

24 Mar
movement
to one, and
Frigate
James R
L. Barge

United States Frigate Constellation

Norfolk Harbour March 24. 1813

Sir

The enemy this morning took three river craft in the mouth of James river and destroyed them with their launches. One of their frigates with five tenders are now standing up James river, how far they mean to go or what is their object I cannot discover, they appear however to have a great desire to get to Richmond. Whether these hints were made, and their present movement, to endeavour to divert the force from Norfolk I do not pretend to decide, but such is the weak state of our force here, that we dare not budge with it out of the waters of Norfolk through a liability of our return being cut off.

A flag of truce has just come up but for what purpose I know not, in all probability to reconnoitre; they appear to look towards this ship and the great boats very anxiously. Should they get possession of the boats by any means, they would not stop short of any place on these waters where they could go, as they would be enabled to snare them.

Report yesterday stated the arrival of three