



**KENTUCKY
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

PRIMARY SOURCE
EDUCATOR PACKET

JAMES WILKINSON



PRIMARY SOURCE PACKET



Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies

Eighth Grade

8.H.KH.1 Articulate Kentucky's role in early American history from the earliest colonial settlement to 1877.

8.G.KGE.1 Analyze Kentucky's role in the early nation through Reconstruction based on its physical geography and location.

8.C.KGO.1 Examine the role of Kentucky and Kentuckians within national politics between 1792-1877.

High School

HS.WH.KH.1 Describe the impact of world history on Kentuckians and how Kentucky impacted the world.



Brief Historical Overview

James Wilkinson (1757-1825) was an American soldier known for being a double agent for the Spanish Imperial Government. He is most notably recognized for his involvement in the Aaron Burr conspiracy. After moving to Kentucky in 1784, Wilkinson became a strong advocate for statehood, although his motives were somewhat hidden. By 1787, he had taken an oath of allegiance to Spain and began operating under the code name "Number Thirteen."

Spain desired Kentucky to become part of Louisiana, but ultimately, the United States purchased the Louisiana territory. Wilkinson was later appointed as the governor of the Louisiana Territory north of the 33rd parallel, a position that allowed him to collaborate with Aaron Burr in attempting to conquer the Southwest Territory on behalf of Spain. However, Wilkinson betrayed Burr by approaching President Thomas Jefferson with evidence of this conspiracy, implicating Burr as the mastermind of the plot.

At one point, Wilkinson faced suspicion for his involvement and was court-martialed, but he was found not guilty. He retained his command in New Orleans and was eventually promoted to the rank of major general. His military career ended abruptly when he failed in a campaign against Montreal during the War of 1812. Wilkinson died in Mexico City while serving as the United States Envoy to Mexico. It wasn't until a century after his death that his true role as a spy was recognized, leading to his portrayal as a more despicable character in history.



Primary Source Reference Guide

Source 1: Letter from James Wilkinson to General Charles Scott in which he describes his attack on the Native American settlement at Keth-tip-pe-can-nunk with a detachment of the Kentucky militia, June 3, 1791. Accession Number SC736_F1_016.

Source 2: Letter from James Wilkinson to Major General Henry Knox in which he discusses a spy, troop movements, and his need for reinforcements, November 3, 1792. Accession Number SC736_F1_014.

Source 3: Letter from James Wilkinson to Major General Anthony Wayne in which he describes a failed attempt to forge a peace treaty with Native Americans and recommends an attack on "Le Glaize" at the junction of the Maumee and Auglaize rivers, September 14, 1793. Accession Number SC736_F1_015.

Source 4: Letter from James Wilkinson to President John Adams in which he attempts to defend his character against rumors that he is a Spanish agent, December 20, 1797. Accession Number SC736_F1_017.

Source 5: Letter from James Wilkinson to Colonel James Taylor asking for documents to be used as evidence in Wilkinson's espionage trial, September 27, 1811. Accession Number SC736_F1_019.

Camp Crutman June 3^d 1798
One O'Clock P.M.

Sir

The Detachment under my Command destined
against the Village Kethlifeconunk got in motion at
half after five O'Clock last evening, knowing that ^{we had to attack} an
enemy whose chief dependance is in his dexterity as
a marksman and his alertness in covering himself
behind trees, stumps and other impediments to fair fight,
would not hazard an action in the night, I determined
to push my march untill I approached the vicinity
of the Village, where I knew the country to be champaign.
I gained my point forty minutes after Ten O'Clock.
I lay upon my Arms untill four O'Clock and half an
hour after Assaulted the Town at all quarters. The
Enemy was vigilant, fled on my Approach, and in
Cannon crossed Ele Creek, which reached the N E quarter
of the Village, that Creek was not fordable. My Corps
dashed forward with the Intrepidity becoming Volunteers,
and were saluted by the Enemy with a brisk fire from the
Opposite side of the Creek, they rushed on to the Waters edge
and finding it impossible: Returned a Volley, which so gallied

which and disconcerted their Antagonists, that they threw
away their fire without effect - in five Minutes the savages
were driven from their covert and fled on all quarters -
I have three men slightly wounded - At half after five
O'clock the Town was in flames, and I commenced my
Retreat at six. - I want language to do justice to the
Courage and good Conduct of the Gentlemen who composed
my party, in neither could they be excelled by Veteran
Troops. - I have the honour to be Sir
~~Wm~~ Genl. Chas Scott Your most Obedt. Servant

James Wilkinson

Wilkinsons

Report of

Reddipocumuck

Wilkinsons Report to
Reddipocumuck
June 1791.

