

Office of Surg. Genl, U.S.A.

Washington, D.C.

May 6 - 1859.

Dr. Jas. B. Patterson,

Pres. State College of Ky.,

Lexington Ky.

Dear Sir,

President Alvord of Med.

Agl. College showed me a letter from you, a few days ago, in which you asked him to recommend a suitable young man for the position of Natural History in your college. The president suggested that I write to you in regard to the matter. I shall make a few statements in behalf of myself, and then perhaps you can judge whether or not I would suit you.

Your three last requirements are perhaps the easiest met. I am a Southerner, intensely so, both by birth and education; a democrat, because I could be nothing else, since I was born of

Democratic parents, and in a Democratic
 state, and nourished on Democratic
 pabulum. I was born in the state
 of Mississippi, near Starkville, the
 present site of the State Agl. & Mech.
 College. I was educated in this institution,
 having worked through a five years course,
 starting in the preparatory sept. I graduated
 in June 1886. For two years previous to
 graduating, I served the college in the ca-
 pacity of assistant to the Professor of
 Biology, and continued in this position
 one year after graduating, when I re-
 signed to accept a position in the
 office of the Surg. Genl. U.S.A. where I
 have been ever since. Since I have
 been in this city, I have taken a course
 in Anatomy and Physiology in one of the
 Medical Colleges ^{here}, and hold a certificate of
 proficiency in these branches. I have also
 taken a short course in **Practical**
 Mineralogy under the Mineralogist of the
 National Museum. Besides these, I have
 continued, independently, my studies in several

branches of natural history. I have successfully passed a competitive examination before the U.S. Civil Service Commission, for the position of assistant botanist in the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture. I passed, ~~at~~ say, but not "sufficiently" to get the appointment.

And now as to my religious qualification. That is perhaps not so easy. While I am not ~~and~~ active member of any church, my inclination is Methodist, of which church I might be called a passive member.

For any further information about me, I will refer you to any member of the faculty of the A. & M. College of Miss., and to my school fellow and friend, Mr. Cornell, whom you now have in your employ.

Now, do you think I would probably suit you? If so, be kind enough to inform me what remuneration you can offer, and if I think I can live on it, I shall be happy to be permitted to make a formal application for the place. I am somewhat anxious to exchange my present

position for one more congenial
to my tastes, and the more so
because I feel that time spent in
mere routine work under government-
employ is time lost.

I hope to hear from you at an
early date.

Very respectfully,
W. B. Stark.

S. G. O. 10" St.,
Washington, D. C.

S. G. Office, 10th St.

Washington, D.C.

May 16/89.

The President and
Board of Trustees
State College of Ag.

Gentlemen,

I desire to place with you, for consideration at your meeting in June, my application for the Professorship of Natural History, now vacant in your College.

The following brief statements will give you an idea of who and what I am: - I am a native of Mississippi, and a graduate of the Miss. A. & M. College, Class of '86. My life previous to entering College was mostly spent in farm work, and for the last two years I have been in the employ of the War Department in this City.

I spent six years in the A & M. college successively; - five as a student, and one, after graduating, as assistant to the Professor of Biology. This position I resigned (because of its meager salary) to accept the one I now hold.

I have continued my studies since I have been in this city; - have a certificate from one of the medical colleges here for proficiency in Anatomy and Physiology. Have also taken a short course in Practical Mineralogy in addition to that in the regular course in the Miss. college, which is considered pretty thorough, (under the name of Blow-pipe Analysis).

The president has letters from President Alvord of the Md. college and myself giving further infor-

mation in regard to me which he will doubtless place at your disposal.

If you conclude to favor me with the position, I have no doubt we shall all be satisfied in the end; for what I most desire is an opportunity to grow.

Trusting that my application will receive your most favorable consideration, I am

Very respectfully,
W. B. Stark,

S. G. O. 10" St.
Washington, D.C.
May 30/89.

Dr. Jas. K. Patterson,
Pres. State Col. of Ky.
Lexington, Ky.

My Dear Sir,

I send you by registered mail additional papers to be placed before the Board with my application for the Professorship of Nat. Hist.

The package contains my Diploma, a certificate from the Medical Dept. of Georgetown Univ., and a certificate from the U.S. Civil Service Commission showing result of competitive examination in Botany.

