THE TRAGIC CAREER OF H. G. ROGERS,
PENNSYLVANIA POLITICIAN AND
JACKSONIAN DIPLOMAT

By Harold D. Langley*

The annals of the foreign service contain few more poignant stories than that of Hezekiah Gold Rogers, the first regularly appointed diplomatic representative of the United States to the Kingdom of Sardinia. His was a saga of bright beginnings and of somber conclusions. Aside from the brief role he played in Italian-American relations, Rogers's career is of interest for the insights it gives into the operations of the early nineteenth-century foreign service, and particularly into the ways in which some diplomatic and consular officers were able to improvise practical procedures when faced with a most unusual and serious crisis.

The future diplomat was born in Cornwall, Connecticut, on February 22, 1811, the first child of Edward and Sally Maria Rogers. He was christened Hezekiah Gold in honor of his maternal grandfather.

Edward Rogers (1787-1857) was a young man of promise. After receiving his education at Williams and Yale Colleges, he moved to the town of Madison, in Madison County, New York, at the end of the War of 1812. Here he practiced law.

Madison County was in the process of being settled by New...
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Englanders. Their movement was facilitated by the Cherry Valley Turnpike which opened in 1806. When the town of Madison (established in 1807) was incorporated in April, 1816, Edward Rogers was named as one of the trustees. Five years later he was one of the three persons chosen to represent the county in a New York State Constitutional Convention. The work of revising the state constitution brought him into association with a number of politically important Democratic Republicans including Daniel D. Tompkins, the Vice President of the United States and the president of the convention; Martin Van Buren; Peter R. Livingston, a member of the prominent New York family; and Ogden Richards of Tammany Hall. This group was arrayed against such men as Chancellor James Kent, Chief Justice Ambrose Spencer, William W. Van Ness, and J. R. Van Rensselaer, Federalists and conservatives who attempted to stem the rising trend toward democracy.

The convention abolished the Council of Appointment, a group chosen by the Assembly, which dispensed 15,000 offices. It also abolished the Council of Revision, consisting of the governor, the chancellor, and all the judges of the Supreme Court, which had aroused popular hostility by its vetoes of laws rather than passing on their constitutionality. But the most important accomplishment of the convention was the establishment of universal white manhood suffrage.

Rogers must have told young Hezekiah about these political struggles, for in years to come the latter would speak with great conviction about the victories for democracy which were won at this convention.

Meanwhile Edward Rogers's family responsibilities had grown. A daughter, Sarah Marie, was born in 1820, and another son, Edward, arrived in 1826. As Hezekiah grew older he was probably

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6 Ibid., pp. 231-232, 235, 239-269.
8 Gold, Cornwall, Litchfield County, p. 296.
prepared for college by the local schools. When he was eighteen years old he entered Yale College. He graduated with the class of 1831. While at Yale, and possibly at graduation, he spoke on the "Comparison Between the Force of Circumstances and Moral Causes in the Formation of Character." 

After graduation Hezekiah studied law. In those days it was not necessary to attend a law school to enter the profession. A young man could "read law" under the guidance of an older lawyer until he felt that he was qualified to practice. Andrew Jackson and Abraham Lincoln, among others, became lawyers this way. Just where and with whom Hezekiah read law is not ascertainable, but he probably took at least some of his training under his father's direction. At some time during this period Hezekiah decided to begin his career in Pittsburgh. Before leaving New York State he joined with his father and mother in February, 1832, in disposing of a piece of property which they owned jointly. Hezekiah was proposed for the Pittsburgh bar by W. W. Fetterman, and on September 16, 1833, was admitted to practice there. From this point onward he was most often referred to as H. Gold Rogers.

About this same time Rogers identified himself politically with the Democratic faction of Pennsylvania led by James Buchanan and Henry A. Muhlenberg. This group competed for power with the Democratic "family" faction led by Alexander Dallas and by Pennsylvania's Governor George Wolf. Both groups were trying to recover from the results of bitter political infighting.

Virtually every important Democratic leader in Pennsylvania who had supported Andrew Jackson for the Presidency of the United States, found by 1832 that he had incurred Jackson's active
dislike or at least lost his confidence. One exception was Governor Wolf, who managed to hold on to Jackson's support.13

Buchanan's group was particularly hard hit. Through a series of appointments which took prominent men out of active politics, the Democratic party was virtually stripped of its leadership. Buchanan himself was given the post of minister to Russia, and in the spring of 1832 he left for St. Petersburg.14 But in November, 1833, he returned and began to rebuild his own and his party's fortunes. Soon after this he was elected as a United States Senator from Pennsylvania.15

President Jackson told Buchanan of his desire that the two factions of the Pennsylvania Democracy work together to re-elect Governor Wolf in October, 1835. This cooperation would also be necessary in November, 1836, to elect Martin Van Buren as Jackson's successor. Buchanan was willing to follow this plan, but trouble arose in his own ranks. Henry A. Muhlenberg decided to run for governor.16

Muhlenberg felt that he had been passed over by his party when important posts were considered. He was assured of the unified support of the Democrats in his bid for the governorship, if he would wait until 1838. But Muhlenberg did not want to wait. His decision split the Democracy of Pennsylvania, revived factional strife, and resulted in a three-way contest. As might be expected, the election was won by Joseph Ritner, the candidate of the Anti-Masonic party. Muhlenberg ran a poor third. Not long after this an effort was made to reunite the party by removing both Wolf and Muhlenberg from active political life. Wolf was given a post as the comptroller of the United States Treasury Department, and he later became the collector of customs at Philadelphia. Muhlenberg was appointed as the first American minister to Austria.17

Rogers supported Muhlenberg's bid for the governorship. According to a newspaper account, Rogers began his political career

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14 Klein, Politics, p. 349; Buchanan, pp. 76-81.
15 Klein, Buchanan, pp. 96-104.
16 Ibid., pp. 99, 104.
17 Ibid., pp. 105-107, 115.
by using the columns of *The American Manufacturer*, a weekly Pittsburgh Whig paper, to attack an old and respected member of the Wolf faction. Hezekiah's connection with a losing candidate apparently did him no harm.

When Pittsburgh's Democratic citizens learned that Richard M. Johnson, a Representative of Kentucky and the prospective Vice Presidential candidate on the ticket with Martin Van Buren, would pass through their city en route to Washington in November 1835, they hoped to hold a public dinner in his honor. Forty-two of them, including Rogers, signed a letter of invitation to Johnson. Unfortunately, Johnson could not accept the honor, but in July, 1836, the Democrats turned out in great numbers to greet him as he passed through Pittsburgh on the way to Kentucky.

Meanwhile other problems developed in connection with Pennsylvania's plans for revising its state constitution. The election of delegates to a constitutional convention was scheduled a month before the Presidential election. Party harmony among the Democrats would be necessary to keep the convention from falling under the control of the Whig or Anti-Masonic factions. It would also be necessary if Pennsylvania was to deliver its electoral vote for Van Buren and Johnson. Influenced by these considerations, a Democratic state meeting in March, 1836, approved a unified electoral ticket. One of the candidates from Allegheny County for the position of a delegate to the constitutional convention was H. G. Rogers.

