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Home Squadron

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**THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE
GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION**

WASHINGTON: 1971

1

Flag Ship Habash
New York, January 17th 1857.

At 88
mm

did;

My letter of December the 17th from Aspinwall, informed the Department of our arrival at that place.

Arrangements had been made with the Superintendents of the Panama Rail Road Company and with Commodore Merwine, with reference to the exchange of the St. Mary's crew to and from Panama, and this was commodiously effected on the 17th day of December. A sufficient number of officers and men of the relief crew having been previously sent over, the officers and men of the St. Mary's were sent to us by the morning train of the 17th, arriving at Aspinwall at 2 P. M., when the relief crew being in readiness were dispatched in the same cars, and arrived in Panama in time to be comfortably on board their ship at nine in the evening.

On the part of the Superintendent of the Rail Road everything was conducted with energy and promptitude, with every desirable care and thoughtfulness for our convenience, and in a spirit of liberality and frankness that claims my warmest acknowledgments.

On the 19th of December, having completed all our arrangements, we sailed from Aspinwall, and being in want of

water and coal put into Havana on 29th. On the second day after my arrival there I dined with the Captain General and in the evening the officers of the ~~base~~ ^{base} attended a soiree at the Palace, where they were received with much courtesy and evident satisfaction by the Captain General and his lady. His carriage with valets in livery, attended by his aid, was sent for me, and the honour was assigned to me of leading Madame Boncha to the table. At the table of the Captain General I met the United States Consul Mr. Blythe, and his predecessor Mr. Robinson, Mr. Lippincott of Philadelphia, Mr. Ford the English Consul, Sir James Doby, Captain of the Coldstream Guards, Commander Peasley of Her B. M. Brig Italian with General Echiveria, the civil and military Governor of Havana, and other distinguished officers of the Spanish army and navy in Cuba. Captain Angle and my aid were also present.

On the day previous to my departure from Havana, the Captain General had gone into the country with his family. He sent his aid to invite me with the officers of the ship to occupy his Box at the Italian opera. I accepted, and a carriage was sent for me. We were escorted by General Echiveria, the civil and military Governor of Havana. The court in full uniform were present in sufficient numbers to fill the Captain General's Box, and I am most happy to say I felt great pride in their appearance as well as their deportment, not only at the Theater but at the Palace.

The Capt

and First Lieutenant of the St. Mary's, having pledged themselves to be present on our arrival in the United States to attend to the discharge of their men, I yielded to their wish to return in the mail steamer Illinois as it enabled them to reach their families some days sooner than by taking passage with us.

We sailed from Havana on the 3rd inst., and arrived here the present morning.

Although I presume the ship has received no material injury from being on shore, I deem it necessary for her to go into dock for examination.

Very respectfully

Your obedient servant

~~W. H. A. H.~~

Commanding Home Squadron

To

Hon. James C. Lobb,
Secretary of the Navy,
Washington, D.C.

ack & see inside

S,

Answer
12 Jan. 1856

O Jan. 12 - Eth

No. 103

Flag Ship "Hrabash"

New York, March 26. 1857

Sir;

I have the honor, herewith, to enclose a report against Charles Crowell, O. S., for striking Midshipman Blodgett, of this ship, whilst in the performance of his duty.

The offence is of so grave a character, and so fatal to subordination, that I request the Department will order a Court Martial, for the trial of Crowell;

I am, very respectfully, Sir,

Your ob. servant

W. A. A. A. A.

Comdg Home Squadron

Hon. J. Tancey
Secretary of the Navy

U. S. Frigate "Habash"
New York, March 21, 1857

Sir;

While carrying on my duty, this morning, as Master's Mate of the Main Deck, after having the word passed for all hands on deck, I went round myself to see the order obeyed, and found Charles Crowell, on the Starboard side of the Main Deck, forward, by the stove, and ordered him on deck, to which he made some insolent reply. I then ordered him to the Mast. Instead of going, he struck me, with his fist, in the face, at the same time grasping my shirt collar, violently, with his left hand, and calling me a d—n son of a b—h.

I held his arms, and kept him from striking me again, until Private Birch took charge of him, he still persisting that he would not obey my order to go to the Mast, but would go for any one else.

The following men witnessed the affair—

Maurice Colbert.
Robert S. Salkeman
James Robinson
Private, H. E. Birch
Chas. Hess.

Very respectfully
Yours ob. Servant
— Geo. W. Lloyd
Midshipman

and add to the foregoing report, that Crowell

When he had been brought to the Mast, Exhibited
most mutinous & insubordinate spirit. In
presence & that of St. Fairfax the Officer of the
deck, he remarked, that he was an American
would protect himself & would not be tried
like a d-d booby, & afterwards cursed the
Blood & threatened to resist authority in
hearing of St. Fairfax & Corporals, Clarke & O
& Sergeant Henry -

Very Respectfully
Geo. J. Sinclair
Exr^t off^r

Commodore Paulding
Com^d of Home Dep^t & down

Flag Ship Wabash
Off Aspinwall N. G. May 18th 1857

Sir,

The report of Captain Engle informed the Department that the "Wabash" sailed from New York on the 18th of April. She arrived at Aspinwall on the evening of the 11th Inst.