SC736_F1_016: Letter from James Wilkinson to Charles Scott

Camp Ouiatenon

June 3rd, 1791

One O'Clock P.M.

Sir

The Detachment under my Command destined against the village Kethtippecannunk got in motion at half after five O'Clock last evening, knowing we had to attack an enemy whose chief dependence is in his dexterity as a marksman and his alertness in covering himself behind trees, stumps and other impediments to fair fight, would not hazard an action in the night, I determined to push my march until I approached the vicinity of the Village, where I knew the country to be champaign. I gained my point forty minutes after Ten O'Clock. I lay upon my Arms until four O'Clock and half an hour after Assaulted the Town at all quarters. The Enemy was vigilant, fled on my Approach, and in canoes crossed Eel Creek, which reached the NE quarter of the Village, that Creek was not fordable—My Corps dashed forward with the Intrepidity becoming Volunteers, and were saluted by the Enemy with a brisk fire from the opposite side of the Creek, they rushed on to the Watersedge and finding it impassible, returned a Volley, which so galled and disconcerted their Antagonists, that the threw away their fire without effect—in five minutes the savages were driven from their covert and fled on all quarters—I have three men slightly wounded—At half after five O'Clock the Town was in flames, and I commenced my retreat at six.--- I want language to do Justice to the Courage and good Conduct of the Gentlemen who Composed my party, in neither could they be exceeded by Veteran Troops.-- I have the honor to be Sir

Your most obedient Servant

James Wilkinson

No 29

Fort Washington

Nov 3 1792

Sir I have this Evening rec^d advice that a man has arrived at Pittsburgh, who reported himself as sent by me into the Indian Towns, from whence he had made his Escape, my informant does not remember the name of this man, but says that his deposition had been taken and made public by Major General Wayne — If this be true it is unfortunately, because it not only destroys this Agents future utility in the same line, but will bar the door against our Companies from every quarter India expect that May of the 1st or Reynolds of the 2^d Reg^t might make for Pittsburgh, as they were allowed to do so in case they should find it necessary — If the person in question answers to either of the above names, he should be retained in service, and sent to this post as a Guide for future occasion — No troops have yet arrived the Six or seven boats from Redstone and other posts on the Monongahela have come down the River, within three days past — The last papered Pittsburgh about ten days since, at which time the passengers advise that no troops had embarked — We have had a moderate Flood, but the waters begin to subside, and with them my hopes of a speedy arrival — If I am not reinforced, you may expect that the Enemy will give us a stroke, before the Expiration of the present month; whatever precautions, caution and vigilance, or my personal exertions can accomplish shall be effected; But when the whole force of the Enemy, may be brought to Enterprize upon and act against 100 or 150 men, which is the utmost strength I can give my Escort — I cannot feel myself secure — The bearer Doctor Hammond has charge of my dispatches of the first Inst. referring you to them, I remain with great deference & attachment Sir your most Obed^t Serv^t
 In Filthman

Fort Washington

Nov 3rd 1792

Sir,

I have this Evening received advice that a man had arrived at Pittsburgh, who reported Himself as a spy sent by me into the Indian Towns, from whence he had made his Escape, my informant does not remember the name of this man, but says that his depo had been taken and made public by Major General Wayne—If this be true it is unfortunate because it not only destroys this agents future utility in same line, but will bar the door against our emissaries from every quarter I did not expect that May of the 1st or Reynolds of the 2nd Reg might make for Pittsburgh, as they were allowed to do so in case they should find it necessary—If the person in question answers to either of the above names, he should be retained in service, and sent to this post as a Guide for future occasion—No troops have yet arrived tho six or seven Boats from Redstone and other posts on the Monongahela have come down the River, within three days past—The last passed Pittsburgh about ten days since, at which time the passengers advised that no troops had embarked—We have had a moderate Flood, but the waters begin to subside, and with them my hopes of a speedy arrival. If I am not reinforced, you may expect that the Enemy will give us a Stroke, before the Expiration of the present month; whatever precaution, caution and vigilance, or my personal exertions can accomplish can be effected; But when the whole force of the Enemy, may be brought to Enterprize upon and act against 100 or 150 men, which is the utmost strength I can give my escort—I cannot feel myself secure—The bearer Doctor Hammits has charge of my dispatches of the first instant referring you to them, I remain with great deference and attachment

