THE PUBLIC CAREER OF JAMES CAMPBELL

BY JOHN F. COLEMAN

ACTORS on the public stage of politics usually suffer at the critical hands of history. Although many survive, few escape the inevitable encounter without their share of bruises. Cruel as this prospect may be, most, perhaps, prefer it to the infinitely harsher punishment more often meted out by history—a cold, uncompromising silence. In the light of retrospect, criticism of cherished policies and ambitious programs may seem sufferable, even justified, but when history views such policies and programs, not as imperfect, but as unworthy of comment, this is indeed a crushing verdict. The hopes, plans, and ambitions of a lifetime are thereby relegated to obscurity, and their originator to the limbo of forgotten men.

Franklin Pierce, among American presidents, has come closest to hearing this verdict pronounced, and his advisors, with startlingly few exceptions, are today clothed in this merciless anonymity. Excluding Jefferson Davis, the Secretary of War, their names—William Marcy, James Guthrie, Caleb Cushing, James Campbell, Robert McClelland, and James Dobbin—strike no spark of recognition in the mind of the general public. One can even imagine more serious students of history, suddenly confronted with their names, suffering a momentary spasm of confusion before identifying them. Pierce's only modern biographer says of them that, excepting Davis, none "had any identity or future, once he left the circle," for they were at best, "men of only local influence."* Men of local influence, led by Franklin Pierce, of whom James F. Rhodes has written:

There can be no better commentary on the fact that he was not a man of mark than the campaign biography

*Mr. Coleman is an Assistant Professor of History, and Acting Chairman of the Department, at Saint Francis College, Loretto, Pa. He holds B.A. and M.A. degrees from Boston College, and is currently engaged in doctoral studies at the Pennsylvania State University. This paper was read at the Association's convention at Washington, Pa., October 21, 1961.

JAMES CAMPBELL,
POSTMASTER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES, 1853-1857

written by his lifelong friend, Nathaniel Hawthorne. The
gifted author, who had woven entrancing tales out of airy
nothings, failed, when he had a bosom friend and a future
President for a subject, to make an interesting narrative.
The most graceful pen in America, inspired by the truest
friendship, labored painfully in the vain endeavor to show that his hero had a title to greatness. . . .

More recent writers have reopened the case for the defense. While not seeking a complete reversal of the earlier verdict, they desire that it at least be revised. The subject of history, they suggest, is not past greatness, but the past, and the eighteen-fifties, a period of institutional crisis and far-reaching change, clothe the workings of even modest talent, when highly placed, with significance. Thus many previously forgotten figures have been subject to considerable recent attention. Oddly, however, this is not true of Pierce's Postmaster General, James Campbell. Not only has he, almost alone in the Pierce Cabinet, failed to find a biographer; he has not even been the subject of a monograph in the twentieth century.

This fact is not only lamentable, but also in many ways remarkable. There is a great deal in the life of James Campbell which might attract attention. He was the friend and powerful political supporter of two presidents, Franklin Pierce and James Buchanan, and the friend and political associate of the only president of the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis. Until the election of Buchanan in 1856, no Pennsylvanian had reached the White House, and Campbell was one of only sixteen to sit in the cabinet. In addition, Campbell was one of a handful of Roman Catholics to serve in the cabinet prior to the Civil War, and the timing and circumstances of his appointment, at the height of nativist sentiment and shortly after his defeat on the religious issue, for a Supreme Court judgeship in his home state, render the appointment even more interesting. It was "... a monument of enlightened tolerance but not of political foresight, as events were to demonstrate." As Postmaster General, Campbell had more than twenty-two thousand postmasterships alone to bestow and his decisions in this area were to have profound political consequence. A closer look at this man, his antecedents, aspirations, and activities would appear, therefore, not only justified but desirable.


3 Nichols, Pierce, 309.

Born in Southwark, Pennsylvania, now a part of Philadelphia, on 1 September, 1812, of Irish-Catholic parentage, James Campbell was the son of a prosperous storekeeper. Educated, according to the custom of that day, in a privately operated school, he was apparently a steady, dependable, bookish young man and could later recall that he had to be ordered away from study for outdoor recreation. He subsequently entered the Philadelphia law offices of Edward D. Ingraham, and was admitted to the Philadelphia bar on 14 September, 1833.

