I merely suggested to him that in this case, the Treasurer should have some knowledge of Metallurgy, altho' of less importance than his knowledge of business.

The President having seen fit to appoint Dr Gibbon as Assayer of the Office at Charlotte, I did not deem it necessary to call again upon Gov^r Holden, on my return to the North. May I not suggest to you, in concluding this head, that some appointment if practicable, be given to M^r Quillen, at Dahlonega, inasmuch as the preservation of the Mint Property at that place is mainly due to him. Such at least is the opinion I received of him in Dahlonega, altho' I confels from not the most loyal of persons.

I have now carried out the Instructions conveyed to me in the letter of the Department and in your own, to the best of my ability, and I trust, to your satisfaction. I will only urge in conclusion, that I think it desirable for the Government to determine as early as practicable, whether to conduct the two Branch Mints as such, or only as Assay Offices, and to make their appointments of Officers, - so as to secure most effectively the preservation of the Public Property, and to enable the Officers to make early preparation for a Winter's campaign.

Very Respectfully yours
J. A. Booth

Schedule A.

1

More Specific Details in relation to the State of the Buildings Apparatus and Machinery of the Branch Mints at Charlotte N. C. and Dahlonega, Ga.

1. Charlotte. The original building, constructed in 1836, was destroyed by fire, and replaced by the present structure, which may be stated in general terms to be in good condition. It is a building of one-story in height, with a basement rising some six feet above the ground, making airy cellars, - and is constructed of brick, stuccoed. The chimney stacks appear to need repointing. The corrugated roof of zinc'd Iron needs a little repair and thorough painting, to prevent rain-leakage, which has slightly damaged the walls and ceiling of the interior of the building. I could learn of no one in Charlotte, capable of repairing such a roof, altho' such a person might be found at the N. C. Company's Shops. The frame out buildings, sheds for fuel and general storage are in a dilapidated condition, requiring considerable repairs to fit them for present use. A single coat of paint on the wood-work of the main building would be a great advantage for its preservation, altho' not presently essential.

The Steam engine was found to be in running condition. I had an experienced machinist to examine the boilers, which he pronounced to be in fair condition, requiring an outlay of about \$200 = to run them safely. Calking and paint

will probably be sufficient for the Water Tanks. The chasers and lathes can be rendered effective by an outlay of \$300-@400. The melting furnaces, belting & forge will have to be renewed. Two Iron-safes, lost during the war, should be resupplied. Fire-brick, melting pots, and the various tools for melting, for the forge and for carpentry, will have to be almost wholly resupplied, at a cost of some \$500- to \$650. The Company's Shops, of the N. C. R. R. Co., near Greensboro, appears to be the nearest available point, from which some of the tools can be obtained. The finer tools should be purchased in the North, and it would be perhaps better to send a single set of melting tools from the Philadelphia Mint, as patterns.

2. Dahlonega. The main building of this Branch Mint was originally well constructed, of two stories height, with a basement rising about four feet above the ground in front, and still higher in the rear. The basement is solidly built of rough-hewn granite blocks, and cut-granite constitutes the sill, lintels and jambs of windows and doors. The rest of the building is composed of brick, stuccoed. The mason-work is generally good, needing few repairs, excepting the chimney-stacks, which pass through the wood-work of the loft, and the shingle roof, with the very censurable thickness of half a brick, rendering fire imminent at any moment. I found the wooden mantel in one apartment burned from a crack in the thin flue. All or at least several of these stacks should be rebuilt.

The wood work of the whole building has suffered severely, and is decaying in parts, for lack of paint, which has evidently not been applied to it for many years.

Some of the frame outbuildings are very much dilapidated, and need either renewal or considerable repairs.

