

CAROLINA CENTINEL.

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CONGRESS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Monday, March 25.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

Mr. BLACKLEDGE, from the committee on public buildings made the following REPORT, accompanied by a bill, which was read and committed:

That they have attentively examined the public buildings, and upon examination find that the work on the centre building has progressed, but has not been brought to that state of perfection which was calculated by the estimates of the last year, all however that was anticipated has been done, except covering with copper, a small portion of the roof, over the library, and the chimney, and some covered decorations, and some panels, on the west projection; and one course of stone on the east projection.

The failure to complete the whole work, that was contemplated, is attributed by the architect, to the general sickness which prevailed among the workmen, and several of the principal superintendents, which occasioned much interruption and delay; but by strenuous exertions in the month of November, the building was brought into that state it now appears, which is not far short of what was anticipated by the best estimate.

The expenditure has been kept within the appropriation, and the work has been executed with correctness and sobriety. The committee have also examined the work which was done on the President's house the last session and find it executed with much neatness; it is stated, however, by the architect, that \$300 will be necessary to complete the work yet unfinished.

By the committee's report, it will be seen that the expenditure on the President's house is not equal to the appropriation, and that there remains unexpended, the sum of \$1,100. The closing of the old executive office has been completed, and by the report of the committee, for \$1,153 33 less than the estimate and appropriation.

The committee have received from the architect the subjoined estimate of the cost of labor and materials, necessary to prosecute the work on the centre building, the present year, and for the improving and regulating the public ground round the capitol.

The estimate for the centre building is calculated, with a view to finish all the committee rooms, and to complete the large dome over the centre building; the cost of which has been calculated in the subjoined estimate, of the architect in three different materials, viz. stone, brick and wood.

From the deliberation which the committee have given the subject, they recommend the dome to be built of wood, and the appropriation they propose is founded on the estimate for a dome of that description. The committee have examined the progress which has been made in grading and improving the ground round the capitol, and are of opinion that the labor which has been done in these two branches of expenditure is not as much as should have been performed by the several appropriations which have been made for their improvement; and the committee are moreover of opinion, that such appropriations must ever continue unprofitable, whilst there remains such a quantity of stones and rubbish scattered over the ground which is to be improved; and therefore recommend that no appropriation for these improvements be made this year. Should the view which the committee have taken of this subject be approved by the House, they recommend an appropriation of \$120,000, which in addition to the unexpended balance of the appropriation to the executive office, will, in their opinion, be sufficient to bring the centre building to that state which is proposed by the estimate.

The committee have been furnished with the subjoined estimate, by the commissioner, which is calculated to finish the south portico to the President's house, to paint the inside of the building, to graduate and construct

the culvert from the building, and for partial repairs generally. The committee recommend an appropriation of \$2,200 for painting and constructing the culvert, and for annual repairs, which, in addition to the unexpended balance on the President's house will make \$3,300 the sum required.

The committee would have been gratified if they could have recommended the appropriation necessary to complete the south portico, but in consequence of the large appropriation which will be necessary to carry on the centre building of the capitol, they cannot at present recommend such appropriation, for they are of opinion that it is more for the interest of the public to bring the capitol to that state of progress towards completion, which it is calculated to do, by the estimate for the present year, than to complete the south portico to the President's house, which can in its present state be protected from sustaining much injury, until such time as the appropriation can be made more consistently with the public interest than at present.

The committee have prepared a bill making the above mentioned appropriations, which they have directed to be reported to the House.

CASE OF CAPTAIN BARRON.

From the National Intelligencer.

The Proceedings of a Court of Enquiry, held at the Navy Yard, Brooklyn, New-York, upon Captain JAMES BARRON, of the United States' Navy, in 1821, have been recently published, by the authority of the Navy Department. They were not printed at this office, & we have only just seen them. The whole pamphlet makes 111 pages. Prefixed to it is this note:

"Navy Department,
March 25th, 1822.