Campbell rapidly developed a large practice and became the leading spokesman for the Catholic voters of Philadelphia. Appointed a school director of the third district of Philadelphia in January, 1840, he was elected by the directors in December of that year to represent the district on the central, or city-wide board. From this vantage point he became one of the handful of politicians who controlled the city vote. When President John Tyler raised Judge Archibald Randall of the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas to the United States District Court, Governor David R. Porter appointed James Campbell to the Pennsylvania vacancy. During his ten years' service as judge, Campbell welded the Catholic voters of Philadelphia into a solid bloc, a task rendered easier by the assaults launched against them by nativist groups. Since this Catholic bloc frequently held the balance of power in Philadelphia, it assumed great significance. Thus when the state constitution was amended in 1850 to provide for elective judges, the Democratic party nominated Campbell for the Supreme Court. Although there was some factional opposition to the nomination, more than two-thirds of the state convention ratified the choice.

In the ensuing election all of the Democratic candidates for the

---


8 Fowler, 79.

Supreme Court won by over 11,000 votes, save Campbell who lost 179,238 to 176,101. His opponent, Judge Richard Coulter, polling 7,000 fewer votes than the lowest successful Democratic judge, was the only Whig on the state ticket to be elected, and his victory was generally attributed to the religious issue. Outraged by his defeat, Campbell was nonetheless pleased that William Bigler had defeated the incumbent Governor, William F. Johnston, who was assumed to command nativist support. Campbell had worked hard to mobilize Philadelphia for Bigler. Since Philadelphia had voted the Whig ticket in 1844 and 1848, Campbell's key role in swinging the city to Bigler won him the appointment of Attorney General.

Campbell's rapid ascent in politics, coming as it did so soon after his public repudiation at the polls in his home state, was a curious twist of political fate. In the bitter intramural wars which plagued the Democratic party in Pennsylvania, Campbell was labeled a Buchanan man. He worked so diligently for Buchanan's nomination for the presidency in 1852 that "The Sage of Wheatland," although not given to superlatives, said of him, "He is by far the best and most influential politician in Philadelphia and is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." Notwithstanding Campbell's support, however, Buchanan's cause failed. And Campbell, having done all that Buchanan could expect of him, now used his influence on behalf of Pierce, who received the nomination.

Pierce was warned that in Pennsylvania the major threat to him lay in the possible defection of the 25,000 Catholic voters. To forestall this, it was suggested that Campbell might stump the Catholic districts of the state on Pierce's behalf. This he did, and reported to Pierce, "The State of Pennsylvania I consider as safe for you as any state in the Union." When Pierce carried the state by a majority of almost 9,000 votes, Campbell's contribution was thrown into sharp relief.

Mueller, 191-192; Campbell, 277-278.
Mueller, 190.
Nichols, Pierce, 466-469.
Campbell to Franklin Pierce, 2, 18 September, 1852. Pierce Papers, Library of Congress as quoted in Fowler, 80.
On this basis, alone, Campbell might have received cabinet consideration. However, other considerations also urged his selection. He was termed, by one who did not share his party affiliation, "... rather a profound than a brilliant man ... [whose] sagacity as a political leader was confessed by all the prominent men of his party." Widely respected among professionals in his native state, his talents could prove useful to the new administration. Moreover, his appointment to the cabinet, besides advertising the administration's religious tolerance, could secure the good will, and presumably the support of Catholics throughout the nation. This, to a man intent upon a second term, was not an altogether unimportant consideration. Finally as a compromise candidate, Pierce was expected to minister to disappointed contenders within the party with the healingunctions of appointment and preference. His cabinet reflected his desire to fulfill this expectation and contained representatives of the major factions. However, Pierce did not want Buchanan in the official family, but felt that he owed him some consideration, and was relieved to learn that he had no cabinet ambitions. The wily Buchanan, occupied with his own plans for 1856, was not inclined to identify himself too closely with the cause of Franklin Pierce. Instead, he was content to name a representative in the cabinet. Despite the later observation of Campbell's son that Buchanan "... had never forgiven the promotion of my father to a seat in the Cabinet,—a man from his own state appointed in despite [sic] of his silent protest," this was not in fact the case. Buchanan, responding to Pierce's request for advice, urged upon the President-elect the selection of "... my intimate friend Judge Campbell, who will, I have no doubt, be strongly presented to you for a Cabinet appointment. The Judge is able, honest and inflexibly firm, and did, to say the very least, as much as any individual in the State to secure our glorious triumph." This plain endorsement, the personal intervention of William L. Hirst, Chairman of the Democratic State Central Committee, who journeyed to New Hampshire in Campbell's be-

18 McClure, J., 191.
19 Nichols, Pierce, 222.
20 Campbell, 288.
half, and the aforementioned considerations, tipped the scales in Campbell’s favor. At a series of meetings in Philadelphia, Pierce tendered Campbell the office of Postmaster General.

