

Message " In reply I have to inform you, that under the rule established
in this office, I have always refused copies of letters, petitions and
Pardon " other papers addressed to the Governor, except when they contained
of bonds " charges against, or had been written by the persons making the
Rioters. " application. If there were no other reason requiring such a rule
it would still be impossible for me, consistently with the discharge
of my public duties to copy such papers, and improper to put
them in the hands of other persons for that purpose".

This rule was established when I first came into
office, not only on account of the labour of copying letters and
petitions, but because I considered it improper to place them
in the hands of individuals, for electing purposes, or for the
gratification of idle curiosity or personal resentment. But when
a call is made by the House of Delegates, for papers relating
to the pardon of any individual, the enquiry assumes a different
character, and then the Executive may with propriety furnish all
the information requiring. As it is impossible however in the
present case, to ascertain from the papers themselves, what
degree of weight was attached to each recommendation, I consider
it necessary to make such explanations, as will enable the House to
understand my reasons for pardoning the individuals who were
convicted at the October Term of Allegany County Court of participa-
ting in the recent riots on the line of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal.

Fourteen of these men were sentenced to the Penitentiary;
two of them for the term of seventeen years and eight months,
seven, for fifteen years, and eight months, three for nine years &
eight months, one for six years and eight months, and one for
five years and six months. Nine of them were tried for an assault
with intent to kill, four for an assault and battery with intent to kill
and one for felony: which offences were committed on the line of the
Canal, on the 11th of August 1839. On that day a large body of Irish
laborers marched to the Dutch section of the Canal, attacked
the German laborers, and beat and wounded many of them in a
cruel manner, and committed other acts of violence, which excited
indignation and alarm among the people of the adjacent country.
A few weeks afterwards, a number of persons, suspected of being
engaged in the riot, were arrested by the military force under
the command of Col. Staunton, fourteen of whom were convicted
and sentenced, as I have before stated.

The Canal had been a scene of occasional disturbances for
several years, in consequence of the quarrels between different parties