Sir your most obedient servant

Major General Knox

James Wilkinson

To, Hamilton
Sept 14th 1792

Sir -

As well as the messenger arrived here last night, and will have the honor to deliver your Excellency this letter -

It is evident from his representation, that the officers and Emigrants of the Britists, were the sole causes, which prevented a treaty, and that they had some difficulty to accomplish this measure. The implacable tribes, reside generally at the Confluence of the Maumee and Glauze rivers, from thence down the Tawa river to the Lake, with the aid, influences and Co-operation of them; and by Intrigue, Mr. McKee carried his point, altho Brant, the Corn planter, and the great body of the Convention were for peace, -

The Nations have for the present dispersed to their several Towns, and the implacable tribes are left at Home, with about five hundred Warriors, their utmost strength; If by some prompt, energetic effort, and by a decisive route, your Excellency could enterprize against this Banditti, strike "le Glauze", destroy their Corn, capture their wives and Children, and break up the Settlements to the mouth of the Tawa river, you would terminate the war at a single stroke, and would enjoy the distinguished honor, of having done it without the effusion of much blood - Should the Kentucky volunteers turn out promptly, and in force, the operation is very practicable.

I have heard that you are preparing to advance, if this be the Case, every the most vigorous and active exertion should be made in every quarter, and on all hands, for you have as much or more to apprehend from the Season and its Consequences, than from the Enemy - a northern Route at the present hour, is an unfortunate one. -

It will be deeply Interesting to the transport of the army, that the road in its approach to Fort Jefferson, should be altered or repaired, - in its present state I hear it is impassable to loaded Waggon for seven or eight miles; but in Justice to the Troops under my Command, I must beg leave to observe, that incessantly

impartially stated as I have seen during the season, it would be an
equal and no my opinion in favor of the service, before
this case goes there, because they have already done
more than their proportion. But a Continuation will
effectually take from them every chance of conforming
to your modes of formation, discipline, and order of ca-
marching etc etc, whilst the troops of your Camp have done
little else for months. I shall willingly act as a guide
on the occasion, and if the road is to be altered, I should
think the safest plan I will mark the Route.

Enclosed you have Copies of my last orders to Col. Stanwix
and Captain Gibson, which may I hope meet your Ex-
cellency's approbation.

In taking up the ideas expressed in your letter of the 11th Instant,
that I was opposed to the blending of the Rifles and Drums
proved muskets, you did me a great injury, and if you
will be pleased to peruse my letter, you will discover
that it was not the thing, but your Excellency's man-
ner of doing it, that I objected to.

We are of opinion the Enemy will make it advise to strike
at your Camps, and if this be their determination, you
will find it a difficult matter to protect them without
harrassing your troops improperly, for being in possession
of the Country and acting offensively, they can attack your
Camps when and where it may best suit, and in any
force they may find necessary. Every practicable precau-
tion should therefore be used, because the loss of one Camp
will at this season be conclusive against your General
operations; What would you think Sir, in order to dis-
turb their attention, and to keep them from the Enemy in
your front, of feinting in advance of Fort Jefferson, with
a light body, or actually by a rapid movement to take
ground, that is to visit the front, and if Circumstances
would justify, the second station, (where would reach
General McLeisfield), and having accomplished these
objects, and forced the negating Garrison to fall back
by night marches, and wait your General movements.
These are Order Ideas - but if you please I will
object them - as I know the plan to be practicable, I
believe the consequences may be important.

I want flints, ammunition and an army.

Lieut. Kremer goes to Cincinnati to provide necessaries for the
Officers of the advanced post, and I will thank your
Excellency, to permit me to send Doctor Carmichael
to Kentucky, to attend from thence to this place, or
Young Lady, his Relations, who I wish to leave with
Harry with Mr. McKim.

I have for some times past been a little indisposed, but I thank
God, that I never felt myself in higher vigor, or more
competent to attend service, than at present, and
I have the honor to be - with all due deference
and Consideration

Yours Excellency
Most Obedient &
Major Genl Wayne
Most Able Servant
John H. Hays
B.S.