The greater part of the machinery, like that at Charlotte, has suffered rather from the rust of inattention, than from injury. The testimony of several, who were engaged in the mint, prior to the war, is that the boilers were then unsafe. In the absence of means or ability on my part to test this question, I prefer adopting the opinion, and recommend the purchase of new boilers. Most of the tools for the turning lathe were removed to Atlanta during the war, and are doubtless among its debris. A tolerably full supply of tools for melting, for lathe, forge and carpentry is demanded by this Branch Mint, because of its isolated and distant position from centres of mechanical industry. I examined the Government works at Chattanooga, and the private establishments at Aracon, with a view to the purchase of new boilers, and recommend the latter, as I learn that the former are to pass out of the hands of the Government.

The furnaces are in tolerable condition, & only need relining. The water tanks, grinding apparatus, belting, black-lead pots, and fire-brick need similar renewal or repairs to those at

Charlotte, except in the case of Sand pots or Flesian Crucibles, of which there is a liberal supply at Dahlonega, The two Iron safes are in good condition.

In regard to both Branch Mints, it is a question whether the old locks on the vaults should not ^{be} replaced by the more modern mutation locks and Keys, With well constructed vaults, fire and burglar proof, which I would unqualifiedly recommend for new establishments, there would be no need of small iron safes.

The table on the following page embraces my more detailed estimate of the cost of renewal and repairs to the two Branch Mints to fit them for present use. Both need, and especially the Branch at Dahlonega, more extensive and costly repairs to render them more permanently useful. I have abundant reason to distrust the exactness of my estimates, and I only offer them as approximately correct, as far as my knowledge would permit. I have given the estimated repairs, &c. for coinage after the others, pending the question of the operation of the Branches, as mints or assay offices.

It is proper that I should state my opinion, that both branches might be opened, as assay Offices, within a few months, with fewer repairs than I have estimated in this Schedule, and of course at so much less expenditure.

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Estimates of the Cost of Renewal and Repairs
of the Branch Mints at Charlotte & Dahlonega

Specific Items.	Charlotte.		Dahlonega.	
Melting Furnaces, a pair.	new	\$ 150 = @ \$ 200 =	repr.	\$ 50 = @ \$ 100 =
Firebrick and Tile	new	100 = 150 =	new	100 = 150 =
Tools for melting	new	50 = 60 =	new	20 = 40 =
Black lead Pots	new	200 = 250 =	new	200 = 250 =
Hessian Crucibles			new	40 = 60 =
Boilers	repr.	200 = 250 =	new	1000 = 1000 =
Water-tanks	repr.	40 = 60 =	repr.	40 = 60 =
Assay apparatus, &c		100 = 150 =		150 = 200 =
Beltting	new	50 = 100 =	new	50 = 80 =
Grinding apparatus	repr.	50 = 100 =	repr.	50 = 100 =
Lathes and tools	repr.	250 = 300 =	repr.	100 = 150 =
Smithy and tools	new	100 = 130 =	repr.	50 = 100 =
Carpenter's tools	new	50 = 70 =	new	50 = 70 =
Safes	new	200 = 250 =		
Total for Apparatus		<u>\$ 1540 = @ 2070 =</u>		<u>\$ 1900 = @ 2320 =</u>
Main Buildings	repr.	500 = 750 =	repr.	1500 = 2000 =
Sheds and Out-buildings	repr.	1000 = 1500 =	repr.	1000 = 1500 =
Total for Assay Offices		<u>\$ 3040 = @ 4320 =</u>		<u>\$ 4400 = @ 5820 =</u>
Refining and Coinage		1000 = 1500 =		1000 = 1500 =
Total for Mints.		<u><u>\$ 4040 = @ 5820 =</u></u>		<u><u>\$ 5400 = @ 7320 =</u></u>

Mint of the United States
Philadelphia Sept 23, 1865

Hon Hugh McCulloch
Secretary of the Treasury

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I am Sir,
Very Respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
James Pollock
Director

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on Branch Mints at Charlotte & Dahlonega
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To Hon James Pollock
Director of the Mint
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Pursuant to my appointment, I left Philadelphia on July 10th, proceeded to make the examinations required with as much dispatch as practicable, and returned to this place on Sept 9th. The two months thus spent far exceeded my original estimate of the requisite time, in consequence of the broken and imperfect condition of the Southern Rail Roads, of their want of connection in running times, & especially of the difficult and tedious overland route to Dahlonega, a distance of 75 miles from the nearest point on a Rail Road. Indisposition, arising from the two months travel, without repose, has prevented an earlier presentation of the result of my labors.

