

7th/38.

Navy Yard Wash. 27th Aug. 1814

Sir

After receiving your orders of 24th directing the public shipping, stores &c., 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 rec'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 inform'd that the conflagration of the Eastern branch bridge had commenc'd - 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 precaution for the safety of themselves, families and property.

Immediately, several individuals came in succession, endeavoring to prevail on me to deviate from my instructions - which they were invariably inform'd was unavailing.