We touched at Aguadilla in the Mona Passage on the 27th Ult. to fill our water and sailed from there on the 3rd Inst. having delayed as little as possible with the object in view.

The ship made the passage under sail, the fires being lighted only in going in and out of port.

In crossing the Gulf and for some days afterwards we experienced fresh gales and the ship behaved well under her canvass.

On my arrival here I found the "Cyane" at anchor. She had not moved for nearly six months, and although there has been no serious disease on board, the officers and men are suffering from the effects of the climate.

I enclose the letter of Capt. Cockburn of the British Navy to Commander Bost, marked (A), and Commander Bost's report on my arrival here, marked (B) which will give the Department some knowledge

knowledge of an occurrence cannot fail to interest the Government.

I was disposed on first learning the transaction to give credit to the British officers for gross humanity and kindness in dealing with their national as American citizens, although many of them belonged to other nations.

In conversing on this however today with the Captain of the Illinois and the surgeon or medical officer of that vessel I learned the men were not only not permitted to go below decks but were crowded and kept between the guns on the deck, and although there were many sick and wounded, no medical aid was given; and that the sufferings of these unhappy men were unendurable.

On the 13th Inst. the English screw ship of the line "Orion" bearing the flag of Admiral Sir Houston came in and anchored.

The Admiral crossed the bar and received him on yesterday on his return.

The Governor of Panama assured him that there was no objection on the part of the inhabitants to the "Trail Road" of the citizens of the United States. The Admiral repeated to the language he had used to the Governor to impress him with the importance of preventing any unfriendly movement towards seafarers, the Trail Road

-citizens

(A)

Her Britannic Majesty's Ship "Cossack"

Colon 20th April. 1867.

Sir

I have already told you when I had the pleasure of waiting upon you on board your ship the circumstances which induced the Senior Officer of the English Squadron at Greytown to embark 370 unfortunate and distressed men, natives of the United States.

I brought them to this Port fully believing there would not be any difficulty in transferring them to the Steam vessels belonging to the United States running between this Port and America.

I regret to inform you that I have met with many difficulties and have only succeeded in getting a portion of them. Those on board my ship (the "Cossack") embarked on board these Mail Steam vessels — before I give up all hope of those on board H.M. Ship "Tartar" being taken I appeal to you for your good offices in behalf of these poor people.

— The

Captain Rob.

United States Ship of War. Cyane

Colon

1
- the reason assigned for not taking them is that Measles has appeared amongst them, and that this fact would subject the ship to such detention that she would lose time, and make the Company liable to a heavy fine. Can you not manage to get over this difficulty by causing her to go to Havana instead of Jamaica. Or indeed in any manner you may be able to suggest? - failing this may I ask you to tell me any other method by which these persons can be sent to their homes. I am obliged to join my Commander in Chief immediately at Carthagena.

I have tried to Charter a Vessel but there is a difficulty about the number of persons she is allowed to embark and the means of putting on board the quantity of water required for the voyage. - The number on board the Tartar is 200 men.

I have the honor to be Sir

Your most Obedt^t & Devot^d

Wm. M. M. Captain

(B)

W H S Ogden
Harbor of St. John's May 13th 1857

Sir

Since your departure from this Port nothing has occurred of sufficient importance to merit a detailed report - The transit across the Atlantic remains unobscured, altho^o occasional outbursts of feeling are exhibited against the Government and Citizens of the United States by the Press of this Country - On April 11th 1857 the B. O. Ships "Cossack" & "Tartar" arrived at this port from San Juan with three hundred and twenty five filibusters to whom protection had been given, against the hot and enraged pursuit of the triumphant Costa Ricans - It appears that Mr. Scott of Punta Arenas, the Agent of Morgan & Sons, drew a draft on that firm for the payment of the passage of these men to the United States, onboard the "Mail Steamer". This draft, however, the Agent of the Steamer would not accept, whereupon, Capt. Cockburn the Senior British Officer made himself individually responsible for twenty dollars a head for those men onboard his Ship, numbering two hundred, and the remainder of the money to be raised from the sale of the arms of the filibusters, which had been placed by mutual agreement under British protection as collateral security for the full amount of the passage money.

The existence of (males) onboard the "Tartar" constituted an insuperable objection to taking the men from that Ship. It was

in this state of perplexity that Capt. Cockburn
addressed me a letter on the subject, which
I enclose together with my reply

I am Respectfully

Your obedt Servant

Robert M

Comman

Commodore H Paulding
Comdr. Home Squadron
At Simsbury

Perhaps it may be proper to add, that on
next day the Tartar sailed, with a view
landing three men at New Orleans.

citizens of the United States.