The Post Office department, in 1853, was torn by conflicting traditions. Charged with the vital and staggering task of maintaining the nation’s communication system, it was in many ways, a huge business enterprise to be conducted according to sound and efficient principles of administration. According to this, the older tradition, the Postmaster General was selected for his business acumen. He was not considered a politician, and was therefore, not admitted to the circle of the president’s political advisors, his cabinet. He not infrequently retained his post despite a change of administration.

While this tradition, or at least its outward appearance, prevailed until 1829, it was challenged by a contrary view. The business aspect of the department notwithstanding, Post Office activities had a distinct political impact. The dispensation of thousands of jobs and millions of dollars worth of mail and printing contracts, the regulation of mail deliveries, the creation of new mail routes, and the extension or curtailment of old routes were all activities which inevitably won friends and made enemies for the administration in power. Local postmasters, usually active in politics and painfully aware of these facts, sought to fulfill their responsibilities with an eye to political consequences that flowed therefrom, just as the Postmaster General, tradition aside, was progressively more attentive to the political implications of his actions. Thus the department, its personnel, and its activities began to assume a distinct political hue. To the generation which regarded the slogan “To The Victor Belongs The Spoils” as a political truism, this development seemed commendable. In 1829, the Postmaster General was raised to cabinet rank.

Thereafter the political tradition overshadowed the older business one, and the department was managed accordingly. Departmental deficits, covered by special congressional appropriations, became, after 1848, the rule. Appointments were openly viewed

---

as rewards for services rendered, and contracts as subsidies merited by political fidelity.

The course pursued by Postmaster General Campbell in these matters was equivocal. While his appointments betrayed the hand of the politician, he assumed, in other matters, the posture of a dispassionate administrator. In both roles he exhibited an unhappy faculty for making enemies within his own party, which is perhaps one reason for his present anonymity.

When the Democrats returned to power in 1853, fresh from their sweeping victory over the Whigs, they sensed the opportunity to complete the destruction of that party. To this end, all of the extensive resources of government were to be bent. The 22,320 postmasterships constituted the largest single bloc of appointments in the government, and the nearly $5,000,000 worth of mail contracts to be negotiated or supervised, further emphasized the political possibilities inherent in the Post Office. A stronger president than Franklin Pierce might have seized upon this huge patronage reservoir and carefully supervised its distribution. Pierce, however, had no stomach for the thankless task and rather gratefully left it almost exclusively to the control of his department heads. "The President rarely received the 'hunting delegations,' but turned them over to the Cabinet," wrote Campbell's son. "My father was frequently obliged to lock himself in his office to avoid the importunity of office seekers." So great was the latitude given to Campbell that the President upheld his appointments even when they ran counter to the wishes of Congressmen and cabinet members in their own states. Thus "... when Jefferson Davis objected to one of Campbell's post-office appointments in Mississippi, the President sustained Campbell and made it a point to persuade Davis to agree." Consequently Campbell's importance in the administration was greatly enhanced, and his personality and objectives became matters of considerable political moment.

Campbell, a quiet, retiring man, who preferred the companion-

---

22 Nichols, Pierce, 252.
23 Campbell, 285.
24 Nichols, Pierce, 252.
ship of his own family to the social whirl of official Washington, was seldom seen at parties and social gatherings, and was therefore less accessible than some public officials. The careful, methodical efficiency mirrored in his diary, and early political activity, are equally revealed in his reports as Postmaster General. These same reports reveal a man of strict, almost uncompromising principles, and of determination and courage which some might prefer to term stubbornness. By any accounting, however, these were disturbing qualities to be found in a Postmaster General, the politician of the cabinet.

Charged with the conduct of a department which staggered under a $2,000,000 deficit annually, rendered unsatisfactory service to many, was continually subject to charges of laxity and fraud, and was occasionally the subject of congressional investigation, Campbell embarked upon a reorganization. The keynote of his administration was to be adequate, efficient service within the limits of economy.