The letter of the Department and your own express the following points as the objects of my mission: viz

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- I. **I prefer offering a general view of the condition of the Branch Mints in my Report, unencumbered with the details of their more precise condition, which are embraced in the subjoined schedule A.**

The Buildings and machinery of both mints are in as good a condition as their closure during four years of war would warrant us in assuming. They received no positive detriment from troops or individuals during Confederate sway, except in the abstraction of tools & a little machinery, which last has been returned and they have been injured to a very limited extent during their occupancy by our own troops.

The main building at Charlotte is in good condition, having been erected more recently than that at Dahlonega. It was employed by the Confederate Government for the storage of goods belonging to their so-called Navy-Yard, situated in Charlotte. The extent of preservation, which this Branch received, is

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I have endeavored to approximate to correct estimates in the following tables of cost of repairs and renewal to the buildings, apparatus and machinery of the two Branch mints, reserving more specific details and estimates to the subjoined schedule A. Correct estimates can only be made by the professional mechanic after a careful survey. The question springing out of the third point of enquiry, whether the Branches shall be continued as mints or assay offices, induced me to divide the estimates accordingly.

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For Assaying purposes, exclusively	\$1540 = @ \$2070 =	\$1900 = @ \$2320 =
For Buildings	1500 = 2250 =	2500 = 3500 =
Total for Assay Offices	\$3040 = \$4320 =	\$4400 = \$5820 =
Additional for Refining and Coinage	1000 = 1500 =	1000 = 1500 =
Total for all minting purposes	\$4040 = \$5820 =	\$5400 = \$7320 =

I remark on the above that the estimates embrace only such repairs as I supposed necessary to put the Branches in present active operation, but that more extensive repairs will have to be made, especially to the Dahlonega Branch, before they can be considered in the best condition.

II. Protection and Preservation of Public Property

Upon my first reaching the Branch Mint at Charlotte, I found it in possession of a detachment of US Troops, who evidently inflicted no injury upon the building or its contents. The Assay Department was then locked up, and the keys in charge of Dr. J. H. Gibbon, by permission of General Ruger, Commandant of N Carolina. As Dr. Gibbon was then in the North & to remain for a few weeks, and as the Instructions of the Commandant were that the closed portion of the building should remain so, I concluded to allow things to remain as they were, and proceed to the examination of Dahlonega, pending Dr. Gibbon's return. Upon my visit to Charlotte, a month later I found that other troops had

replaced those I left in charge, that the Assay Department had been forced open, the balances and other articles disarranged, and according to Dr. Gibbon, some gold and silver had been abstracted. The officer in charge had seen both the gold & silver, and I trust that through the investigation of Dr. Gibbon, it will be found and returned. While in Charlotte, I had the lathes and pointing rolls transferred from the Confederate Navy Yard to the Mint, from which they had been removed. The reappointment of Dr. Gibbon, as assayer is now a sufficient guarantee that the Public Property of this Branch will be duly guarded and preserved.

