

Papers of Alexander Cochrane MS 2348

Cochrane to Craik

2 September 1814 (cont.)

(2)

Enclosed in a case delivered
to Capt. Wainwright.

ascending that river to attack him near its source,
above Pig Point, while the ultimate destination of the
combined force was Washington, should it be found
that the attempt might be made with any prospect of
success. To give their Lordships a more correct idea
of the plan of attack I send a sketch of the country upon
which the movements of the Army and Navy are
portrayed: by it their Lordships will observe that the
best approach to Washington is by Port Tobacco upon
the Potomac and Benedict upon the Patuxent; from
both these places are direct and good roads to the City
of Washington and their distances are nearly alike:
the Roads from Benedict divide about five miles in land,
the one by Poxataway and Bladensburg, the other
following the course of the river, although at some
distance from it, owing to the Creeks that run up
the country; this last passes through the Towns of
Mottingham and Marlborough to Bladensburg, at
which Town the River called the Eastern branch, that
bounds Washington to the Eastward, is fordable and
the distance about five miles. There are two bridges
over this River to the City, but it was not to be
expected that the Enemy would leave them accessible
to an invading Army. Previous to my entering the
Patuxent I detached Captain Gordon of His Majesty's
Ship Sealhorse with that Ship, and the Ships and Boats
named in the margin up the Potomac to bombard
Fort Washington (which is situated on the left bank
of that River about ten or twelve miles below the City)
with a view of destroying that Fort, and opening a
free communication above, as well as to cover the
retreat of the Army should its return by the
Bladensburg Road be found too hazardous from
the accession of strength the Enemy might obtain
from Baltimore; it was also reasonable to expect