His Ex^{cy}
Major Genl Wayne

Fort Hamilton

Sept 14th 1793

Sir--

Mr. Wells the messenger arrived here last night, and well have the honor to deliver your Excellency this letter--

It is evident from his representation, that the officers and emissaries of the British, were the sole causes, which prevented a treaty, and that they had some difficulty to accomplish this measure. The implacable tribes, reside generally at the confluence of the Miami and Glaize rivers, from thence down the Iowa river to the Lakes with the [illegible], influences, and co-operation of these, and by Intrigue, Mr. McKee carried his point, altho Brande, the Corn planters, and the great Body of the Convention were for peace, -- The nations have for the present dispersed to their several towns, and the implacable Tribes are left at Home, with about five hundred warriors, their utmost strength; If by some prompt, energetic effort, and by a devious route, your Excellency could enterprize against this Band etc., strike "Le Glaize", destroy their Corn, captivate their wives and children, and break up the settlements to the mouth of the Iowa river, you would terminate the war at a single stroke, and would enjoy the distinguished Honor of having done it without the effusion of much Blood—Should the Kentucky volunteers turn out promptly, and in force, the operation is very practicable.

I have heard that you are preparing to advance, if this be the Case, every the most vigorous and active exertion should be made in every quarter, and on all Hands, for you has as much or more, to apprehend from the season and its Consequences, than from the Enemy, a northern Route at the present Hour, is an unfortunate one.--

It will be deeply Interesting to the transport of the army, that the road in its approach to Fort Jefferson should be altered or repair,-- in its present state I fear it is impassable to loaded wagons for seven or eight miles; but in Justice to the troops under my Command, I must beg leave to observe that incessantly fatigued as I have been during the season, it would an equal and in my opinion injurious to the Service, to impose this labor upon them, because they have already done more than their proportion, and a continuance will effectively take from them every Chance of Conforming to your modes of formation, and exercise and indeed of exercising at all, whilst the Troops of your Camp, have done little else for months—I shall willingly act as a BLANK, on the occasion, and if the road is to be altered, which I think the Cheapest plan, I will mark the Route.---

Enclosed you have Copies of my last orders to Col. Hamtramck and Captain Gibson, which may I hope meet your Excellencys approbation.--

In talking up the idea expressed in your letter of the 11th Instant, that I was opposed to the blending of the Rifles and improved muskets, you did me Injustice, and if you will be pleased to reperuse my letter, you will discover that it was not the thing but your Excellencys manner of doing it, that I objected to.--

Well is of the opinion the Enemy will make it a point to strike at your Convoys, and if this be their determination, you will find it a different matter to protect them without harassing your troops improperly, for being in possession of the Country, and acting offensively, they can attack your Escorts when and where it may best suit, and in any force they may find necessary. Every practicable precaution should therefore be exerted, because the loss of one Convoy, that is the destruction of the Pack Horses and wagons, will at this season be against your general operations. What would you think Sir, in order to divert their attention, and to keep them /the Enemy/ in your front, of feinting in advance of Fort Jefferson with a light Corps, or actually by a rapid movement to take Ground, that is to erect the feint, and if circumstances would Justify, the Second station, /which would reach General BLANK/, and having accomplished these objects, and posted the necessary Garrisons to fall back by night marches, and wait your General movements,

These are crude Ideas—but if you please I will digest them—as I know the plan to be practicable, and believe the Consequences may be important--

I want flints, ammunition and an armorer

Lieut Kreeman goes to Cincinnati to provide necessaries for the officers of the advanced fort; and I will thank your Excellency, to permit me to send Doctor Carmichael to Kentucky, to attend from thence to this place, a young Lady his Relation, who I wish to leave in company with Mrs. Wilkinson--

I have for some time past been a little indisposed, but I thank God, that I never felt myself in higher vigor, or more competent to active service, than at present, and I have the honor to be—with all due difference and consideration

Your Excellencys

Most obedient and

Most Humble Servant

John Wilkinson

Copy

Head Quarters Pittsburgh

Dec. 20 1797.