A contributor to a Pittsburgh Anti-Masonic paper who signed himself "P.Q.R." struck a sarcastic note concerning the selection of the young (age twenty-five) and inexperienced Rogers as a candidate. In fact, most of the ticket failed to impress him. He wrote:

> The Masonic, Democratic, Jackson, Van Buren, Muhlenberg, and WHIG Convention have placed in nomination for delegates to the Convention to amend the Constitution—
> Walter Forward, WHIG Mason;

18 *Daily Pittsburgh Gazette*, June 9, 1836.
19 *The American Manufacturer* (Pittsburgh, Pa.), June 20, 1835; July 23, 1836.
21 *The American Manufacturer*, August 20, 1836.
Ephraim Pentland, WHIG Mason, and recusant witness;
Hugh Davis, WHIG;
James Patterson, of Mifflin, and
Hezekiah G. Rogers, a very tall young man, from New York. He is modest and unassuming, and his nomination was doubtless procured by a knowledge of his extraordinary talents and public services, as well as his very advanced age, and GREAT EXPERIENCE. . . .
I have given this ticket the denomination of “the Tadpole ticket,” because it is all head and no body. Mr. Forward is the head—and the rest, put together, form a poor tail.22

To reassure themselves that these nominees would act as the Pennsylvania Democratic leaders desired, the latter met in Pittsburgh on October 15, 1836, and drew up three questions which should be asked of each candidate. The first question was whether the man would vote for the electoral ticket pledged to support Van Buren and Johnson. The next two questions dealt with the difficult issue of the Bank of the United States.23

After President Andrew Jackson vetoed a bill to recharter the Bank, the director of that institution sought a charter from Pennsylvania. The Democrats controlled the state Senate and defeat was expected. But the Senate approved the charter bill under circumstances which suggested that some Democrats had been bribed. The party leaders were now trying to stop any movement which might be made to amend the state constitution in favor of the Bank. Question two was whether the state constitutional convention possessed the power to annul the Bank’s charter. The final query was: if the convention has the power to annul the charter, did the candidate think it was expedient to do so, and would he vote in favor of such an action?24

Walter Forward’s answers to these questions annoyed the Democratic leadership, and he was read out of the party. Nevertheless, he was elected as a delegate.25

22 Daily Pittsburgh Gazette, June 9, 1836.
Rogers's answers apparently pleased the party, for he remained on the ticket. When the ballot were counted, he had the distinction of being the only Democrat elected to represent Allegheny County at the convention.\(^\text{26}\)

The delegates chosen by the various representative districts of the state assembled at Harrisburg on May 2, 1837, to begin their deliberations. Behind them lay the strains of their own and the presidential elections. Van Buren and Johnson had been elected and were in power in Washington. Now it was time for Pennsylvanians to put their constitution in order. To this task Rogers and his fellow delegates were to devote the next nine months.\(^\text{27}\)

Rogers made three speeches during these deliberations which give indications of a liberal trend of thinking. The first was in favor of keeping the legislative, executive and judicial departments of the state government completely independent of each other. In this connection Rogers said that he was not one to confer too much power, or to place too much confidence in the legislature, for history indicated that such bodies have "ever been the most disposed to invade and usurp other powers."\(^\text{28}\)

Undoubtedly Rogers drew upon his own observations of Pennsylvania politics when he turned his attention to the executive branch. After alluding to the reputation of the state of Virginia as "the mother of mighty men," he said:

> I look in vain upon the roll of eminent men—the list of Presidents and Vice Presidents—for any son of Pennsylvania. Sir, to what other cause is it to be attributed but to the violent and bitter feuds arising out of the excessive patronage of the Governor? Let us lop off the rank luxuriances of power; let us enlarge the rights and extend the liberties of the people. Then will Pennsylvania assume a lofty, honorable, and elevated position in the councils of the nation.\(^\text{29}\)

\(^{26}\) *Ibid.;* Buchanan to Van Buren, June 1, 1837, *Appointment Papers, Department of State archives, Record Group 59, National Archives. Department of State archives hereafter cited as RG 59, N.A. An obituary notice of Rogers states that he was elected by an accident because a number of people cast "complimentary" votes for him. See *Lancaster Weekly Intelligencer*, March 22, 1882.

\(^{27}\) Klein, *Buchanan*, pp. 110, 118-119.

\(^{28}\) *Proceedings*, 1, 510.

His second speech was in opposition to the article in the Constitution of 1790 which made the payment of a state or county tax, assessed six months previously, one of the requirements for voting. As Rogers saw it, this provision disenfranchised some persons, such as veterans of the Revolution, who were too poor to pay it. It also discriminated against the roving laborers who built the railroads and canals. He concluded with a confession and a hope:

Sir, I am disposed to be liberal upon the subject of suffrage. I had the extension of it near my heart when I came into this Convention. If in my power, I would found this Government upon two broad and enduring pillars—universal suffrage, and general education. While I would concede the one as an estimable right, I would advocate the other measure of incalculable good.  

His third and final speech was in favor of a proposal that the tenure of judges be subjected to periodical reviews by the legislature. He was opposed to lifetime appointments, as well as to retiring judges at an arbitrary age.  

On the evening of February 22, 1838, the convention ended. Before returning to their homes the delegates signed an address to the people of Pennsylvania which summarized the changes in the state constitution. Some of the more important of these were: (1) the term of the governor was limited to two terms of three years each; (2) county officers were to be elected, thus greatly reducing the governor’s patronage; (3) the power of the legislature to grant banking corporations and privileges was abridged and regulated; (4) all life offices were abolished, and judges were commissioned for a limited number of years; (5) the right of suffrage was extended to all white males twenty-one years old who had resided in the state for a year, in a district for ten days, and who within two years paid a tax assessed ten days before an election.  

Rogers returned to his law practice in Pittsburgh. Although his part in the convention was small, he could take some satisfaction

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"Ibid., II, 476.
"Ibid., IV, 513-522.
"Daily Pittsburgh Gazette, February 26, 1838.
from the fact that like his father he did his bit for extension of democracy. He had proved himself to be a believer in Jeffersonian principles and a follower of Jacksonian leaders. Proving himself to the party leaders in Pennsylvania was to bring important dividends. When the National Democratic Convention met in Baltimore in May, 1840 to nominate Van Buren and Johnson, Rogers was one of the delegates. By the time it was over, Rogers was about to receive a reward he had long awaited. It was to be the most important contribution of his life.

As early as January, 1834, Rogers had tried to get himself a diplomatic appointment in Europe. William B. Conway, of Pittsburgh, wrote to President Jackson on Rogers's behalf. He described Rogers as "a highly respectable member of the Pittsburgh Bar; A gentleman whose character and attainments justly entitle him to the respect and esteem of every honorable and judicious person who enjoys the pleasure of his acquaintance." Conway's confidence in Rogers's ability and integrity was based on "an intimate acquaintance" with the applicant. But nothing came of this effort.