Since efficiency required competent personnel, Campbell tried to find able postmasters. To this end he utilized his mail agents, who were directed to report slipshod postmasters to him. Yet these agents were so few in number that he asked Congress for a special class of supervisory agents "... to see that the postmasters properly perform their duties, and report a want of ability, attention, or fidelity on their part ... promptly to the department." In addition, he devised a centralized system of mail distribution to be managed personally by him rather than the local postmasters, which, he predicted, would expedite the rapid delivery of the mails.

Another important element of the system was the performance of the mail contractors. Here Campbell was vigilant and perhaps unyielding. He held contractors strictly to the performance of their contract obligations. While other Postmasters General, possessing the authority to fine contractors, had frequently foregone the imposition of penalties, Campbell was not so easy. Thus, fines

---

28 PMG Report (1854), 706.
imposed against contractors in the fiscal year 1853 amounted to $37,920.31, rose to $110,486.59 and $124,530.68 in the next consecutive years, and reached $162,740.05 in 1856.30 "These fines," Campbell proudly observed, "show that contractors have been held to a rigorous performance of their contracts.31 The first obligation of the Postmaster General was to the public.

Any assumption that Campbell's formula for efficient service was a negative one, the curtailment of irregularities, would however, be misleading. His administration resulted in a number of impressive, positive achievements. Miles of mail routes increased from 217,743 in 1853 to 239,642 in 1856, and the total mileage of mail transport, from 62,000,000 to 71,000,000.32 In addition, less efficient means of carriage steadily gave way to the railroad. By mid-1856 nearly thirty per cent of the mail mileage was moved by railroad at 10.6 cents per mile as opposed to about twenty-one per cent at 12.3 cents per mile at the beginning of the administration.33

In the matter of international mail, Campbell was equally energetic. He worked steadily for a revision of the international mail rates, rates which were badly in need of review, for some of them, as in the case of England, dated to the reign of Queen Anne. While he was successful only in the case of Bremen, which agreed to a fifty per-cent reduction, he did lay the foundation for subsequent reductions by England and France.34

Although Campbell also introduced pre-stamped envelopes, and sheets of perforated stamps to replace the older printed sheets which required a scissors to separate them, his greatest achievement was undoubtedly the establishment of the registry system.35 The transport of valuables through the mails had always been a
problem, and was accompanied by considerable risk. By the registry system, each postmaster who handled the item indicated its safe handling by affixing his signature to a form provided, and the safe delivery was indicated by the signature of the recipient. Under this system, mail frauds declined. Today, a vast percentage of the monies and securities of the world move through this system which owes its inspiration to Campbell.

The Postmaster General's desire to provide efficient service had to be balanced against his greater determination to preside over a solvent department. This was the primary consideration and he repeatedly pledged himself to keep expenditures as low as possible within the limits of adequate service. To Congress, he observed in 1854, "The principle adopted in the infancy of our republic, that the Post Office Department should sustain itself from its own revenues was, in my opinion, most wise and salutary." Campbell revamped the accounting system to see that postmasters did not collect postage due, pocket it, and destroy the receipts.

He vigorously attacked congressional legislation which reduced postal rates on the grounds that "... the rates fixed ... will not enable the department to sustain itself from its own revenues ..." and that under the present system whereby Congress underwrites postal deficits, the whole people in effect subsidize a service which only some of the people employ. Campbell curtailed and even abolished mail lines in areas where the cost was, in his judgment, prohibitive. This generally occurred in sparsely populated areas, especially in the South and West. In the House of Representatives, Chairman Olds of the Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads observed, "Now there are constant complaints by gentlemen representing the southern and western districts, that they cannot get their increased mail facilities ... because they are met by the Postmaster General with the declaration that the revenues of the department are crippled." He urged an increase in postal rates to alleviate the problem.

---

\(^{36}\) *PMG Report (1854)*, 624.

\(^{37}\) *Ibid. (1853)*, 709-711.

\(^{38}\) *Ibid. (1855)*, 327. This theme is echoed in each of the annual reports.