If I should be so fortunate as to receive an appointment to a professorship in your College, you will please to keep the papers until my arrival; if otherwise, kindly return them to me at my expense.

I hope to receive favorable returns from my application.

Very respectfully,
W. B. Stark.

S. G. O. 10" St,

Washington, DC,

May 16 - 89.

Dr. Jas. N. Patterson,

Pres. State College of Ky.

Lexington Ky.

Dear Sir,

Yours of 10" Inst. received.
I enclose application for the Professor-
ship of Natural History,

In answer to your question in
regard to geology, will say I have
a good knowledge of the fundamental
principles of the science, and am
well read up in the theory, but have
had little actual field work. I have
been for sometime watching for an
opportunity to acquire this practical
work but, so far, have failed, except
in a small way without an instructor.

There is very little geological expos-
ure near my home in Miss., and

since I have been here I have been too closely confined to do much field work. I have, however, taken several excursions into the surrounding country to study the geological exposures, and notably those of Harpers Ferry and in the mountains of Virginia, where I spent a week last summer.

I should anticipate no trouble in this line, however. I presume you lay most stress on the Lithological division of geology, and this in connection with Mineralogy, which belongs largely to the Dept. of Chemistry.

If I am so fortunate as to be elected to a position in your College, I shall spend a good portion of the summer in making special preparation for the work. I have already made arrangements to attend a summer school of natural history on the New Jersey coast

where I shall receive instruction, among other things, in the methods of science teaching. Of course every summer's vacation would be devoted to special preparation.

And now in regard to the Professorship of Agriculture. It is true I know which end of a plow to hitch a team to. Seriously, one could not go through the A. & M. college, as I did without having some of the principles of the science (or art?) rubbed into him. I had it both practically and theoretically; for I had to work my way through college, and I had considerable experience before going there. Up to the time of my appointment to assist the Professor of Biology (in my junior year) I had worked in every industrial division then existing at the college, and had acquired some

skill in each. During my sophomore year, I had entire control of the college herd, superintended the milking, feeding, - and the rearing of the calves, ect. The year before this, I worked in the horticultural dept, and had the direction of much of the work there. So I have had practical work in everything from the digging of a ditch to the grafting of a fruit tree. And while I would have no fear of success in running a farm of my own, or a dairy, or of breeding cattle, still I fear I would not at once make as great a success in teaching Agriculture as you would desire. I should have to have a little time to grow, and catch up with the progress of the last three years - I don't know how far this dept,

has been developed at your college,
and you can therefore judge better
than I how nearly I would suit
for the work you require.

If, therefore, I should miss
the Prof. of Nat. Hist., and you
and the Board conclude to trust
the Dept. of Agriculture with me,
I shall be happy to serve you,
and believe I could soon work
up to the "top".

Very respectfully,
W. B. Stark.

S. G. O. 10" St,
Washington, D.C.

June 14/89.

Dr. Jas. K. Patterson,
Lexington, Ky.

My Dear Sir,

Yours of 10" Inst,
informing me of the action of
the Board of Trustees has been
received. While it is a
disappointment to me, I cannot
but approve the wisdom of
the Trustees in awarding the place
to Mr. Morgan. A graduate of
a college when qualified for a
place should, in my judgment,
be given preference over all
others for positions in that college.

I should be very happy to serve
your college in the capacity of
Prof. of Agl. but can scarcely
allow myself to hope that I shall
be thus honored.

May I ask when the Board
will be likely to fill this place?

Very respectfully,

W. B. Starks.

S. G. O. 10th St.

Washington, D.C.

June 20/89.

Dr. Jas. H. Patterson,
Lexington, Ky.

Dear Sir,

Yours of 18th Inst.
just received. Please accept
for yourself, and convey to the
members of the Ex. Committee, my
sincere thanks for the honors
just conferred on me. I assure
you I shall exert every effort to
prove myself equal to the trust
thus imposed on me,

You do not ^{state} when I am expected
to report for duty. I think I
shall visit Mr. Cornell sometime
during the summer, as you suggest,
and give him a chance to tell all he'

knows (and perhaps more).

I also expect to visit the truck
farms of Norfolk as well as
other places of interest near
here. I shall, however, await
the promised catalogue before
making any definite plans for
the summer, and, in the meantime,
will visit Mr. Cornell.

Very respectfully
W. B. Starbuck.