

Lancaster 28<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1851

My dear Sir,

I have this morning received orders to report for duty on board the U.S. Sloop of War Jamestown, which I shall promptly obey [sic]. In doing so I am more impressed with the pernicious influence experienced by the chiefs of the Bureaux [sic] in the Navy Department; and that the whole service belongs to a few of the old Commodores & their friends, who use it for their convenience.

The sooner the whole service is abolished and the country rely upon her commercial marine for defence [sic] in time of war, the better.

The Jamestown is ordered to the coast of Brazil where I have recently served nearly three years, as the surgeon of the Fleet, now, I am ordered to the same station, as surgeon of a 20 gun sloop with a crew of 180 men! As an assistant surgeon I always did the duty of the surgeon, who was ever an imbecile or a drunkard. Ten years ago I was ordered to take charge of the Naval Hospital of the Mediterranean station, with all the sick of the squadron- Five years ago I was Surgeon of the Fleet, and I have flattering letters from all my commanders and from the Department as to the manner in which my duties were performed. Professional duties to me are never laborious, when I am in health as they are agreeable.

After my service in the East Indies – Pacific & South American stations, I was anxious, very anxious for duty in the Home Squadron, on board one of the steamers (of which we have six) or – afloat in the Mediterranean – where any previous service was on shore, or the lakes; but these stations are all kept for commodore[']s sons, sons-in-law [sic] & nephews [sic].

Col: King in one of the strongest possible letters in my behalf. (for which I beg to thank him) asked it as a personal favor that I should be ordered to a Steamer; and your own influence was exerted to the utmost with Mr Graham, who himself was most favorably disposed towards me, and seemed anxious to do me justice – but, neither he, or any other secretary or even President, can control the Navy – It is in the hands of a Navy clique from whom it cannot be wrested.

I have now reached my twentieth year in the Navy, attained my maximum pay and rank, and am now ordered on the subordinate duty of Surgeon to a 20 gun sloop with 180 men, on a station where I last served in a higher capacity. The surgeon of the Fleet at present on the coast of Brazil is a prototype of Dr. Harris, with the exception that his mind is not paralysed [sic], as he never had a mind to paralyze.

I will obey [sic] my orders and proceed to Norfolk on Monday and report for duty – leaving those stations which I looked for to Commodore[']s sons & relatives, to whom they have so long belonged.

“Alls well” at Wheatland and in Lancaster, your friends are pleased with the ward elections. Yesterday I saw Col Sam Black- who says your nomination is certain – God grant it – Mr Sterrigger did not come up on Saturday evg [evening]. I was at the station looking out to deliver your message

With my compliments to Miss Harriett & Col: King I am, very respectfully

Your obliged friend & obt: servt [obedient servant]

J. M. Foltz

Hon: James Buchanan

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