I found that some of the apparatus of the Dahlonega Branch had been somewhat injured by the privilege accorded to the Cavalry Detachment, quartered in the Mint, to rove unmolested over the whole building, except in a few rooms, where the more delicate apparatus was kept. A squad of 15 men, under Lieut Zimmerman of the 139th Ill VVI (volunteer Infantry) accompanied me to the mint, to replace the Cavalry, and I assigned certain portions of the building to them, with strict injunctions, which I am confident were obeyed, to enter no other part of the building. Upon my return to Dalton to give special instructions to Brevet Major General Kueffner of the 139th Ill in relation to the Mint, I found that in the short interim Dahlonega was already transferred to the jurisdiction of General Judah. Fearing the consequences of such frequent changes of military occupation, I went at once to Augusta, to explain the state of things to Major General Steedman, Commandant of Georgia, and to request that the troops should not be quartered in the building, because the personal character and discipline of the officer in command was the only guarantee of the due preservation and protection of the Public Property. I further stated to him the disturbed condition of upper Georgia and the necessity of a heavier force than fifteen men. He at once issued instructions to General Judah to detach a force of forty (40) men, duly commanded, to Dahlonega, with special instructions that the mint building should not be occupied by the troops, except perhaps one or two rooms by officers. In the meantime Mr. Quillen resides in the mint with his family, and will, I doubt not, exercise the same care of the building and its contents, that he has heretofore done, until officers are appointed

Page -7- is missing from the original report. The page fastener was a rivet-type and the sheets pulled loose from the back rivet.

Shall these Branches be mints or only assay offices?

If gold dust be deposited in the mint, improved by melting, assaying, cast into a bar, and its value stamped thereon, its commercial value is at once known, and this fact precludes imposition on the Depositor or Holder. If such gold is to be coined at the mint, it must of necessity be previously refined, and hence all the appliances for refining and coinage would be required, in addition to those for assaying. These acts necessitate the employment of more officers and more workmen, the inconvenient transportation of acids in glass vessels into the interior of the country, the use of much more machinery and apparatus, and greatly increase the cost and complexity of a mint over an assay office. The only advantage of coinage in the interior would be the distribution of a moderate amount of gold, in the directly utilizable form of coin, in the regions surrounding the Branch mints, but this advantage is only limited to the short time of transit of a gold bar of determined value to a place of coinage and its return. The advantage appears to me to be too short in time, too small in value, and too limited as to the number of depositors, to outweigh the increased cost and complexity of Refining and Coinage at Branch mints in the Interior of the country. Moreover, even this slight advantage may be met, if the government should give a Specie Draft for the value of a gold deposit, payable at any Depository in a Commercial Center, and should assume the responsibility of transferring such gold to a mint for refining and coinage.

I derived this excellent suggestion from your Report, as Director of the Mint, for 1863-4 and can add nothing more to it. I am confident there would be no difficulty in negotiating the sale of a Specie Draft in the Southern gold regions, subject to no other loss than the rate of exchange, which would doubtless be sometimes in favor of the Depositor.

Do we require new Branch mints in the United States?

While the question is now, for the first time since their establishment, an open one, whether the two branch mints in the South shall be reopened with full minting power, or simply as assay offices, there is nothing in the way of examining the general bearings of this question, with a view to future legislation by the Congress. The only interference is perhaps the law, establishing a branch at Denver, Colorado, but I believe that is consequence of the difficulties of transportation, it has only been worked thus far as an assay office and has proved ample for all commercial purposes.

Gold and silver are being extensively developed in Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Arizona, and other territories. It is hardly necessary to remark that in a gold producing region, a very small proportion of their gold is required by the producing community for circulation, and that nearly all of it must find its way to a commercial center.

Shall the extensive and more cumbrous structure of a mint, in its buildings, machinery and operations be erected in each one of these territories or states, or possibly in more than one locality in each of them, because of their great extent? This is not only important as an economical question, but another arises with it, whether the multiplication of centers of coinage may not multiply the possibility of erroneous issues of coin.