The next attempt came in the spring of 1837. Writing to President Van Buren, Rogers asked for the appointment as chargé d'affaires to Belgium. In the delightfully frank way of many a nineteenth-century office seeker, he added that he wished "to spend sixteen or eighteen months abroad." Support for his application came from Senator James Buchanan, who pointed out that Rogers was the only Democratic candidate from Allegheny County to be elected to the state constitutional convention. Once again, nothing came of the application.

Two years later he tried again. This time new supporting letters were sent by less prominent persons. One of these letters was from a John Dement, who was identified as a colonel and a receiver of public moneys at Galena, Illinois. We may also assume that Rogers's father, now a Democratic Congressman from New York, worked for his son's appointment. Now the effort was successful.

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24 W. B. Conway to Jackson, January 10, 1834, Appointment Papers.
25 H. G. Rogers to Van Buren, April 26, 1837, ibid.
26 Buchanan to Van Buren, June 1, 1837, ibid.
27 J. Dement to Z. Casey, April 10, 1839; Z. Casey to Rogers, April 30, 1839, ibid.
Early in June, 1840, the Washington and Philadelphia newspapers reported that Rogers had been appointed as the new chargé d'affaires to the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia. But Rogers did not receive his commission until June 30.39

A treaty of commerce and navigation with Sardinia had been signed in November, 1838, by Nathaniel Niles, a special agent. After its approval by the Senate, it went into force on March 18, 1839. It was Niles's hope that he would be appointed as the first American diplomatic representative to Sardinia, but that honor was given to Rogers. Both President Van Buren and Secretary of State John Forsyth expressed the wish that the new chargé proceed to his post with as little delay as possible. Rogers obliged them even though it involved personal inconvenience.40

He sailed for Europe on July 8, on board the ship Patrick Henry. Nineteen days later he arrived in Liverpool, where he was met by an old (and unnamed) friend. He went on to London by rail via Birmingham. While viewing the sights of London, Rogers had frequent opportunities to observe Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in public. He also saw King Leopold of Belgium, who was on a visit to England. Unlike many a tourist, Rogers was not impressed by the pomp he observed. He wrote that: "All this pageantry was heart-sickening, and made me feel proud that I was an American." After seeing the Duke of Wellington he noted that: "Nature has not stamped upon his face, as it has upon General Jackson's, the character of an old soldier."41

The journey to Sardinia continued via Southampton, Havre, Rouen, Paris, and Lyon. Early in September he arrived at Turin, the capital of Sardinia, after a sixty-two-hour trip from Lyon. Quarters in the Hotel d'Europe served as Rogers's residence and as the temporary home of the legation. By September 15 he had presented his credentials and had his first meeting with the Sar-
THE ROYAL PALACE AT TURIN

The photograph dates from about 1910, but except for the trolley tracks and the statue at the right the scene is as it was when H. G. Rogers presented his credentials.

Library of Congress

dinian foreign minister, Count Clemente Solaro della Marguerita.42

A few days later Rogers sent a note to the foreign minister asking to be presented to Charles Albert, the King of Sardinia. The request was granted. Rogers described the meeting as follows:

At the day appointed, I donned my court-dress for the first time. It consisted of a chapeau de Bras, with a black ostrich plume, a blue broadcloth coat embroidered upon the collar, the lappels [sic] and the cuffs with gold, with the American button. Blue pantaloons, with gold lace at the side, boots with varnished leather, and a sword completed my dress. . . .

His majesty received me standing, and in a very gracious manner. He made many inquiries of a personal nature in French, as to the place of my residence, and

42 Ibid., 11-21; Rogers to Forsyth, No. 1, September 17, 1840, Despatches Italy (Sardinia), IV, RG 59, N.A. Rogers identified the Foreign Minister as “Count Solar de la Marguerite.” For a brief sketch of the foreign minister see Howard R. Marraro, ed., Diplomatic Relations between the United States and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies (New York: S. F. Vann, 1951), I, 500n.
my journey, to which I answered, in as good French as possible. I said to him in reply, that I was an envoy in Italy, or minister from the government of the United States of America, with many other complimentary expressions.43

The next meeting took place on October 2, the king’s birthday. The celebration of that event began with the firing of cannons. At 10 a.m. the public square in front of the palace was filled with soldiers. One hour later the ministers of state and other dignitaries began arriving at the palace. Shortly after 12 noon the assembled guests were ushered into the presence of the king. His Majesty walked among them and spoke a few words to each person. When the greetings were finished, the king walked to another room. The troops in the square fired a volley, and the celebrations came to an end. The pageantry prompted more contemplation on Rogers’s part:

What better scene or place for a republican to moralize! How empty, said I to myself, all this pomp! How heartless and cold! Amid all this array of gold and silver embroidery how becoming it would be that the representative of the United States should appear in a simple costume, without the decoration of nobility, or the rich embroidery of ministers of royalty! Who more respected than plain Ben Franklin at the court of St. Cloud, in a modest dress of ordinary apparel!44

Nevertheless, diplomatic relations between Sardinia and the United States seemed to be off to a good start. But within three weeks a crisis developed which was to tax the patience of all parties.

On the morning of October 19, 1840, Charles Crokat, the acting United States vice consul at Genoa, received a letter from the Sardinian minister of foreign affairs, informing him that for some days past Rogers had shown signs of mental illness. His condition became so bad that the Sardinian doctor attending him took away the charge’s firearms as a precautionary measure. Rogers’s situation was complicated by the fact that he had no servant, and he

43 Rogers, Letters [1], 5-6.
44 Ibid., p. 6.
spoke no language fluently but English. While in this disturbed state of mind Rogers demanded his passports. The Sardinian foreign minister was reluctant to accede to Rogers's demands. Rogers was obviously in need of care, but he was still an official representative of the United States Government. The Sardinian Government found itself in an awkward and embarrassing situation. There was no person at Turin who could assume responsibility for the official records of the legation. While the foreign minister did not wish to give Rogers his passports or see him travel, he felt that the chargé would be better off in Genoa, where he could be cared for by his countrymen. In any case, Crokat was informed by the foreign minister that Rogers would arrive at Genoa the following day in the custody of a "confidential person."  

Crokat's reaction to this surprising bit of news may well be imagined, but he quickly cooperated with the authorities. The governor of Genoa and the director-in-chief of the police required Crokat's help in making arrangements for Rogers's arrival. Light and airy quarters were rented for a fortnight. Crokat requested the director of the hospital to furnish two men (preferably English-speaking ones) who had had experience in dealing with cases similar to Rogers's.

Important preparations had been made, but they were not enough. What if Rogers' condition became worse? Without full authority from the Department of State, Crokat was reluctant to send his superior officer home to the United States. The possibility that force might be necessary made the contemplation of the task even less appealing. The vice consul told the director of police that he would write at once to Washington for instructions. The director hinted that a considerable amount of time would elapse before a reply could be received from Washington. Crokat and the director then agreed that they would wait a fortnight to see what course Rogers's malady might take before they did anything further.