\(^{39}\) *U. S., Congressional Globe*, 33d Cong. 1st Sess., 1854, House, 13 April, 1854, 912. Supporting documents, attached to each of the *PMG Reports*, and showing the location and disposition of mail routes, bear out the contention of the South.
When Congress presumed to increase departmental expenditures, as it occasionally did, Campbell became extremely irate. He charged, in 1855, that when he requested $45,000 as increased compensation for certain remote postmasters, Congress responded by raising the compensation of all, at an unnecessary cost of $317,498.31 to the department.\textsuperscript{40} In addition, he observed that the legislation of 30 August, 1852, which permitted a fifty per-cent discount for prepayment of postage on newspapers and pamphlets was actually a subsidy, since prepayment had previously been required without any such discount.\textsuperscript{41} He therefore urged a return to the former system, and when this was not accomplished within a year, admonished Congress with the reminder, "However enterprising and worthy, no particular class in the various departments of industry can reasonably claim . . . special privilege over others."\textsuperscript{42}

Campbell also charged the railroads with being most uncooperative and disrespectful in their treatment of his department.\textsuperscript{43} Exploiting the vital position which they held, they refused to sign contracts unless they could set arrival and departure times, thereby dictating the terms of the service. Yet they refused Campbell's suggestions for improving facilities. He sent each railroad a model of a specially designed mail car but, he wrote, "... in very few instances have my wishes been complied with."\textsuperscript{44} He therefore urged Congress to examine the entire question.

Campbell was not at all sure that these suggestions would secure a balanced budget for his department. One other reform was needed, and it was a simple one to enact. The franking privilege must be abolished.\textsuperscript{45} With this reform and those previously suggested, he was confident that the department could become self-sustaining.

But Congress proved uncooperative. Thus, the deficit con-
continued at two to three millions of dollars annually. Sensing the
temper of Congress, Campbell sadly concluded:

... large annual appropriations must continue to be
drawn from the Treasury. Although this, in my opinion,
is deeply to be regretted, it has been, and shall continue
to be, my effort to confine its expenditures, as nearly as
practicable, within its income.\(^{46}\)

Congressional opposition to Campbell's conduct of the Post
Office Department was based, not on his objectives, but on his
methods. They alienated powerful combinations, the railroads and
the press. In addition, his hostility to western express companies,
his opposition to those who obtained a lush income renting space
to the Post Office department, and his counsel that the depart-
ment should construct and own its buildings, offended other im-
portant business interests. As for mail routes, the discontinuance
of even one might be ruinous for some incumbent congressman.
Campbell did not seem to appreciate this important fact of political
life. And if this failure cost him the support of many southern
and western politicians, his refusal to admit "incendiary" literature
to the southern mails lost that of powerful northern elements.\(^{47}\)
The single policy which invoked the most widespread opposition,
and upon which even hostile groups were united, was his dis-
tribution of patronage.

Thrown into close association with Pierce, at a time when his
ardor for Buchanan was cooling, Campbell was naturally inclined
to the support of the former. Then, Pierce's appointment of Camp-
bell to the cabinet was, in Campbell's eyes, a magnificent ex-
pression of tolerance and courage. The President's constant sup-
port of his subordinate, despite mounting criticism, won Campbell's
admiration still further. Finally, his political future was so clearly
identified with that of Pierce, and the expectation of favor from
other party leaders so remote, that continued support of Pierce
recommended itself even on the grounds of cold political cal-
culation.

\(^{46}\) *PMG Report* (1855), 327.

\(^{47}\) H. K. Beale, ed., *The Diary of Edward Bates, 1859-1866* ("Annual Re-
port of the American Historical Society for the Year 1930," Vol. IV,
Settled upon a course of action, Campbell proceeded to implement it with characteristic efficiency. By 30 June, 1855, he had removed 5,177 postmasters, and filled 12,091 additional offices created by the resignation of the incumbent officeholders. Additional appointments raised the total number from 17,268 to 24,288. This was not only the cleanest sweep of personnel seen in the department in its entire history, but total appointments in fact exceeded the number of postmasterships in existence. J. F. Forney, associate editor of The Union, and a supporter of Buchanan in 1856, found little solace in this and wrote to his favorite, “The old Campbell officers are all for the President and so is C. . . . the Campbell men want to get their men into the next Convention to make trouble.” Buchanan discovered that his recommendations for postmasterships were ignored, and complained that his support of an officeseeker was the kiss of death. Campbell’s reply to the charge exhibited that same loyalty that Buchanan had previously endorsed under different circumstances. He wrote, “General Pierce stood by my side and I should be the veriest ingrate upon earth had I not stood by him.” This is precisely what Campbell did, carefully building support for Pierce and the Pierce faction throughout the country, to the disgust of most of the party leadership.

