

Wilmington  
Delaware  
Dec 27<sup>th</sup> 1813

D. Filson

Surgeon Gen.

Sir  
Agreeably to your intimation I set about enquiring into the state of the hospital at Pittsfield but soon found that this medical establishment was a part of a network of family interest & influence and that I could not get a clear view of any thing from any body. I recd a letter from the commanding officer of that Cantonment, saying that he had understood that a permanent appointment was about being made of an hospital surgeon, & that he therefore recommended Dr Childs, who had then the care of it. With it came a letter from D.C. with his "Returns" & requisition for medicine, being a very copious list for at least a 1000 men, with ~~many superfluous articles~~; the whole and intimating that he did it from a direction from the War Department. I soon found that this temporary medical establishment was part of a network of family interest & influence, & that it would be difficult if not impossible to obtain a clear view of it from any body even if I went there myself. Genl. Cushing ~~has~~ of whose correctness & sobriety you have just ideas, desires me to say to you that he is decidedly of opinion that the <sup>present</sup> medical establishment at Pittsfield should be broken up as needless; excepting it be the residence of a mate, who could be serviceable there or else where according to circumstances.

We have a port at New Bedford, another at  
head & at Salem, & at Castine under the care  
of citizen surgeons from whence I have heard no  
complaint.

General Cushing requests me to represent to you  
as his decided opinion that an hospital, of the tem-  
porary class you suggest be established herein  
Charlestown as soon as may be; and that it is <sup>his</sup> opinion  
I wish that you send me two notes, which he  
thinks needful at this place (Charlestown). He is  
very unwilling to give up the idea of a permanent  
Hospital, near to his present Head Quarters. The  
strip of land, running from the college green to the navy  
yard, in extent about 3 miles, having the river Charles  
on one side & the Mystic on the other, is shaped like  
the back of a horse, the back bone being Bunker hill,  
is the Mount Crisis of New England the war path  
between Rhode Island & Massachusetts on one side  
& New Hampshire, the District of Maine & New Brunswick  
on the other. ~~It therefore~~ permanent hospital should  
ever be admitted, we think that there is a hint of  
return for us to build one here. The convenient &  
expensive hospitals that I have seen in Holland, in  
England, in France & in Spain, have impressed  
my mind favourably respecting these establishments,  
but my judgement must concede to yours ~~that have~~  
~~seen, & approved~~ because I have never had any  
experience in a camp; but have seen much  
of hospitals.

I have read with great satisfaction & profit your  
publication on Military hospitals,

Dr. H. S. P. G. Cambridge 30<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1813

Your letter of the 20<sup>th</sup> inst. I read with pleasure and read with satisfaction. Having your approbation we shall proceed to arrange a temporary hospital at Chales-ton, having engaged a house for the purpose, which is situated about 2 miles from my residence in the town. By the time we get it arranged, I hope to receive the mates you spoke of. As we should wish to have the most accomplished one here in Charlestown near the general, I ~~shall~~ shall be obliged to enquire of you which that one is. Being strangers to me I may err in my judgement; beside one of them may expect to have this station, while the other may be contented to reside at Pittsfield; which is however a very pleasant town, chiefly inhabited by friends of our Government.

I hope the citizen surgeon at Castine will share the fate of that at Pittsfield. He has lately presented me for approbation a long account of medicine, ~~used~~ <sup>found</sup> altho' he has the pay & the emoluments of a Surgeon's mate. His bill for 8 months was 212 dollars, I reduced it to 150. He charges 25 cents for an ounce 1/4 grains of I. Quat. & as much for a dose of salts & so of every thing else. He charged 5 dollars for the medicine used in every venereal case. I hear he is to be no longer employed, & that a mate is to be placed there. Excepting in such considerable parts as that at New Bedford, I presume, it would be economy to establish mates, who are a kind of medical cadets belonging to the government, & rearing up & improving in the public service.