Crokat promptly took advantage of the delay to write to the

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43 Copy of Crokat to Cass, October 19, 1840, an enclosure in Cass to Forsyth, No. 112, October 27, 1840, Despatches France, XXIX, RG 59, N.A. It should be noted that the foreign minister either was unaware of, or had little respect for, Rogers's knowledge of French.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.
Secretary of State, and to Lewis Cass, the United States minister at Paris. He asked Cass for advice on "the unprecedented nature of the Circumstances" facing him. After explaining the case, he added that "the greatest delicacy has been shown by the authorities here, and a strong desire to proceed in this gentlest and most conciliatory way in taking those precautions which may have become necessary for the safety of Mr. Rogers and those around him."

The following day brought further surprises. Rogers did not arrive in Genoa as was expected. Instead, the governor of Genoa received a letter from the foreign minister urging that Crokat go to Turin. Crokat believed that his consular duties prevented him from leaving his post. But Henry Cormack, the United States consul at Spezia, happened to be in Genoa, and Crokat requested him to go to Turin. Cormack agreed, and set out the next day.

At Turin Cormack called upon the foreign minister, who told him about the delicate position of the Sardinian Government in the Rogers case. That government had requested the English-speaking Prussian minister to Sardinia, Friedrich Ludwig Graff Truchsess von Waldburg, to act as a friend and protector to Rogers. Cormack was referred to the Prussian minister for further details on the condition of the chargé and the official records of the legation.

Count Truchsess told Cormack that for some days Rogers had "exhibited symptoms of a decided alienation of mind, but that certain remedies had been prescribed with a very salutary effect. . . ." The physicians in attendance had pronounced him better. Cormack wrote to Crokat that the Prussian minister "seems to have acted with the greatest kindness throughout," even though previously he was a stranger to Rogers. At some point in the proceedings the private physician of the British ambassador was called into the case.

Next came a meeting with Rogers. Cormack found him "low and weak, but perfectly consistent and coherent. . . ." After

\[\text{Ibid.}\]
\[\text{Ibid.}\]

\[\text{Copy of Cormack to Crokat, October 24, 1840, enclosure in Cass to Forsyth, No. 114, November 6, 1840, Despatches France, XXIX; Marraro, op. cit., I, 495n.}\]
\[\text{Cormack to Crokat, October 24, 1840.}\]
three long conversations with the chargé, Cormack reported to Crokat that he was unable to find any evidence of "an alienation of mind." Rogers had told him that his illness was like "a severe attack of nervous fever" which the chargé had suffered some time ago in Philadelphia.\(^5\)

The medical men attending Rogers told Cormack that the chargé was suffering from an "inflammation of the brain" and for such they were treating him.\(^6\)

After these interviews Cormack felt optimistic about Rogers's gradual recovery. The medical attendants said that he would be ready to go to Genoa within twelve to fourteen days. Count Truchsess assured Cormack that if Rogers's condition grew worse, the count would notify Crokat through the Prussian consul at Genoa. From his conversations with Rogers, Cormack got the impression that there were few if any official papers in the archives of the legation, so there was no need for him to interfere there. Cormack sent two letters to Crokat reporting on his activities. He pointed out that since there seemed to be no need for him to remain in Turin, he was returning to Genoa.\(^7\)

The British Legation at Turin sent news of Rogers's condition to Enos T. Throop, the United States chargé d'affaires to the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies at Naples, and requested him to come to the aid of his countryman. Throop believed that it would be more appropriate for Cass to handle the matter, and he wrote to him as well as to the consul at Genoa.\(^8\)

Meanwhile French officials lent a helping hand. The French ambassador to Sardinia wrote to the president of the Council at Paris concerning Rogers, and the president sent word to Lewis Cass, the American minister at Paris.\(^9\) Thus Cass was aware of the problem before he received Crokat's despatch. Acting on the assumption that John Bailey, the recently appointed United States consul at Genoa, was at his post, Cass instructed him to go to Turin, attend Rogers, and help the Sardinian minister of foreign

\(^5\) Ibid.
\(^6\) Ibid.
\(^7\) Ibid.; copy Cormack to Crokat, October 25, 1840.
\(^8\) Throop to Forsyth, No. 25, December 9, 1840, Despatches Naples, I, RG 59, N.A.
\(^9\) Extract from letter of the French ambassador at Turin to the Marquis de Dalmatre, President of the Council, October 16, 1840, an enclosure in Cass to Forsyth, No. 111, October 23, 1840, Despatches France, XXIX.
affairs in his hour of embarrassment. If Rogers's "mental affliction" was merely a temporary condition accompanying illness, he would need only "the ordinary kind attentions" of the consul. But if the chargé appeared to be suffering from "prolonged insanity," it would be necessary to send him back to the United States. In the event that such action were required, Rogers could be brought to Genoa and placed on board a ship under the care of some careful person. Cass added that he could not give Bailey any assurances that the consul would be paid for his trouble, "for this is a case not foreseen in our ordinary diplomatic arrangements. But there cannot be a doubt that all necessary expenditures will be immediately refunded either by the government, or by the family of Rogers, who are highly respectable." Thus did Cass anticipate and resolve all the problems facing the American consular representative at Genoa.

The only trouble was that Bailey had not yet reached his post. Cass realized this a few days later when he received Crokat's letter. He promptly advised the vice consul to read the letter addressed to Bailey. Cass also told Crokat that the President might find it necessary to appoint another chargé at Turin. In preparation for such a contingency Cass wrote to Daniel C. Croxall, the American consul at Marseilles, requesting him to write to Crokat, and if necessary, to go to Genoa. Meanwhile Crokat was instructed to write at once to Croxall.

While all this was taking place Cass received additional news about Rogers from the Sardinian ambassador at Paris, which made him pessimistic about the envoy's recovery.

Rogers arrived in Genoa on November 7. Shortly afterward he again showed the symptoms of insanity. The medical men caring for him told Crokat that there was no hope that Rogers would be able to perform his diplomatic duties again. Faced with such a piece of intelligence, Crokat had no alternative but to send Rogers out of the country, as Cass suggested. It was also his expectation that Croxall would be on hand to help him with such an unpleasant task. But the steamship that plied between Marseilles

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25 Copy Cass to Bailey, October 20, 1840, enclosure in Cass to Forsyth, No. 111, October 23, 1840, ibid.
26 Copies Cass to Crokat, October 26; Cass to Croxall, October 26, 1840, enclosures in Cass to Forsyth, No. 112, October 27, 1840, ibid.
26 Copy Cass to Croxall, October 26, 1840, ibid.
and Genoa did not arrive, and Crokat could send no urgent requests for help by that means. Each day he waited anxiously for the ship. His anxiety was heightened as Rogers's condition grew progressively worse. Crokat was also aware of the mounting tension on the part of the Sardinian officials. The Royal Court was then in Genoa, and the King and his ministers showed a great desire to have Rogers sent from the country. But they also respected his rank, and were very reluctant to see him subjected to any violent actions in the course of the removal.

Another problem concerned money. Crokat wrote Croxall that he believed Rogers had with him a considerable sum of money in gold, as well as letters of credit. He recommended that those about the chargé see that he did not use this money improperly. As far as the expenses for the doctors, servants, accommodations, and transportation were concerned, he expected that Rogers would reimburse those who made the outlays.

Crokat was also concerned about a passport for Naples, signed by the minister of foreign affairs, which Rogers had obtained without anyone being aware of it, and which the Sardinian authorities wished to have returned.