Campbell also sought to strike at his personal enemies, the Know Nothings, who had opposed him at every turn. Upon coming to office, he had instructed certain postmasters:

If there are persons in your office who sympathize with the political party hostile to the Democratic party and bound by secret oaths to principles contrary to the letter and spirit of the Constitution under which we live, you should know them and should neither employ nor trust them.

---

48 PMG Report (1853), 699; ibid. (1854), 613; and ibid. (1855), 317. These statistics were not included in the 1856 report.
49 This occurred since, over four years, more than one appointment was made to several postmasterships. Fowler, Appendix, 305-307, conveniently lists removals and resignations by administration, from Jackson to T. Roosevelt.
50 Forney to Buchanan, 25 November, 1855, Buchanan Papers as quoted in Fowler, 85.
51 Campbell to Buchanan, 20 August, 1857, ibid.
52 Postmaster General Letterbook, 1 March, 1856, to Postmaster A. Nevitt as quoted in Fowler, 82.
Those who complained of Pierce's policy "... in placing a Jesuit at the head of the Post Office Department and filling many of the Post Offices in the country with Foreign Catholics to the exclusion of native born Americans ..." were, Campbell felt, being paid in their own coin.

Yet he sought to counteract this opposition by attracting the immigrant vote. In 1855, Millard Fillmore, writing to a friend, lamented "... the large disproportion of offices which are now held by foreigners. ..." While his cheek might "... tingle with shame and mortification ..." at this development, Campbell perceived therein a second term for Franklin Pierce.

Such, however, was not to be the case. At the 1856 Democratic Convention in Cincinnati, Pierce was unable to mount the necessary two-thirds vote for the nomination. After fourteen inconclusive ballots, James Buchanan was selected as the standard bearer. Campbell, although disappointed by the result, did what all good party leaders do, he supported the party's choice.

Returning to Philadelphia, he stumped for Buchanan who carried the city by 6,177 votes and subsequently the state. For Campbell, however, the political wars were over. Buchanan carefully disassociated himself from the Pierce men and the ex-cabinet officer found himself without influence in the new administration. Remaining in Philadelphia, he resumed his law practice and with only two interruptions, contented himself with the local stage.

The first interruption came in 1860. Like many other observers, Campbell was disturbed by the dangers to the Union inherent in a Lincoln victory. Convinced that this would occur unless the opposition to Lincoln could be united, he sought, at Pierce's suggestion, to convince the other candidates to withdraw in favor of a fusion ticket of James Guthrie and Horatio Seymour. In this he failed and as he had predicted, Lincoln won.

Three years later, Campbell was nominated in the Democratic state legislature for the United States Senate. However, in a

53 Pennsylvania Telegraph, 17 May, 1854, as quoted in Hewitt, 19, n. 10.
55 Campbell, 287.
56 Ibid., 288.
bitterly contested caucus fight, he was narrowly defeated.58 Thereafter he devoted his energies to the law, his many public charities and his family. Although he remained "... one of the most accomplished and trusted leaders and advisers of the Democratic party ...," he never again sought political office.59 A respected elder statesman, but to an increasing degree, a political anachronism, he lived on to the age of eighty-one and died on 27 January, 1893.

What judgments should the historian make of the life of James Campbell? He might observe that Campbell never held an elective office and that his political influence was most successfully used in behalf of a President not fondly remembered today; that his appointment to the Pierce cabinet inflamed important segments of public opinion; that his efforts failed to secure a second term for his chief; and that his public career was over at the age of forty-four.

But these observations constitute only part of the story. This same man was a powerful figure in Pennsylvania politics for at least two decades and influenced a host of state and local contests. As a public official, he brought dignity, courage, honesty, and energy to every post which he held. As Postmaster General, he breathed efficiency and economy into the affairs of a rapidly expanding department despite an unsympathetic Congress. His innovations were important in their day, and some, notably the registry system, continue to be so today. His loyalty to Pierce, even if it did not bring success, excites a certain admiration. Had Pierce's fortunes not suffered so severe a reverse in 1856, he had every right to anticipate continued service. While not a statesman of the first rank, Campbell was not without talent. Like most public officials, perhaps, he achieved less than he hoped, but enough to merit at least a minor place in the memory of men.

58 Campbell, 289.
59 McClure, I, 193.