The following proceedings are published at the request of Captain Barron; and this request would have been complied with at any time heretofore, had it been made. They have been withheld from the public for no other reason than an impression, that a publication without the consent of Captain Barron, would be improper, until a final decision was made in his case.

The Court of Enquiry was composed of Capt. Stewart, Capt. Evans and Capt. Morris. The Judge Advocate was H. Wheaton, Esq.

This case has been so much the topic of discussion in the newspapers, and so often alluded to even by ourselves, that pressed as we are by other matters, we feel ourselves bound to make room for the conclusion of the proceedings of the Court, which is as follows:

Friday, July 13th, 1821.

PRESENT:
Captain Charles Stewart, President.
Captain Samuel Evans, } Members.
Captain Charles Morris, }
H. Wheaton, Esq. Judge Advocate.

The minutes of the proceedings, and the evidence with the accompanying documents, were read by the Judge Advocate, and the Court proceeded to deliberate on the case, and, after carefully considering the testimony, agreed upon the following

STATEMENT:

The Court having proceeded to examine into the matters stated in the warrant from the honorable Secretary of the Navy, dated the twentieth day of March, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-one, do report the following statement thereof as it appears to them:

It appears to the Court, that Captain James Barron, was, by sentence of a Court Martial, bearing date the 8th day of February, one thousand eight hundred and eight, suspended five years from his pay and emoluments, and from the service of the United States. That the two letters accompanying the said warrant, and annexed to their proceedings, being a letter from William Lewis, Esq. to Charles W. Goldsborough, Esq. dated Pernambuco, September 7th, 1811, and a letter from Mr. Thomas P. Goodwin, dated March 4th, 1819, to the Secretary of the Navy, were written by the persons whose signatures they bear, and received by the persons to whom they were addressed.— That the said William Lewis has since deceased, supposed to have been lost in the United States brig Epervier, on her return home from the Mediter-

anean, in the year 1815; and that the said Thomas P. Goodwin also died some time in the month of January, 1820, at the Havana. That the said letters, containing allegations that the said Captain James Barron, during his suspension, being at Pernambuco, did make to Mr. Lyon, British Consul at that place, certain declarations and representations respecting the President and government of the United States, highly improper and unbecoming an officer of the United States, were communicated by the Navy Department to the said Capt. James Barron for explanation, and copies thereof delivered to him in 1819, soon after his return to the U. States. That Captain Barron passed through Baltimore in the spring of the year 1819, where the said Goodwin then was; but whether Captain Barron saw the said Goodwin, does not appear to the Court by the testimony; and it is stated by Captain Barron that he did not.

That it appears to the Court, that the said William Lewis was a man of the strictest honor and integrity, and an officer of distinguished merit; and that the character of the said Goodwin for truth and veracity was highly respectable, but that he was of a very ardent temper, which was particularly manifested when excited by conversation on political subjects. And the said Lyon was also a man of respectable character.

It further appears to the Court, that Captain Barron did not, during his residence at Pernambuco, in the year 1809, live with Mr. Lyon, the British Consul there, as stated in said Goodwin's letter; but that the said Captain Barron lodged a part of the time in a tavern, and the remainder of the time in a house which he rented jointly with one Fernandez, who was the supercargo of the vessel in which Captain Barron went out to Brazil as master; and that it appears to the Court by testimony of two respectable witnesses, who were in Pernambuco in the year 1811, and had frequent conversations with the said Goodwin at that place, and with the said Lewis & Lyon, that the said witnesses never heard from any of these persons anything respecting the facts stated in said Goodwin's letter to the Secretary of the Navy; nor did they hear from any other person or persons at that place any reports or rumors of such conversations having taken place between Captain Barron and said Lyon, as are stated in said letter; and no legal evidence has been produced to the Court, tending to prove the truth of the allegations contained in said letter.

