

U. S. A. Gard Mare Island
Sept 29th 1854

Sir,

On my arrival at this place, I found five Squatters on the Island - viz Turner (an American) Roy (a Canadian) Vera (an Italian) Antonio (a Portuguese) & Griffin (an Amr). I warned them off the Island; I informed them that the Government had purchased the Island for a Navy Yard & wished the entire possession of it &c - Turner & Roy, are both regular squatters, their claim is to a residence on the Island since 1851 - They have a considerable quantity of stock, such as cattle Horses, Hogs & goats - They have cultivated the land to raise wheat & barley & cultivated the wild Oats for hay, they have pretty good houses to live in, & have sunk wells, but the water is not good as it made us all sick, on our arrival Roy was boarding the workmen in the employ of the Dock Company & has been generally rather unfortunate since his arrival in this country, in fact from the time he left St Louis where he had resided for many years, as an architect & House Carpenter, he was induced to believe that the Island would not be occupied by the Government & the Dock Company Agents told him that he might have the boarding of their workmen, so long as they remained here

It was under these circumstances that he went to the expense of enlarging his house, which he offered to me at \$1900 & believing that the Government would be the gainers by the purchase. I determined to take it for a temporary work shop & therefore authorized the purchase of it by the Navy Agent & unfinished house & lumber - I was also willing to purchase their Oxen & horses at fair prices, but as they asked too much I declined to purchase generally, but took such as I thought reasonable. I pursued the same course towards them all & when they come down to market prices I took what they had that was needed for use in the Yard - Still the losses of Roy & Turner will be considerable for them, though not much in amount -

In consideration of the large amount of property the sectional Dock Company, have on the Island & the work they are still carrying on, I determined to allow the families of the Agents Mr Seer & Mr Hanscom to remain on the Island in their houses, which they had built for the purpose & in consideration of the fact that this is an isolated place & the Dock Company was obliged to build houses & fix themselves for several years -

I determined to allow no one on the Island but those in charge of the works the Watchmen & Steamers, after working hours, so as to guard against firing the prairies as much as possible - they are burning in every direction at present on the main land & half of the Island has been already burned off, but I must endeavor ^{to stop} this end from being burnt as it will endanger the public property -

I took possession on the 18th Inst. I have put up a Flag Staff, established myself on board the Warren with my Officers purchased the Squatters Houses on very moderate terms & am now going on

putting up a temporary Black Smith Shop.
 Shelter for the Horses & Cattle which I have
 purchased for the use of the Yard & have
 commenced driving Piles for the wharf - so
 that if I only had the Master workmen
 I might say that I have fairly made a
 commencement - I took the Warren on
 the sectional dock & repaired her; The
 Copper on her bottom (in obedience to instructions
 from the Bureau of Construction) before
 going on board - I had the Cabin
 extended forward two rooms for the
 accommodation of Mr Turner & family & we
 are as comfortable as we can hope to be on
 ship board; but I trust Congress will give
 us houses to live in this winter - I would
 suggest the propriety of having a steamer here
 for a "Tug & transport" as the amount for those
 purposes will be very great - I could have
 built a temporary residence for what it cost
 to get the Warren at her moorings - the Tug
 was \$500. & the Pilotage \$192. - & yet I am
 told that a very good boat for any purposes
 could be purchased for 20 or 30,000 dollars -

I herewith enclose a schedule of prices
 under which we are working at present -

Ship Carpenters	\$6.00	per day
House do	5.50	
Bricklayers	6.00	
Watchmen	4.00	
Teamsters	4.00	
Laborers 25 c.	3.00	
Blacksmiths	6.00	

Prices for Labor continue high but they
 have fallen very much & no doubt but I will
 be able to get along with these rates, but
 I will change the prices of pay from time
 to time, according to the changes in San Francisco.

I am greatly in want of the Master Workmen it has
 delayed my estimates for the buildings & otherwise
 embarrassed my operation -

Very Respectfully
 Yours Oct. 1.
 Hon. J. C. Dobbin.
 Secy of the Navy
 Washington D.C.