Consider for a moment that the same value of gold, whether in assayed bar, or in refined coin, will have to be transported to the commercial centers, at an equal cost and risk to the public. If government were to assume the transportation of bars, the risk would no doubt be borne by perfectly responsible transportation companies for a modest consideration, more moderate than would be the case, if effected for individuals. The cost might be paid by the Depositors under the charge for coinage, with or without additional consideration. If the gold is to be refined for coinage at the Interior Branch Mint, all the materials for refining will have to be transported to that mint from a commercial and manufacturing center, and the Depositor, by virtue of the proper clause in the General Mint Law, requiring him to pay the cost of refining, will have to bear the expense of transporting the materials for refining, in addition to the usual charges for coinage and transportation of coin. It entails unnecessary expense both on the government and the Depositor. For if gold is simply assayed at an Interior Assay Office, its commercial value is known, and it is immediately convertible into coin by a specie government draft, at an expense to the Depositor of the moderate charge for assaying, and the charges for transporting gold, and at an expense to the government of maintaining an assay office. If such gold be refined and coined at an Interior Branch Mint, an equivalent conversion into coin is effected, at the same expense to the Depositor as for assaying, with the additional charge of transportation of materials for refining and at a greater cost to the government of maintaining the more expensive Minting Establishment.

The only object of the increased cost of a mint over an assay office can be, in effect, the supply of the very small proportion of coin need for local circulation, an object wholly inadequate to warrant the greater expense of a mint, and wholly unnecessary when we know that the production of gold, of known value, will attract the equivalent quantity of coin, required for circulation, without cost to anyone, especially if the specie draft system were adopted.

Near all the gold produced and coined in the Interior would be charged with the increased cost of refining, over that necessarily imposed on it in localities most favorable for refining and coinage, and that without adding to its value as a manufactured article. In general, the increased cost of production

should add to the value of that production, but as this is not the case in the present instance, it is at variance with the soundest economical principles to refine and coin gold in the interior of the country.

The views which I have presented appear to me sufficiently to prove that it is against the interests of the government, the Depositor, the miner, and the general public to establish Branch Mints in the interior of the county. Some of the reasons addressed go further to show that mints should not be multiplied, even in the commercial centers of the Republic. The simple manufacturing principle ought to be sufficient, that the manufacturing operations of refining and coinage can be most economically effected in the fewest localities. On the grounds I have presented, it appears to me that there should be but two mints in the United States, one on the Eastern and Western coasts respectively. I am not prepared to advocate, on general grounds, the continuance of even the Branch Mint at New Orleans; for however useful it formerly was, as the nearest recipient of silver from our then chief source Mexico, the increasing production of silver in our own Territories will probably diminish the activity and need of that branch. Nevertheless, as it is in existence with all of its appliances, and in an important commercial center, as well as to avoid the imputation of a desire to deprive the Southern Ports of Coining Privileges, I am inclined to waive my objections in relation to it, and to accord to it the power of coining silver. The current of gold-dust will probably not hereafter flow towards New Orleans.

General Plan for Assay Offices.

Since the most favorable moment is present for adopting a general system for assay offices, because of the question in relation to the two southern branch mints, & because of the legislation of the congress will be asked for to establish like offices in new territories and states, I venture to suggest the outlines of an operative plan which appears to me to combine the greatest economy with efficiency and a full system of checks.

The official staff might comprise two commissioned officers, one the Superintendent and assayer, the other the Treasurer and melter. There might be a general mint clerk, or one subordinate to the Treasurer, and the assayer should have a first class workman to assist him. The operative force might consist of two melters, two laborers, and a watchman. The whole force then would be two officers, a clerk, and six workmen, of different grades.

The works for an assay office might be a plain and moderate sized building, with two substantial vaults, fire and burglar proof, and plain sheds for the storage of fuel, etc. A steam engine to supply water and for power, a grinding apparatus for sweeps, two melting furnaces, the full appliances of an assayer, several large and small balances, with the subsidiary mechanisms of a lathe, smithy, and carpenters bench, seem to me to constitute sufficient furnishing for all assay purposes.

The official and operative force suggested, and the building and furnishing just recited, commend themselves to my judgement as constituting an assay office, that will operate securely, economically and efficiently. I submit the plan to your better judgement.

