



## TREASURY DEPARTMENT

WASHINGTON, D. C.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF  
U. S. SECRET SERVICE

December 27, 1941

S E C R E T

Mr. Frank J. Wilson,  
Chief, U. S. Secret Service,  
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

This report is written to permanently record the accomplishment of a momentous assignment by personnel of the United States Secret Service under your direction.

On Christmas Day, December 25th, 1941, in conference with Assistant Chief Joseph E. Murphy, you informed me that I had been selected to confer on December 26th with Mr. Archibald MacLeish, Librarian of Congress and Director of the Office of Facts and Figures, and arrange for the transfer from Washington, D. C., to the vaults of the gold depository at Fort Knox, Kentucky, of priceless historical documents, including the original of the Declaration of Independence and the original of the Constitution of the United States. You stated that the shipment of these documents would be accompanied by Agents Daniel Moriarty and Neil Shannon, both of whom are at this time temporarily assigned to the Washington Field Office for special duty. The transfer of the documents was deemed advisable because of the war in which the United States is now engaged and because of the possibility that in Washington they might be destroyed or damaged in the event of air raids by the enemy.

With Agent Shannon on December 26th I called on Mr. Archibald MacLeish and his Administrative Assistant, Mr. Verner W. Clapp, at Mr. MacLeish's office of the Library of Congress. I explained to Mr. MacLeish that we had reserved Drawing Room "A" and adjoining compartments "B" and "C" in Car A-1 of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad train leaving Washington at 6:30 P. M. on December 26th; that we proposed to place the containers housing the documents in Compartment "B", where they would be under the observation of the agents and of Mr. Clapp, occupying Drawing Room "A" and Compartment "C". Mr. MacLeish was told that we would transport the material in an armored truck under suitable guard from the Library of Congress Annex to the Union Station, and that the shipment would be met in Louisville, Kentucky, at 9:50 A. M. on December 27th by Supervising Agent A. A. Andrews and agents of this Service, to be taken to the depository at Fort Knox. Arrangements had already been made by Executive Aide Laurence E. Albert of your office with Mrs. Nellie Tayloe Ross, Director of the Mint, to have the time lock on the gold vaults at Fort Knox set so that the vaults would be open to receive the shipment on Saturday, December 27th, and Mr. MacLeish was advised accordingly.

During our conference, Mr. MacLeish agreed to furnish a description of the contents of the cases, with the understanding that the Secret Service would assume responsibility for the shipment until its delivery in the vaults, and that when the delivery was completed, his assistant, Mr. Clapp, would obtain a receipt for the packages. In accordance with your instructions, I requested Mr. MacLeish to have each package carefully sealed, and at the suggestion of Agent Shannon I asked that each be then wrapped in plain wrapping paper, tied with cord, and not be marked in any way.

After reporting results of our conference to you and Assistant Chief Murphy, I arranged with Agent John A. White, Superintendent of the Uniformed Force, to have an armored truck and two armed guards from the Bureau of Engraving and Printing report to me at the Treasury Building at 4:30 P. M. December 26th.

I then met Mr. Harry Marx, Station Master, at the Washington Terminal and arranged for his representative to meet the armored truck in the baggage room at 5:30 P. M., and to have a baggage truck convey the packages to the train. Leaving the station I drove over three routes to determine the one best suited to transportation of the documents to the depot.

At 5:15 P. M., in an armored truck followed by a Secret Service car occupied by Agents Shannon and Moriarty, and accompanied by Private First Class William G. Quigley and Private Severyn J. Barley of the Uniformed Force, U. S. Secret Service, I met Mr. MacLeish and Mr. Clapp at the Congressional Library Annex. Four wrapped packages were loaded on the armored truck and transported to the baggage room at the railroad station as planned. At 6:15 P. M. we were able to board the National Limited, and placed all the packages in Compartment "B" in Car A-1, in the custody of the two agents and Mr. Verner W. Clapp. I requested the agents to have Supervising Agent A. A. Andrews telephone you after the delivery at Fort Knox had been completed. The train departed at 6:47 P. M. and I remained on the platform until it was out of sight.

Returning to the office I received a sealed envelope which had been delivered by messenger, containing a list of the contents of the cases, as follows:

Case 1 - THE GUTENBERG BIBLE (St. Blasius - St. Paul copy).  
Three volumes.

Case 2 - THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION (Original, engrossed and signed copy). One roll.

Case 3 - THE MAGNA CHARTA (Lincoln Cathedral Copy). One parchment leaf in frame.

LINCOLN'S SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS (Original, autographed copy). One volume.

(Continued)

Case 3 (Continued) - LINCOLN'S GETTYSBURG ADDRESS. (First and second autographed drafts.) One volume.

Case 4 - THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES. (Original, engrossed and signed copy). Five leaves.

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE. (Original, engrossed and signed copy). One leaf.

For record purposes, the original letter with this list is attached to the original of this report.

Very truly yours,



HARRY E. NEAL  
Secret Service Agent

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