And it further appears to the Court, that Captain James Barron left the United States on or about the 6th day of April, 1812, as master and supercargo of the Brig Pointa, belonging to Messrs. Armistead and Kelly, of Norfolk, and proceeded to Lisbon, where he arrived in said brig in the beginning of May, 1812, where the outward cargo was disposed of, and the proceeds remitted by him to London, according to instructions from the owners, except a part of the same which was invested in a cargo of fruit, with which he sailed for Genoa, where he arrived on 3d day of July, 1812; and from thence sailed to Copenhagen, where the proceeds of the cargo went into the hands of the Danish government. The vessel was subsequently sold for the sum of 7500 dollars, were remitted by Captain Barron to the owners, and 500 dollars retained by him to pay his own expenses and those of the crew. That the news of the declaration of war by the United States against Great Britain reached Copenhagen some time in the month of July, 1812; and that Capt. Barron was wholly dependant upon his labor and exertions as a ship-master for his support and the maintenance of his family, being suspended from his pay and emoluments.

And it further appears to the Court, that no order or proclamation was issued by the government of the United States in consequence of the declaration of war, directing such officers of the navy as were absent from the country to return; but a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, on the 19th day of June, 1812, announcing the declaration of war, and enjoining on all military and civil officers to be vigilant in the execution of their duties. That no special order was sent by the Navy Department or given to Capt. Barron directing his return; nor were any other orders given to the said Captain Barron previous or subsequent to the

expiration of his term of suspension from service, and before his arrival in the United States; nor was any permission or leave of absence from the country given to Captain Barron at any time.

It further appears to the court, that the suspension of Captain Barron expired on the 8th day of February, 1813, whilst he still remained at Copenhagen; and that on 22d of July, 1813, Captain Barron wrote to the Secretary of the Navy two letters, one of them marked private, which were duly received at the Navy Department, and copies of which are annexed in these proceedings.

That no answer was given by the Secretary of the Navy to said letters, nor were any other communications received by the Navy Department from Captain Barron, until his return to the United States in 1818.

It does not appear to the court, that Captain Barron made any actual attempt to return to the United States until the summer of the year 1814, when, in pursuance of the advice of the honorable Henry Clay, one of the ministers of the United States, then in Europe to whom Captain Barron had expressed his earnest desire to return to the United States, and serve in the war with England, he proceeded from Copenhagen to Gottenburg, and on the 11th of June, in that year, applied to Captain Samuel Angus, of the United States corvette John Adams' for a passage on board that vessel to this country.

That Captain Angus expressed himself willing to comply with the request, but referred Capt. Barron to the honorable John Quincy Adams, and the honorable Jonathan Russell, two of the ministers of the United States, (then about to embark on board said corvette for the Texel,) for their opinion whether this could be done consistently with the character of the said ship as a cartel.

That Captain Barron stated to the said ministers that his motive for wishing to return to the United States at that time, was his earnest desire to offer his professional services to his country in the war in which she was then engaged, and to claim employment in the station to which he was entitled in the navy; but that the said ministers felt themselves compelled, (though with reluctance,) to give it as their opinion to Captain Angus, that he could not consistently with the terms of the cartel, give a passage to Captain Barron. In consequence of which, Captain Angus declined complying with Captain Barron's request, and he returned to Copenhagen.

That Captain Barron subsequently applied by letter to Mr. Russell, at Ghent, during the summer of the year 1814, renewing his request for a passage to the United States, in the corvette John Adams, then lying at the Texel, and received an answer from Mr. Russell, stating his and Mr. Adams' desire to give effect to Capt. Barron's request, but that the British government would not consent to permit any other persons than those attached to the Legation at Ghent, to embark on board that ship.

