



Texas Navy Association

Historical Article



[From F. T. Wells, Esq., of the Texas Navy.]

TEXAS BRIG-OF-WAR WHARTON,
GALVESTON, Aug. 3d, 1843.

MY DEAR SIR,—We are apt to remember our friends in the time of our need, and as that is peculiarly the time with me now, I deem it a most suitable time to call upon you for what may be of little moment to you, but may be infinitely so to me.

Our navy, I presume, from the indications, is about to be broken up, and so far as I can see or hear, those who have been in its service will, in all probability, receive no compensation for their services, but will be turned adrift to look out for themselves, without a cent to start upon, or an opportunity given (to) obtain employment, which in Texas, at this season of the year, is next to impossible to be done.

Whatever evils may have arisen from the navy going to sea contrary to the orders and wishes of the Government, should be attributed to the proper place, and its consequences should fall on the guilty alone. When the Commissioners first arrived in New Orleans, if they had taken possession of the vessels, there would have been an end of the matter, and the officers who had no

agency, or knowledge that they were acting contrary to the orders of the Government, would have been spared the mortification of seeing themselves held up to the world as a band of pirates and traitors, and Texas would have been spared the infamy of the proclamation by the want of an occasion for its publication. Before Mr. Bryan returned to Texas to make the report of the Commissioners, I informed him that I would not go to sea contrary to the orders of the Government, nor would, in my opinion, any other officer in the navy, if the orders were communicated in such a manner as would enable us to obey them without the charge of insubordination. And on his return we were still induced to believe that the Government was sanctioning the shipping men, and procuring supplies from the citizens of New Orleans, as it was done with the knowledge and countenance of the Commissioners; and (they) ought to have known, if they did not, that no men could have been obtained, or supplies procured, but upon the grounds of our going against the Mexicans. The officers endeavored to get some information from the Commissioners, but without success. I cannot believe the proclamation would ever have been published under its present form, if the President had known that the officers were totally ignorant of

its existence, or of their acting in any way contrary to his orders. It was believed here that, before going to sea, all the officers knew of the existence of the proclamation, and were willing to risk its infamy, but it is not so. Its existence was totally unknown, or suspected, by rumor or hearsay, till towards the last of May, when I heard it from New Orleans. I believe the other officers were as ignorant as I was of its existence. We have been fortunate in returning safely, for we ran a narrow risk of expiating other people's neglect and offences, at the yard-arm, as pirates, which sentence of our own Government the Mexicans would have most cheerfully executed if an opportunity had been afforded them.

But inasmuch as we have returned safely, I want your advice upon what my prospects are of staying in the navy or going out of it. I am unable to ascertain if any navy at all will be kept up, or if we shall receive any pay from the arrangements that are making by the Navy Commissioners.

There has been and is now considerable excitement here in regard to the proclamation, the dismissal of Com. Moore and Capt. Lathrop. And Com. Moore has been brought out as a candidate for Congress

; but I do not think (he) will be elected if he continues the canvass.

I hope you will do me the kindness to drop me a few lines. I have been in the service a very great length of time, and received but little remuneration, and I am somewhat solicitous about the result of our naval affairs. In all the moneyed operations of our navy with Yucatan, I have unluckily been out of the mess, so that none of it fell to my share.

If you can recommend me to any thing in the way of business, I would be much obliged to you.

I am, very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

F. T. WELLS. Hon. ANSON JONES,
Secretary of State, Washington.

[Endorsed. — Difficulties in the navy. The proclamation was injudicious, and made in

my absence without my knowledge. — A. J.]
MEMORANDA AND OFFICIAL
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