I have rec'd a letter from the Superintendent Genl of Military supplies for a return of receipts & of mes of all medicines, Surgical Instruments, Hospital stores &c which have come under my charge; but I myself have none, excepting a case of pocket instruments. The fact & the

wounded, prisoners of war & others followed & returned home, many of them with consumptions, are living here & there in Boston & the neighbouring towns, scattered at a considerable distance. These I visit, & if an apothecary be not near to them, I generally use my own medicine, because I have never had deposit of medicine, or supply from the apothecary general, nor do I see how I can regularly obtain any agreeably to the late order from the War Department dated 26<sup>th</sup> November. 1813. In arranging & preparing a temporary hospital for the reception the expected prisoners of war from Halifax, how can I provide myself with the needful articles, seeing there are as yet no men, no sick & wounded of whom to make report? — I suspect this contingency was not adverted to —

as we have in view every clean & decent house it will be expected that the mate should take up his quarters in it. In which case may I ask if he be entitled to a room, & to fuel, & to a waiter; for I cannot get any information here on this head. Should such a person be supplied with bedding & other absolutely needed furniture. —

Will you excuse me for asking as it regards myself whether an hospital surgeon be allowed a room & a kitchen, with the care & attendant fuel? It is said here that he is allowed only one room; which I suspect must be a mistake, because it is different from the usage of other services, & seems not agreeable to the reason & nature of things, seeing in many cases, it would be needful for the surgeon to reside in the hospital. There are a number of officers returned from the army, <sup>now</sup> in Boston & within 10, or a dozen miles of it, is it my duty

duty to attend all such? or ought they to follow the  
custom of the British, as mentioned in your pamphlet  
to employ whom they should prefer, & pay for it themselves.  
This custom would relieve a physician from a load  
of perplexity. —

In apportioning fuel, I find that our superior  
officers have not been too well acquainted with our  
climate. They allow it to commence in November  
& terminate in April, now the fact is, we generally  
make fires in our parlours & offices in October &  
continue them generally to June. In this gothic cli-  
-mate we have had a frost, so as to destroy certain  
vegetables every month in the year, in June, July  
& August. — It is therefore a fact that the officer in  
the service supplies his own fuel two months in  
every year in Mass. & New Hampshire in the 1<sup>st</sup>  
Military District. —

Form of Certificate of wounded man

I certify according to the best information I can obtain & the best of my belief that A. B. ~~has~~ received a wound ~~the~~

To D. Tilton

Cambridge 24<sup>th</sup> of March 1815

Dear Sir, Medical Cadet

In your letter of the 11<sup>th</sup> inst. you ask me if I wish to be retained on the peace establishment, or whether I have luckier prospects of ambition. You desire me to make up my mind & let you know; and you kindly add, that if you can render me any service, I must not fail to command them. And for these expressions of friendship is your patience taxed with this long letter.

My situation & circumstances are peculiar. President Adams has often said they have a striking resemblance to those of his, & our friend the late Dr. Rush, who was once reduced by his political & professional enemies, almost to want bread, until he gave him the place of Secretary to the Mint, by way of anchor in the storm; & which saved him. - I will relate, & you shall judge.

I went to Europe in 1775 for my improvement in physic, where I remained nearly eight years, four of them I spent at the University of Leyden; & about three in London, in the family of my relation Dr. Hothergill, who was throughout my fulcrum. On my return to my native place Rhode Island, I was called from thence by the Supreme authorities of the State of Massachusetts to fill the chair of the Professorship of the Theory & Practice of Physick, Hancock & Adams being then at the head of the Government, and I sustained this office ~~for~~ with some reputation, twenty nine years, when I was

dismissed for my political heresies; for in 1800, this an-  
cient University was taken entire possession of by the  
notorious Essex Junto, who consider it their castle, or strong-  
hold, & have accordingly manned it with picked men of  
their own cast. I had created, & maintained a Professorship  
of Natural history, & during about four & twenty years, had  
collected & made a very considerable cabinet of Natural  
history, especially of Minerals, yet was I gradually and  
insidiously, during seven years, under various pretences,  
stripped of the fruits of all my labours, and in 1812, set a  
drift with the loss of every thing but my honour. The faction  
meant to destroy me; to beat me to the ground forever -  
never to rise again. How these men came filled with such  
fell rancours towards me needs explanation.

When Mr Jefferson came into office, the late Judge Lowell,  
a leading man of the Junto, & a very influential governor of  
this University, & a warm friend of mine, gave us, of the  
college to understand, that the church & all our other  
sacred Institutions were in danger, particularly the Uni-  
-versity, that therefore it behoved us Professors to rally with the  
clergy, & together form the front-rank in the Massachusetts  
army of Federalism, in opposition to infidelity, Jacobinism  
and Jeffersonism. My associates, & the clergy very generally  
swallowed & relished this doctrine, while I remained rather  
silent. However, at length, said thus much to my esteemed  
friend Lowell - "as I know not exactly what you mean by  
Federalism, I should rather, that we unite & endeavour to  
form the front rank of knowledge, & virtue, & piety, & leave to  
the politician the government of the State." True said these  
Junto



Junto-men; but we must form these politicians".  
It is from this seminary go all the Lawyers, Divines, and  
Physicians, & gentlemen, & here they must imbibe true prin-  
-ciples; (which were little more than hatred to France. adoration of  
England, & contempt of their own country) - From this time, the ex-  
-ercises, & orations of the students were replete with Esse Junto  
doctrines; and soon after the pulpits uttered similar sen-  
-timents. I could not entirely conceal my disapprobation of  
this line of conduct.