It does not appear by any evidence produced to the Court, that Captain Barron made any subsequent attempt to return to the United States, but he remained at Copenhagen until the close of the war with England, and did not return to this country until the latter part of the year 1818.— That Captain Barron has been paid his half pay from the 8th day of February, 1813, to the 25th of February, 1819, inclusive, and full pay and rations, from the last-mentioned day, to the 21st of January, 1821. That he drew on the accountant of the Navy, at Copenhagen, on the 29th of November, 1817, directing the said accountant to pay to the order of Mrs. Elizabeth Barron, or to that of Mr. Wilton Hope, of Hampton, Virginia, any balance of his half-pay that might be due at that time.

That it does not appear to the Capt. Court at what rate of exchange a bill on the government of the U. States, could have been negotiated at Copenhagen during the late war; but that it appears from the evidence extremely difficult, if not impossible, to have negotiated bills on this country.

It further appears to the Court that Barron was in embarrassed circumstances, and in want of pecuniary means while at Copenhagen; but the precise extent of his embarrassments, and of his means, at different periods, does not distinctly appear.

And it does not appear that he made application to any of the ministers, agents, or consuls, of the United States in Europe, or to any other persons, to obtain an advance of the funds necessary to enable him to return home.— Nor when he reported himself for service in 1813, did he apply to the Navy Department for funds, or at any subsequent period of his absence, or make known his wants to the Department. Nor could any application to such ministers, agents, or consuls, in their official capacity, have been successful, as they had no special authority to make advances.

It further appears to the Court, that Captain Barron had, during the war, the choice of 3 different routes by which he might have returned to the United States.

The first was by way of England; by which route it does not appear, from the testimony, that any particular difficulties were (except at one period) interposed to the passage of citizens of the United States, not in the service of their country. But several witnesses state their impression that a naval officer, returning from Europe to the United States, if travelling under that avowed character, would certainly be liable to detention and imprisonment; and, if travelling as a merchant, under some circumstances be exposed to more serious perils.

The second was from some port in the north of Europe, in American or neutral vessels. It does not appear that any of our own merchant vessels escaped the vigilance of the enemy's cruisers, after the declaration of war was generally and publicly known in the north of Europe, so as to effect their escape from the Baltic or the north sea. The only opportunity under the American flag, of reaching this country by that route, which has been brought to the notice of the Court, is the pilotboat *Champlain*, which was sent by certain merchants in New-York, to give information to the vessels in the Baltic of the declaration of war, and in which one of the witnesses, Richard Law, Esquire, returned to the United States, in the autumn of 1812; which opportunity was confidentially made known to Law, by the person to whom the boat was consigned; but was not publicly known at Copenhagen, nor considered a safe opportunity at that season. And that the object for which Captain Barron proposed to embark, might have been an objection to receiving him on board of a neutral vessel.

The third route, which Captain Barron might have selected to return to the United States from Copenhagen, during the continuance of the war, was to proceed over land to some port in France, or elsewhere in the south of Europe, and there await an opportunity of embarking in a letter of marque, or privateer, or other vessel. The expenses of such a journey by land, according to the testimony which has been produced to the Court, would have varied from 100 to 700 dollars, according to the period and the circumstances in which it might be undertaken, and the manner in which it should be conducted.

It appears that, in the year 1812, and the first part of the year 1813, Capt. Barron, with regular passports and sufficient pecuniary means, might have proceeded from Copenhagen, to France, except for the British blockade of passages between the Island of Zealand, in which Copenhagen stands, and the continent; which, however, does not appear to have formed any considerable obstacle.— But, from April, 1813, to April, 1814, the communications were extremely embarrassed by the state of the war, & the movements of the different armies. After April, 1814, there was no very serious obstacle to his proceeding from Copenhagen to any part of France: but the difficulty of embarking in the ports of that country for the United States was proportionally increased, for a short time, in consequence of some of those ports being occupied by the British, and others exposed to their controul and close inspection.

And, at all times before the peace of Paris, in May, 1814, there was very considerable difficulty in procuring passports for American citizens, to travel through that part of the continent of Europe, and many vexations and interruptions from the police of different countries and the movements of troops; which latter obstacle did not entirely cease after the continental peace.

No evidence has been produced to