On this subject he seemed to feel more than a common interest concluding by expressing to me his apprehension that if from any cause we should take possession of the Isthmus it might lead to a complication.

My intercourse with the Admiral was of a friendly character. On returning to the Orion he got under way for San Juan del Norte, the Basilisk having preceded him.

Every thing on the Isthmus is quiet and there seems no reason to apprehend the least danger of an interruption of the Transit. On this side the people with very few exceptions are employed by the Rail Road Company and as far as any security can be afforded by us, the smallest vessel under our flag is as good as the whole Navy.

With this view I shall regret to see the energies of the Home Squadron wasted in this climate so pernicious to health, and the ships rendered unavailable when their services may be much needed.

I have the Honor to be
Very Respectfully Sir,
Your Obedient Servant

H. Paulding

Commanding Home Squadron

The Hon. Isaac Toucy -
Secretary of the Navy
Washington D. C.

No. 115
 Flag Ship Wabash
 Off Aspinwall June 2^d 1857

Sr;

Nothing of material importance
 has transpired since my letter of the 18th
 Lt. Every thing is quiet on the Isthmus.
 Yesterday H. B. S. Ship "Orion" an-
 chored near us, two days from San Juan
 del Norte. Admiral Stuart had
 changed his Flag to the "Basileisk" and left
 for Bermuda. There are now no British
 Vessels of War at San Juan.

Captain Erskine of the "Orion" in-
 forms me that there are at San Juan on
 board one of the River Steamers one hun-
 dred and fifty of Walker's men, prisoners
 to Costa Rica and claiming to belong to
 the United States. Many of them are sick
 and wounded and all are in circumstances
 of great destitution.

The Cyane sailed on the 20th Lt. and
 cruised to the Eastward for ten days touching
 at Carthagena where she communicated with
 our Consul and interchanged a salute with
 the authorities. She will be dispatched,
 under your order of the 18th Lt. for San Juan del
 Norte. Some repairs are necessary which
 will delay her a few days.

I am Sir Very Respectfully
 Your Obedient Servant

H. H. H. H.

Commanding Home Squadron

The Hon. Isaac Toucy
 Secretary of the Navy
 Washington D. C.

(to 118)

Flag Ship "Habash"
Off Aspinwall, C.S.
June 3rd 1857

Sir;

I have only a few minutes before the steamer leaves for New York, to acknowledge the receipt of your order of May 16th, entrusted to William Carey Jones, Esq., whom I have not seen, and who has, at this moment, sent me the order, with a private note from Panama.

There are now at San Juan del Norte, as I have informed the Department, one hundred and fifty of Walker's men, and besides these, I have reason to believe there is a still greater number on their way to the coast. I presume it is intended that such as are brought in the "Cyane", shall be sent home at the expense of the government, as it is the only way in which they can be disposed of. As the "Cyane" cannot birth her crew, the unfortunate men who are taken from San Juan, will be exposed, on deck, to the vicissitudes of the weather.

I am, Sir, very respectfully
Your ob. servant,

H. Paulding

J. Tancey
Secretary of the Navy.

Comdg Home Squadron

No. 119

Flag Ship Wabash
Off Aspinwall June 16th 1857

Sir;

The "Cyani" arrived today from San Juan del Norte with one hundred and forty two (142) men, women, and children, claiming the protection of our Flag as citizens of the United States, and having belonged to the "Expedition under General William Walker".

The orders of the Department directed me to have them brought here.

Of the whole number there are about fifty sick and wounded and all are in extreme destitution.

They cannot be landed, the Company refuse to send them to New York on any terms, and require that forty (\$40) dollars for each grown person and twenty (\$20) for each child shall be paid for a passage to New Orleans.

The Department has failed to instruct me beyond bringing these unfortunate people here and under the circumstances in which I am placed no alternative is left to me but their transportation to the United States in the "Wabash". I have therefore directed their transfer to this ship tomorrow and will sail with them for New York with the least possible delay.

I am, Sir Very Respectfully
Your Obedient Servant

W. A. T. Harding

Comm^dg Home Squadron

Over

Hon. Isaac Toucey
Secretary of the Navy
Washington D.C.

P. S. June 17th. Two of the men have
since the "Cyani" arrived ~~##~~

Copy

U. S. Steam Frigate Wabash
Off Aspinwall June 17th 1857

Sir,

Among the passengers just received
board this ship, are nearly fifty disabled
wounds, ulcers, and disabled. Incidental
the climate of Central America.

Many of these patients are greatly
prostrated also. by privations constant heat
and moisture, and in my opinion would be
much benefited by being transferred to some
northern Port of the United States where they
could enjoy a change to a cooler and dryer
climate.

