

together with a copy of this letter, I have enclosed to him for his consideration.

"It appears to me utter'y impossible to build gun boats at Presqu'ile. There is not a sufficient depth of water on the bar to get them into the lake. Should there be water, the place is at all times open to the attacks of the enemy, and in all probability when ready for action, ultimately will fall into the hands of the enemy, and be a great annoyance to our forces building and repairing at this place. From a slight acquaintance I have with our side of the lake, and with what information I have obtained from persons who have long navigated it, I am under the impression Lake Erie has not a single harbor calculated to fit out a naval expedition; and the only one convenient, I am at present at, which is in between Squaw Island and the Main, immediately in the mouth of Niagara River. I have no further communication to make upon the subject. Probably in a few days I shall be in possession of Commodore Chauncey's impressions, when you shall again hear from me.

"With esteem, yours, &c.,

"J. D. ELLIOTT, U. S. N.

"*Sailing Master Daniel Dobbins.*"

Mr. Dobbins (that being the modest title applied to sailing master) at once replied as follows, viz:

"ERIE, Oct. 11th, 1812.

"DEAR SIR:—Yours of the second inst. is received. In regard to the idea entertained by you, that this place is not a suitable one to build gun boats at, allow me to differ with you. There is a sufficiency of water on the bar to let them into the lake, but not a sufficiency to let heavy armed vessels of the enemy into the bay to destroy them. The bay is large and spacious, and completely land-locked, except at the entrance. I have made my arrangements in accordance with my own convictions, for the purpose of procuring the timber and other material for their construction. I believe I have as perfect a