IV On appointments at the Branch Mints

I called on Provisional Governor Holden in the middle of July, and finding that he had already suggested to the Department the name of a gentleman as Superintendent, I took no further action on that point. In a conversation with Provisional Governor Johnson, as I was not then acquainted with individuals capable of filling the offices, I preferred suggesting the principles which ought to govern nominations. On the supposition that the branch mints might be opened with full minting powers, I suggested that the Superintendent should possess a business capacity, that the assayer should have some acquaintance with chemistry, as well as be or become a skillful assayer, and that the melter, refiner, and coiner should be a tolerably expert mechanic, and if possible possess some metallurgic knowledge.

He informed me that he had suggested the name of Mr. Todd, the former assayer, for appointment. I do not doubt, from all that I could learn, that the appointment would be a good one.

Subsequently, as the propriety of opening the branch mints only as assay offices forced itself on my attention, and satisfied, my judgement that their establishment as assay offices was the only proper course for the government to pursue, I wrote to Governor Johnson knowing it to be your opinion also, to the effect that in all probability the mints would only be made assay offices, and that in such case neither Superintendent or coiner would be required. I merely suggested to him that in this case, the Treasurer should have some knowledge of metallurgy, although of less importance than his knowledge of business.

The President having seen fit to appoint Dr. Gibbons as assayer at Charlotte, I did not deem it necessary to call again upon Governor Holder, on my return to the North. May I not suggest to you, in concluding this head, that some appointment if practicable, be given to Mr. Quillen, at Dahlonega, in as much as the preservation of the mint property at that place is mainly due to him. Such at least is the opinion I received of him in Dahlonega, although I confess from not the loyal of persons.

I have now carried out the instructions conveyed to me in the letter of the Department and in your own, to the best of my ability and I trust, to your satisfaction. I will only urge in conclusion that I think it desirable for the government to determine as early as practicable, whether to conduct the two branch mints as such, or only as assay offices, and to make their appointments of officers, so as to secure most effectively the preservation of the public property, and to enable the officers to make early preparation for a winter's campaign.

Very Respectfully yours
James C. Booth

Schedule A

More specific details in relation to the state of the buildings, apparatus, and machinery of the branch mints at Charlotte NC and Dahlonega GA.

1. Charlotte. The original building, constructed in 1836, was destroyed by fire, and replaced by the present structure, which may be stated in general terms to be in good condition. It is a building of one story in height, with a basement rising some six feet above the ground, making airy cellars, and is constructed of brick, stuccoed. The chimney stacks appear to need repointing. The corrugated roof of xinked (sic zinced) iron needs a little repair and through painting, to prevent rain leakage, which has slightly damaged the walls and ceiling of the interior of the building. I could learn of no one in Charlotte, capable of repairing such a roof, although such a person might be found at the NC companies shops. The frame outbuildings, sheds for fuel, and general storage are in a dilapidated condition, requiring considerable repairs to fit them for present use. A single coat of paint on the woodwork of the main building would be a great advantage for its preservation, although not presently essential.

The steam engine was found to be in running condition. I had an experienced machinist to examine the boiler, which he pronounced to be in fair condition, requiring an outlay of about \$200 to run them safely. Caulking and paint will probably be sufficient for the water tanks. The chasers and lathes can be rendered effective by an outlay of \$300 to \$400. The melting furnaces, belting, and forge will have to be renewed. Two iron safes, lost during the war, should be resupplied. Fire brick, melting pots, and various tools for melting, for the forge and carpentry, will have to be almost wholly resupplied, at a cost of some \$500 to \$650. The company's shops,

of the NC RR Co., near Greensboro, appears to be the nearest available point, from which some of the tools can be obtained. The finer tools should be purchased in the North, and it would be perhaps better to send a single set of melting tools from the Philadelphia mint as patterns.

2. Dahlonega. The main building of this branch mint was originally well constructed, of two stories height, with a basement rising about four feet above the ground in front and still higher in the rear. The basement is solidly built of rough hewn granite blocks, and cut granite constitutes the sill, lintels and jambs of windows and doors. The rest of the building is composed of brick, stuccoed. The mason work is generally good, needing few repairs, excepting the chimney stacks, which pass through the wood work of the loft, and the shingle roof, with the very censurable thickness of half a brick, rendering fire imminent at any moment. I found the wooden mantel in one apartment burned from a crack in the thin flue. All or at least several of the stacks should be rebuilt.

