

SLM116

Letter from William P. S. Sanger to Alexander Parris

Washington Feb. 21st 1844

Dear Sir

I owe you an apology for neglecting so long to write you in answer to your last letter, but as Mr. Brown wrote you from New York and at that time gave you all the news I concluded not to tax you with postage on a repetition of the same. We had a long and disagreeable job in making the survey upon the East river in relation to the Croton Dock; this was in my opinion a perfect humbug got up by some of those gentlemen who wished to make a speculation in lands etc.; I think my report will be likely to settle the question of removing the Yard from its present location at Brooklyn and I shall probably have the New Yorkers down on me pretty hard, but shall not mind that as long as they keep hands off; some of the reasonable among them have acknowledged to me that they think my views of the matter quite correct and wonder how they could have been deluded with such an idea.

The gentlemen concerned in the Floating Sectional Dock are all here and are making the most strenuous efforts to carry their bill through Congress and I am much inclined to the belief that they will succeed; the fact is their Dock is a most excellent and ingenious contrivance and will answer to purpose admirably; I had no

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idea of its powers and qualities untill recently, and truth and candour compel me to say it has a great deal of merit. Mr. Henshaw (excuse me for using his name) has recommended it very strongly and the proprietors have the Presidents inf[lu]ence and that of many members of Congress in their favour so that I have no doubt they will succeed; well a Floating Dock is good enough for New Yorkers and I say let them have it.

My dear Sir how do you like the idea of having your friend Mr. Henshaw decapitated in this manner by the Senate, he has now an opportunity of judging of the feeling of those whom he placed so uncerimoniously under the ban of proscription, and it is to be hoped that he and others will profit by it. Mr. Gilmen has taken charge of the Department and is said to be a fine gentlemanly man and disposed to do justice; he is however one of the champions of retrenchment and I suppose will not be inclined to do much in the way of improvements; the Committees in the House are apparently determined to reduce the appropriation to the smallest possible amount, and make a great fuss as usual about abuses, extravagance etc. Very little has been done as yet by

Congress; the Senate are still engaged upon the Tariff question and the House having disposed of the Election question are now upon the celebrated 21st rule

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or the rule excluding abolition petitions; this discussion will probably give rise to many angry disputes and quarrels and will most likely end just where it commenced.

The greatest [lion?] we have here at present is the new Steamer the Princeton, with her big guns; Capt. Stockton is creating quite an excitement among the great folks, indeed the Princeton is a splendid ship and a very formidable one; she has no appearance of being a steam vessel, having neither paddle wheels or smoke chimney in sight. Yesterday all the Members went on board of her and I suppose had a regular blow out; all persons attached to the Navy Dep[artment] are to be invited on board in a few days when I expect to [document torn] a look at the wonder, and take a glass of wine with her gallant Commander. I expect to leave this shortly on a visit to Norfolk as I have not been there since the first of November. I shall be much pleased to hear from you, what you are doing and what the prospect is for the coming season; I was in hopes to see you here this winter, but suppose you are frozen up. My wife desires her respects to you and your lady; please accept the same from myself, write to me soon and believe me

yours truly

W[illia]m P. S. Sanger

[verso]

Capt. Alexander Parris
Boston
Massachusetts

[written in Parris's hand]
W[illia]m P. S. Sanger's letter
Feb[ruar]y 21st 1844