

As long as a year before the land office at Jeffersonville was established, an Alexander Balmain of Winchester, Virginia, wrote to Secretary of State Madison recommending Major Edmund Taylor for an appointment. The grandiose manner of presenting the good points of his character are characteristics of many similar letters:

Honest, virtuous, modest, and capable, he served his country as a lieutenant under General Wayne in several campaigns against the Indians, and distinguished himself, as a good, and brave officer in some of the bloodiest actions of that dangerous warfare. . . . I need not say to you, Sir, that his family is numerous and influential in Virginia and Kentucky, and that his connections are the firm friends of Mr. Jefferson and yourself.<sup>1</sup>

Public service, influential friends, political prestige, all went into insuring appointments to offices.