The woodwork of the whole building has suffered severely and is decaying in parts, for lack of paint, which has evidently not been applied to it for many years.

Some of the frame outbuildings are very much dilapidated, and need either renewal or considerable repairs.

The greater part of the machinery, like that at Charlotte, has suffered rather from the rust of inattention, than from injury. The testimony of several, who were engaged in the mint, prior to the war, is that the boilers were then unsafe. In the absence of means or ability on my part to test this question, I prefer adopting the opinion, and recommend the purchase of new boilers. Most of the tools for the turning lathe were removed to Atlanta during the war, and are doubtless among its debris. A tolerably full supply of tools for melting, for lathe, forge, and carpentry is demanded by this branch mint, because of its isolated and distant position from centers of mechanical industry. I examined the government works at Chattanooga, and the private establishments at Macon, with a view to the purchase of new boilers, and recommend the latter, as I learn that the former are to pass out of the hands of the government.

The furnaces are in tolerable condition, & only need relining. The water tanks, grinding apparatus, belting, black lead pots, and fire brick need similar renewal or repairs to those at Charlotte, except in the case of sand pots or Hessian crucibles of which there is a liberal supply at Dahlonega. The two iron safes are in good condition.

In regard to both branch mints, it is a question whether the old locks on the vaults should not be replaced by the new modern mutation locks and keys. With well constructed vaults, fire and burglar proof, which I would unqualifiedly recommend for the new establishments, there would be no need of small iron safes.

The tables on the following page embraces my more detailed estimate of the cost of renewal and repairs to the two branch mints to fit them for present use. Both need, and especially the branch at Dahlonega, more extensive and costly repairs to render them more permanently useful. I have abundant reason to distrust the exactness of my estimate, and I only offer them as approximately correct, as far as my knowledge would permit. I have given the estimated repairs etc for coinage after the others, pending the question of the operation of the branches as mints or assay offices.

It is proper that I should state my opinion, that both branches might be opened, as assay offices, within a few months, with fewer repairs than I have estimated in this schedule, and of course at so much less expenditure.

<p>Estimates of the cost of renewal and repairs Of the branch mints at Charlotte and Dahlonega</p>
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Specific Items	Charlotte	Dahlonega
Melting furnaces, a pair	New \$150 = @ \$200 =	Repr \$50 = @ \$100 =
Fire Brick and Tile	New \$100 = \$150 =	New \$100 = 150 =
Tools for melting	New 50 = 60 =	New 20 = 40 =
Black lead pots	New 200 = 250 =	New \$200 = 250 =
Hessian crucibles		New 40 = 60 =
Boilers	Repr 200 = 250 =	New \$1000 = \$1000 =
Water tanks	Repr 40 = 60 =	Repr 40 = 60 =
Assay Apparatus	100 = 150 =	100 = 150 =
Belting	New 50 = 100 =	New 50 = 80 =
Grinding apparatus	Repr 50 = 100 =	Repr 50 = 100 =
Lathes and tools	Repr 250 = 300 =	Repr 100 = 150 =
Smithy and tools	New 100 = 130 =	Repr 50 = 100 =
Carpenter's tools	New 50 = 70 =	New 50 = 70 =
Safes	New 200 = 250 =	
Total for apparatus	\$1540 = @ 2070 =	\$1900 = @ 2320 =
Main Buildings	Repr 500 = 750 =	Repr 1500 = 2000 =
Sheds and outbuildings	Repr 1000 = 1500 =	Repr 1000 = 1500 =
Total of Assay Offices	\$3040 = @ 4320 =	\$4400 = @ 5820 =
Refining and coinage	1000 = 1500 =	1000 = 1500 =
Total for Mints	\$4040 = @ 5820 =	\$5400 = @ 7320 =