

North Colebrook Post Office, 1851

North Colebrook, Litchfield County, Ct. April 26, 1851
Second Assistant Post Master General, Washington, DC

Sir,

I had the honor to receive from the appointment office of the 10th inst. by mail of the 19th the necessary documents conferring upon me the office of Post Master at North Colebrook.

This appointment was to me as unexpected as it was unsolicited and while I would express my grateful acknowledgement for this testimonial of your confidence, at the same time I feel constrained to return the papers.

You must be aware the recent election in this state was one of more than ordinary interest, and the great and patriotic principles of Union operated especially in this 4th Congressional District upon men of both parties in the sustaining of the compromise by the election of Seymour over Butler to Congress. What sane [?] sentiment had its influence unto a greater or less extent in the election of representatives to the state legislature.

As the returns show, (I herewith enclose an extract from the Journal of Commerce) there is nearly if not an equal division of parties in the House, and being myself a member elect from the Town of Colebrook, (our statute law prohibiting any member taking his seat as a representative while holding the office of Post Master under the gen^l. government) I am led to infer there has been some “-? – soil” intrigue [chicanery] in procuring for me this appointment.

Permit me to make you acquainted also with the situation of my colleague, Mr. Henry W. Pinney: he was elected to the legislature from this town by the combined vote of Union Whigs and Democrats. At the time he was holding the office of Post Master at Millbrook, an office whose quarterly returns I understand are about five dollars. Our election was on the 7th. On the 10th he forwarded to you his resignation, and also on the 15th with the recommend of the Post Master at Colebrook to your favorable notice the person named by Mr. Pinney as his successor. I have understood there are efforts making to induce the Post Office Department to withhold his resignation until after our Legislature shall have risen by which means to dispossess him also of his seat.

As these two operations taken in connection, I will refrain from any remarks. Their conception was in darkness. Their execution must be in the light.

Requesting as I do that any action should have been taken with the intent to defraud the Electoral College and cou - ?- disfranchise a town, I am happy to say I do not attach any design or knowledge of the fact to the department over which you preside.

As to the Post Office at North Colebrook, there ought to be an immediate appointment, as the Post Mistress, Mary A. Marine [?] is at present a “tenant at will”, having sent away her household furniture and is impatiently awaiting her discharge.

Mr. Jasper Pinney has purchased the place occupied by Mrs. Marine [?] and taken possession.

It is by far the most convenient location for the office, and his appointment as Post Master I have no hesitation in saying will give general satisfaction to all within its delivery. I signed a petition for his appointment some three weeks since to which was attached [the] usual respectable names, and so well am I satisfied with his ability to perform its duties that I gave him assurance as before his petition was sent on that if appointed I would become his bondsman.

I stand ready to fulfill that promise and would recommend his immediate appointment.

Most Respectfully

Yours

Edward A. Phelps