For this purpose I would recom-
mend the Port of New York

I am, Very Respectfully

Your Obedient Servant

(signed) G. B. B. Hornor

Surgeon of the Fleet

Commodore Hiram Paulding

Commanding U. S. Naval Force

Home Station

N^o 119.

Comm^d.

H. Paulding

16th June 1857

Reports arrival of
Legation from San Juan
de los Rios with 142
"Walker's Expedition".
Has directed their
fer to the Wabash
will bring them to
H.K.

ack
Done July 1. 1857.

P. June 29 - 1857

No. 22

Flag Ship Wabash
Off Aspinwall June 17th 1857

Sir;

By the Mail Steamer "Illinois" I had the honor to receive a letter from the Department dated on the 1st Inst. addressed to me at "Panama" and from this and the fact that Dr. Caldwell of the "Independence" has recently made a partial exploration of the Isthmus which I understand was reported to the Department, I suppose there may have been a clerical error by which my name was substituted for that of Commodore Schurvin.

If in this I am mistaken I would respectfully inform the Department that the route between "Aspinwall and Panama" was more thoroughly surveyed by the engineers who projected the Rail Road than could be done by any person connected with this command. The rainy season is setting on and however I may misapprehend the wishes of the Department, the season is unfavorable to the exploration.

I am, Very Respectfully
Your Obedt. Servt.

H. A. A. A.

Comdg Home Squadron

Hon. Isaac Toucy
Secretary of the Navy
Washington D. C.

Flag Ship Wabash
Quarantine New York
June 28th 1857

No. 121

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that I arrived here today in the Wabashina, passage of ten days from Aspinwall, with one hundred and twenty (120) men, thirteen (13) women and five (5) children, who, under the orders of the Department of the 16th U.S. were conveyed from San Juan del Norte to Aspinwall, in the "Cyani", where they arrived on the evening of the 16th Inst, as communicated in my letter 119 by the "Illinois".

The U. S. Mail Steamship Company's Agent refused to receive the sick and wounded on any terms. He also refused to take any of the well to New York, and charged for a passage to New Orleans forty dollars (\$40) for adults and twenty (\$20) for children.

I could perhaps have landed them at New Orleans in a day or two less than at New York, but there a doubt existed whether I could obtain a supply of Anthracite coal, as well as water, and the Surgeon of the Fleet, as will be seen by a copy of his letter, herewith enclosed, recommended a northern climate for the sick and wounded. Of these there are seventy, about one half of the whole number on board, a majority of whom have been subjected to the greatest degree of human suffering. For these and the rest who have been less unfortunate, everything has been done that humanity suggested.

When received, they were in a state of extreme destitution. Besides what they had suffered from the want of food, they

they were without necessary clothing and
highly infested with vermin. When
upon our Gun Deck the sickening effluvia
from wounds and ulcers alarmed my
health of the ship, but this as well as the
condition of the sufferers has been gradually
by the unremitting labor of our Medical
who have secured a claim to my highest
praise, and the approbation of the Depart
by their professional skill and devotion
sufferers.

I shall direct that all who are well and
be landed at once. Many of the sick and
wounded are totally helpless. If they
not received at the Hospital at Guaman
I request the Department will inform
what is to be done with them. We can
nothing with them on board, and the
urgent reason demands that they should
promptly removed.

The number of our country
yet in Central America, and who
been ordered out of the country is estimated
at from three to four hundred. If it is the
of the government to receive and transport
them from Aspinwall and San Juan
North to the United States, I would respectfully
suggest that one of the Store Ships fitted
the express purpose, would perform the
better, and leave the Navy to fill the more
important demands of the government.

It has been imperatively necessary
to issue some government clothing and
stores to our passengers.

One of the passengers, Phillip
son, late an officer in the U.S. Army and
more recently a Colonel under Walker
on board the "Wabash" on the morning of the

I perform an agreeable duty in speaking of Capt. Eskin of U. S. S. Ship "Orion" who, for long time has been the Senior Officer on the Coast of Central America.

He was at San Juan del Norte when Cockbridges men retreated to that place, and the duties devolving upon him were in great degree embarrassing.

It became necessary not only to give protection to our misguided countrymen, but to reconcile in some manner the interests of contending parties belonging to the United States, and of Costa Rica, blended in a manner not always to be comprehended nor disposed of by an ordinary standard.

Captain Eskin has with much courtesy and frankness explained to me the course that was pursued by him and which seems to have given satisfaction to all parties concerned. Subsequently, guided by the dictates of humanity, he sent Cockbridges' men to Aspinwall in the "Tartar" and "Cockack", and it is known to the Department that those in the first named ship were conveyed under his orders to New Orleans.

On the arrival of the "Tartar" at Aspinwall from New Orleans, he again offered the services of that ship to bring any men I might wish to send for from San Juan.

With suitable acknowledgments I declined the offer, having a few days previously dispatched the "Cyani" on this service under the orders of the Department.