Honoured Sir

No justice to our Country and to the
world your protection of me at a moment when
murder and powerful enemies were combined to des-
troy me by implications which dare not meet the
light. I profess before God and man is among the
leading motives of all my actions —

The death of General Wayne
silenced an investigation which I had much at
heart, because it would have unfolded scenes
and circumstances evincing of my utility, my in-
tegrity and my errors, which can now never
reach the public eye — so soon as this death was
announced in Philadelphia, I waited on the Secre-
tary of War and held with him a conversation
precisely to the following effect — "prosecution is in
the grave with General Wayne, but the door
is

is still open to investigation, and I most earnestly
wish an enquiry into my Conduct, Military and
Political — indeed the vindication of my own affected
reputation more than any desire to injure Gene-
ral Wayne has directed the obstinate perseverance
with which I have pursued this subject — I know
that whips and menuders are circulated in
secret to wound my Character — I know that a
sinister connection with Spain is slanderously im-
puted to me — I know that Jacobinism, French
attachments, and an indisposition to the Government
of my Country are barely ascribed to me — but
conscious of innocence, I court inquiry to obtain
an opportunity of vindication which I have amply
in my power" — to this Mr. M. Henry after decla-
ring that he did not know such things were said
or insinuated, but that if they were I must be
sensible from the President's Conduct to me, that
they had made no impression on his Breast, replied
in the following words — "I advise you as a friend to
give yourself no more trouble about it" — this
conversation

conversation took place several weeks before the
expiration of the Session of Congress, and I followed
the advice given to me, in the hope that the pre-
judices and animosity of my enemies might subside.

But I have been deceived and
while all my faculties have been on the stretch
to promote the interests of the Nation and the
of the Government, I find my enemies have not
stumbled and that calumnies are still cir-
culated to wound my fame and impair the
public confidence. —

Under such circumstances I
know not where to appeal with so much pro-
priety as to your breast, because I implicitly
confide in your justice, to determine my
merits by my works and not by the words of
those who seek my destruction, and because
to you I owe the preservation of a spotless
character, and am particularly responsible
for my Conduct. —

The following circumstances
have occasioned this trespass on your time and
may

may I humbly hope justify the intrusion. —

A man by name Hamilton from the lower Country, anticipated me at this place several weeks, and it was presently rumoured about the town that he had secret business with me and waited my arrival — so soon as the report reached the ears of the Commanding Officer Capt. Turner and the Quarter Master General Mr. Wilkins they called on Mr. Hamilton and taxed him with the slander — he avowed his innocence and declared he had no knowledge of or business with me — the report was then traced to a Mr. Norththwait a Tavern keeper of the town and he gave for another some one of his household who had it from a third person, but it could not be fixed that Hamilton had made the declaration. —

What a man should be at this place with business for me public or private might occur without producing any remarkable ^{effects}

force of my force in fair conflict - not with all my
habits of vigilance it may be impossible for me
to guard against their wiles and stratagems - to
you then Sir, permit me to look up for protection against
the shafts and arrows which may be levelled at
the honor of an absent, injured, innocent man -
I stand to me but the patronage which the retrospection
of my recorded services may warrant and my future
conduct justify, and I ask no more, under heaven
to justify your confidence and to fulfill every
reasonable expectation. -

They leave in this place to remark
on a circumstance which appears in a letter
of the Spanish Minister to the Secretary of State, it
is there stated that I had not received orders to
oppose the violation of our neutrality by the British
in the quarter of Canada - This as far as
relates to my instructions which I received from the
Secretary of War is true, yet it is in fact false - for
Sir, you will be pleased to recollect that in
a conversation which I had with you on the
Subject

affairs — but when such man is known to be a
professed Spanish agent (the very man whom I had recom-
mended to Col. Sargent at Cincinnati last May on
Jimm as a proper subject for the attention of the
Civil Magistrate, as will fully appear from the copy
of my letter to the Colonel which was transmitted
to the War Office) jealousies are excited, speculations
produced and conclusions formed highly injurious
to me, when in fact I never have held, nor ever
shall hold communication with him unless I
may be authorized to put him in confinement,
which if consistent I would recommend and that he
should be removed to some other place.

I intrust your pardon Sir, while
I detain your attention to a circumstance of similar
import but more serious aspect. —

In consequence of the information
no. 1 I wrote the letter no. 2 and received for answer
no. 3. and this last produced no. 4 & 5. The misre-
presentation of Capt. Lewis notwithstanding the
affected

affected guise of candor and respect which he
gave his communication to my Major of Brigade
is apparent from the positive information of Major
Freeman &c. &c. &c.; — This officer attached to
the family of General Wayne in the relation of
extra Aid de Camp mingled in his prejudices
and co-operated in his labors against me, and
the circumstance has long protected him against
the sentence of a General Court Martial for
abuse of my Character and contumelious of my com-
munity. I have considered it my duty to inter-
pose particularly upon you with the solemn asser-
tion that I shall make no indolent attempt to find out
the reported author of this vile Calumny and if
he has been guilty of the fact to bring him to
Justice —