At length our papers began to be filled with pieces vi-  
-denting Jefferson's credulity of a mountain of fact  
in Louisiana, when I sent some short dissertations to the press,  
proving that mountains, or vast & high bodies of salt actually  
did exist in various parts of the world; & I shewed to my  
pupils in natural history various specimens of such salt.  
This stopped the current of low abuse against the President,  
but brought the vengeance of the party on my head. I was  
stiled "the flatterer of the Infidel Jefferson."

When I undertook the very arduous task of introducing  
and defending vaccination in its disputed march <sup>through</sup> an host  
of enemies, Jefferson, by his correspondence, strengthened my  
hands & encouraged me heart. This you may be sure did  
me no good with the party, who governed this college, and  
they began to predict that I should one day desert their ranks.

While Mr. John Quincy Adams was on a visit in my  
family, the memorable "affair of the Chesapeake" happened;  
and it electrified us both. We did not merely talk, & coolly argue,  
but we raved, & filled the newspapers with our sentiments. As  
the Junto. party took the British side of the question, they were en-  
-raged to find that the Professor of Oratory & Rhetoric, & the Professor

of Physic openly & emphatically advocated Mr Jefferson. As it regarded myself, it was passing the Rubicon with my college friends, & indeed the whole party. From this time, as you may well suppose, I was regarded with an evil eye, & both Mr Adams & myself experienced, at times, marks of the party's vengeance. I am firmly of opinion, had not Mr Adams been appointed to go Minister to Prussia, he would have been dismissed from his professorship. He himself thought so, & so did his father. — From that time the persecution became notorious, & produced a schism in the University, but the votes of the dominant party prevailed, & I was dismissed from my professorship in 1812, & turned out, for all they knew to starve; or to return to them again, after confessing my errors & begging pardon; for they promising me an act of oblivion & forgiveness, under certain conditions; which I rejected with scorn.

The late Vice President Gerry was knowing to all this persecution, & while he was governor of the State, he retarded its progress; but nothing could stop it entirely. My venerable friend, the late President Adams saw all their movements and foretold the event; & his correspondence, which I have enjoyed for many years, down to this day, consoled me in my trials. Dr Bush was not unacquainted with it; neither was Mr Jefferson, who wrote to me in March 1813, that  
"They (the party) may solicit an Auto da fe' to burn you for your heresy,  
" or force you to fly South of Connecticut, where no truth is feared, where  
" Science is honored, not reviled; & where you, as one of its sons would  
" always be received with cordiality" —

My affairs were thus situated, when Mr Adams, Mr Gerry, Mr Gray and some other of my friends, undertook, of their own accord, to represent  
my

my situation to the President, & some of the heads of Department at Washington.

About this time Dr. Rush wrote to Mr Adams, and suggested my standing a candidate for a place at the head of the Medical Staff of the army. He said he had been consulted, and he had advised, that the Government should appoint a Physician General and a Surgeon-General; one to be a northern man, the other a southern man, that together they might be masters of the disorders, & habits of both extremes of the union. He afterwards wrote to me, & said, that he believed, that on this plan, I ~~the~~ would be appointed the Physician General; but he added, if the Government should from an idea of economy, chuse only one person, then that one person will not be you; but a surgeon of character & greater experience in one of our middle States, viz, as he said afterwards, a gentleman in Delaware. After that person was appointed, General Armstrong offered me, through the Vice President, the place of Hospital Surgeon to this District. I replied that I would accept it, on the condition of being stationary, and being allowed to reside in Cambridge, or Boston; to which he assented, through Mr Gerry; and after sending Dr Wheaton to the frontiers, sent me my appointment, here, but I never received my commission untill yesterday.