The official and personal intercourse that I have had with Capt. Eskin, has been such as to justify an appreciation of his honorable character corresponding with his just and humane course of proceeding, in discharging his onerous and

and painful duties at San Juan del Norte
I would respectfully present to the Department
whether duties so well and faithfully per-
formed by a Foreign Officer, under circumstances
of so much difficulty, may not claim
acknowledgment.

It has been ascribed to Capt. Erskine in
public prints and otherwise that he had
agency in the capture of the steamers on
Nicaragua, and other proceedings on
River. This Capt. Erskine has denied
and has assured me upon his honor is
untrue.

Trusting the
I have pursued will meet with the ap-
probation of the Department

I am, Sir, Very Respectfully
Your Obedient Servant

H. Lambton

Commanding Horn Squadron

Hon Isaac Toucey

Secretary of the Navy

Washington D.C.

To Secretary

My letter of the 28 June (1871)
concerning the ship that you
had arrived at New York with a
person of Walker's name has been
recd. The ship under the circum-
stances appearing your course
is being taken by the U.S. and
sanctioning the issue of the
stores taken. You will
direct that the vessel take
on board ~~stores~~ but coal
provisions water &c & be
got ready for sea immediately.

Am July 3. 71.

P. June 29. 71

Flag Ship Wabash
Quarantine New York
June 28th 1857

No. 122

Sir;

I have the honor herewith to enclose, for the information of the Department; copies of my Instructions to Capt. Montgomery and Commanders Robb and Chatard.

The "Roanoke" had not arrived up to the time of our departure

I am Sir Very Respectfully
Your Obedient Servant

H. A. A. A. A.

Commanding Home Squadron

Hon Isaac Toucey
Secretary of the Navy
Washington D. C.

Copy

Flag Ship Wabash
Off Aspinwall June 17th 1857

2;

The arrival of one hundred and thirty two Americans from San Juan del Norte in the "Cyani", has rendered it necessary for me to take them on board the "Wabash", and as no other disposition can be made, I shall sail with them for New York.

My Instructions from the Department direct me to keep the "Boanoke" under your command, at Aspinwall until further orders, and you will be governed accordingly.

I shall send the "Charatoga" to San Juan del Norte under an order a copy of which is herewith enclosed for your information.

There are yet in Nicaragua several hundreds of Walker's men and it is not improbable that some of them may be received on board the "Charatoga" and brought here as directed by the order of the Department. In that event I must leave it to your judgment to dispose of them as you may think best according to the circumstances of the case.

That you may be in possession of all the knowledge I may have as to the wishes of the Department in respect to these unfortunate men I send you a copy of my letter.

The Store Ship "Pellase" sailed from New York on the 5th Inst. and may be expected here daily. On her arrival you will be pleased to inform Commodore Merwin and ask him to make his Requisitions.

The

He has already a copy of her Invoice.
When his Requisitions shall have
supplied you will have the "Cyano's" provisions and stores replenished and whatever remains on board the "Boat" and as early as practicable send the "Boat" to New York.

I enclose copies of the General Orders of the Squadron for your guidance.

During my absence you will be pleased to receive and examine whatever letters may be sent to my address under the Official Seal of the Department and as the Senior Officer present carry out whatever orders may be received.

I shall expect to return soon as the trip can be made and meanwhile the protection of our citizens and their property, as well as the affairs of the Squadron will be left to your discretion.

I am, Sir, Very Respectfully
Your Obedient Servant
Signed, H. Paulding
Commanding Home Squadron

Captain John B. Montgomery
Commanding U. S. Steam Frigate "Albatross"
Off Aspinwall
New Grenada

Copies of the letters of the Department of the Navy were sent with this order.

H.P.

Copy

Flag Ship Wabash
Off Aspinwall, June 17th 1857

Sir,

I shall sail from here in the
"Wabash" with the people brought on your ship
from San Juan del Norte, as soon as we are
prepared for departure.

You will remain here until fur-
ther orders giving all necessary protec-
tion to our citizens and their property,
whether afloat or in transit across the Isthmus.

Take all necessary precaution
for the health of your crew and expose them
as little as possible to the rain and sun.

Should the "Store Ship" "Beleasi"
arrive before the "Boanoke" advise Commo-
dore Schurme and ask him to make his
Requisitions for such stores as he may want
from the "Beleasi".

As the Senior Officer
present it will be your duty to approve the
Requisitions and see the stores delivered.

Supply your own ship to fill all deficiencies.

Detain the "Beleasi" until the arrival of
the "Boanoke", when Captain Montgomery
will give orders in respect to her move and
Wishing health and happiness
to yourself, the officers and crew.

I am, Very Respectfully
Your Obedient Servant
(Signed) H. Paulding
Commanding Com. Squadron

Commander Robert G. Pott
Comd'g U. S. Schooner of War "Guano"
Off Aspinwall
New Grenada

Over

P.S. Until the arrival of the "Boanoke" you
will receive and examine whatever letters
may be sent to my address under the
Seal of the Department, and as the Senior
Officer present, carry out whatever orders
may be received.

