

Captain's Letters
Thomas Truicy to William Jones
August 27, 1814

Folio 138

1

Sir,

Navy Yard Washⁿ
27th Augst 1814

After receiving your order of 24th directing the public Shipping, Stores etc at this Establishment to be destroyed in case of the success of the enemy over our Army - no time was lost in making the necessary arrangements for firing the whole and preparing boats for departing from the yard as you had suggested.

About 4 P.M. I rece'd a message by an officer from the Secretary of War with information that he could protect me no longer. Soon after this, I was informed that the conflagration of the Eastern branch bridge had commenced and, in a few minutes the explosion announced the blowing up of that part near the "draw", as had been arranged in the morning.

It had been promulgated, as much as in my power, among the inhabitants of the vicinity; the intended fate of the yard in order that they might take every possible precautions for the safety of themselves, families and property.

Immediately, several individuals came in succession, endeavouring to prevail on me to deviate from my instructions & which they were invariably inform'd was unavail(?) unless they could bring me your instructions in writing countermanding those previously given.

A deputation also of the most respectable women came on the same errand - when I found myself painfully necessitated to inform them that any further importunities would cause the matches to be instantly applied to the trains - with assurance however that, if left at peace; I would delay the execution of the orders as long as I could feel the

See Codrington; 328-9 re burning ship in shed at Wash. D.C.