Believe me Honoured Sir it is
the invisibility of my enemy only which I fear,
for while I dare the open assault I dread the secret
stab — defended by the invincible armor of
Integrity I shall exultingly meet the combined
power

in that form, and if I may credit my informant
have discovered a Country of Mines — I had ordered
two hundred pounds of the copper to be brought away
but the metal was too hard for my tools and a
few small pieces only could be cut from the mass
body — a sample will be delivered to you with this
enclosed in a tin case. —

Before I left Philadelphia I
requested the Secretary of war to mention to you
my Son who bears my name, as a Candidate
for a Commission in the Army — suffer me now
Sir, to recommend him to your patronage — it
is my view to make him a Scientific Soldier
and to give him if possible every advantage of Edu-
cation and experience — he is sixteen years of age
and is well grown and well educated for his years, it
your goodness may incline you to favor me I should
prefer the Corps of Artillery and Engineers for my
Son nominally as the most Scientific branch —

with the highest de ac. — I am

The President

Wickham

Head Quarter Pittsburg

Dec 20 1797

Honored Sir

To justify to our Country and to the world your protection of me at a moment when numerous and powerful enemies were combined to destroy me by implications which dare not meet the light, I profess, before God and man in among the leading motives of all my actions--

The death of General Wayne silenced an investigation which I had much at heart, because it would have unfolded scenes and circumstances evincive of my utility, my Integrity and my wrongs, which can now reach the public Eye—so soon as his death was announced in Philadelphia, I waited on the Secretary of War and held with him a conversation precisely to the following effect-- “prosecution is in the grave with General Wayne, but the door is still open to investigation, and I most earnestly wish an inquiry into my Conduct, Military and Political—indeed the vindication of my own aspersed reputation more than any desire to injure General Wayne has directed the obstinate perseverance with which I have pursued this subject—I know that whispers and inuendoes are circulated in secret to wound my Character—I know that a similar connection with Spain is slanderously imputed to me—I know that Jacobinism, French attachments, and an indisposition to the Government of my Country are barely ascribed to me—but conscious of innocence, I court inquiry to obtain an opportunity of vindication which I have amply in my power”—to this Mr. McHenry after declaring that he did not know such things were said or insinuated, but that if they were I must be sensible from the Presidents Conduct to me, that that they had made no impression on his breast, replied in the following words “I advise you as a friend to give yourself no more trouble about it”-- this conversation took place several weeks before the expiration of the session of Congress, and I followed the advice given to me, in the hope that the prejudices and animosity of my enemy might subside

But I have been deceived and while all my faculties have been on the stretch to promote the interests of the Nation and the honor of the Government. I find my enemies have not slumbered and that calumnies are still circulated to wound my fame and impair the public confidence.--

Under such circumstances I know not where to appeal with so much propriety as to your breast, because I implicitly confide in your Justice, to determine my merits by my works and not by the words of them who seek my destruction, and because to you I owe the preservation of a spotless character, and are particularly responsible for my Conduct.--

The following circumstances have occasioned this trespass on your time and may I humbly hope justify the intrusion.

A man by name Hamilton from the Lower Country, anticipated me at this place several weeks, and it was presently rumoured about the town that he had secret business with me and waited my arrival—so soon as the report reached the ear of the Commanding officer Captain Turner and the Quartermaster General Mr. Wilkins they called in Mr. Hamilton and taxed him with the slander—he avowed his innocence and declared he had no knowledge of, or business with me—the report was then traced to a Mr. Postlethwaite a Tavern Keeper of the Town and he gave for author some one of his household who had it from a third person, but it could not be fixed that Hamilton had made the declaration.--

That a man should be at this place with business for me public or private might occur without producing any remarkable effect of my foes in fair conflict—yet with all my habits of vigilance it may be impossible for me to guard against their wiles and stratagems—to you then Sir, permit me to look up for protection against the shafts and arrows which may be levelled at the honor of an absent, injured, innocent man—extend to me but the patronage which the retrospect of my recorded services may warrant and my future conduct justify, and I ask no more, under Heaven to justify your confidence and to fulfill every reasonable expectation.