Signed H. P.

Copy
copy

Flag Ship Wabash
Off Aspinwall June 17th 1857

Sir;

You will proceed to San Juan del Norte with the United States Ship "Saratoga" under your command, and remain here until further orders.

Having in view your General Instructions for the protection of our citizens, their rights and property, as well as what belongs to the honor of our Flag, you will, "should any American citizens who have been connected with the Expedition under General William Walker in Nicaragua, present themselves on board your vessel for protection, receive them and bring them to Aspinwall"

In such a contingency it may be necessary for the sake of the health of your crew, humanity to the distressed, as well as cleanliness, for you to serve to them certain articles of government clothing.

In such an event you will be governed by your own judgment of what may be proper, taking receipts in the same manner as in serving to your own crew.

The part of this order that is marked as an extract is copied from an order from the Department

With my best wishes for your health and that of your officers and crew

I am Very Respectfully

Your Obedient Servant

(Signed) H. Paulding

Commanding Home Squadron

Over

Commander Frederic Chatard
Comd. U. S. Sloop of War "Saratoga"
Off Spanishwall
New Grenada

Flag Ship Wabash
New York, July 1st 1857

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you
the passengers were landed from this ship
yesterday. — The sick and wounded were
received at the Bellevue Hospital by the authority
the Commissioners of Emigration —
I am very Resply Sir, your obt^d serv^t

H. Audring

Commandy Home Squadron

to Hon.

Isaac Lorcey
Secretary of the Navy
Washington D. C.

Flag Ship Wabash
New York July 28th 1857

No. 123

Sir,

In considering the order of the Department for an Exploration of the Isthmus of Panama with all its important bearings I have the honor respectfully to state that we do not hope by all the means that appear necessary to a successful accomplishment of such an enterprise, and a failure would be attended with probable loss of life as well as disappointment.

The natives are hostile to the intrusion of strangers, and besides the arms that might be deemed necessary and could be provided from the ship, each person should be provided with a revolver.

Our ordinary provisions of Bread and meat are too heavy to be conveyed in considerable quantity, and to meet the contingency of protracted absence in an inhospitable, and perhaps hostile country, concentrated nutrition in sufficient quantity would seem but an ordinary precaution to guard against accident.

In addition to this I would respectfully suggest certain light material of water-proof clothing with knap-sacks for transportation and suitable instruments all of which will readily occur to the efficient Chief of the Bureau of Hydrography, on whom I would respectfully request the Department would devolve the preparation, and prompt

despatch

despatch by one of the chail Steamers
that may be deemed necessary accord
to the above suggestions, and whatever
may be thought expedient to accompe
the wishes of the government

I would also request to be inform
what amount of money I shall con
myself authorised to expend on the
ration

I am Sir, Very Respectfully
Your Obedt. Servt.

H. P. Loring

Commanding Home Squadron

The Hon. Isaac Toucy
Secretary of the Navy

act very liberally by the
order of the 5th
the ~~public~~ ^{various} concentrated
movement, ~~water~~ ^{water} ~~provisions~~
clothing & knapsacks will
be sent out for a party
of 25 persons much
cheaper than it is supposed
enough. The Chief Engineer
of the Road upon your
application will furnish
the necessary instruments.
As all the facilities of
the Railroad will be
furnished at no expense
for the passage of the
party to and from
the line at the same may
be desirable it is not sup-
posed that there will be
occasion for any large expan-
diture of money. The Board
desires that the accommo-
dation be made with all dispatch
and trusts that your
mercantile enterprise
in carrying it out
will be successful.

San Aug. 3. 1857.

J. W. 3rd 1857

Flag Ship "Wabash"
Off Aspinwall August 18th 1857

0.126
Sir;

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3^d Inst informing me that certain articles of clothing, provisions and arms, had been sent by the "Illinois" for the use of the party to be employed in the "reconnoissance" indicated by your order of June 1st.

The service shall be promptly performed and I will most cheerfully cooperate in fulfilling the wishes and expectations of the government.

The "Wabash" arrived on the 10th Inst.

The "Saratoga" was here and I have sent her to San Juan el Norte. By a reference to her muster Roll it will be seen that the time of some of her crew has already expired and others have but a short time to serve.

If two other ships can be substituted for her and the "Cyane", I would recommend that they should both be withdrawn from the Station, believing it important to the continuance of the good health of the Squadron.

Everything is quiet on the Isthmus.

I am, Sir, Very Respectfully

Your Obedient Servant

H. A. T. A. T. A. T.

Flag Officer Commanding Home Squadron

The Hon. Isaac Toucy

Secretary of the Navy

Washington D. C.