Now I have said to you what I should have said in conversation; and you know now all about it, and about me. One thing only remains to be mentioned. —

— The Junto, or Faction have enlisted nearly every active man in the ~~three~~ learned professions. They have a numerous body of intriguers, writers & preachers. In their rebellious corps I might have carried a pair of colours; but my conscience would not let me; and I threw myself into the lean, pinched up corps of Republicans, & took up my post behind the press, whence I have not only kept up a pretty constant fire, but made cartridges for others to fire from other posts. President Adams warned me early of the danger of it, and said that the faction would not hesitate to destroy me & my family also, if they could. But I felt the impulse operating like an irresistible instinct, and I cannot resist its operations. For more than seven years past have I poured an incessant stream of Republicanism on the wheels of government, while all about me were endeavouring to impede them. If this is not universally known here, it is universally guessed at. The number of ~~subscribers~~ <sup>have</sup> Republican writers here is very circumscribed, while the Federalists host ~~hosts~~ of them. We have but three Republican papers in Boston, they nevertheless keep the enemy at bay, & they have rendered the whole business of the Hartford Convention a laughing stock to the whole continent. Now I mention these things to shew that if I were to quit Boston, our friends here would be disposed to cry out, you have deserted us; you have thrown away your pen for some gainful project. The faction have been more than once defeated & put to rout by the steady fire of the Republican papers; and if it slacken they will even now crowd upon us, for so long as their ambitious men are out of place, their hostility will be unabated.

To all this I must add, that I possess a small but handsome seat with 10 acres of land, on the Cambridge-common, about 200 paces in front of the colleges, where my six children were born. This is about 4 miles from the centre of Boston, & about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to our hospital. I should indeed be very unwilling to quit this pleasant stand. The advantage must be considerable, & the establishment permanent, to render my decamping an act of prudence. While connected with the University my income was about twenty five hundred dollars; of this I have been entirely stripped, & my reliance has been wholly on my pay as hospital surgeon; and of this I have not received a cent since last June. — and thus you have a rapid sketch of my humble history — By it you will perceive, that I cannot live without the support of government, for whose cause I have been sacrificed. Mr Jefferson is fully apprised of all this, and Mr Madison, & Mr Monroe have been lately made acquainted with some of the most striking particulars. —

As you have encouraged me to take advantage of your friendship, I would thank you to make such a representation as you think my case allows, & calls for. Cannot I be employed here in the vicinity of the Capital of New England, the centre of many important posts; for fix one leg of the compass in Boston, & extend the other one hundred miles, & make with it a semi circle, (the sea board forming the chord) and see what a number of posts it includes. Beside all in the first district, it includes nearly half of the second. Why may not a medical district include two military districts, or in fewer words — all New England; and why may not the surgeon of N<sup>o</sup> 1 have such a jurisdiction in time of peace?

As we have no invalid establishment, like other nations, we must have here & there hospitals for the reception & maintenance of certain mutilated men, a paralytic, nephretic, & epileptic men, wh

who never had any homes or relations in America, of whom there are many from Ireland, & from the north of Europe. Many of them are so disabled that no person can board them & treat them properly for 50 dollars a year. It is totally impracticable. You and I know these things better than the Secretary at war. If you recur to my topographical description of this vicinity, sent you last July, you will, I trust, agree with me, that there is no spot this side of the Andron so well adapted for such an asylum as Charlestown, where we have as neat a little hospital as any upon earth: and I have been sufficiently conversant with them all my life to judge of them — altho' we have no personal acquaintance, I rely on you to express your opinion as to my care & competency.

My general idea is this — It is of importance to keep entire and together the medical system of the United States, which shall be like a ship in ordinary, that shall be fitted for sea, on a short notice, without being obliged to build one from the keel. You told me that General Armstrong was pleased with my idea of Medical Cadets, why cannot that idea be perpetuated through peace? Foreign nations keep alive their medical establishments, & so ought we; for on my soul I believe that our present tranquillity is but a Truce. at least this is the opinion of our deep thinkers in this quarter.

I cannot resist believing that the government will have a hospital kept up in this vicinity. I cannot easily conceive how they can do otherwise. As to myself I never can re-enter private practice, nor shall I ever resume lecturing. almost all the other Hospital surgeons are young men & will commence practice, such as Wheaton & Lovell. Dr Mann is not young, but he left his village-practice with a partner & can resume it whenever he wishes. My wish is to be retained in the service in my old residence, & to be so situated & circumstanced as to be able to serve my country as a medical man, & with my pen as a literary one. I have consulted our Republican Fathers here, & they coincide in my opinion & wishes. Forgive this long & tedious "Talk" for the sake of the tribe to which belongs your friend  
Benj<sup>n</sup> Waterhouse.  
D James Tilton. P. S. G.