Believing himself in danger on shore, Rogers fled from his quarters at the inn and took refuge on board the American merchant ship India, of Boston, then in the harbor of Genoa. Captain Lord, of the India, welcomed Rogers and took an interest in his case.

For a brief period Crokat thought that Rogers's flight was advantageous. He was at least safe on board a ship. But two days later Rogers escaped from the ship and returned to the inn, where he went into a sound sleep—his first rest in many nights.

It was imperative that Rogers be placed under tighter control. Crokat authorized the police to place two men in Rogers's quarters to prevent further excursions. When Rogers attempted to leave

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60 Copy Crokat to Cass, November 21, 1840, enclosure in Cass to Forsyth, No. 117, November 28, 1840; Crokat to Croxall, November 17, 19, 1840, enclosures in Cass to Forsyth, No. 119, December 6, 1840, ibid.
61 Crokat to Croxall, November 17, 1840, ibid.
62 Ibid.
63 Copies Crokat to Croxall, November 17, 19, 1840; Crokat to Cass, November 21, 1840, enclosures in Cass to Forsyth, No. 117, November 28, 1840, ibid.
64 Ibid.
the house, Crokat was forced to reveal to him some of the reasons for the restraint. Crokat told Rogers that he had orders from Cass to confine him to quarters and to get him out of the country by the first opportunity. Rogers submitted quietly.65

At long last a ship arrived in Genoa which could take Rogers to Marseilles. The chargé was sent on board, accompanied by his servant and by Captain Lord. The latter was making the trip in response to Crokat’s urgings. Lord was “a powerful and resolute man,” who was well fitted to manage a person in Rogers’s condition. As an added precaution, the pistols in Rogers’s possession were unloaded.66

The chargé went on board the ship in the belief that he was going to Naples. When he found out his true destination he was very angry. In a letter to an unidentified friend, written about this time, Rogers made no reference to his reaction over this change in his plans. He wrote that he suffered from “ill health” when he left Turin, and that a “slight relapse of fever” overtook him in Genoa before he left for Marseilles. He found the voyage to France “exceedingly unpleasant” because the wind and the waves tossed the ship about for forty-eight hours.67

Early on Sunday morning, November 22, the party arrived at Marseilles. Rogers and his servant were left at a hotel while Captain Lord called on Consul Croxall. The Captain handed the consul two letters from Crokat that the latter had been unable to send by the regular steamer. These letters and Lord’s remarks helped Croxall to familiarize himself with recent developments in the case. Additional details were later supplied to Croxall by Rogers’s servant, who reported that the chargé had taken his pistols from the trunk and had ordered his servant not to enter the room again.68

Croxall was now ready to make his own investigation. Accompanied by Captain Lord and by Lieutenant Edward M. Vail, U.S.N., who happened to be in Marseilles at the time, Croxall called on Rogers. The chargé received his guests politely and conversed in a rational fashion. Croxall observed that Rogers’s

65 Crokat to Croxall, November 17, 19, 1840, op. cit.
66 Ibid.
67 Copy Croxall to Cass, November 25, 1840, enclosure in Cass to Forsyth, No. 119, December 6, 1840; ibid.; Rogers, Letters [II], 9.
68 Croxall to Cass, November 25, 1840, op. cit.
diplomatic uniform was spread out over some chairs, and that his sword, pistols, and powder horn were on the mantelpiece. The consul picked up a pistol to see if it was loaded. Rogers saw him and remarked "take care[,] it is loaded!" Croxall then asked Rogers to let him take charge of the pistols, as they might cause some trouble. Rogers refused. But by the time the visit was over, the consul managed to pick up the pistols and take them with him.  

In his conversations with the chargé, Croxall discovered that Rogers was suspicious that some evil would befall him. He believed that the Sardinian Court was hostile to him. He also felt that Nathaniel Niles, the special agent who had negotiated the treaty with Sardinia in 1838, was his enemy. Niles was in the United States at the time, but Rogers believed that he was in Sardinia.  

After describing these conversations to Cass, Croxall wrote that Rogers's "conduct was perfectly calm, and betrayed nothing of madness, unless the parade [posturings?] above mentioned, and the expression of his suspicion that he had spies put about him by the Court at Turin, may be considered as such."  

That evening Croxall, accompanied by a physician, called on Rogers again. After observing the chargé the doctor told Croxall that medical aid was of no use.  

The following day the chargé spent a great deal of time with the consul. Rogers knew that Cass had written to Croxall about his case, and he asked to see the letter. Croxall refused on the ground that it was improper to show Cass's letter without his consent. The consul informed Rogers that Cass wished the chargé to take passage on an American naval vessel bound for the navy's winter quarters at Port Mahon, on the island of Minorca. Here he would find a naval physician in whom he could confide, and have the benefit of being among his countrymen. Rogers was still
troubled by suspicions of intrigue on the part of the Sardinian Court, Niles, and his servant, but at length he consented to go in the company of Lieutenant Vail. This was a happy decision, for Captain Lord had returned to Genoa, Rogers's servant refused to accompany him to Minorca, and Croxall felt he must stay in Marseilles.

The consul turned to the navy. Croxall wrote to Commodore Isaac Hull, U.S.N., the commander of the United States naval squadron in the Mediterranean, and quoted Cass's suggestion that the navy take Rogers to Port Mahon. Hull was told that Rogers had been in ill health and that his mind was seriously affected. At the present time he seemed to be better, and it was hoped that "the society of his Countrymen" would have a beneficial effect upon him. For further details on the case, the commodore was referred to Lieutenant Vail. That same day Croxall wrote a note to Captain John K. Latimer, U.S.N., the commanding officer of the sloop-of-war Cyane, then at the port of Toulon, asking him to take Rogers to Port Mahon. No mention was made of Rogers's mental condition, and there was only a brief reference to his being ill.

The navy cooperated. Lieutenant Vail and Purser Horatio Bridge accompanied Rogers to the port of Toulon. Here he had an opportunity to tour the dock yard and the naval arsenal in the company of a Mr. Truché, the vice consul at Marseilles, before boarding his ship.

When the party left for Toulon, Croxall wrote Cass the following estimate of Rogers's condition:

He appears to me more silly than insane, and perfectly harmless. No doubt he was out of his element at Turin, and the sudden and great change of habits from a life in the western part of Pennsylvania, where ceremony is of no account, to a formal and rigid observance of it at Turin, deprived of all he had been accustomed to, is one of the causes of the alienation of the mind he now betrays.
Rogers was received on board the *Cyane* with the honors due to his rank—a salute of thirteen guns. The trip to Port Mahon was made in three days, and Rogers presumably reported to a naval doctor there. No records of interviews or treatments have been located by the present writer, and one can only speculate on what happened. The doctor or doctors who examined him probably found him much improved and dismissed him. Rogers's letters mention only that on two occasions he dined with Commodore Isaac Hull, with whom he had "diplomatic affairs to arrange," and with the lieutenants on board the warships *Ohio* and *Cyane*.\(^{27}\)

In any case, he had gone to Mahon for his examination, as his colleagues wished. He would now do some traveling on his own.