I beg leave in this place to remark on a circumstance which appears in a Letter of the Spanish Minister to the Secretary of State, it is there stated that I had not received orders to oppose the violation of our neutrality by the British on the quarter of Canada—This as far as relates to my instructions which I received from the Secretary of War is true, yet it is in fact false, for Sir, you will be pleased to recollect that in a conversation which I held with you on the subject effect—but when such man is known to be a professed Spanish agent (the very same whom I had recommended to Col. Sargent at Cincinnati last May or June as a proper subject for the attention of the Civil Magistrate, as will fully appear from the copy of my letter to the Colonel which was transmitted to the War office) jealousies are excited, speculation, produced and conclusions formed highly injurious to me, when in fact I never have held, nor even shall hold communication with him unless I may be authorized to put him in Confinement, which if consistent I would recommend and that he should be removed to some other place.

I intreat your pardon Sir, while I claim your attention to a circumstance of similar import but more serious aspect.--

In consequence of the information No. 1 I wrote the letter No. 2 and received for answer No. 3 and this last produced No. 4 and 5 the misrepresentation of Capt. Lewis notwithstanding the affected guise of candor and respect which he gave his communication to my Major of Brigade is apparent from the positive information of Major Freeman and Lt. Lovell;--- this officer attached to the family of General Wayne in the relation of extra aid-de-camp mingled in his prejudices and co-operated in his labours against me, and this circumstance has long protected him against the sentence of a General Court Martial for abuse of my Character and contempt of my authority. I have considered it my duty to intrude those particulars upon you with the solemn assurance that I shall admit no industry to find out the reputed author of this vile calumny and if he has been guilty of this fact to bring him to Justice.--

Believe me, Honored Sir, it is the invisibility of my enemy only which I fear, for while I dare the open assault- I dread the secret stab—defended by the invincible armor of integrity I shall exultingly meet the combined force in that pursuit, and if I may credit my informants have discovered a Country of mines—I had ordered two hundred pounds of the copper to be brought away but the metal was too hard for my Tools and a few small pieces only could be cut from the massey body- a sample will be delivered to you with this letter inclosed in a Tin case.--

Before I left Philadelphia I requested the Secretary of War was to mention to you my Son who bears my name, as a Candidate for a Commission in the Army—suffer me now Sir, to recommend him to your patronage—it is my view to make him a scientific Soldier and to give him if possible every advantage of education and experience—he is sixteen years of age and is well grown and well educated for his years, if your goodness may incline you to favour me I should prefer the Corps of Artillerists and Engineers for my son's novitiate as the most scientific branch--

With the highest veneration for your character, and the most respectful attachment to your person, I am

Your obliged and faithful soldier and servant

James Wilkinson !

10th Tithings daughter of Genl Taylor was
named in honor of Mrs Genl. Wilkerson

Mr. To J.

On the receipt of this I will pray of you, without a moments
delay, to make a statement of the account of forage and of boats which
you furnished Captain Peter in 1809, and also the price of the forage
furnished Col. Russell the same season, with a copy of his receipt for
the same; be so good as to attest these documents before some Magis-
trate and transmit them to me by the return mail, or as soon as
possible. These papers being interesting to me on my trial now at
issue, I shall rely on your justice to indulge this request - and
am respectfully Sir,

your obed^t serv^t

J. Wilkerson

Frederick Town Md
September 27. 1811

Recd. Town and Recd. Paid

Col. James Taylor

Col. James Taylor

Newport

Kentucky

My Dear Sir I am so cramped with
that I have no time to transmit the above
& to add that the exposition which was
taking place, will vindicate my as-
sessed Character, & put my enemies
to the blush, & justify the confidence
of my friends - but what can repair
the wrongs or heal the wounds I have
received, for saving my Country from a Ci-
vil War? to the smiles & affection of my
celestine Ann, I can only look for recompense
- my best wishes & regards to Mrs. J. & thy offspring. Good
bye. Your manly friend
J. Wilkerson

SC736_F1_019: Letter from James Wilkinson to James Taylor

Sir,

On the receipt of this, I will pray of you, without a moments delay to make a statement of the account of forage and of boats which you furnished Captain Peter in 1809, and also the price of the forage furnished Col. Russell the same season, with a copy of his receipt for the same, be so good as to attest these documents before some Magistrate and transmit them to me by the return mail, or as soon as possible. These papers being interesting to me on my trial now at issue, I shall rely on your justice to indulge this request,-- and am respectfully Sir,

Your obedient servant

James Wilkinson