Duplicate

41

No. 127

Flag Ship "Kabash"

Off Aspinwall September 3^d 1857

Sir;

The "reconnoissance" of the Isthmus between Aspinwall and Panama has been made and I shall be prepared to report by the next mail Steamer.

An epidemic fever passed through the ship but it has now subsided. Forty were admitted in one day and the Sick Report numbered as high as twenty-six. We are now in usual health.

I deem it my duty to inform the Department that the anchorage here is not satisfactory for the want of sufficient water and protection. We are between the extreme Head Lands with but six and a half (6½) fathoms, exposed to the ocean swell, and should a Hurricane or heavy Gale blow home I am of opinion that the ship would take the ground and be lost.

I request that the Department will send me a copy of any orders that may have been given to the "Boanoke" or "Cyani" and that I may be informed what disposition it is intended or desired should be made of them.

Since the "Fulton" went home more than a year since for repairs, I have heard nothing officially in regard to her. I request to be informed if she is to be continued as one of the vessels of the Home Squadron, and if so, when she may be expected to join the Flag. Her services would be important in

in peace or in war. In many cases more so than
ship of larger draft

I am, Sir, Very Respectfully
Your Obedient Servant

H. Loring

Flag Officer Commanding Home Squadron

The Hon. Isaac Toucy
Secretary of the Navy

ack + say that the
Franklin has been put
out of commission. The
bugle is made up to the
Eastward in the completion
of which she will go into
Hempden, Prad, & wait
the further order of the
dept. It is uncertain
whether she will be continued
in commission. You will
inform Mr. B. that the
the Fulton had been ordered
to New York as a part of the
Squadron and if you
know and the ship desired
that she remain a ship
for the present.
Done Oct. 8, '57.

1 Oct. 8 - E. H.

Flag Ship "Wabash"

Off Aspinwall September 18th 1857

No. 128

Sir;

On the 26th of August, under the orders of the Department of June 1st, I organised a party and set out on a 'reconnoissance' of the Isthmus between Aspinwall and Panama, with reference to the 'practicability of constructing an inter-oceanic canal across the Isthmus of Darien' at this point.

The route by which the Rail Road passes was in every respect the most desirable for this purpose and the means by which the character of the country could be best known, as far as its topography and the features, essential with the object in view, could be seen. It was in fact the direct means for the accomplishment of the purpose.

The officers who accompanied me have reported their opinions in writing which will be available to the Department if it is desired that they should be submitted.

Col. Geo. M. Litten, the Pioneer of the Panama Rail Road, and since its construction, the Chief Engineer of the Company, favored me with his presence and extensive information of what relates to this part of the Isthmus. To him, and to Allen M. Lane Esq, the Pacific Mail Steam Company's Agent, who placed the steamer "Tobago" at my service for the examination of the Bay of Panama, I was indebted for every facility that they could afford me. Commander Hoff, the Senior Officer present in the Bay of Panama, furnished a boat to verify the Chart which accompanies this report. By this it will be seen that the water is shoal for a considerable extent, both to the East and West of the City of Panama.

It is supposed that the Canal could be united with the waters of the Pacific on either side of the City and that a channel might be dredged to the depth of thirty feet, to meet the navigable waters for ships of large draft. The Bay then expands into an ample harbor, where the winds are said

never

never to flow with violence, sufficiently comprehensive for the commerce of the world, and studded with Islands, convenient for all the great purposes that the condition of things would call for, by the construction of a canal through the Isthmus.

The

Isthmus itself seems to present no serious obstacle to science for the construction of a canal. The whole extent from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean is made up of swamps, hills and plains, and the highest point of land where the Bail Road passes, is no more than two hundred and eighty six feet above the level of the sea. On the whole route, most, if not all the hills through which the Canal would pass would be required for embankments over the plains and swamps, and I can perceive no insuperable obstacle to piercing the highest part, so as conveniently to make the waters of the Chagres and Obispo and Rio Grande available for the wants of a canal.

The truth is, that in a climate less unfavorable to the white man I do not think the question of "feasibility" would be raised.

It seems to be conceded from experience that the African race can alone persistently labor in this climate.

A few thousands of free Blacks might be obtained from the West India Islands, but this resource would be inadequate as was experienced by the operations on the Panama Bail Road.

The want of men to labor would seem to be the great obstacle to the successful accomplishment of a work of so much magnitude.

To illustrate the Topographical features of the Isthmus by the route of the Bail Road and near which the Canal must pass, I have the honor to refer you to the accompanying Profile, which has been kindly furnished by Col. Totten.

On the Atlantic side the Canal would enter the Bay of Apinwall, the Chart of which is herewith referred.

In approaching this point it would pass a few miles from the Chagres and enter the Bay near the River Chindi.

Here it will be seen, as in the Bay of Panama, extensive dredging for a channel to meet the deep water, would be necessary.

The Bay expands for the distance of about

about five miles, between two head lands and is open to the sea.