About three weeks after his arrival on the island he took passage on a French mail steamer *Cymere*, which plied between Toulon and Algiers. On this trip it was bringing French soldiers home from Algiers. For Rogers this was a pleasant voyage. He liked the French, and he dined at the captain's table with two of the military officers on board. Such companionship made it easier to stand a five-day quarantine at Toulon prior to debarking.\(^{78}\)

Rogers knew that Cass was responsible for his leaving Italy, and he probably wanted a face-to-face meeting with him. Leaving Toulon for Marseilles, he boarded a coach for Paris and arrived in that city near the end of December.\(^{79}\) An interview with Cass was soon arranged. In view of all the preliminaries, the meeting must have been interesting. Rogers makes no mention of it in his letters. Cass made only a passing reference to it in a despatch to the Secretary of State, but he concluded on an optimistic note:

> He is in good health and appears to me in the perfect possession of his faculties. There is nothing in his conduct or conversation which indicates the contrary. He has

\(^{27}\) *Log Book of the United States Ship Cyane*, Navy Department archives, RG 54, N.A.; Latimer to Hull, December 1, 1840, *Papers of Isaac Hull*; Rogers, *Letters* [II], 11. The hospital was in charge of naval surgeon Jonathan M. Foltz. There is no mention of Rogers in the biography of the surgeon by Charles S. Foltz, *Surgeon of the Seas* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1931). Foltz's journal is in the Library of Franklin and Marshall College, but there is a gap between November 1840 and March 1841; letter of H. B. Anstaett to writer, April 13, 1961.

\(^{78}\) Rogers, *Letters* [II], 11.

\(^{79}\) *Ibid.*
not explained his intentions any further, than that he proposes to spend a short time in Paris.\textsuperscript{80}

While in Paris Rogers seems to have enjoyed the pomp of the French Court. He had long been an admirer of King Louis Phillippe, and Cass arranged for him to be presented at Court. Rogers described his meeting with the King as follows:

He was dressed in rich uniform; a chapeau de bras with a white ostrich plume was in his left hand, and covered his sword-handle. He said a few words to each person, and then passed on. He has not a commanding stature, being about five feet ten, and is not graceful in his manner of walking; the most apparent mark and expression in his countenance is sagacity. In that respect he is not unlike Mr. Van Buren. The skin wrinkles about the eyes, and the eyelid half drops. His features, however, are all regular; his hair is curled with great neatness, and he would be considered a handsome man. He is courteous and marked in his attention to all Americans.\textsuperscript{81}

Not long after this Rogers had another opportunity to observe the King while at dinner at the Tuileries.\textsuperscript{82}

In his private correspondence Rogers criticized Cass for publishing a series of essays on the King and his Court.\textsuperscript{83} Cass's aim was to make the French king and government better known to Americans, but Rogers thought that his action indicated a "want of delicacy" for one in his position.\textsuperscript{84}

This was a time when Anglo-American relations were strained by disputes over the border between Canada and the United States. On this subject Rogers said that he and others considered Cass as "too pacific." "As for myself," wrote Rogers, "I am the bitter foe of England. I detest her Government. I pant for war. The fire of two bitter family feuds is burning in my veins."\textsuperscript{85}

While in Paris Rogers wrote to John Bailey, the American consul at Genoa, that he had instructed his bankers to pay the

\textsuperscript{80} Cass to Forsyth, No. 121, December 30, 1840, Despatches France, XXIX.
\textsuperscript{81} Rogers, \textit{Letters [II]}, 12.
\textsuperscript{82} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{83} Lewis Cass, \textit{France, Its King, Court and Government} (New York, 1840).
\textsuperscript{84} Rogers, \textit{Letters [II]}, 11.
\textsuperscript{85} \textit{Ibid.}, 13.
consul 730 francs (about $137) from which he was to “satisfy all honorable and just expenses that may have occurred on account of my sickness.” He added that: “It is a matter of great delicacy with me personally and I hope you will act in the matter as you shall think right and proper.” The chargé may not have known it, but representatives of both the English and the Sardinian Governments expressed an interest in the settlement of these claims.

Bailey was also instructed to go to Turin, rent some new quarters, store the archives, and be on the lookout for a shipment of books for the legation. But before Bailey could attend to these matters he discovered that the Department of State had asked the chargé at Naples to do the job.

Meanwhile, what was the reaction in Washington to the news of Rogers's illness? When he received Cass’s despatches with enclosures from Crokat, as well as those sent by Crokat directly, Secretary John Forsyth notified President Van Buren. The President directed that a copy of Crokat’s first despatch be sent to the chargé’s father, Congressman Edward Rogers of New York. With this despatch Forsyth sent a letter informing the Congressman that Cass was supervising the arrangements being made for the care of his son.

Late in December 1840 Forsyth sent an official despatch bearer to Naples on board a naval vessel with instructions for Enos Throop, the American chargé at that city. Throop was ordered to go to Turin, to pack and seal the archives, and to ask Count Truchsess, the Prussian minister, if he would care for them until Rogers or his replacement arrived at Turin. Throop was also to express the thanks of President Van Buren to Count Truchsess for his kindnesses toward Rogers.

These instructions reached Throop in mid-March, and he started at once for Turin. On the way there he stopped off at Genoa to

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Rate based on that used in “Abstract of Contingent Expenses paid by H. Gold Rogers . . . .,” an enclosure in S. Pleasanton to Webster, July 18, 1842, Despatches Italy (Sardinia), IV.

Rogers to Bailey, No. 1, January 21, 1841, ibid.; Cass to Forsyth, No. 119, December 6, 1840, Despatches France, XXIX.

Ibid.

Forsyth to E. Rogers, November 24, 1840, Domestic Letters, XXXI, 270-271, RG 59, N.A.

Marraro, op. cit., I, 494-495.
confer with Crokat and Bailey. The latter showed Troop the letter Rogers had written from Paris concerning the archives of the legation.\textsuperscript{91} When Throop reached Turin he questioned Rogers's landlord about the archives. The landlord stated that Rogers had left only a locked desk, three chairs, and an empty box in his apartment. After conferring with the Sardinian minister of foreign affairs, and with the Prussian minister, the landlord took these items from the apartment and stored them for safety. The chargé from Naples inspected the furniture and found the desk still locked. Later the furnishings were delivered to the Prussian minister to hold until further notice.

Throop called on the ministers of Prussia and Great Britain. Both men expressed the opinion that no correspondence had taken place between Rogers and the Sardinian Government except the usual compliments upon his arrival. Such official papers as Rogers had were presumably locked in the metal safety drawer of the desk. Therefore Rogers had not compromised anyone by leaving any official papers in the open when he departed for Genoa and Port Mahon.

Ralph Abercromby, the British minister, showed Throop a letter sent by Rogers from Paris late in January 1841. To Throop this letter indicated that if Rogers were not entirely recovered, he had lucid intervals. Throop was happy to learn that Rogers had sent funds to pay for the expenses incurred in going to Mahon. The only debts still outstanding were for a month's rent on Rogers's quarters in Turin, and a small balance due to Crokat.

