

West-Point May 18th 1827

Dear father,

It is with the greatest concern and distress that I have to inform you of a circumstance, which will distress you as much, at least, as it does me, and which can only be palliated by my youth.

I shall give you as well as I recollect it my whole conduct in this affair, and the consequences resulting from it—

Something more than a month ago, I went to the Post Office to take out a letter which was unpaid for; but the clerk being unable to change the note which I gave him I left the money at the Office as a deposit. Sometime after this, I went there, for the purpose, as before, of getting out a letter: but in the mean time another clerk had arrived here who it seemed knew nothing of the deposit having been made, and therefore could not permit me, to obtain the letter, without first ~~having~~ ^{paying} paid for it with other money which I did; but at the same time, requested him, to enquire into the transaction, by the next time I should come there; which he promised to do. Last Friday I went there, but was again put off by him, and told the second time that he knew nothing of the affair, and therefore could do nothing: I then told him, that he should have enquired into it; that ~~he~~ could not be put off in this manner; that the agreement was made with the post office, without any regard to persons: upon which he told me that it was not his duty to attend to it; that I must settle it with the person with whom the arrangement was made: Finally he told me, and repeated it several times, that I knew nothing about his duty, and should therefore say nothing about it: which incensed me very much, and caused me to tell him that if he repeated it again, I should injure him; upon this he immediately ordered me out of the office, and repeated what he had said before; I struck him gently, or rather laid upon his shoulder, a small piece of iron, which was lying near me