

Private

Constellation April 10th 1813

Dear Sir

The late promotions to Master Commandants in which Lieut Biddle has superseded Lieut Ridgely, has excited in the officers considerable dissatisfaction, not induced by the Government's rewarding a meritorious officer, but that they should be subject to the loss of their seniority in the service, through accidental causes, arising from the limited nature of our service, and the want of means in Government, to give them all an equal opportunity to distinguish themselves. — Lieut Ridgely was not desirous of any promotion untill such opportunity should offer, but after seeking it in all directions and every quarter / on the declaration of war / without success and impairing his health and constitution in endeavouring to serve his country / he was obliged to content himself with a distant prospect of such an opportunity, onboard this ship, where his prospects, you must be aware, is for some time at least / effectually blighted by the blockading squadron.

You no doubt Sir will feel as one acquainted with our service & profession, as one who knows