After expressing to the Prussian minister the thanks of the President for his kindesses, Throop returned to Naples and sent a report of his mission to the Secretary of State.\textsuperscript{92}

Sometime in February or early March, 1841, Rogers left Paris for London. From the latter city he wrote to Secretary of State Forsyth that a "very severe and painful illness" had compelled him to absent himself from his duties at Turin. He asked for a leave of absence for two months in order that he might travel. But if the secretary believed that the public interest necessitated his return to Turin, he would return there at once. While awaiting

\textsuperscript{91} Ibid., 496; Throop to Forsyth, No. 27, March 27, 1841, Despatches Naples, I.
\textsuperscript{92} Ibid.
a reply, he spent his time in London and Paris. On April 27, 1841, he left Paris for Turin.63

By early May Rogers was probably back at Turin. On May 22 he wrote to the Department of State acknowledging the receipt of a circular announcing that Daniel Webster was the new secretary of state in the administration of President William Henry Harrison. It was not until some weeks later that Rogers learned of the sudden death of Harrison, and of the elevation of Vice President John Tyler to the Presidency. Rogers wrote to Webster in July that he had received no answer to his request for leave, but since he was now in "perfect health" no answer was necessary.94

While all this was taking place, Edward Rogers was trying to get further information about Hezekiah. He apparently called on Forsyth late in January, 1841, to discuss his son's case. Later he was informed of Hezekiah's request for a leave of absence. Congressman Rogers's term ended in March, and he returned to his law practice in Madison, New York. Far away from Washington and its sources of news, he must have felt a great deal of anxiety for his son. Finally, in June, 1841, he wrote to Secretary Webster to ascertain whether the leave requested by Hezekiah had been granted, and what action the government had taken in regard to his son. He added that he had received no information about his son on which he could place full reliance, but what he had heard made him think that Hezekiah's health was delicate. Edward Rogers was apprehensive that Hezekiah might have a recurrence of his trouble. The father admitted that his fears might be groundless, but if a messenger was to be employed by the government to carry any despatches to England or to countries near to it, the elder Rogers would like to be considered for the assignment. As if there was any doubt about his motivation for volunteering, he added that he wanted to learn more about his son's condition than he could by normal means.95

Webster had not yet received the news of the chargé's return to

63 Rogers to Forsyth, No. 3, March 2, 1841, Despatches Italy (Sardinia), IV; Rogers, Letters [II], 13, 15.
64 Rogers to Bailey, No. 2, May 22, 1841; Rogers to Webster, May 22, June 17, July 9, 1841, Despatches Italy (Sardinia), IV.
65 Forsyth to E. Rogers, January 18, 1841, Domestic Letters, XXXI, 306; E. Rogers to Webster, June 6, 1841, Miscellaneous Letters, RG 59, N.A.
Turin when he answered Hezekiah’s father. He said that he could not give any satisfactory information about Hezekiah because the Department “does not indeed know with certainty where he now is.” Under all the circumstances of the case, the President thought that it was his duty to send him a notice of a contemplated recall.

Ten days after Webster wrote to Edward Rogers, the Department received a despatch from Hezekiah at Turin. The plan to replace him was now implemented. On August 16, 1841, Ambrose Baber, of Georgia, was commissioned as the new chargé d'affaires at Turin. Soon after he left for his post. Webster wrote to Hezekiah Rogers on August 21, informing him of the appointment of Baber, and that the bankers were to close out his account on October 15. He was also notified that his account was already overdrawn by $457. Rogers later claimed that he did not receive the notice of his recall until the last of October. His dismissal came as a surprise to him, and the shock must have been increased by the financial statement. Hezekiah faced a whole new series of problems including that of getting home.

The first regular United States diplomatic mission to Sardinia terminated on November 22, 1841, when Rogers presented his letter of recall to the Sardinian foreign minister and took his leave of the realm. Ambrose Baber, delayed in Paris by illness in his family, did not arrive at Turin until late in December. By January 12, 1842, he had passed through the Court ceremonies and was ready to take up his official duties. Rogers went to Genoa, where he wrote Webster concerning the expenses of his mission. After pointing out the errors in his account, Rogers asked for a “proper audit” of his contingent expenses, and the balance due on his salary. “It would be a kindness to me to have the whole matter properly adjusted before my return,” wrote Rogers, “as I am anxious to avail myself of what is due me at London.” But time was to prove that neither hope was justified.

While waiting for the department to adjust his accounts, Rogers

96 Webster to E. Rogers, June 11, 1841, Domestic Letters, XXXI, 451-452.
97 Dept. of State to Baber, No. 1, August 21, 1841; Webster to Baber, No. 2, December 29, 1841, Despatches Italy (Sardinia), IV; Webster to Rogers, August 21, 1841, Instructions to Turin, I, 14-15, RG 84, N.A.
98 Rogers to Webster, No. 7, No. 8, November 26, December 1, 1841; Baber to Webster, September 6, 1841, January 12, 1842, Despatches Italy (Sardinia), IV.
enjoyed himself in Europe. From Genoa he went to Naples, Pompeii, Herculaneum, Sorrento, Florence, and Rome. Accompanied by Hiram Powers, the American sculptor, Rogers paid a visit to Enos Throop, the United States chargé d'affaires to the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, who was visiting at Sorrento. At Florence Rogers wrote that he was entertained by the nobility and given some letters of introduction to persons in Rome. Through the efforts of George W. Green, the American consul in Rome, he had an audience with Pope Gregory XVI while visiting Rome. In March 1842 he was again in Florence, where in the company of Horatio Greenough, the American sculptor, he dined with James Ombrosi, the United States consul at that city.  

On April 3, 1842, Rogers left Genoa, presumably to begin his journey home. By early July he was in London. Sometime after that he returned to the United States, probably before the summer was over. At any rate, he was in Washington by late January, 1843.  

Nowhere in the official records is there a clear suggestion that Rogers was ever aware of the fact that his mental illness had anything to do with the recall. It seems likely that he visited his family after his return. No evidence has been found to indicate that he was ever in an asylum or hospital. All indications are that he was accepted as normal. Now that he was back in the country, he had to settle some long-pending matters relating to his accounts with the Department of State. These problems were to disturb him for years to come.  

As noted earlier, several items in Hezekiah’s reports of his official expenses were challenged by the auditor for the State Department. Matters were still pending when Hezekiah went to see Webster in February 1843. If a later statement of Rogers’s is correct, Webster agreed to make some adjustments in favor of Hezekiah’s claims, but was overruled by the auditor. The extensive correspondence on Hezekiah’s accounts gives some illuminating insights into the department’s attitude on diplomatic expenses.  

One problem concerned the employment of a private secretary.  

60 R. Sanford to Webster, January 20, 1843, Rogers to Cass, June 9, 1857, Miscellaneous Letters.
Rogers wrote the department that the mission at Turin needed a consul and a secretary of legation. The Sardinian foreign minister suggested to Rogers that he employ a secretary. Rogers hired an American who was suitable for this position and who also acted as a translator. The department's auditors found this expenditure "unusual" and refused to allow it.