A Breakwater would be necessary here.

With such a one as would afford the necessary protection against the ocean swell, the Bay of Aspinwall like the Bay of Panama, would afford ample room for the commerce of Europe as well as America, and in contemplating these two Bays with the eye of a seaman and in reference to the great work in question, it would look as tho' nature had provided them for the especial convenience of man in his laborious undertakings for the extension of commerce and a place where all nations may meet, in their varied pursuits on the great high-way of the ocean.

In a work like that of a Canal through the Isthmus of Darien it is to be supposed that the requirements of commerce and navigation in its most extended application would alone be considered; and taking this for the standard, a canal two hundred feet wide and thirty feet deep would seem to be the approximate dimensions.

With such an avenue from the Atlantic to the Pacific, the stormy and distant seas of the extreme South would be abandoned by Europe as well as America, and we should meet here on neutral ground, pursuing with a common purpose the paths of peaceful industry, which, by its means, we may suppose, would effect a moral revolution such as the world has never known, and surpassing in importance that which would be effected in the revolution of the commercial world.

In making this report, as well as in the performance of the service, I trust that I may have fulfilled the wishes and expectations of the Department, and if I have failed in anything, I desire it may not be ascribed to a want of zeal, but rather that a laborious naval life has rendered me unequal to the task imposed by the Department.

I am, Sir, Very Respectfully
Your Obedient Servant

H. Auldring

Flag Officer Comg. Home Squadron

The Hon. Isaac Toucy
Secretary of the Navy
Washington D. C.

N. B.

Appended to this report is a paper submitted
by Col. E. M. Totten containing dimensions and other data
for the proposed Ship Canal across the Isthmus of Panama

~~H. F.~~

*Dimensions and other data of the proposed
Ship Canal across the Isthmus of Panama.*

Length from shore to shore - $45 \frac{3}{4}$ miles.

Length from five fathoms water in Navy Bay on the Atlantic, to three fathoms water in Panama Bay on the Pacific - $48 \frac{3}{4}$ miles.

The prism of water to be 150 feet wide at bottom, 270 feet wide at surface, and 30 feet deep.

The Locks to be 400 feet in clear length of chambers, and 90 feet in clear width.

The Summit Level will be 150 feet above mean tide of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

The Summit Cut will be about 4 miles long. The deepest cutting on this level will be 136 feet, and the average depth of the cut will be 49 feet.

The River Chagres yields an ample supply of water for the Canal at all seasons of the year.

The Summit Level will be supplied by a feeder about 24 miles long, which will take the River Chagres about 21 miles above the town of Cruces, where the level of the River is 185 feet above mean tide, and 35 feet above the Summit Level.

The cost of this Canal, including the requisite harbour improvements at each end, will not exceed \$80,000,000.

W. S. F. - Sept. 14th 1857

G. M. Fother.

Flag Ship "Wabash"
New York, April 4. 1859

Sir;

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st ult., in regard to the crew of the "Niagara". The "Wabash" can sail, under the regulation, with one tenth less than her Complement, if it shall be the pleasure of the Department.

I shall deem it of importance to the public interest, that the "Fulton" be placed under my orders, in a condition for service, whenever the presence of the Flag Ship may be required in the West Indies, for despatch, and for service that cannot be performed by the "Wabash", because of her great draught of water. Permit me to add, that I should be pleased to have her placed under the Command of Lieut. Woodhull, an officer, in whose zeal I have great confidence.

I had the honor to address the Department on the 26th ult., respecting the relief of the "Cyane", now at Aspinwall, and absent from Boston, five months.

Commander Tilton, of the "Saratoga", has reported to me, his arrival at San Juan, early in March. If there should be no necessity for his remaining there, he will

have proceeded to Havana, and thence to Key West.

The limited number of vessels in the Home Squadron, render it necessary that they should not remain in port, without an especial object.

I am, very respectfully
Your ob. Servant

Yours ob. Servant

H. Auldridge

Comdg Home Squad

Hon. J. Toumey
Secretary of the Navy

Itao Shik Wabash
New York April 13th 1857

Sir;

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your sailing order for this ship dated on the 6th Inst: and delayed for some days on its way to my hands.

I am instructed after my visit to Ashinwall and San Juan Del Norte to proceed to Pensacola.

In regard to my going to Pensacola I deem it my duty to inform the Department that this ship cannot go into that Harbor with safety and I think not without great hazard.

I am not willing to take the risk without communicating my opinion and my apprehension and after having done so received further instructions. Key West or Matanzas would be a more favorable point of rendezvous.

It is my duty also to inform the Department that we cannot go into the Harbor of San Juan. There is however an anchorage outside the Harbor where in good weather we may anchor and

and communicate with the tor,
I am Sir Very Respectfully
Your Obedient Servant

H. A. Harding
Commanding Home Squa

Hon. Isaac Toucy
Secretary of the Navy
Washington D. C.