Another problem concerned the cost of following the Sardinian Court on its annual trip to Genoa, where it remained about one or two months. Rogers followed the prevailing diplomatic practice. He asked that he be allowed $500 for each of the two years that he went with the Court. The department refused. It is interesting to note that the time of the first trip coincided with the period of Rogers's illness and his departure for Mahon. The second peregrination was at the time of the chargé's recall.

Rogers's expenditures for furniture also caught the eye of the auditor. For $66.75 he purchased three chairs and a desk with an iron safety drawer for valuable papers. The department rejected this expense. Yet it spared no pains to send a special messenger across the Atlantic and Mediterranean, and a charge from Naples to Turin, to make sure that the diplomatic archives of the legation were safe.

A fourth problem concerned Rogers's pay. His salary stopped on October 22, 1841. Hezekiah argued that he should be paid until April 3, 1842, the day he left Genoa. He also sought compensation to replace the money he borrowed for his passage home. If the department made any adjustments in Rogers's favor, they did not go beyond a date in early December, 1841. And it is not known whether Hezekiah's benefactor was ever repaid. One thing is certain: for years afterward Rogers felt that the government owed him money.

Other claims by Rogers were for fuel, light, rent, messengers, and the cost of delivering an exequatur to Consul Bailey. In addition, he suffered losses in shipping books and clothes back to the United States. There was even a claim for the expenses incurred in attending the funeral of an American consul while he was in Paris.101

101 S. Pleasanton to Webster, August 4, 1841; July 18, 1842; Rogers to Webster, June 17, 1841; June 18, 1842; February 1, 3, 1843; June 13, 1843; Rogers to Upshur, July 23, September 27, 1843; Rogers to N. P. Trist,
After two audits failed to support his contentions, Hezekiah took his case to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. The committee’s report stated that his claims for journeys to Genoa were “in violation of justice, reason and usage and ought not to be allowed.” Furthermore, his claims for expenses covered “a number of extravagant and unreasonable items,” which were not sanctioned by government usage.\textsuperscript{102}

This rejection by the committee did not stop Hezekiah’s efforts to obtain what he considered his due. In 1854 he succeeded in getting the House committee to make another inquiry, but in view of the earlier report nothing came of it. Until the end of his life Rogers periodically sought compensation for one or another expenditure made in connection with his mission. The State Department stopped answering his letters sometime after 1846. Hezekiah’s correspondence and depositions were filed away—a monument to futility.\textsuperscript{103}

Meanwhile, he returned to his law practice in Pittsburgh. Here he worked for the election of James K. Polk. Not long after this he left Pittsburgh, and information on his subsequent career is fragmentary. He became a wanderer. Letters written to the Department of State in relation to his claims offer a few clues as to his whereabouts. Washington, Honesdale, Franklin, Butler, and Lancaster were some of his residences in Pennsylvania; and it seems likely that he spent at least some time in New York City in the 1850’s.\textsuperscript{104}

November 4, 1845; N. P. Trist to Rogers, September 10, 1846, Despatches Italy (Sardinia), IV. Rogers’s letter to Lewis Cass of June 9, 1857, contains a sentence which may be an indication that Hezekiah was aware of the relationship between his mental problem and his recall. He wrote: “There are some circumstances connected with my situation as Charge d’affairs at Turin known to you which possibly might induce you to get about it and send me a letter of Credit to negotiate a Bill or authority to act to some extent.”

\textsuperscript{102} Reports of Committees, 29th Congress, 1st session (Serial 489), No. 308, February 18, 1846.

\textsuperscript{103} Rogers to Buchanan, June 8, September 7, 1846; to A. K. Parris, March 10, 1849; Memorandum of H. G. Rogers, June 26, 1859; Despatches Italy (Sardinia), IV; T. H. Bailey to Marcy, February 5, 1854; Rogers to Marcy, February 6, 1854; to Cass, June 9, December 10, 1857; to Buchanan, February 6, 1861; to Hamilton H. Fish, November 26, December 25, 1869; to W. Evarts, September 15, 1880; Miscellaneous Letters; Marcy to T. H. Bailey, February 13, 1854, Domestic Letters, XLII.

\textsuperscript{104} Ibid.
Rogers tried his hand at writing. In 1854 he published *The Tragedy of Vitelli*, a five-act play set in thirteenth-century Florence that glorified the character of woman. Three years later, he issued *The Surrender of Creuta in Spain*, a three-act tragedy set in eleventh-century Spain. Each play was published in a pamphlet that included a group of Hezekiah's private letters written from Italy. Playwriting gave way to political science when in 1868 he published a short treatise entitled *The Origin of Civil Government*.

Whether these works were issued with the help of friends to gratify Hezekiah, or whether they were intended to prove that he was of sound mind is not known. No evidence has been found to indicate that the plays were ever produced. It seems apparent, however, that none of these works ever enjoyed any wide circulation. Whatever the literary merit of his works might be, they do reflect an imaginative and sympathetic nature.

Between 1845 and 1861 Rogers made four unsuccessful attempts to secure a diplomatic appointment to England, Austria, Sardinia, Belgium, Denmark, or Holland. In view of his earlier experiences in Sardinia, it is interesting to note a portion of a letter of recommendation for Rogers written on the eve of the Civil War by one Cyrus L. Pershing, of Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Pershing wrote:

> I think the Country is going crazy anyhow and dont see why he ought not to be appointed till all parties become sane again.

The present writer has found no information on Hezekiah's role, if any, during the Civil War. What few glimpses we have of him in the years that followed the war are pathetic. Rogers never married, and by 1857 he had lost both his parents and his only brother. Apparently he had no one to care for him. As he wandered about Pennsylvania he seems to have supported himself by giving an occasional lecture, and by getting signatures and contributions for a future appearance. If a later obituary notice is correct, he passed himself off as a brother of Henry Rogers, a

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celebrated Pennsylvania geologist. He allegedly collected money for a series of lectures on geology which were never delivered.\textsuperscript{108}

The year 1882 found him in Lancaster. On this visit his conduct became so offensive that he was arrested for vagrancy. After his release from jail he was sent to the county almshouse. Here, on March 21, 1882, he died at the age of seventy-one.\textsuperscript{109}

His death did not go unnoticed. A Lancaster paper referred to him as “the well known, very tall, old tramp, whose presence has been familiar on our streets for some years past...” After noting his earlier career, the same source said that Rogers had “steadily sunk to the level of a very common and obnoxious tramp.” Other papers were kinder, but most noted that the man who had once represented his country at the Court of Sardinia died in a poorhouse.\textsuperscript{110}

Someone, presumably one of his maternal relatives, arranged to have the body brought back to Madison, New York, for burial. Over his grave a tall and handsome obelisk was erected to mark his resting place.\textsuperscript{111}

Such was the saga of Hezekiah Gold Rogers, Jacksonian diplomat, whose personal tragedy became a unique case in the history of the American foreign service.

\textsuperscript{108} Lancaster Weekly Intelligencer, March 22, 1882; Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette, March 21, 1882; The Pittsburgh Evening Chronicle, March 22, 1882. The last two of these papers state that the money collected by Rogers was used by him to buy liquor.

\textsuperscript{109} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{111} F. E. Welch, Madison Village Cemetery Association, to writer, March 23, 1961.